

A journey of cultural change

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Abstract

This article describes collaborative autoethnographic reflections on the meaning of our decade-long journey as a school community towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This has resulted in a heartening cultural change driven by the school's strong, faith-based commitment to reconciliation and the desire to make an incredibly complex issue accessible for children and young people.

A powerful change took place when we invited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into our community to tell their story and true growth occurred when our students moved from the position of spectators to participators. Reconciliation events are now a permanent part of our school calendar. The many cultures that make up our community, but especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritages, are celebrated in authentic ways. Our students led the process and have developed pride in their identity, finding their voice among peers.

Introduction

Schools are communities which often function as cultures (Hughes, 2017). Culture can be defined as “a shared set of meanings or a cognitive map of meanings” that shape attitudes, values, beliefs and actions (Punch & Oancea, 2014, p. 157). As society changes, so too can a school community in response to new understandings and directions in education (Pendergast, Bahr & Main, 2017). Indeed, in the last ten years, educators have been increasingly challenged to design learning that focuses on 21st

century skills that prepare students for a somewhat unknown future (Mathew, 2018).

In 2008, the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, set goals for future focused education that included the promotion of “*equity and excellence*”, with a commitment to “*improving the educational outcomes for Indigenous youth*” (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MYCEETA], 2008, p. 6). Following this, the Australian Curriculum was rolled out with the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures as a Cross Curriculum Priority to be taught across all subjects to help close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learning outcomes by providing more culturally accessible and accurate curriculum (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2012). Closing the gap, has been a strong theme in Australia, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 3.3% of the population, and remain the most marginalised Australians with over 30% living below the poverty line (Community Affairs References Committee [CARC], 2004; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). This change in curriculum created a challenge in educational settings as teachers sought to embed this new Cross Curriculum Priority across year levels and subjects. In recognition of this as a curriculum requirement and underpinned by the school's strong faith-based commitment to reconciliation, Suncoast Christian College, along with schools across Australia began the journey of cultural change.

Methodology

As school leaders we have been working within our school community to create cultural change over

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the last decade. More recently, we have had an increasing number of schools reach out to discuss the reconciliation projects and partnerships that are helping to shape and change our school culture. In response to this, we set aside time to actively reflect on our past, present and vision for the future, and in doing so, became aware of the sociological concepts of individual story inextricably linked to culture (Chang, 2008). This led us to explore autoethnography as a process that enabled us to tell our story of social change from within the community, whilst inspiring us to reflect as we actively interpreted our journey (Chang, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Wall, 2008).

Ethnography involves the study of human society or culture (Merriam, 1998; Punch & Oancea, 2014). Autoethnography is an ethnography with the explicit addition of 'auto', or self, making it an ethnography written by and about the researchers as members of the culture being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Autoethnography is a methodology that enables the researcher to tell a story, inviting potential readers to become co-participants in the researchers' experience of a larger social or cultural context (Wall, 2008).

Drawing on the centrality of story within autoethnography, we spent time separately making notes, then came together to tell each other the story as coproducers of a collaborative autoethnography (Hughes & Pennington, 2017). We then co-created a visual representation of our story and its symbolic meanings, which was used to interpret and analyse data, finally settling on the practical steps we took and the deeper themes we uncovered in our own learnings in the journey. Working together enabled us to challenge each other to engage in deeper critical social research (Hughes & Pennington, 2017) and to utilise what Creswell and Poth (2014) describe as the lens of vulnerable, coherent and critical self in data analysis.

The structure of this article is reflective of this collaborative methodological process beginning with: a) our story, then b) our steps, and finally, c) our findings that will inform our future direction as leaders within our school community.

Our story

As a school community we have been on the journey of reconciliation for more than a decade. It has been a rich and rewarding process despite the many challenges that have arisen. The truth of the proverb, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together" (Barrett, 2018, p. 51), has been integral to the process. It has been a remarkably healthy journey as we have wrestled both with our sense of responsibility to the broader Australian community and our own community as a local school. It has

led us to find new dimensions of meaning in our collaboration and depth of understanding as we have learned to listen, observe and participate beyond the boundaries of our tight knit community. Our journey did start with something very simple, but very profound – a story.

Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody sing a song that has become an anthem of our time, "*From Little things, Big things Grow*" (ABC News, 2014; National Museum Australia, n.d.). It tells the story of an Aboriginal man who was small in stature, but big in courage. Vincent Lingiari, a Gurindji man, along with his people called a rugged piece of country in the Northern Territory home. His people had been custodians of this land until Lord Vestey turned their lives upside down. He was a wealthy Englishman who quickly claimed the land and started using it as if it was his own to farm beef. One day Vincent decided this was not acceptable, so he packed his swag and headed toward Sydney to tell his story. He took every opportunity to talk to anybody who would listen to the story of the Gurindji people and the greed of those who had moved in. His courage eventually led to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Australian Government, 1976), the basis upon which Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory could claim native title. On 16 August 1975, a small part of their land was handed back to the Gurindji people on a 30-year-lease by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, a symbolic gesture which gave recognition to the loss the people had experienced.

Our journey in joining the reconciliation movement in Australia started by telling this story and many more. We invited our students and staff into the story of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and sought to develop understanding, compassion and empathy for their plight. As a community it took some time to welcome these stories, not as part of political debate, but rather as a community of people who value justice, compassion, faith and love. The stories were told in a compelling manner for the audience to feel as though they themselves were a part of the ongoing story, rather than just hearing about a bleak part of history which we revisit once a year on a special occasion.

An important aspect of the reconciliation project at Suncoast has been the desire to make what is an incredibly complex issue into one that is accessible for children and young people. Our commitment to having reconciliation as a permanent part of our school calendar was matched by a desire to keep it accessible and palatable for our community. At our Reconciliation Assembly in 2014, with the help of a team of people a bridge in the colours of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and the Australian flag was constructed as a metaphor for

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what is meant by the term reconciliation. The pieces were put together during the ceremony and students were invited to cross the bridge as a symbol of reconciliation. Students were invited to explore their own family heritage and bring a map to the school to place on the bridge as a representation of the many cultures that make up our community.

Along with the telling of story, authentic conversation took place which sought to recognise the place of each individual within the community. Our culture of transparency, authenticity and vulnerability as a community has been critical to the process. The cultural diversity and lived experience of our staff have meant that patience, understanding and active listening have also been integral. The language that has been used has been tempered and considered with the desire to avoid inviting the conversation to become political, but rather presenting it as a value, a way of doing relationship and community that is transformative and effective in bringing a sense of worth in the life of every individual. In this way, the leaders in this process set out to create a space which allowed people to listen and respond to the story at their own pace which has been a key to its success.

A powerful change took place when we invited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into our community to tell their story. The students experienced the ceremonies of “Acknowledgement of Country” and “Welcome to Country” and participated curiously as people who also call this place home. They began to understand the depth of beauty that exists in the land that the traditional owners had taken care of for generations. Our visitors introduced us to the rich heritage of our local Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi people. We were introduced to local foods, local places, celebrations, language and laws. We worked hard to be students of culture who showed a deep sense of honour and respect to those who have called this place home for so long. Our guests were generous in their willingness to engage with us as we awkwardly sought to use correct names and terminology in our ceremonies and conversations. Holding the place of humility has allowed our conversations with guests to become conversations with friends over time as we built relationships characterised by trust and mutual regard.

At times, the story has been confronting. As individuals and a community, we have faced the reality of the ignorance and evil that characterises aspects of this story, including the impact of the Stolen Generation, Terra Nullius and history in our local area, such as the story behind “Murdering Creek Road” in Peregian Springs (Windolf, 2013). These stories must be told, and recognition given for the hardship and pain caused. We have also been aware

that while it is important to acknowledge the powerful sense of grief and shame that is invoked, it is a difficult emotional place to stay for too long. However, these stories needed to be heard with opportunities for our community to feel safe and respond in a way that is authentic.

True growth occurred when our students moved from the position of spectators to participators. Opportunities were created for our student leaders to shape and inform how we would engage in the reconciliation movement. They brought the fun and celebration as we designed ways for students to respond following our ceremonies. These important rituals have shaped our understanding of what reconciliation is all about. For example, during Reconciliation Week in 2015, our Year 12 student leaders created a huge hessian sign (Figure 1) and invited each member of the school community to add their handprints in paint to the sign to represent each person’s responsibility in committing to the cause of reconciliation. We are committed to the notion that reconciliation is something we must respond to, and therefore we have created rituals which encourage young people to engage in the process by first creating the opportunity, then a choice to participate.



Figure 1. *The hessian handprint sign made by Year 12 students at the 2015 Reconciliation Assembly.*

A rewarding part of the journey has been observing a large portion of our community shift from the place of spectator to active participant. Staff have been activated in their strength areas and students have become active in the process of planning and running events and activities. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been involved in leading the process and began to develop pride in their identity and have begun to find their voice among peers. This shift of culture has embedded the reconciliation movement into school life and has made it central to the values and attitudes that define the character of our community.

A high point of the reconciliation journey has been

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the creation of sacred spaces within our College which are powerful symbols of reconciliation. It started with the idea of a leaf chair providing a space where people could gather to share ideas, thoughts and beliefs in a safe, peaceful and inspiring space (Suncoast Christian College, 2019). The vision grew and as conversations took place something quite extraordinary resulted. A yarning circle came together, and a mosaic was designed that told the story of people gathering and listening to one another. The integration of the ideas of staff and students under the guidance of a local Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi man, Kerry Neil led to the creation of a beautiful, and unique space which will be enjoyed for many years to come (Suncoast Christian College, 2019) (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Local Gubbi Gubbi/ Kabi Kabi man, Kerry Neil who runs Triballink is part of the journey of cultural change at Suncoast.

This year with a global pandemic on our doorstep we believed it was critical to continue our commitment to the journey we are travelling. The limitations of large gatherings pushed us into more intimate settings where again students were asked to participate under the 2020 national reconciliation theme “In this Together” (Reconciliation Australia, 2020; Reid & Whitfield, 2020). Our expectations were exceeded when the hindrances and barriers that we thought might make things all too difficult, turned into advantage. Individual teachers took on more responsibility, students were engaged deeply and our conversations with our local Gubbi Gubbi/ Kabi Kabi representative went to new levels.

Our journey has been challenging but has yielded a rewarding shift in our school culture. Our collaborative autoethnographic reflections have helped us identify some of the key ideas and attitudes that guided our work, which may be helpful to others as they gather the courage to lead their own communities on a journey toward reconciliation. These reflections also helped us to identify nine distinct steps that were integral to our community’s reconciliation journey.

Our steps

Schools are dynamic communities which are constantly changing, adapting and growing. For this reason, it has been important to recognise that the process, including progress towards reconciliation, is both chronological and cyclical in nature. It is critical that we recall the journey that we have been on, in order to ensure that we continue to capitalise on the progress that has been made.

1. Create a culture of story telling

From children to adults, everyone loves a story. Beginning with the stories of our past as a nation and local community invites people of all ages to engage with reconciliation, as was the case for us with the story of Vincent Lingardi, for here the power of reconciliation was relayed through song (ReconciliationAus, 2016). By sharing these stories, before long a culture of ‘telling the story’ was created and people began to have familiarity with the authentic narratives of our past.

2. Create a culture of conversation

So often in contemporary society people are afraid to have a conversation about controversial issues such as colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and reconciliation. The next step was to bridge this by having intentional conversations that enabled people to discuss, argue and reflect on issues related to reconciliation without judgment.

3. Create a culture of recognition

There is an irrefutable gap between the life trajectories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC), 2018; OECD, 2019). In educational contexts, despite improvement over the last decade, Indigenous students have 10% lower school attendance, influencing academic outcomes (PMC, 2018, p. 9). The proportion of Indigenous students achieving national minimum standards in literacy and numeracy is 13 – 29 % lower than non-Indigenous students (PMC, 2018, p. 59). The unemployment rate of Indigenous Australians is about three times higher than non-Indigenous Australians (PMC, 2018, p. 78, OECD, 2019, p. 3), with more than 120,000 Indigenous people living below the poverty line (CARC, 2004, p. 302).

From our conversations as a school, an increasing number of people began to recognise the gap and in doing so take a big step towards engaging with the purpose of reconciliation. Through previous steps of storytelling and conversation the recognition of gap was not about guilt, shame or judgment, but rather stopping to acknowledge that Aboriginal and

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Torres Strait Islander Australians are marginalised and that something needs to be done.

4. Create a cultural ritual

Cultures use rituals for all manner of purposes, with ritual often functioning as a signifier that defines cultures and subcultures (Lester, 2020). At Suncoast, moving into the next stage of reconciliation, a school cultural ritual needed to be included which led to the decision to put an annual Reconciliation Assembly into the school event calendar. Within any school the calendar of events is already crowded and so adding a whole school event is no small thing. The ritual began small and each year became more significant as it began to include symbols, signifiers, metaphors, membership and, eventually, a sense of legacy.

Over the years flags and bunting were bought, posters and banners constructed. One year a bridge was constructed, another year a hand-print hessian wall was made, and more recently the reconciliation rope. These were associated with themes and, metaphors and symbolised the learnings of each Reconciliation Assembly. Before long there was a sense of legacy attached to these as students remembered their involvement in creating them and the collective meaning attached to the annual ritual of reconciliation.

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Figure 3. First Nations male students made their own didgeridoos in a 2-day workshop.

5. Create a culture of celebration

Local legend, Steve Irwin famously believed that if you want people to protect something, they have to love it; and in order to love it, they have to touch it (YouTube, 2006). Although he was talking about wildlife, the same applies to culture. People need to experience it to love it.

Our Reconciliation Assembly (ritual) and other events in the calendar began to be about celebrating the beauty of cultural diversity. Aboriginal and Torres



Figure 4. Some of our First Nations students performing at the 2018 Reconciliation Assembly in Djan Durman, on didgeridoos they made.

Strait Islander culture, in particular Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi culture, and multi-cultural representations from New Zealand, Hawaii, Tonga and Cook Islands were included. Community partnerships increased with trainers, teachers, storytellers, dancers, musicians and other people. A growing group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other students learnt multi-cultural songs and dances and contributed to events across the school calendar. Being culturally diverse has become something of beauty, something to be proud of, something for the whole school community to celebrate.

6. Create a culture of active participation

From celebration the next logical step was to invite active participation. So often the younger generation is described as self-oriented, social-apathists who are unlikely to take action beyond social media likes and shares for issues that do not directly impact them (Hitlin & Salisbury, 2013). In our Reconciliation Assembly we aimed to provide a moment for the community to physically touch reconciliation. In doing so, “voice” became voices as our community mobilised in symbolic action, rather than passively watching or listening to the person or group at the front. Active participation meant people became part of reconciliation, doing something small, instead of listening to the story they became the story.

In a recent project, the reconciliation rope, everyone in the school tied a piece of fabric that represented either personal or national sorry, reconciliation or acknowledgement (Reid & Whitfield, 2020). As each individual tied their piece of fabric onto the rope a symbolic action was taken (see cover image), and the rope represented over 900 people’s active participation in the reconciliation journey (Suncoast Christian College, 2020).

7. Creating cultural places of shared significance

Every culture has places or spaces of significance (Ujang & Zakariya, 2015). Early in the reconciliation journey, the current Principal, Greg Mattiske worked with local Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi people to create an area of the school set aside for acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for students to gather together. The Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi name, Djan Durman, meaning pleasant place, was given to this space with the permission of local elders and has gradually become a central meeting place for culture including assemblies and a giant Aboriginal art mural co-created with our students and local Aboriginal artists.



Figure 5. One of the murals in Djan Durman painted by our First Nations students with Aboriginal artists.

At one entrance to Djan Durman is the Reconciliation Space and Yarning Circle which has the mosaic created by over 900 people laying stones in a pattern of significance. It is a permanent space to reconcile, listen, yarn, plan and belong. Students visit it to show their friends the stone they laid. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students designed the mosaic with local Gubbi Gubbi/ Kabi Kabi man, Kerry Neill. The students told the stories of the symbols to the school and continue to visit

Prep and Junior primary classrooms to talk about the meaning of this place and the importance of reconciliation.

8. Creating cultural movement

When a stone falls in a pond the ripples move outwards, which is also true for the way a true cultural shift moves beyond the original people. A grassroots natural movement began in classrooms as activities, lessons and even whole units became more embedded with rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and perspectives. Teachers have been increasingly empowered and the teaching and learning documents and practice reflect this. For First Nations' students, this is a vital aspect of having their culture represented in learning environments and to be given an opportunity to develop their cultural identity within our school community (Phillips, 2005).



Figure 6. A student laying a stone in the Reconciliation Space at the 2019 Reconciliation Assembly.

Indigenous student leaders became a necessary role set and as each new group of leaders emerged and was recognised, they influenced the forward moment of our cultural revolution with fresh ideas and initiatives. Accepting and supporting this has been a powerful step in empowering a community of change.

9. Creating a culture of legacy

The longer we have been on this journey, the more history we create with our school community. We do not just learn about it; we are part of it. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni come back for our events and know that they have been part of the change; it is their legacy. Their younger siblings take on the mantle that was left by students who have graduated. As they step up into roles of leadership they do so with confidence and a deep sense of purpose that has emerged from people that they both knew and admired. The path has been paved and the

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road can be walked with a stronger sense of their own value and identity as indigenous young people.

These steps have been undertaken over considerable time and have been intentionally undertaken to invite as many on the journey who are willing to be involved. As a result of this approach the community has taken ownership of the process and a deeper understanding of reconciliation has evolved. Our findings have been evidence of profound growth and transformation within the community.

Our findings

As the school community has walked this journey toward reconciliation, we have recognised that although much ground has been gained, there is still so much more work to be done. Reconciliation takes place in the heart of individuals and communities and the desire to see a community that is committed to this end is ongoing. Whilst we still have so much to learn, the learning that has been undertaken has led us toward what we consider to be six key findings to contribute to this process that will shape our current and future aspirations for reconciliation.

Moving from telling the story to being part of the story

Reconciliation requires an examination of our own thoughts and attitudes, which is both deeply personal and sometimes confronting. There is a need for our values and beliefs to align with our actions. As students were invited to play their part in the process many were inspired to 'be the change'. They were empowered by the thought that their actions and response personally, had an impact on the whole community. They were inspired with the idea that they could be a part of writing their own history by choosing to be a part of something truly profound.

Avoidance becomes generosity

We have seen a quiet revolution in teachers embracing reconciliation events and projects. In general, teachers rightfully guard learning time within the constant time balancing act of schools. They prioritise what is of highest value for the learner and actively avoid distractions. As the cultural movement at Suncoast has developed, rituals such as the Reconciliation Assembly have moved from an event of low relevance to one of high importance. Teachers are increasingly generous in their flexibility, adaptability and time release for students to participate in events. Beyond this, teachers from Prep – Year 12 generously assist in supporting the organisation of events. They prepare their classes and are overtly supportive, getting involved, encouraging student leaders and making a point of thanking our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners.

At a classroom level, more and more learning

across subjects and year levels is richly embedded with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives. Our teachers seek professional development opportunities and partnerships and are hungry to learn more. When Triballink (2020) released its online Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi teaching resources webpage a third of our teachers asked to have subscriptions. The shift from avoidance to generosity has been natural and authentic and is an example of people choosing to participate in the reconciliation story.

The importance of listening

At the heart of this project has been a determination to engage in meaningful collaboration both within the school community and beyond. True reconciliation requires that people have been heard and understood, something that is particularly challenging for a diverse and multicultural community. A willingness to let go of one's own assumptions and generously engage with others does take time and energy but it is integral for the process to be meaningful, or perhaps even transformational. The spirit of a yarning circle reflects the approach that has been taken throughout the process and has been integral to its success (Yunkaporta, 2012). As Australian Sociologist, Hugh Mackay (2019), writes, "listening to someone is not only one of the most generous acts we can perform for another person; it's also one of the most courageous" (para. 6).

Protect, challenge, work with existing school culture

Schools have their own socio-cultural contexts that shape participatory relationships within socio-ecologies (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Within any school there is a vision, strategic plan, goals, protocols and priorities that influence the direction, tone and culture. Some of these are established at leadership levels, some of these are enacted values and virtues.

We have learnt that it is important to find ways of working that fit within our own school culture. For instance, Suncoast is known for its high-quality events, so having events works well within the culture. Choosing to embrace unity and the cultural flow within the school have been key to high participation and connection from stakeholders within the organisation. Over time this has led to Reconciliation becoming part of the strategic goals of the school.

The Principal, Greg Mattiske, has strongly supported, guided and participated in the various stages of the reconciliation journey. For us, working with his vision for the school, being protective of what we love about the school and finding ways to weave expressions of reconciliation into the fabric of our school culture have been imperative.

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Having the courage to take risks

Stepping into projects that were new and innovative meant that courage was required. The risk of poor community engagement, interrupting an already busy calendar, offending or simply making a mess in attempting to create something meaningful were all very real, however the reward for such efforts were felt by our community. The engagement of the whole school community in projects such as the Reconciliation Space and Yarning Circle has ultimately led to a sense of pride and ownership of the reconciliation process. It has become symbolic of our whole community's commitment to the process and given our indigenous students a profound sense of achievement and affirmation as to their cultural identity.

Building trust

Trust has been a pillar of our cultural journey. In the early stages this involved earning the trust of school leadership to step into somewhat unfamiliar ground. The "little things" of the early days were big steps forward in building trust within the school community.

Gradually we gained greater buy-in and more people became involved. We increasingly found ourselves in the position of having to trust our staff, volunteers and students. As an extension of trust this meant letting people work to their strengths, being open to their ideas and bringing our volunteers together as team. This is evidenced in the magnitude of what has been achieved in projects. The sheer number of individuals that have chosen to be involved in the process over the years is evidence of the community's trust and engagement.

Conclusion

Our journey began with an earnest desire to engage our school community in more meaningful and authentic reconciliation as Australians. This required a change in the school's culture which would only come through more robust and honest engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, identities and heritages. Remarkably this has been achieved, by starting small ("from little things, big things grow") and through thoughtful, sensitive planning, the invitation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into our community to tell their story and position our students and staff as participators rather than spectators. It has taken time, but true cultural momentum has been attained. We do recognise that the path to reconciliation is a long road which requires a sustained and committed approach, our progress however, inspires us to continue on this learning journey. Collaborative autoethnography has helped us delve deeper into our learnings, our narrative and our vision for the future. Perhaps the

most satisfying development has been the fact that our students with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage have found pride in their identity and a voice among peers at Suncoast. **TEACH**

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Author information

Garth Reid is Director of Student Development at Suncoast Christian College. He is an educator with a passion for

equity, excellence and reconciliation in education. For the last decade he has led the pastoral care and Christian studies program at Suncoast Christian College striving to find innovative ways to develop students' spiritual, physical and academic growth. An avid reader, Garth skillfully draws together new understandings about faith into foundational truths and the essences of the Bible.

Haley Whitfield is the Director of Teaching & Learning at Suncoast Christian College. Haley has been a member of the Suncoast team for five years during which time she has focused on refining curriculum alignment, assessment practices and pedagogical approaches. She has a heart for people, community, culture and for every person to know their worth. With a creative background, Haley has strived to create places and spaces for culturally inclusive education to grow and for the whole school to celebrate cultural diversity.

Greg Mattiske is the Principal at Suncoast Christian College, and has led the school in an exciting new phase of growth and innovation. He has actively worked with his teams to create dynamic learning by introducing an LMS, collaborative teaching, flexible learning space and a renewed energy amongst staff for the distance travelled by every student. With rapidly increasing student numbers, Greg has initiated a master building plan that has a sustainability, collaboration and inclusion focus.

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