



**RECONCILIATION**  
AUSTRALIA



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Cairns  
*Learning with Faith and Vision*

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**Reconciliation Action Plan**

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**Catholic  
Education**  
Diocese of Cairns

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**You are part of Australia and Australia is part of you. And the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.”**

*Pope John Paull II, Alice Springs, 1986.*







## Reconciliation Action Plan

# Prayer

Our great Creator God of the Dreaming  
Through Your Word You brought Marvelous light  
To the Bubu and Jalun of this great Nation

By Your Hands we were created  
And as Brothers and Sisters  
We walk together in Your great love

We pray through Your Son Jesus  
That we walk this Reconciliation  
Journey together for Your purpose

Lead us with Your Godly Wisdom  
With each step of our Journey  
And embrace us with Your many blessings

By the power of the Holy Spirit  
We pray that Your Will, will be done  
As it is in Heaven and on our Bubu

Our Father GOD we Surrender  
Our Reconciliation Action Plan to You  
And we ask this through Your Son  
Jesus Christ our Lord

*Patsy Lockington*

*Artwork by Naika Wasaga, 'Meeting of Land, Sea and Sky'*



## Message from Executive Director



It is with a sense of both respect and pride that I introduce the Cairns Catholic Education Community's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan 2020 – 2021: we respect the numerous communities of First Nations Peoples, past, present and emerging, who have lived and continue to live on and care for the lands, seas and waterways that are within the boundaries of our vast and diverse diocese; and, we are proud of the relationships that we have developed with our First Nations Peoples and the team that has reflected on those relationships to develop our Reconciliation Action Plan.

This plan outlines our commitment to reconciliation, ensuring the provision of culturally safe spaces to engage in respectful relationships based on principles of justice, equity, consultation, democracy, and respect for human dignity.

We honour the past in recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their contribution to education since time immemorial. We inhabit the present and our commitment to addressing educational disparity in education and employment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We imagine the future, where all come to respect, reflect, connect, and embrace the richness of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and spiritualities.

I commend the RAP Working Group in their commitment, and passion towards enabling shared commitment in our first Reconciliation Action Plan. The actions outlined in our RAP build shared understanding, shared accountability, and shared responsibility across our organisation. I thank Reconciliation Australia for their ongoing partnership and final endorsement of our RAP.

We look forward to embracing this Reconciliation Action Plan over the coming 12 months and our call to action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Dixon'.

**Mr Bill Dixon**

Executive Director  
Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns

## Message from Reconciliation Australia



**RECONCILIATION**  
AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey. Through implementing a Reflect RAP, Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns will lay the foundations for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

We wish Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

**“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”**

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Catholic Education Services – Diocese of Cairns on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Karen Mundine.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia





## Our business

The vision of the Cairns Catholic Education Community (CCEC) is: 'to offer a quality Catholic education so that each person may know and come to identify more fully with the living Spirit of Christ.' Our learning experiences are grounded in a Catholic perspective in dialogue with other school communities working in partnership with families to create opportunities for young people to encounter fullness of life.

The CCEC leads and supports the work of Catholic education spanning over 377,000 km<sup>2</sup> from Cardwell in the south, west to the Northern Territory border including the Atherton Tablelands, and north to the Torres Strait Islands and Gulf of Carpentaria. The CCEC

provides quality education to over 11,000 students in the 29 Catholic schools and colleges across the region. These are supported by three offices located in Cairns. The schools extend from Tully in the South, west to Dimbulah on the Atherton Tablelands, and north to Hammond Island in the Torres Strait. Currently there are 1077 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students (approximately 9.7%) across the school communities.

The Cairns Catholic Education Community is one of the largest non-government employers in the Far North. There are 1285 employees of which 40 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employed in teaching, non-teaching and leadership positions across the Diocese. The





CCEC is committed to increasing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student enrolments and employment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Working in partnership with all school communities, including parents and caregivers, the CCEC sets strategic directions and develops system priorities, policies, procedures and guidelines supporting effective, ethical and safe practices. The organisation is committed to reconciliation and improving wellbeing and learning outcomes of all young people ensuring that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students have access to cultural, spiritual, academic and leadership opportunities.

Cairns Catholic Education Community is committed to reconciliation, ensuring all school communities are committed to providing a culturally safe space to engage in respectful relationships based on principles of justice, equity, consultation, democracy, and respect for human dignity.



## Our RAP

In 2017, the Executive Director of Catholic Education Services Cairns requested a Reconciliation Action Plan working group be formed. The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) strengthens reconciliation initiatives actively undertaken and led by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff across the Diocese since 2013 and aligns with the strategic directions. The RAP strengthens the organisation's reconciliation commitment to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and aligns with its Strategic Directions. The RAP Working Group was formed in 2018 and comprises six Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members, and four non-Indigenous members. The RAP Working Group members are holders of valuable knowledge and expertise with strong links to key stakeholders in the wider community.

The CCEC acknowledges Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, cultures and spiritualities and commits to reconciliation through words and actions. The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for CCEC is everybody's business and is embedded in our core vision. The implementation of the RAP will empower Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff as well as building mutually respectful relationships across our organisation and in partnership with other stakeholders. To ensure effective implementation of the RAP we have developed a list of measures to track our progress. We have appointed a RAP champion, Director of Student Wellbeing and Diversity, who is a member of the Strategic Leadership Team. As RAP champion regular reports on progress of the RAP will be provided to the Strategic Leadership Team. The RAP Working Group will regularly monitor and track progress of the RAP implementation.





## Our partnerships/current activities



Currently the activities undertaken across the Cairns Catholic Education Community have been driven by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff. Varying levels of partnership have been nurtured by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff alongside non-Indigenous staff.





## Relationships

### Action

#### 1 Establish and maintain RAP Working Group

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples from across our organisation	May 2020	RAP Working Group Chair
b) Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG	May 2020	RAP Working Group Chair

### Action

#### 2 Build internal and external relationships

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	May 2020	Director Identity & Outreach guided by the Indigenous Education Collaborative
b) Develop a list of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey	May 2020	Director Identity & Outreach guided by the Indigenous Education Collaborative
c) Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey	June 2020	Director Identity & Outreach guided by the Indigenous Education Collaborative
d) Raise awareness of and explore opportunities to support Reconciliation Australia	June 2020	CES Communications Team
e) Engage Cairns Catholic Education Community, including Parishes in authentic partnership building opportunities with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples	July 2020	Moderator of the Curia/ Vicar for Education Executive Leadership Team Strategic Leadership Team Manager Governance & Engagement

### Action

#### 3 Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to attend at least one external event to recognise NRW event	May-June 2020	Executive Director
b) Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff through weekly communications and CES website	27 May- 3 June 2020	Executive Leadership Team
c) Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	27 May- 3 June 2020	CES Communications Team RAP Working Group Chair, RAP Champion



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**Action****Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments	May 2020	Manager Governance & Engagement, RAP Champion
b) Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP	May 2020	CES Communications Team
c) Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey	July 2020	RAP Working Group Members
d) Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey	July 2020	RAP Working Group Members

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**Action****Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	July 2020	RAP Champion, Manager Human Resources
b) Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	July 2020	Manager Human Resources, Director Student Wellbeing & Diversity

## Action

### 6 Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation	May 2020	Director Identity & Outreach guided by the Indigenous Education collaborative
b) Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	June 2020	Consultant Formation- First Nations, School Leaders
c) Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	June 2020	Consultant Formation- First Nations

## Action

### 7 Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities	May 2020	Executive Director
b) Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area	May 2020	CES Communications Team
c) Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event	July 2020	RAP Champion

## Action

### 8 Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area	May 2020	Indigenous Education Collaborative
b) Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence	May 2020	Indigenous Education Collaborative
c) Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols)	June 2020	Manager Governance & Engagement guided by Indigenous Education Collaborative, CES Communications Team
d) Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols. Including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	June 2020	Indigenous Education Collaborative



## Action

### 9 Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation	July 2020	Executive Director Manager Human Resources RAP Champion, Chief Financial and Operating Officer
b) Identify current Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities	August 2020	Manager Human Resources guided by Indigenous Education Collaborative

## Action

### 10 Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	October 2020	Chief Financial and Operating Officer
b) Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers (as required) for conference and other branding	November 2020	CES Communications & RAP Champion
c) Investigate Supply Nation membership	November 2020	Chief Financial and Operating Officer
d) Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	November 2020	Manager Building & Planning Principals

## Action

### 11 Investigate strategies to support staff

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Investigate an internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional mentoring network	August 2020	Director Leadership & Professional Learning guided by Indigenous Education Collaborative
b) Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships)	August 2020	Manager Governance & Engagement, Education Officer – Vocational Education & Training

## Action

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### Promote Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education to staff and external stakeholders

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Engage our CES Senior Leadership Team in the delivery of RAP outcomes	May 2020	Education Officers – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education
b) Promote Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation Education program to all early learning services in our network, and encourage schools to develop their own RAPs via the Narragunnawali platform	July 2020	Director Learning and Teaching
c) Encourage all staff/all early learning services and schools in our network to sign up to the Narragunnawali News mailing list	May 2020	Director Learning and Teaching
d) Host an appropriate links to Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education platform on our website	May 2020	CES Communications Team
e) Help promote and encourage early learning services within our network who have shown exceptional commitment to reconciliation to apply for the 2021 Narragunnawali Awards	January 2021	Director- Catholic Early Learning and Care, Education Officers -Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education



## Governance and Tracking Progress

### Action

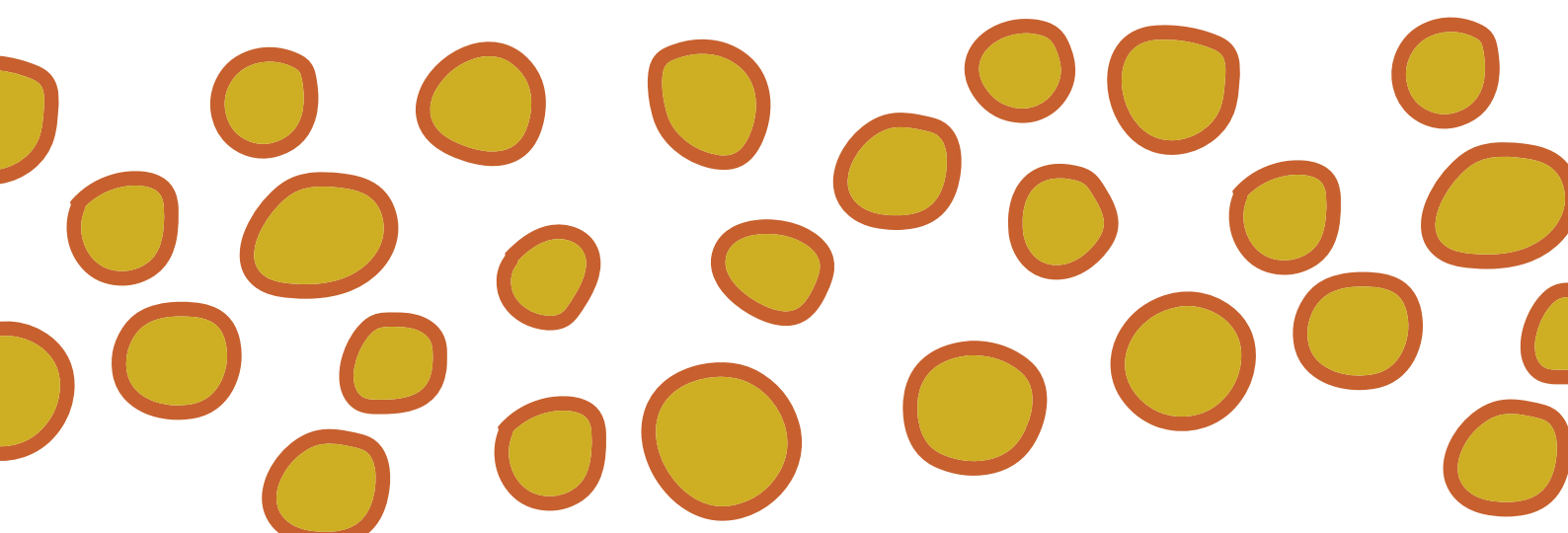
#### 13 Build support for the RAP

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation	May 2020	RAP Working Group members
b) Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities	June 2020	RAP Working Group Members
c) Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	May 2020	RAP Champion
d) Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia	September 2020	RAP Champion

### Action

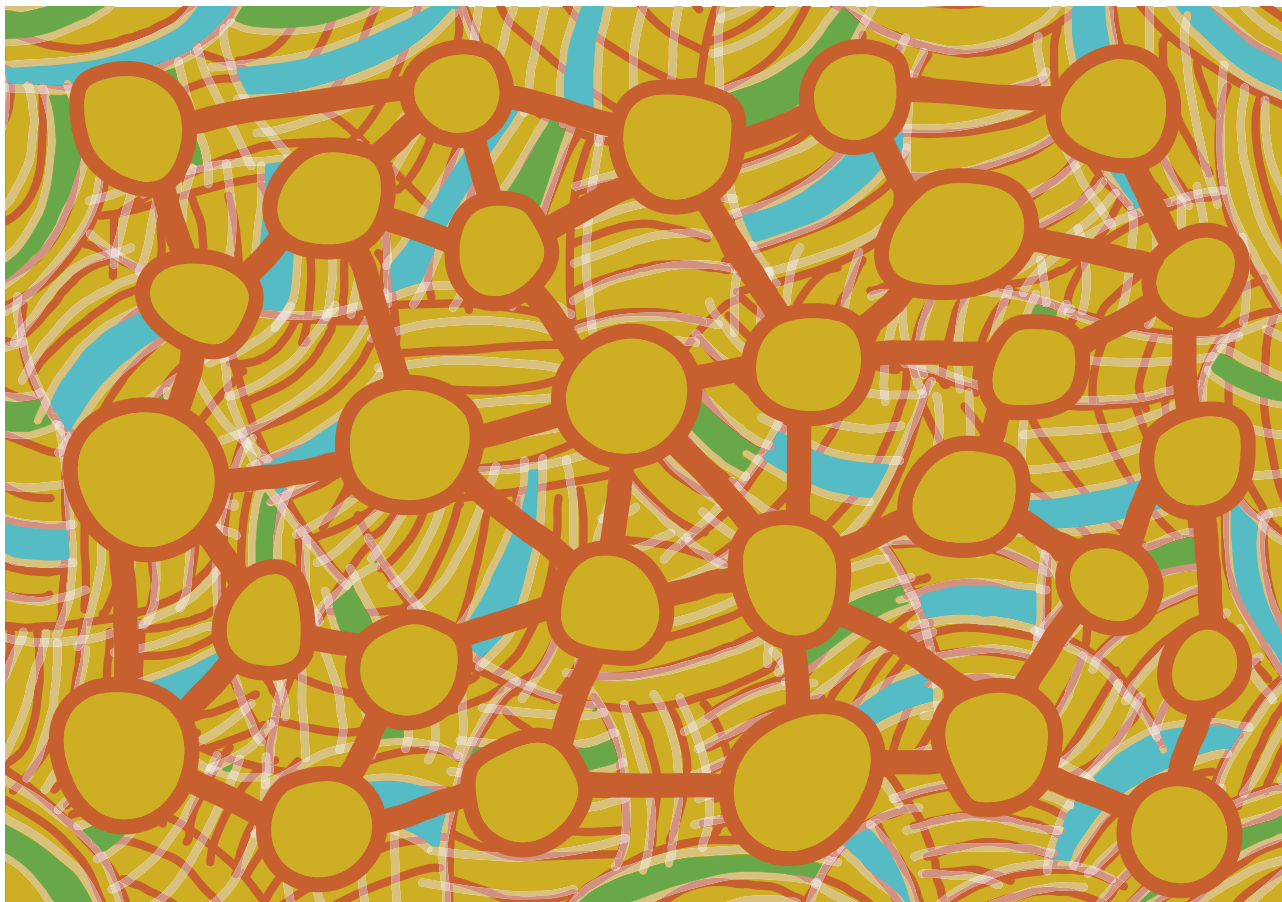
#### 14 Review and Refresh RAP

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
a) Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	November 2020	RAP Working Group Chair





## Reconciliation Design



### About the design

Catholic Education Services- Diocese of Cairns Reconciliation Action Plan design is built around a stylised contemporary pattern symbolic of both land and sea and depicts the journey of reconciliation through nurturing and the sharing of knowledge and understanding with students throughout the Cairns Catholic Education Community.

This stylised contemporary background pattern draws upon a scrub turkey nest. Known throughout the Far North Queensland region as a forest forager, gathering to build its nest to ensure the safety and security of its eggs. In this same way the Cairns Catholic Education Community ensures reconciliation is nurtured through the sharing of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures throughout the 29 schools and colleges within the Diocese.

Each egg symbolises a school or college within the Diocese of Cairns and will formulate co-designed reconciliation icons for schools by the students of each school in the second iteration of the Catholic Education-Cairns Diocese Reconciliation Action Plan design.

### About the design studio

The Catholic Education Services-Diocese of Cairns piece was designed by Leigh Harris of ingeous studios in Cairns, a leading Indigenous design and digital creative agency. Leigh, a proud Kangoolu and Gungarri man who is also proud of Italian and Welsh heritage and draws upon his Aboriginal cultural heritage and knowledge to influence his design works across all of his design works.

Leigh's work has been a process of many years as an industry specialist and is strongly influenced by his heritage as inspired from traditional and contemporary styles, drawn from his rich knowledge of Country and Culture while remain stylised and modern.



**Catholic  
Education Services**  
Diocese of Cairns

*Learning with Faith and Vision*

*We acknowledge the RAP Working Group, a passionate  
and dedicated group of people who have maintained  
a rigorous process, discernment and shared vision  
in the development of our RAP.*

Contact details  
Antoinette Cole  
Consultant Formation-First Nations  
Phone: 07 40509700  
email [acole@cns.catholic.edu.au](mailto:acole@cns.catholic.edu.au)

