



**WARAKIRRI
COLLEGE**
MTC Australia

Fairfield
Blacktown
Campbelltown

**Annual
Report**

2020

Our vision

Empowered, resilient young people whose education enables them to make a positive contribution to the community

What we do

Warakirri College is an independent college for young people completing Year 10 and Higher School Certificate (HSC) studies. As a social impact initiative of MTC Australia, it's a different kind of college where students are encouraged to be themselves as they study in a flexible adult learning environment.



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Chairman Message

2020 was a year of growth and overcoming adversity for Warakirri College.

Our Board has spent valuable time in clarifying the relationship with MTC, the sole member of the College. To that end I thank Rob Campbell and the MTC Board for their continued support.

In addition to this the Warakirri Board has worked hard to strengthen our governance through the development of the College's Strategic Risks Framework as well as our Strategic Plan. These provide important foundations for the next chapter in the work of Warakirri College.

Running parallel to this important work has been preparation for our first purpose-built campus in Campbelltown. Over the course of the year the Board has worked closely with management and stakeholders to receive necessary approvals and select a suitable contractor to build this new campus. We expect to open this new school in early 2022.

Chairman
Doug Taylor



The most noteworthy development of 2020 was the impact of COVID-19. Our students and teachers were significantly impacted by this development and the Board is enormously appreciative of the hard work of management and teachers in responding so comprehensively through the provision of online learning and other types of student support. It's a credit to our school that through this challenge we have adapted to now provide Distance Education for young people who are unable to come to our campuses for social and psychological reasons.

I thank the other Board members for their support and leadership and for their welcome of Esta Pascalides-Chilas to the Board. Thanks also to our School Principal for her expert leadership across so many of these important achievements and our teachers and staff for their unwavering focus on education support for our young people.

Of course, we cannot conclude this report without acknowledging the students who attend Warakirri College. These young people, along with their families are the reason we exist and we are continually inspired by their courage and hard work. Section 12 of this report outlines some of these inspiring stories.

Doug Taylor
Chairman

Principal
Carolyn Blanden



Principal Message

Warakirri College Ltd is an independent secondary college for Years 10–12, situated in Western and South-West Sydney. The college commenced operations in 2007 to assist young people aged 15 to 22 years experiencing major difficulties in completing their secondary education. In 2011 the Fairfield campus opened and in 2017 a second campus in Blacktown was opened by the Hon John Barilaro, Deputy Premier of NSW who was responsible for brokering a partnership between TAFE and Warakirri College. In March 2019 the College purchased property in Watsford Road, Campbelltown with the intention of constructing a purpose-built college for 120 students. In June 2019 Cr George Bricevic, Mayor of Campbelltown opened the third campus in Queen Street, Campbelltown.

The first students to complete Year 12 graduated in 2013. In 2014 there was a 100% increase in the numbers with 8 students graduating from Year 12, in 2016 11 students completed Year 12. In 2020 there were 20 HSC graduates across the two campuses that had Year 12 students.

The College's name means to Stand and Grow; an Aboriginal term consistent with the college's commitment towards creating an adult learning environment encouraging students to engage with their teachers and peers respectfully; exercising acceptable values and good moral judgement.

The college encourages and supports students to develop strategies that build resilience and character despite the significant hardships that many students face.

As a Special Assistance School, the College is proud of its culturally diverse staff and student body. Cultural Diversity is seen as a major advantage with students' ancestral links from countries located in the Pacific Islands, Middle East, North Africa and Asia, as well as students from Aboriginal communities and of Anglo-Australian and European descent.

Warakirri College is fully funded by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments and receives support from many community organisations. Enrolments often come from young people connected to NGOs, charities and of course, local high schools. Many community organisations support the College by presenting at the college's weekly assemblies and the school

partners with a range of organisations through excursions, courses, counselling and special programs.

Warakirri College engages three full-time Counsellors and the college assists students with accessing emergency accommodation, welfare services and post school education and employment.

At the college, students are provided with all teaching resources, food and clothing and other needs such as prescription glasses. The extent and depth of support for students is a key factor in enriching and diversifying the Warakirri educational experience. Warakirri College does not charge fees.

With the development of a new Strategic Plan covering the period 2021 – 2025 the College has identified the following strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1. College offering

Build on the current Warakirri College Model to enhance the student experience, increase student engagement and prepare young people to make effective transitions to future learning and work.

Strategic Priority 2. College reach

Maintain the current provision and establish 1-2 new campuses* over the next five years to extend the opportunities for young people across the Greater Sydney region to benefit from the Warakirri College experience

Strategic Priority 3. Sector leadership

Continue to provide sector leadership, working with other alternative education schools to share lessons and evidence through professional associations, networks and advocacy

**New campuses are in addition to the proposed Campbelltown North campus, opening in 2022.*

Together with staff of MTC Australia, the teachers and staff of Warakirri College celebrate the success of each student completing Year 10 or the HSC in 2020.

We acknowledge the students' commitment and tenacity in overcoming personal and educational challenges and we wish them every success in the future as they transition to further education and employment.

Carolyn Blanden

Principal

Contextual Information and characteristics of the Student Body

MTC Australia

MTC is a social enterprise that is committed to assisting people to gain employment through skills training, work-experience and career planning. As an integrated service provider, MTC offers support through a variety of training courses and services that include case management for young people and a range of community initiatives.

MTC is located in over 22 locations across the Sydney metropolitan area. As a public benevolent institution, MTC reinvests funds from its surplus back into the community which includes its support of Warakirri College Ltd of which MTC is the sole member.

Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

Warakirri College only offers Years 10 and the HSC. Students do not participate in the NAPLAN program.

Warakirri College

Warakirri College offers the NESA curriculum for Stages 5 and 6, preparing students for a Year 10 ROSA or the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The HSC is delivered via the compressed model whereby students study three subjects per year, covering both Preliminary and the HSC in a 12-month period, over two years.

The college provides assistance that includes covering the cost of tuition, stationery, textbooks and excursions. There is no college uniform and students are served a modest breakfast and lunch each day to assist with their nutritional needs and minimise any financial hardships. A small number of students live independently and without the support of a family environment. The vast majority of students come from families that receive support from Centrelink, or the students themselves receive these benefits directly.

In 2016 Warakirri College moved from being a division of MTC Australia Limited to becoming a company limited by guarantee, Warakirri College Limited. Warakirri College has its own Board of Directors. The College is a registered charity and public benevolent institution.

Warakirri College is registered and accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) until 31 December 2022.

Senior Secondary Outcomes

Results of Year 10 2020

In 2020 Warakirri College had 148 Year 10 students complete the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

Subject	Number of Students	Grades ABC %	Grades DE %
English	148	49	51
Mathematics	148	43	57
Science	148	61	39
Geography	148	66	34
History	148	62	38
PDHPE	148	58	42

Results of the Higher School Certificate 2020

These results are consistent with those of previous years. With such a small cohort, statistical comparisons are misleading because one or two strong students in a year group would make a significant difference in the data.

Warakirri College has a vast range of students of varying ability and social disadvantage. These mean scores do not reflect the fact that several students applied for University and gained places, while in many other cases students were the first in their families to complete Year 10 or their HSC.

Subject	Number of Students	Bands 1-3 (%)	Bands 4-6 (%)	School Moderated Mean (%)	State Moderated Mean (%)
Ancient History	148	49	51	54.87	72.10
Business Studies	148	43	57	50.58	71.99
English Standard	148	61	39	59.03	69.93
Food Technology	148	66	34	62.64	72.15
Geography	148	62	38	51.40	74.45
Mathematics G2	148	58	42	49.05	68.40
Investigating Science	68	79	21	58.71	70.79
Legal Studies	45	96	4	54.30	74.97



Teacher qualifications, accreditation, and professional learning

35

Teachers with a Bachelor degree or AEI-NOOSR equivalent

2

Teachers with TAE

All teachers at Warakirri College delivering NESAs curriculum courses are accredited by NESAs and have a degree and a teaching qualification.

Professional Development undertaken in 2020

During the year all teachers undertook at least the required minimum hours of professional development required for maintenance of their accreditation. The college supported teachers, administration staff and college counsellors to attend regular professional development training.

Teachers and counselling staff individually completed courses with accredited providers, most commonly at the Association of Independent Schools (AISNSW). Most of the courses were delivered online. These courses were specific to the staff member's subject areas or roles within the College.

First Aid Training



41

28 Teachers (including College Executive Staff)
13 Support Staff

Planning for Quality Home Learning in PDHPE – ACHPER NSW



1

Teacher

NCCD Network Meeting: Implementation and Support - AISNSW



Deputy Principal
Disabilities Coordinator

Awarding Year 11 RoSA Grades



1

Teacher

What is Educational Data - AISNSW



Deputy Principal

Macqlit Training – Macquarie University



1 Teacher and 1 SLSO

Working with Students with Disabilities



40

Staff members

Canvas Training



15

staff members

Administering Canvas Training



Deputy Principal
Curriculum Coordinator
& 1 Teacher

Assessing for Practice - Teacher PD net



2

Teachers

Numeracy Stage 6 Conference



2

Teachers

South Korean Culinary Journey – Gary Mehigan



1

Teacher

Child Protection Training



47

32 Teachers (including College Executive Staff)
15 Support Staff

Working with young people with mental health issues – NSW Health



50

33 Teachers (including College Executive Staff) &
17 Support Staff

Affirm, Assist and Connect - Be You, Beyond Blue



1

Teacher

Trauma Based Teaching



2

Teachers

Self-Care for Teachers and Staff – Be You, Beyond Blue



1

Teacher

Workforce composition

In 2020 Warakirri College employed the following:

Staff	Number	FTE
Principal	1	1.0
Deputy Principal	1	1.0
Curriculum Coordinator	1	1.0
Head of Campus	3	3.0
Disabilities Coordinator	1	0.6
School Counsellor	3	3.0
Careers Advisor	1	1.0
Teachers	35	30.2
Student Learning Support Officers	6	5.2
Administration Support Workers	8	4.8
Total	58	50.8

Student Attendance, Retention and Post School Destinations

Student Attendance 2020

Year Group	Semester 1	Semester 2
Year 10	39%	37%
Year 11 and 12	56%	63%
Whole School	48%	50%

A poor attendance rate is a common challenge for schools that cater for students from highly disadvantaged communities; particularly where families are experiencing financial hardships and other pressures such as intergenerational unemployment and mental health issues. The risk of these students disengaging from school is very high, particularly for students with an entrenched history of school avoidance prior to enrolling at Warakirri College. Each year there are students who have their enrolment terminated due to lack of attendance. These students are referred to the DET Learning Engagement Officers if they are under 17 years.

The College continues to review its policies and practices including building strategies to address student non-attendance. A range of measures to reduce non-attendance have been implemented including changes to teaching methods, systematic follow up for non-attenders, daily SMS messages to carers and parents of any student who does not attend by 10am, phone calls from the College staff, letters to parents, caseworkers and care-givers together with revised documentation collection procedures for recording the reasons for non-attendance and school follow-up. In 2020 the College employed a Social Worker to work with students who were not engaging in school. This resulted in many students feeling supported to return to class.



Stage 6 (Year 12) Food Technology class from Campbelltown Campus participating in a Cultural Food Tour at Bankstown.

2020 Student Retention from Year 10 to Year 11

Campus	2020 Year 10 Students	2020 Year 10 leavers	% retained in school 2020	Repeat Year 10 Progressed	Repeat Year 10 2020
Fairfield	53	19	64	31	3
Blacktown	47	11	77	28	8
Campbelltown	82	21	74	49	12

Post School Destinations

Year 10 leavers post school destinations included enrolling at TAFENSW to study a range of courses including graphic design, childcare, animal studies and apprenticeships in landscaping and beauty therapy.

Year 12 graduate post school destinations included enrolment in University courses in the areas of health science, teaching (secondary), community services, gaming design and nursing. Employment for graduate students was mostly in the areas of retail, hospitality, warehousing and real estate.

Enrolment Policies

Although the policies were reviewed at the end of 2019, the enrolment policy is largely unchanged from previous years. The Enrolment Policy reflects the mission of the college:

To enable young people facing challenging circumstances to complete secondary schooling and enhance their access to further education and employment.

In 2020 enrolment interviews were generally conducted by each Head of Campus or the Principal. In accordance with policies and procedures, the suitability of a student was determined according to the following assessment criteria:

- Assessing the student's capacity and preparedness to re-engage in education;
- Making note of any learning or behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities that would need support following enrolment;
- Ensuring that the student has achieved an academic level Year 9 or equivalent;
- Assessing the student's levels of social, cultural & economic disadvantage;
- Noting that applicants had a general proficiency in speaking, reading and writing English;
- Recording the nationality and country of birth of the applicants and visa details if relevant;
- Recording if the student is from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community background;
- Recording if the student is experiencing a range of issues that include being marginalised or isolated as well as some level of mental health or physical impediment; and
- Recording any mental or physical health issues reported by the student or parent/carer
- Recording demographic data about education level and employment of parents.

The college endeavours to liaise regularly with each student's family, caseworkers, youth-workers, Juvenile Justice workers and any number of health care professionals to ensure that the student's needs are being addressed holistically.

In order to maintain their enrolment, students must not engage in bullying, violent behaviour or conduct that harms or threatens other students, staff or college property. The most common reason for students' enrolments being terminated is persistent non-attendance, followed by behaviour that is threatening to students or staff. The Enrolment Policy and Termination of Enrolment Policy together with all other policies were reviewed January 2019 - see Appendix 1.

Summary of other school policies

The Student Welfare Policy (Pastoral Care Policy) outlines the College's commitment to addressing the holistic needs of the students who are acknowledged as having particularly difficult life circumstances that result in challenging behaviours. This policy was reviewed January 2019.

The Discipline Policy outlines the processes that are followed in the event of a breach of the disciplinary code. The Discipline Policy applies the principles of procedural fairness and involves parents or caregivers in these processes in the event of a suspension or expulsion. This policy was reviewed in Jan 2020.

The Discipline Policy is read in conjunction with the Corporal Punishment Policy which states that "Corporal punishment of students at Warakirri College is prohibited and excluded as an unacceptable method of disciplining students. Warakirri College does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-college persons, including parents/carers to enforce discipline." This policy was reviewed in Jan 2019.

The Complaints and Grievances Policy outlines who can make a complaint or suggestion and includes the form in which that complaint or suggestion can be lodged and to whom including what processes are used in responding to the complaint or suggestion. This policy was reviewed in January 2019.

The Student Anti-bullying Policy and the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) highlight the importance of respect, responsibility, honesty and describes the actions that staff or students should take to preclude the existence of any form of bullying or harassment including cyber bullying. This policy was updated in January 2020.

Policies are available to be viewed on request. The Student Code of Conduct is read, explained and signed at enrolment interview.

School determined priority areas for improvement



Goals	Action
Increased student learning support	Employed two Student Learning Support Officers at each campus (six across the College) to assist students with learning difficulties and literacy acquisition. A Disabilities Coordinator (0.6 FTE) was also employed to develop student Individual Education Plans (IEP's) in collaboration with students, parents/ carers and key College staff.
Support for student's transition to employment and/or other training	Employed a full-time Careers Support Advisor across the three campuses to assist students to identify future career pathways and support their transition to further training and employment.
Improved staffroom facilities at the Blacktown Campus	Refurbished the Blacktown Campus staffroom facilities including new furniture and resource storage.
Student access to an online Learning Management System (LMS)	Trained key staff in the administration and implementation of Canvas with a planned whole school roll-out in 2021.
Development of a Warakirri College Strategic Plan	Contracted SVA Consulting to work with the whole staff team to develop a five-year strategic plan for the College. This included a number of focus groups with the College's Board, Executive team, teachers and support staff.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The college is very proud of its community reputation as a place where young people can be given a chance to complete their education. We receive repeat referrals from local high schools and community organisations in addition to the Department of Communities and Justice.

Warakirri does not use survey tools to receive feedback from parents because the parents rarely return any such material that is sent home.

The main sources of data about stakeholder satisfaction are:

- **Student exit surveys** – whenever a student leaves they complete a survey about the college premises, resources, pastoral care, teaching and teacher/student relationships. These surveys have been very positive.
- **Social Media** – comments about the college on Facebook by parents have been very positive.
- **Student attendance rates** – Our information is that government schools which serve the same demographic as Warakirri tend to have an attendance rate of around 30%. Our attendance rate is 48-69% which shows that students feel safe and engaged.
- **Student retention rate** – Student retention rates are always higher than we anticipate from enrolment data. A large number of students proceeded to Year 11, having indicated on enrolment that they would leave at the end of Year 10. When questioned about this they replied that college was a very safe and pleasant place to be, so they had decided to stay.
- **Student referrals** – many students come to enrol in the college as a result of students or parents of students referring friends. We have a positive reputation as an inclusive college and therefore have a significant number of students who are LGBTQIA+. This group is a source of mutual support for each other and they find the atmosphere of acceptance to be very positive.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

Warakirri students come from backgrounds of social disadvantage and they and their families are generally the recipients of public largesse. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many of the guest speakers we would usually have at the College's Gatherings (assemblies) presenting on a range of topics to promote respect and responsibility were unable to attend.

Anzac Day commemorations were held at each campus and the Fairfield Campus celebrated Harmony Day with activities organised by students.

"I now have the support I need to motivate me to do the best of my ability and I have special bonds with people that I hope will last a lifetime".

- CHARMAINE (YEAR 12)

"Honestly, Warakirri has been the best thing that happened to me. I have gained genuine connections with teachers and students that will change the rest of my life. Warakirri has become a second home, a safe place where I can be myself and leave behind the troubles that follow me."

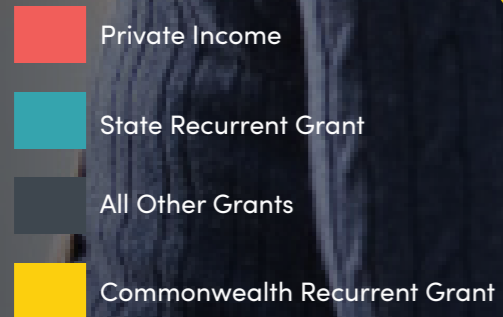
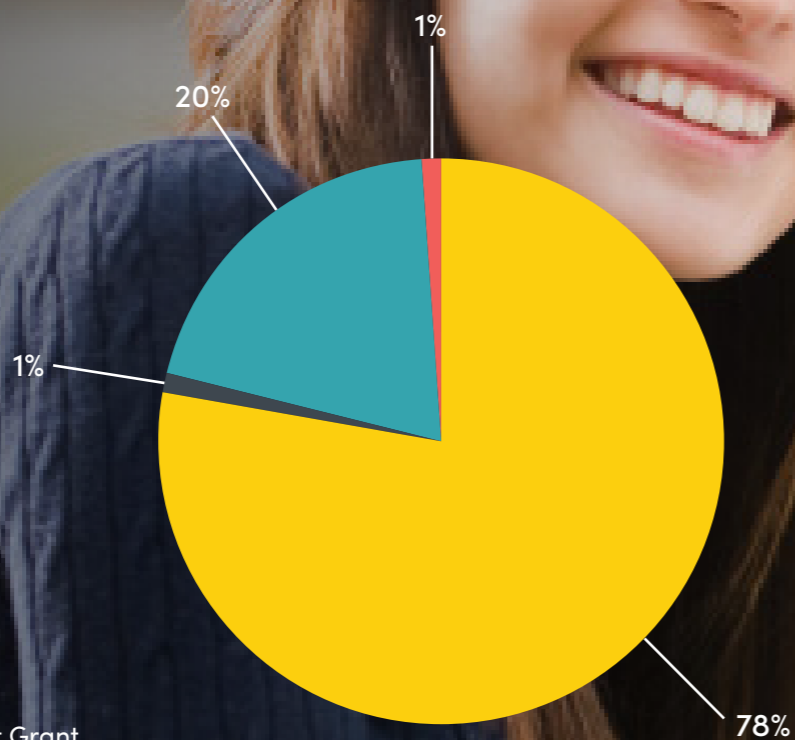
- BROOKE (YEAR 12)

"Warakirri College has helped me get into a routine and gave me hope. I was reassured that I am way smarter than I thought, and I formed great relationships with people, improving my negative mindset".

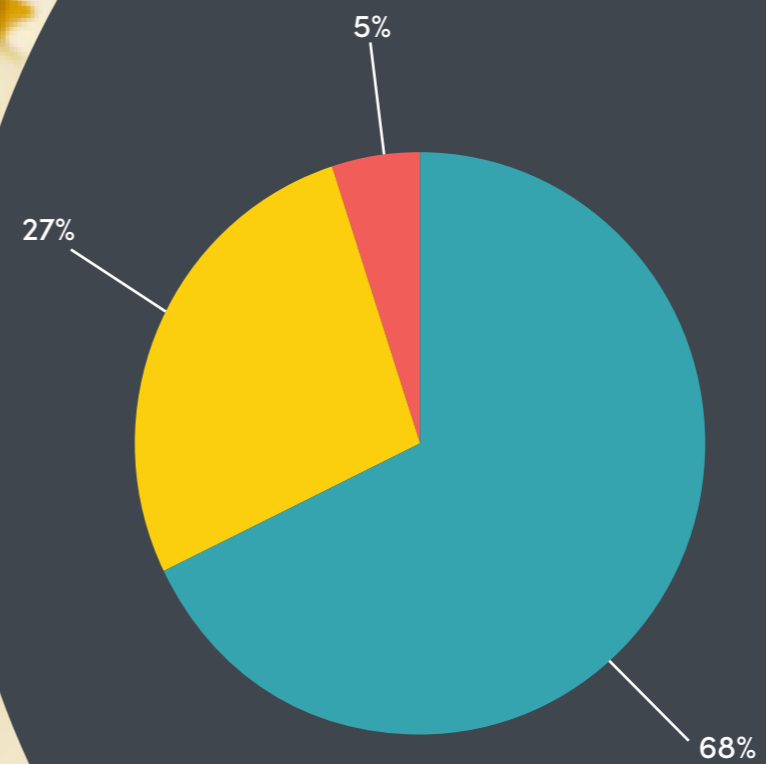
- AMARIS (YEAR 11)

Financial Data

Recurrent/ Capital Income



Recurrent/ Capital Expenditure



Appendix 1: Enrolment Policies

P 073 Enrolment Policy

"The School's policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the [Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#) and of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirements for registration of the school."

1. PURPOSE

Warakirri College endeavours to provide an inclusive learning environment to meet the needs of young people who have become disconnected from mainstream schools. Supportive, professional staff encourage students to maintain their enrolment and to complete their secondary education.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all Warakirri College staff: Managers, Teaching and Administration Staff and Warakirri students.

3. DEFINITIONS

The [NSW Education Standards Authority \(NESA\)](#) replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 2017

4. REFERENCES

[Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#)

5. POLICY

5.1 A student's enrolment may be terminated by the College in the following circumstances:

- a. The student exhibits violent, threatening, aggressive or abusive behaviour or damages school property or acts in a manner that is offensive or could reasonably be expected to damage school property or be harmful to staff or students.
- b. A student consistently behaves in a way that obstructs the learning or jeopardises the well-being of other students. This may include bullying, misbehaviour in class, refusing to follow reasonable instructions from College staff, refusal to conform to school expectations,
- c. A student persistently acts in a manner that is contrary to the Student Code of Conduct.
- d. A student has a high rate of absenteeism and does not provide documentation or supporting evidence from a parent/carer/guardian/health professional/Juvenile Justice or Youth Worker etc to justify the absences.
- e. The Principal, in consultation with College staff determines that it is no longer in the interests of the student or the school community for the enrolment to be continued. This may occur in situations where the College is unable to meet the learning, social or health care needs of the student or other circumstances.

5.2 The procedure for termination of enrolment will vary depending on the circumstances.

5.3 In the event of summary termination of enrolment, the College will contact the student's parent or guardian (if applicable) or the student and notify them by telephone or in person that the student should not return to the college. This notification will be confirmed by mail.

5.4 Where a student has discontinued attendance, the College will send a letter expressing a preliminary intention to terminate enrolment within 14 days unless due cause can be shown as to why the enrolment should be maintained.

5.5 Should the College receive no response or an inadequate response then the termination of enrolment will be confirmed by a second letter.

5.6 Where a student has indicated that they are receiving income from Centrelink the College will notify Centrelink of the termination.

5.7 Where a student is under 17 years, the College will either oversee transfer to an alternative education provider or contact the State Department of Education to notify them of the student's termination of enrolment. The College will notify NESA of the termination of enrolment as required.

P 082 Termination of Enrolment Policy

1. PURPOSE

Warakirri College endeavours to provide an inclusive learning environment to meet the needs of young people who have become disconnected from mainstream schools. Supportive, professional staff encourage students to maintain their enrolment and to complete their secondary education.

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The policy applies to all Warakirri College staff: Managers, Teaching and Administration Staff and Warakirri students.

3. DEFINITIONS

The [NSW Education Standards Authority \(NESA\)](#) replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 2017

4. REFERENCES

[Education Act 1990 No 8 \(NSW\)](#)

5. POLICY

5.2 A student's enrolment may be terminated by the College in the following circumstances:

- f. The student exhibits violent, threatening, aggressive or abusive behaviour or damages school property or acts in a manner that is offensive or could reasonably be expected to damage school property or be harmful to staff or students.
- g. A student consistently behaves in a way that obstructs the learning or jeopardises the well-being of other students. This may include bullying, misbehaviour in class, refusing to follow reasonable instructions from College staff, refusal to conform to school expectations,
- h. A student persistently acts in a manner that is contrary to the Student Code of Conduct.
- i. A student has a high rate of absenteeism and does not provide documentation or supporting evidence from a parent/ carer/ guardian/ health professional/ Juvenile Justice or Youth Worker etc to justify the absences.
- j. The Principal, in consultation with College staff determines that it is no longer in the interests of the student or the school community for the enrolment to be continued. This may occur in situations where the College is unable to meet the learning, social or health care needs of the student or other circumstances.

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5.7 Where a student is under 17 years, the College will either oversee transfer to an alternative education provider or contact the State Department of Education to notify them of the student's termination of enrolment. The College will notify NESA of the termination of enrolment as required.

Appendix 2

Student Code of Conduct

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the right to:

1. Enjoy a safe and supportive learning environment free from discrimination or harassment;
2. Speak to Warakirri staff about any issues in my personal life or life at school that may adversely affect my education or welfare either at school or at home.

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the responsibility to follow the Student Code of Conduct and I understand that my position in the College will be at risk if I breach this code.

At Warakirri College students agree to:

1. Act in a manner that is respectful and supportive of staff and students;
2. Take responsibility for their actions;
3. Come to class on time, prepared for lessons with appropriate books, completed homework and necessary equipment;
4. Supply a note for all absences, including partial absences;
5. Participate in a conscientious and responsible manner in all College activities;
6. Be co-operative in class and support other students' learning;
7. Take responsibility for personal belongings and respect those of others;
8. Dress in a manner that is respectful of others, in keeping with workplace dress codes and the Warakirri College Student Dress Code;
9. Turn off electronic devices during class time and hand in mobile phones as requested by teachers;
10. Not bring weapons or dangerous items of any kind to the College;
11. Not bring or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed medication;
12. Not graffiti or damage any item on College premises;
13. Not smoke less than 10m from any College premises;
14. Not commit or engage in any dishonest or unfair act in relation to an examination or other form of academic assessment;
15. Not engage in any offensive conduct or unlawful activity.

I have read and understand all items in this contract, and I agree to comply with it to the best of my ability. I understand that if I do not honour any part of this contract, I can expect to face disciplinary action and that my position at the College will be under review. I understand that I am able to discuss or get clarification on any item in this contract or related College policies and procedures at any time upon request.

Student's Name:

Student's Signature:

Date:

If applicable:

Name of parent/guardian:

Parent/guardian's signature:

Date:





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