We believe in education, culture, wellbeing & you

www.worawa.vic.edu.au
Worawa Aboriginal College continues to honour the ideals of its founder, Aboriginal visionary Hyllus Maris who at the opening of the College in 1983, said:

"...in this, the first Aboriginal school in Victoria, the educational curriculum has been specially designed to suit Aboriginal students to bring them to their full potential...Aboriginal culture will be imparted not only as a school subject in each class’s timetable but as an integral part of everyday life at the school..."
Beginnings

Worawa Aboriginal College purchased the property 'Barak Park' in 1985 through funding from the Commonwealth Government and the Worawa College Buildings and Land Fund Raising Committee. The property is of particular importance to the Aboriginal community as it once formed part of the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station and is in close proximity to the Coranderrk Aboriginal Cemetery. Historically Coranderrk, including the site of Worawa Aboriginal College, has been an integral part of the Healesville community as a settlement and education centre for Aboriginal people.

Today

Worawa Aboriginal College is a full boarding school for young Aboriginal women, years 7-10, and is Victoria’s only independent Aboriginal community school. It is the only boarding school in Australia that caters exclusively to Aboriginal girls. The College delivers a holistic program through an integrated academic, wellbeing and culture model and provides a rigorous education program within a cultural framework. The curriculum is based on the Australian curriculum and organised around a series of ‘Learning Centres’ involving Health and Sport, Creative Arts, Languages, Mathematics and Science. Aboriginal culture and perspectives are ‘threaded’ through each curriculum area. Along with the core academic program, emphasis is placed on nurturing and celebrating Aboriginal culture as a crucial aspect of student self-esteem and wellbeing.

Our School

We believe each student can:

• Master the essential skills of literacy and numeracy
• Be prepared with life skills for the next phase of life
• Flourish in a bi-cultural environment
• Have pride in their identity and cultural heritage as First Nations peoples
• Develop self-confidence, pride, tolerance and respect for others
• Develop habits of good health and physical fitness
• Be engaged in a total education program
• Be engaged as part of the Worawa home and broader community
• Be supported by quality staff
We believe in...

Worawa believes that gender specific education for Aboriginal young women will create opportunities for continued education, training or employment. We believe that education of young women in a gender sensitive way will equip them with life skills to make the greatest contribution to the development of their communities.

Our Success

In over three decades in Aboriginal education Worawa has gone from strength to strength. Delivering a holistic and rigorous ‘Two Way’ education program incorporating Western knowledge and Aboriginal methods of teaching and learning. Certificate studies and career pathways are augmented by work experience in local community businesses. Aboriginal language usage is encouraged with first language learning as the basis to enhance second language acquisition.

An exciting stage in our unique College’s development has been a curriculum that is based even more deeply in Culture, Aboriginal Languages and the Arts.

School Partnership Program

The Worawa Partner Schools program is based on Reciprocity and Two Way Learning. Schools identify curriculum areas that provide opportunity for shared learning through joint activities that provide positive learning experiences for all students involved. Such activities may include Maths Make it Count Program, music, song and dance, drama, visual arts, media, library and literature festivals. The Worawa Reconciliation Sports Carnival brings together a number of partner schools for shared sporting, social and cultural exchange.

Partner Schools:
Shelford Girls Grammar
Scotch College
Mt Evelyn Christian College
Genazzano FCJ College
Tintern Girls Grammar
Garra Valley Grammar
Healesville High School
Melbourne Grammar School
Presbyterian Ladies College
Melbourne Girls College
Methodist Ladies College

International Schools:
Nga Taioata, NZ
Nawaihokaiapi School, Hilo, Hawaii

Alliances:
Healsville Sanctuary
University of Melbourne
Willin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Culture
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music
Malthouse Theatre
Box Hill Institute
William Angliss Institute
Honeglen Institute
Ilbijerri Theatre Company

We believe in...
The Worawa Model

Worawa has developed a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of Indigenous education. The Worawa model focuses on both the effectiveness of the overall education provided and also to the recruitment, professional development, support and retention of teaching and non-teaching staff. A Council of Elders oversees the culture curriculum and the College resident Elder provides cultural guidance to students and staff. This unique approach delivers educational outcomes through an Aboriginal perspective which has been carefully developed to ensure culture and well-being are core to a rigorous educational program. The curriculum is based on the Australian Curriculum and provides an integrated education model of education, culture and wellbeing so that all students develop academically, culturally and socially.

Personalised Learning Plans

At Worawa personalised learning ensures that every student’s education is structured and tailored to their needs so as to support high levels of student engagement and success. Upon entering the College students undergo a diagnostic assessment. The assessment, along with reports and referrals are the starting point for a student’s personalised learning journey. Students are then placed in groups to cater for their social and academic development and learning activities are designed to cater for individual learning needs. Personalised learning plans include development of students’ talents in the creative and performing arts, in sport, ICT and in other pursuits for which aptitude and interest have been identified.

The Worawa Way

An Aboriginal learning model grounded in Aboriginal values and ways of knowing, doing and being.

The Worawa Way

Worawa has developed a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of Indigenous education. The Worawa model focuses on both the effectiveness of the overall education provided and also to the recruitment, professional development, support and retention of teaching and non-teaching staff. A Council of Elders oversees the culture curriculum and the College resident Elder provides cultural guidance to students and staff. This unique approach delivers educational outcomes through an Aboriginal perspective which has been carefully developed to ensure culture and well-being are core to a rigorous educational program. The curriculum is based on the Australian Curriculum and provides an integrated education model of education, culture and wellbeing so that all students develop academically, culturally and socially.

Personalised Learning Plans

At Worawa personalised learning ensures that every student’s education is structured and tailored to their needs so as to support high levels of student engagement and success. Upon entering the College students undergo a diagnostic assessment. The assessment, along with reports and referrals are the starting point for a student’s personalised learning journey. Students are then placed in groups to cater for their social and academic development and learning activities are designed to cater for individual learning needs. Personalised learning plans include development of students’ talents in the creative and performing arts, in sport, ICT and in other pursuits for which aptitude and interest have been identified.

The Worawa Way

An Aboriginal learning model grounded in Aboriginal values and ways of knowing, doing and being.

RIGOUR

Ways of doing

• Creative/Adaptive Learning
  Innovation + resilience
• Hands-on Learning
  Kinaesthetic / development of ‘life skills’
• Problem-based Learning
  Problem-solving
• Scaffolded Learning
  Ensure skills mastery

RESPONSIBILITY

Ways of knowing

• Individual Learning
  Sense of capacity to learn
• Independent Learning
  Autonomy
• Discovery Learning
  Creativity and self expression
• Observation-based Learning
  Learning by Doing

RESPECT

Ways of valuing

• Connected Learning
  Land, community, culture, economy
• Narrative-based Learning
  Story
• Place-based Learning
  Country
• Cultural Value-based Learning
  Law/spirit

RELATIONSHIP

Ways of being

• Discussion-based Learning
  Story, experience, connectedness
• Collaborative Learning
  Peer Relationships
• Socially Supportive Learning
  Partners & Community
• Holistic Learning
  Integrated education, culture, wellbeing

The Worawa Way

An Aboriginal learning model grounded in Aboriginal values and ways of knowing, doing and being.

Personalised Learning Plans

At Worawa personalised learning ensures that every student’s education is structured and tailored to their needs so as to support high levels of student engagement and success. Upon entering the College students undergo a diagnostic assessment. The assessment, along with reports and referrals are the starting point for a student’s personalised learning journey. Students are then placed in groups to cater for their social and academic development and learning activities are designed to cater for individual learning needs. Personalised learning plans include development of students’ talents in the creative and performing arts, in sport, ICT and in other pursuits for which aptitude and interest have been identified.
The Arts at Worawa

The Arts at Worawa is a core part of a rich curriculum. Students participate in Dance, Theatre/Drama, Media, Visual Arts and Music (singing and instrumental). Worawa girls have had the opportunity to exhibit and perform locally, nationally and internationally. Culture is central and the uniqueness of each girl is fostered as she explores her own ideas and identity through the arts. Highly successful integrated art projects combine all the arts and facilitate the delivery of many areas of the distinctive Worawa curriculum.

Worawa Art Studio

The Worawa art studio nurtures a unique combination of educational capacity, artistic talent and Aboriginal integrity to provide an environment where the educational capacities, artistic talents and Aboriginal integrity of students with creative aspirations may be nurtured and developed. Students prepare for exhibitions in our on-site gallery and galleries elsewhere in Melbourne and overseas. Through this process students are provided with the experience of presentation of art works and developing knowledge in art business and skills in matters such as copyright, intellectual property, licensing agreements, pricing, percentages, preparing for exhibitions, preparing a canvas, the role of galleries and good arts practice.
The College has its own art gallery which holds exhibitions that are open to the public. The gallery is named in honour of the late Sandra Bardas OAM, a founding member and lifelong supporter of Worawa. The gallery showcases the art work of Worawa students through exhibitions of student art providing an outlet for the sale of high quality art produced through the Art Studio. Art work, jewellery and greeting cards produced by Worawa students are sold in the gallery.
Pathways to Womanhood is a year-long program that provides a series of modules and experiences for the young women attending Worawa to develop their leadership skills.

The objectives of the program are for the young women at Worawa to:

- Understand the issues confronting young women as they transition from adolescence to young adulthood
- Establish individual goals to be achieved through their participation in the program
- Increase their self-esteem and self-confidence to make this transition and confront these challenges
- Improve their knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles and health-promoting behaviours
- Increase their social skills and ability to relate to a wide range of people in social settings
- Gain skills in self-care and personal presentation
- Gain skills in leadership and organisation of events
- Have the opportunity to celebrate their achievements with the community
Boarding at Worawa

Your home away from home

At Worawa students learn to succeed not only through their academic studies, but also through the values integrated into the routines and activities of College life.

The College aims to produce strong Aboriginal women who will be leaders and role models for their home community and for the wider Aboriginal and Australian communities. Our approach is a holistic education, one where the students’ educational, cultural, social, physical and emotional needs are catered for. The Worawa Social and Emotional Wellbeing service provides high quality and comprehensive care to its students. Each of the houses has a Sensory Room to provide access to a special, pleasant and calming space for students. Staff lead students in relaxation, meditation and mindfulness sessions. Worawa programs are underpinned by Aboriginal values of Relationship, Responsibility, Respect and Rigour.
A School Nurse, Wellbeing Coordinator, and Psychologist and a weekly on-site GP Clinic with a female doctor ensures that the students’ health needs are addressed and that their education also extends to areas of personal health and development. The College has professional partnerships with a range of community organisations to deliver a comprehensive combination of on-site and external health services in medical, dental, hearing, vision and mental health services to support students to enable them to focus on education. The health education program includes active lifestyle, good nutrition and healthy diet and links to the College’s Healthy Eating Plan.

Physical Education and Sport

Physical Education and Sport are delivered through formal lessons which introduce the girls to essential skills, knowledge and understandings. The College places emphasis on student participation in physical fitness and sporting activities to enhance individual health and wellbeing. All students undergo a health and fitness assessment and a qualified fitness instructor works with students to develop a personal fitness regime. Students have the opportunity to participate in a range of sports. Circuit training is available in the College’s well equipped fitness centre. Worawa holds membership to a number of local sporting associations and enjoys a positive reputation in the sporting field with regular wins in sports competition which includes winning the local basketball premiership. The College has its own netball, basketball, softball and cricket teams that compete in weekly local sporting association competition.
Worawa Aboriginal College is an Aboriginal space located on culturally and historically significant land of great natural beauty. The Cultural program is led by the Council of Elders and is designed to provide students with understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal values, history and their place in Australian society as First Nation peoples.

The school curriculum is shaped to recognise the validity and integrity of the traditional knowledge system, Aboriginal cultural protocols and the cultural authority of Elders. The Aboriginal flag is a permanent symbol of pride and each day commences with acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners of the land. Aboriginal history and achievement and contemporary developments in Indigenous Australia are an ongoing aspect of the College program. Worawa celebrates the diversity of language, dance, customs and beliefs of Aboriginal Australia. Students live and study in an atmosphere that fosters positive identity, cultural pride and individual potential. Worawa has been active in sharing cultural events with partner schools and the broader community.
The Worawa program also extends to personal development and life skills providing new experiences, skills and abilities that build self-esteem and confidence to empower girls enabling them to select alternatives in their life through increased opportunity for further education, artistic pursuits or skills to contribute to the development of their community.
“Our children of today are our leaders of tomorrow.”
“Bubup-nganyin yalingbu nanggit-nganyin buyburruny gurridhan.”
(Woiwurrung)