



McDowall State School

Courtesy – Honesty – Knowledge

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Context

Reflecting on our national identity, all Australians should take time to reflect on our shared histories, contributions and achievements. In doing so, all Australians should consider the unique place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in our nation's story, a story that extends far back in time, well beyond modern Australia.

Tom Petrie was a settler, explorer and developer from a respected founding family. He grew up and played with Aboriginal children. He spoke their language. He wrote that prior to European settlement in Brisbane in 1825, the Turrbul people, occupied the area of land extending far inland to the Gold Creek or Moggill, as far north as North Pine, and south to the Logan River. Earliest historical records suggest that Brisbane was well inhabited by the Turrbul people.

In fact, this dense inhabitation was one of the many reasons, attracting early settlers to 'Meanjin' (Turrbal name for Brisbane) following their failed settlement at Humpybong (Redcliffe) in 1824. (Lack of water, poor soil fertility, ship access, etc)

The various Aboriginal tracks that had existed for generations were later to form the basis of road infrastructure found around Brisbane today. Examples include Waterworks Road, a Turrbul pathway that led to Mount Cootha – a place of the honey-bee dreaming. Old Northern Road was a Turrbul pathway leading to the triennial Bunya feast in Wakka Wakka country. Many of our large public spaces and parks found in Brisbane today, were once Turrbul campsites around which Brisbane has expanded over many years.

Improved knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's historical and cultural heritage. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

Acknowledgement of Country

'Acknowledgement of Country' says to the world and more importantly to ourselves, that we are in a place that has a history and a story that extends far beyond when the story of 'modern Australia' began in 1788. It says to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellow Australians that we are all participants, together, in the present and future 'story' of our great country.

We would therefore like to respectfully acknowledge the Turrbul people, the traditional custodians of the land on where we gather today, and pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of their people.

This land has for many, many generations been a place of teaching and learning. As we share our own knowledge, teaching, learning and research practices within this school, may we also respect the knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

To our students

The purpose of the McDowall State School is to implement the Australian preparatory and primary curriculum and deliver effective professional teaching services within a supportive school learning environment facilitation achievement of personal excellence. Our vision is for all students to experience success and to assume increasing levels of self-responsibility in the achievement of pre-determined learning outcomes within a supportive learning context strengthened by partnerships.

We, together achieve *the best outcomes for all students* through an ongoing commitment towards:

SCHOOL RULES	SCHOOL MOTTO
Respect for Yourself	Courtesy in conduct
Respect for Others	Honesty in judgement
Take Responsibility for Your Own Actions	Knowledge on which to base informed decisions

To every student with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage enrolled at McDowall State School, you are expected to learn all that you can, to commit and achieve exceeding expectation, and assume respected societal standing according to your personal merit. Your teacher and your parents, will assist you. Stand tall, be proud and become a role model to all others. Generations change and Australia, our proud nation, will soon look to all children of the Southern Cross for its leadership and its continuing 'story'.

A prosperous future can only be assured when we all value difference, respect each other and in unity, work together as Australians. We are an extraordinary people, in a unique land, mindful of history and forging ahead, creating a visionary 'Aussie' future. This is our collective story and responsibility.