



Warakirri College

Annual Report

2018

Fairfield

Blacktown

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Principal's Message

Warakirri College Ltd is an independent secondary school 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 commenced operations following an opening ceremony attended by the Hon John Barilaro, Deputy Premier of NSW who was responsible for brokering a partnership between TAFE and Warakirri College.

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 2018 there were 10 HSC graduates across the two campuses.

The College's name means to *Stand and Grow*; an Aboriginal term consistent with the school'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 school 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. Diversity is seen as a major advantage; with 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 receives support from community organisations with enrolments often coming from young people connected to NGOs, charities and of course, local high schools.

Many community organisations support the College by presenting at the school's weekly assemblies and the school partners with a range of organisations through excursions, courses and camps.

Warakirri College engages 2 full-time Counsellors and the school assists students with accessing emergency accommodation, welfare services and post school education and employment.

At school the 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.

Together with staff of MTC Australia, the teachers of Warakirri College celebrate the success of each student completing Year 10 or the HSC in 2018.

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

Carolyn Blanden
Principal

2. 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 and includes a database of over 20,000 clients who are looking for work or are enrolled in courses that provide accredited training.

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.

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 an accumulation pathway whereby students study 3 subjects per year, covering both Preliminary and the HSC in a 12 month period.

The school provides assistance that includes covering the cost of tuition, stationery, textbooks and excursions. There is no school 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.

During 2017 both campuses were inspected and granted registration and accreditation from the NSW Board of Studies (NESA) until 31 December 2022.

3. 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.

4. Senior Secondary Outcomes

Results of Year 10 2018

Subject	Number of students	Bands ABC %	Bands DE none%
English	98	38	62
Mathematics	98	33	67
Science	98	32	68
Geography	98	19	81
History	98	29	71
PDHPE	97	37	63

In 2018 Warakirri College introduced a School Developed course called Living Independently which was specially written to address the needs of our students. Teachers noted that the high level of social disadvantage resulted in students needing explicit teaching on a variety of topics that many more privileged young people would learn from their parents.

Topics in the course included:

Staying on the right side of the Law, Savvy Shopping, Budgeting, Positive Relationships, Getting a Job, Finding a place to live, Cooking and Nutrition. All Year 10 students participated in this course.

Results of the Higher School Certificate 2018

Subject	Students	Bands 1 – 3%	Bands 4 – 6%	School Moderated Mean%	State Moderated Mean %
Biology	9	77	22	54	73
Business Studies	25	92	8	57	73
English Standard	8	87	13	52	69
Food Technology	17	83	12	61	72
Geography	6	100	0	39	74
Mathematics G2	17	94	6	45	70
Modern History	29	97	3	40	73

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.

The extremely small numbers make comparisons over time somewhat meaningless except to say that the number of students sitting for HSC subjects or completing Stage 5 has steadily risen over the past 4 years as the school has grown. Whilst Warakirri subject means have remained relatively constant over time there has been an increase in the number of students achieving results in bands 4 and 5 in the past 2 years. There has also been an increase in the number of students whose ATAR has qualified them for University entry.

No students studied a VET or TVET course at Warakirri College.

5. Teacher qualifications and professional learning

Teachers with education qualifications	18
Teachers with Bachelor degree or AEI-NOOSR equivalent	18
Teachers with TAE	1

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

Professional Development undertaken in 2018

During the Year all teachers undertook at least the required minimum hours of professional development required for maintenance of their accreditation. Most teachers did more than the minimum. The School supported Teachers, Administration Staff and School Counsellors to attend regular professional development training.

Teachers individually completed courses with accredited providers, most commonly at the Association of Independent Schools. Some courses were delivered as webinars or online courses. These courses were specific to the teacher's subject areas or roles within the College. One teacher participated as a NAPLAN marker.

All teachers attended both days of the Alternative Schools Conference on Enhancing Student Wellbeing which covered topics on how student learning is affected by the stress cycle, restorative justice, experiential learning, service learning, how DET can assist Alternative schools, Adjusting the Curriculum to suit Alternative schools, Responding to Mental Health Complexities and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The NSW Dept Adolescent Health ran a course for all staff on Youth Mental Health First Aid and all staff received training on the Child Protection Legislation and training on the new Sentral data base.

Additionally, teachers participated in subject specific PD courses and conferences offered by the Association of Independent Schools as well as more generalist training such as Principles of Purposeful Programming Webinars.

The Executive Team also participated in a course on Building a Culture of Coherence Through Effective School Improvement and Updating Child Protection Investigation Skills.

Teacher accreditation status

Pre 2004 (Old scheme) teachers including the Principal	3
Teachers accredited at Proficient Level	13
Teachers with Provisional accreditation	2

During the year 4 teachers gained accreditation at Proficient Level.

6. Workforce composition

In 2017 Warakirri College employed the following:

- A Principal, 2 School Counsellors, 4 Receptionists (2.8 FTE) ;
- 15 full-time teachers and two part-time (0.7) teachers with degrees and teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines;
- Over 70% of staff come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and one in the role of Senior Executive identifies as having Australian Aboriginal heritage.

7. Student Attendance, Retention and Post School Destinations

Student Attendance 2018

Year Group	Semester 1	Semester 2
HSC (Year 11 and 12)	68%	69%
Year 10	58%	48%

2018 Student Retention from Year 10 to Year 11

Campus	2018 Y 10 Students	2018 Year 10 leavers	% retained in school 2019	Progressed to Year 11 2019	Repeat Year 10 2019
Fairfield	39	16	59%	21	2
Blacktown	62	26	58%	31	5

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.

Post School Destinations

Students who left from Year 10 but were under 17 years were linked up with Transition to Work providers, particularly under the Smart Skilled and Hired program. Those who were over 17 entered employment in the areas of childcare, retail, fast food and apprenticeships.

Year 12 graduate destinations included University, travel industry, veterinary assistant, health care, University transition programs, TAFE, retail, construction industry and hospitality. A small number of students did not gain employment soon after leaving school and one got married and gave birth.

8. Enrolment Policies

Although the policies were reviewed at the end of 2018, the enrolment policy is largely unchanged from previous years and is in accordance with MTC Australia's Policies and Procedures. The Enrolment Policy reflects the mission of the school:

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

In 2018 enrolment interviews were generally conducted by the 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 school 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 school 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.

9. 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 care-givers in these processes in the event of a suspension or expulsion. This policy was reviewed in Jan 2019.

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 Jan 2019.

The Student Anti-bullying Policy and the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) highlights 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 Jan 2019.

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

10. School Determined priority areas for improvement

Priority Area 2018	Action Taken in 2018
Enhance communication between the campuses in terms of teachers from each KLA working together. Improve consistency of program writing and reduce issues with assessment tasks and marking across campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed Alissar Ghadban Curriculum Co-ordinator to: hold regular cross campus KLA meetings, • monitor assessments, • ensure reliability of marks collection & weighting, • monitor compliance and quality of course programs, • supervise teachers with Provisional accreditation and assist them to become Proficient.
Improve learning opportunities for students from migrant background.	Late 2018 appointed Arabic speaking EAL teacher. Approached community organisations to inform them of the special English Support Class opening in 2019.
Offer better support for students with disabilities.	Engaged a second full time School Counsellor 2018. Produced Individual Education Plans for over 60% of students to comply with NCCD requirements.

Grow new Blacktown Campus which opened in 2017 with 53 students at August Census.	Blacktown Campus opened extra classes and grew to capacity with 106 students at August Census 2018.
Start work on new Campbelltown campuses to open 2019 and 2021.	<p>Identified appropriate site for new leased campus in Queen St Campbelltown. Drew up plans and began Local Council approval process. Proposed opening July 2019.</p> <p>Identified a suitable block of land for purchase for construction of a new campus to open in Campbelltown in 2021. Commenced discussions with Local Council re zoning and applied for Bank loan, completed Business case to go for Board approval.</p>

Priority Areas selected for 2019

1. Completion of a new 3 year Strategic Plan by the Board.
2. Opening of new leased campus in Campbelltown South.
3. Introduce first stage of 3 year curriculum program: “New Pedagogies for Deep Learning”.
4. Further develop the disability support processes with training for key staff in NCCD procedures 2019 and engagement of specialist NCCD support staff 2020.
5. Apply for Capital Grant from AIS for construction of 4th Campus in Campbelltown – North.
6. Purchase of land Campbelltown – North.
7. Commence Development Application for Campbelltown – North campus.

11. 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.

In 2018 the school introduced two new programs to empower the students to make a contribution to their community.

At the Fairfield Campus students made visits to a local nursing home, interacting with the elderly residents and bringing them small gifts. The residents were very glad to receive the visits, and the students were surprised and delighted by what a positive experience it was.

At the Blacktown Campus the students have been making weekly visits to the Mt Druitt Food Pantry to help pack large crates of food which are distributed to local community members in need. The students were very afraid when the program first started because it involved working with strange people in a strange environment. However, as the year progressed a culture of contribution developed and students are happy to participate. An added bonus of this program has been that the students have also learned of a place in the community where their families can go to get food.

In 2018 the Warakirri Parent Company, MTC Australia launched it’s first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Warakirri Blacktown volunteered to be the host venue for the event which featured a smoking ceremony and welcome speeches from members of the Aboriginal Community. The keynote address was given by an Aboriginal student from Warakirri College.

12. Parent Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The School 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 government agencies such as Dept. Juvenile Justice and Dept. of Family and Community Services.

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 school premises, resources, pastoral care, teaching and teacher / student relationships. These surveys have been very positive.

Social Media – comments about the school on Facebook by parents have been very positive.

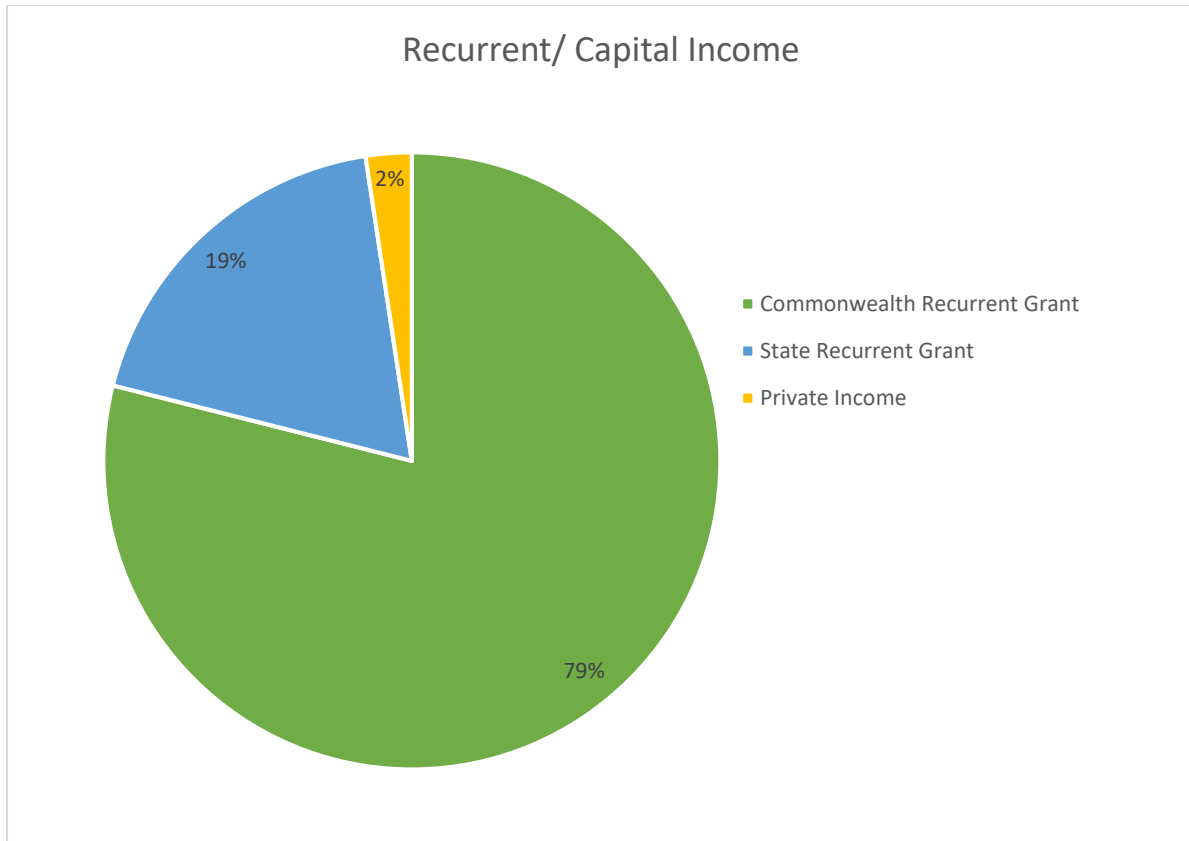
Transition to Work Providers – When students leave the school they are linked with a Transition to Work provider. These providers have commented that the students often cite Warakirri College as the best thing that has happened to them.

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.

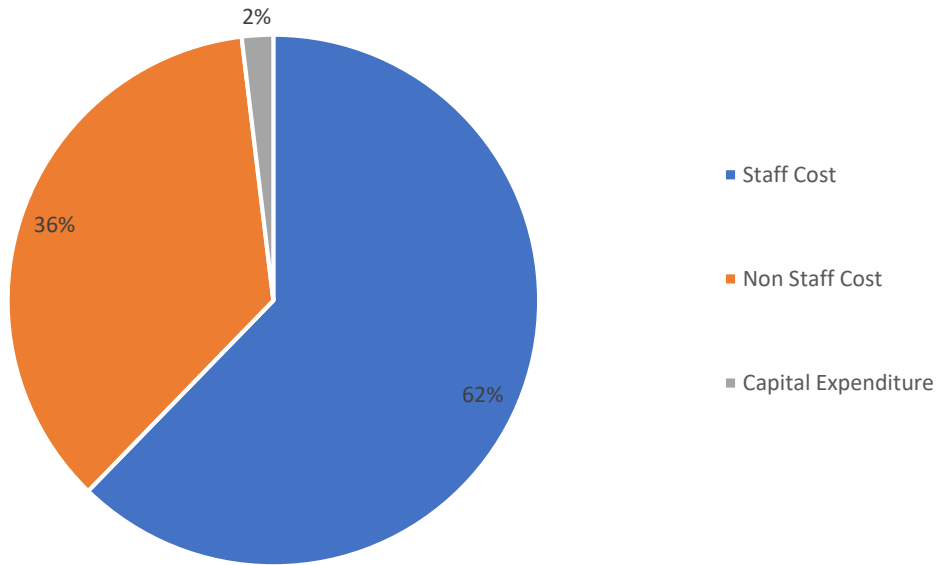
Student retention rate – Student retention rates are always higher than we anticipate from enrolment data. In 2018 we found an unusually large number of students decided to proceed to Year 11, having indicated on enrolment that they would leave at the end of Year 10. When questioned about this they replied that school 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. At Blacktown there is a particularly high percentage of students who have gender dysphoria or who are transgenering. This group is a source of mutual support and they find the atmosphere of acceptance to be very positive.

13. 2018 Financial Data



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

[NESA](#) 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 NESAs of the termination of enrolment as required.

"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."

P 082 Termination of Enrolment Policy



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

3. DEFINITIONS

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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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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 Signature: _____

Date: _____