

FIRE CARRIER 2024-2027

The dream of the FIRE Carrier program is to promote respect, fairness and inclusion for Aboriginal people. The FIRE Carrier promotes, enculturation and reconciliation in our Catholic primary and secondary, schools.

ECO STEWARDSHIP

What does it mean to be a Steward of the Earth? Stewardship is a theological belief that humans are responsible for the world, and should take care of it. Eco Stewardship explores the interaction between **ecological** values, such as sustainability, while dealing with man's relationship to land, animals and the plants which grow upon it.

Why we are Incorporating Eco Stewardship (stewards of creation) to the (FIRE) carrier project.

Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education.

History of the FIRE Carrier Program

It is around the fire that stories are told and the laws taught. In the Aboriginal community fire represents the spiritual connection for the individual to Mother Earth and the Ancestors. And so it is fire that will represent the learning and teaching for a school journey towards reconciliation.

For many First Nations people, land relates to all aspects of existence - culture, spirituality, language, law, family and identity. Rather than owning land, each person belongs to a piece of land which they're related to through the kinship system. That person is entrusted with the knowledge and responsibility to care for their land, providing a deep sense of identity, purpose and belonging. This intimate knowledge of the land and ways of relating to it are also reflected in language, including many words and concepts that have no English equivalent. This deep relationship between people and the land is often described as 'connection to Country'. In the FIRE carrier project, we are calling it Eco Stewardship, stewards of creation.

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FIRE carrier covenants are drafted under the 4 core values or elements.

A Covenant is a sacred agreement.

Covenants emphasize the ethos and faith belief of Catholic schools and the Social Justice response they are committed to make as part of their Christian identity. St Joseph School's expressed commitment is reflected in practical goals and actions which they strive to achieve in the year ahead.

School covenants express in ways, specific to each school, recognition of the special contribution Aboriginal peoples and their cultures make to Australian society, their relationship and connection to the land, their present position of disadvantage and social exclusion. They declare St Joseph's School and school community's commitment to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal peoples to achieve true reconciliation and acknowledgement, by all Australians, of their rightful position within Australian society. (*firecarriers Sandhurst.pdf*)

It (the FIRE carrier project) makes Sandhurst schools culturally safe places for Aboriginal students and their families and aligns with the Sandhurst Aboriginal Education Plan *Kalik Baring Kayap Baringi – Many Paths One Destination*.

The symbols below are part of the traditional iconography used by Aboriginal groups for centuries to communicate between clans and different language groups. Without written language the use of visual symbols in Aboriginal culture is pivotal.

In the FIRE Carrier program we use three Aboriginal symbols to represent the three core values of the program:

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The three core values are:



Spirituality - This symbol Aboriginal painting means campfire. The campfire is where people meet and stories are told. In the FIRE Carrier program we use the campfire symbol to represent the core value of spirituality. We invite you to educate yourself and others about Aboriginal Spirituality and its connection to Eco Stewardship/stewards of the earth.



Cultural Recognition and awareness - This symbol represents the Message Stick. The Message Stick is a wooden stick that is passed between clans and language groups to transmit messages, invitations and information. In the FIRE Carrier program we use the Message Stick to signify Cultural Recognition and Awareness. We Invite you as a part of the FIRE carrier program to join us in promoting the message of Eco Stewardship/stewards of the earth.



Practical Reconciliation and Justice - This symbol represents journey in Aboriginal painting. It has been chosen to represent the journey towards Reconciliation for Aboriginal peoples. We invite you as part of the FIRE Carrier program to join us on this journey in honouring the earth as Eco Stewards.



Ecological and Custodian Stewardship - The Spirituality of Aboriginal people remains constant through the connection between the land and nature, and Aboriginal identity and the Dreaming. It is argued

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that ecological renewal and sustainability depends upon spiritual awareness and an attitude of responsibility. This must include the recognition of creation as sacred and behaviours that honour that sacredness. The message of Eco Stewardship aligns with the Aboriginal 'way of knowing' the world in relationship to the land. The earth is the central spiritual context, an attitude and 'way of being' in the world, rooted in land and embedded in place. Recognising cultural perspectives and demonstrating awareness through looking after and caring for country sends a strong message. Throughout Australia Aboriginal people have an intimate knowledge of local terrains. For Aboriginal people land is a story place. It holds the stories of human survival across the generations. Land shapes people, just as people shape their countries. Australia is interwoven with the tracks of the dreaming/song lines. We invite you to join with the story of this land and honour creation as sacred while displaying an attitude of responsibility for the Earth as ecological stewards and custodians.

