



# REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)



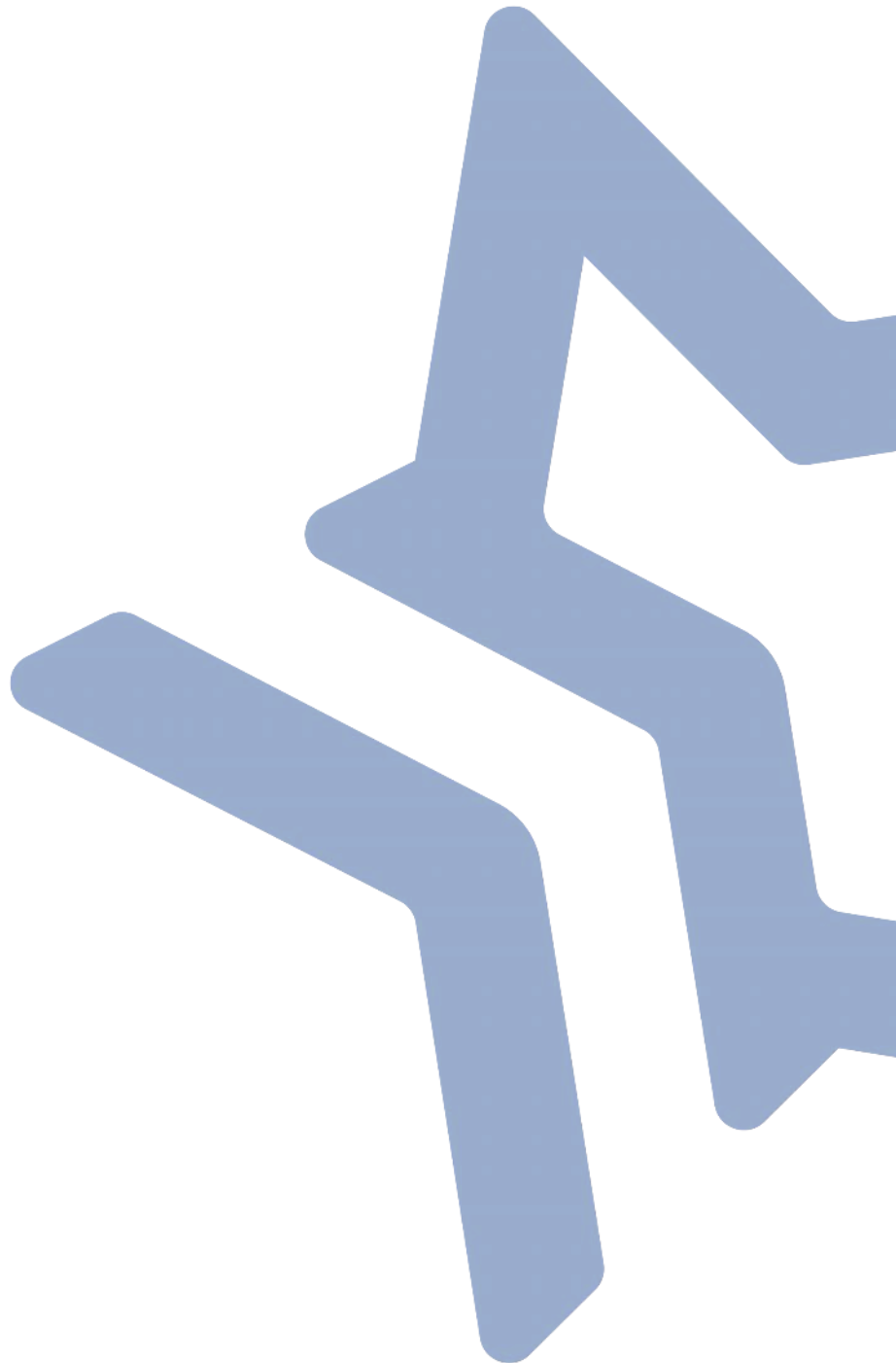
March 2026 - March 2027



**RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN**

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**REFLECT**



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# REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)



# Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia



Reconciliation Australia welcomes Special Teaching and Research (STaR) to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

STaR joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with over 5.5 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate – allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

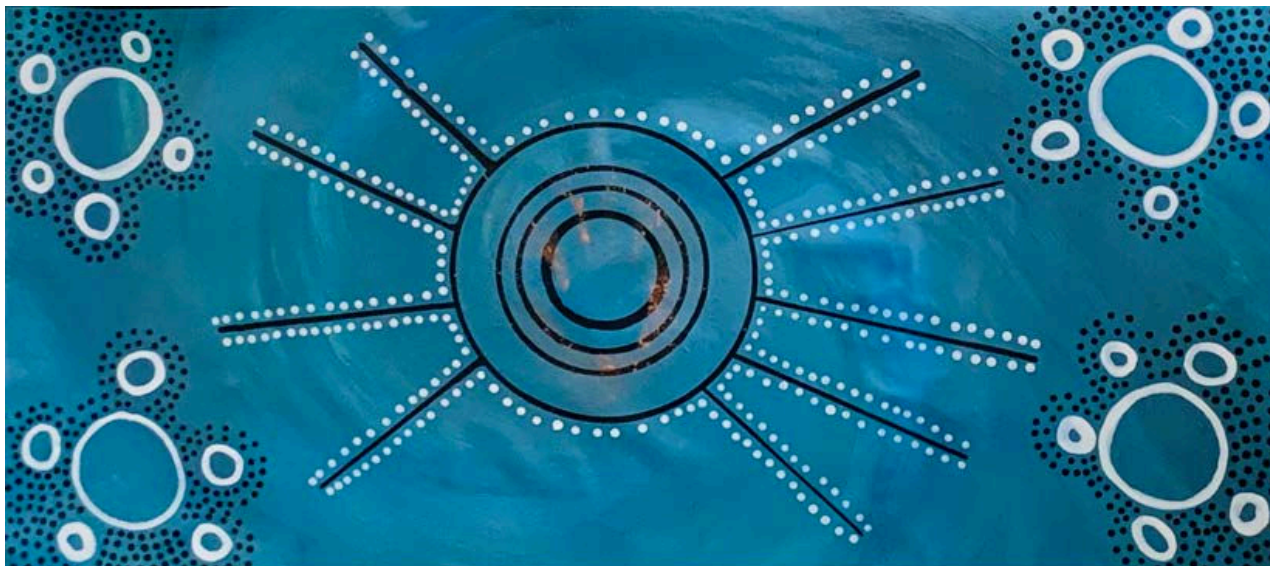
This Reflect RAP enables STaR to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations STaR, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# About the Artwork



Guiding STaR by Courtney Coralee

**Courtney Coralee is a talented Wiradjuri artist and a proud mother of a child who was enrolled in the STaR Early Years Program.**

The symbols in the corners represent not only the first five STaR children but all the children who have benefited from the STaR program. The background represents the challenges and difficulties of parenting, which can be as unpredictable and challenging as a riptide. The circles in the centre symbolise the STaR board, while the lines reaching out from it symbolise the support and knowledge that the STaR team provides to families, children, and educators. The orange outline of Courtney's son's hand, who was enrolled in the STaR Early Years Program, connects to the original logo, which was created from the handprints of the first five STaR children in 2001.



# Acknowledgement of Country

STaR acknowledges the First Nations peoples across this Country. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Lands on which our organisation is located and where we conduct our business.

We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present and recognise those who continue to promote and protect First Nations cultures.

STaR is committed to honouring First Nations peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the Skies, Lands, Waters, and Seas and their rich contribution to society. We acknowledge the past and stand together for our future.



# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

## Our Business

Special Teaching and Research (STaR) Limited is a non-profit organisation that works across early years, school-aged and post-school settings to ensure *progressive, meaningful and inclusive* learning for people with disabilities.

STaR (originally known as The STaR Inclusive Early Childhood Association) was founded in 2001 by Dr. Coral Kemp, parents, and professionals from Macquarie University Special Education Centre. Initially launched as a pilot program in 2002, STaR pioneered inclusive education, supporting children with disability or developmental delay in childcare centres. Over two decades, STaR has delivered the early years program in 30+ centres, supporting over 600 children with disability and mentoring early childhood educators through professional development. In 2020, STaR broadened its vision to include lifelong learning, addressing the lack of educational opportunities for adults with disability in post-school settings. STaR remains committed to fostering inclusion and learning for all.

STaR is a small team of 11 in Sydney, including administrative staff, early years educators and special educators. While we do not currently have any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people on our team, we are committed to creating an inclusive workplace and actively welcoming and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to join our team. Our office is located on Dharug country (Castle Hill, 2154) and our geographic reach covers North-West Sydney and the City of Blacktown.



## **Our Mission**

Making quality special education accessible.

## **Our Values**

### **Respect**

We value and embrace everyone for who they are, accepting differences in opinions and backgrounds. Respect means caring enough to consider how our actions impact others.

### **Integrity**

We uphold honesty and strong moral principles. Acting ethically and doing the right thing at all times, defines our commitment to integrity.

### **Social Justice**

We champion access, equity, participation, and human rights for all. Our commitment to social justice ensures fairness and inclusivity in every aspect of our work.

### **Equality**

We cultivate understanding and connection with others by acknowledging and responding to their thoughts and feelings. Empathy is the cornerstone of building meaningful social relationships.

Our key outcome areas are:

**Educating Educators** – Research-based professional development and training

**Lifelong Special Education** – Delivering evidence-based special education programs and support for people living with disability.

**Engaging Communities** – Advocating for special education to a range of audiences.

We deliver on our key outcome areas by:

**Collaborating** to build strong relationships and make special education a national conversation.

**Delivering** evidence-based programs and support to ensure progressive and meaningful learning for people with disability.

**Connecting** with the global research community to share knowledge, expertise and contribute to the evidence base of special education.

**Educating** by providing quality professional development and coaching to those who work with people living with disability.



## Our RAP

- At STaR, we recognise that developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is important to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation and how we will embed reconciliation into our daily work practices. We must make meaningful strides toward genuine inclusion and a deeper understanding of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, cultures, and perspectives. Each year, we have the privilege of working alongside five to ten families who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
- By developing a RAP, we commit to improving our practice, fostering a more inclusive environment, and ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families feel supported, valued, and respected. This work is vital for us to continue building strong, culturally sensitive relationships and to create an environment where all children, regardless of background, can thrive.
- We have nominated Megan Cooper, Manager – Special Education & Family Support, as our Lead RAP champion responsible for driving and championing internal engagement and awareness.

### Implementation

- We plan to take a careful and collaborative approach, ensuring that it is embedded across all work areas. We plan to start by researching best practices and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. In time, we hope to reach out to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as allies, listening to what they share, and incorporating their feedback and perspectives into our work. This will include ongoing discussions with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families we work with and seeking guidance from cultural experts. We will also continue to train our team to build cultural awareness and competence, ensuring they understand the significance of reconciliation and how it relates to their roles and daily work. We aim to regularly review and assess our progress, adjusting as needed to ensure we progress toward meaningful actions and outcomes. By integrating the RAP into our everyday practices, we aim to positively impact our relationships with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families and strengthen our overall approach to inclusive education.

### Our reconciliation journey to date

- As a team, we have engaged in initial cultural competency training to deepen our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and perspectives. STaR has also engaged in webinars and workshops with Evolve communities to strengthen our knowledge of allyship. We have also participated in local NAIDOC Day celebrations, showing our support and respect for the Aboriginal community and gathering information.
- We have also supported a local Preschool Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) by actively participating in its initiatives and serving on the ACCO committee to help ensure the service's continued success and growth, while supporting this service as part of our Early Years Program.
- We consistently use the Acknowledgement of Country and have added Key Word Signing to the delivery before meetings and workshops.



- STaR has commissioned a unique artwork from a young Aboriginal mum whom we know through our program. She generously created art representing families' journey of understanding and embracing disability.
- STaR has been an Associate Member of SNAICC since 2024 and has attended the SNAICC National Conference in Darwin in September 2023. Recently, we were asked to present the topic "Inclusive Learning in Action" at "Empowering Future Leaders: Nurturing Culturally Strong Foundations in ACCO Early Years Education" in Tamworth, June 2025. This engagement reflects our ongoing commitment to reconciliation. We are dedicated to furthering our knowledge by strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal communities and learning from our participation in these events.
- STaR is at the beginning of our reconciliation reflection path. We are taking practical steps, learning as we go, and building our understanding together. This is a long-term commitment, and we know much work is ahead.

**STaR established its working group in May 2025. Our RAP Working Group meets quarterly to progress and monitor actions. Progress is reported quarterly at our All-Team meeting and documented in the meeting agenda.**

All members of our RAP Working Group are passionate about helping STaR contribute to reconciliation in a meaningful way.

| <b>Name and Job Title</b>                                    | <b>RAP Working Group (RWG) Position</b> |
|--|---|
| Melissa North - CEO  | RWG Chair                               |
| Dr Sarah Carlon – Head of Research and Special Education     | RWG Member                              |
| Megan Cooper – Manager, Special Education and Family Support | RWG Champion                            |



# Our Partnerships / Current Activities

**Yawarra Community & Child Care (ACCO)**– STaR worked with Yawarra for 8 years (2016–2024), delivering the Early Years Program to support children with disability to learn meaningfully with their peers and transition to school. Our Manager, Special Education & Family Support, Megan Cooper has also supported Yawarra as a member of their committee to help support continued success and growth of the centre (2022–2025).

**STaR is an SNAICC Associate Member (2024–present)** and attended the SNAICC National Conference in Darwin in 2023. STaR has an ongoing relationship with SNAICC and has been invited to speak at a regional meeting in Tamworth in June 2025 on inclusive early childhood education for children with disability or developmental delay. We regularly attend SNAICC webinars and read the SNAICC Newsletter to stay up-to-date with the organisation’s growth and share messages.

STaR has participated in **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and National Sorry Day**, sharing and promoting these events within sphere of influence.

STaR has two Special Educator’s trained in the **ASQ-Trak**, a developmental screening tool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and families.



# Relationships



| Action   | Deliverable  | Timeline   | Responsibility  |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p><b>1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. For example NATSIEC and SNAICC</li> <li>Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>April 2026</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Office Manager</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff and ECEC partner services.</li> <li>Share Narragunnawali NRW Week resources with our ECEC partner services and incorporate resources in our teaching materials.</li> <li>RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.</li> <li>Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2026</li> <li>April 2026</li> <li>27 May – 3 June 2026</li> <li>27 May – 3 June 2026</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office Manager</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.</li> <li>Investigate professional learning opportunities for staff to develop their understanding of reconciliation.</li> <li>Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey Eg. SNAICC, Evolve Communities</li> <li>Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>April 2026</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO / Communications Co-Ordinator</li> <li>CEO</li> <li>CEO</li> <li>Office Manager</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.</li> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2026</li> <li>June 2026</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO</li> <li>CEO</li> </ul>  |



# Respect



| Action   | Deliverable   | Timeline  | Responsibility  |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p><b>5.</b> Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation, engaging with staff to understand their current understanding of the support they need to ensure their understanding of how to respectfully embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through Narragunnawali's RAP's, programs and resources.</li> <li>Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>April 2026</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO</li> <li>CEO</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>6.</b> Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.</li> <li>Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> </ul>                  |
| <p><b>7.</b> Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</li> <li>Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.</li> <li>RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2026</li> <li>June 2026</li> <li>July 2026</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Co-Ordinator</li> <li>Communications Co-Ordinator</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> </ul> |



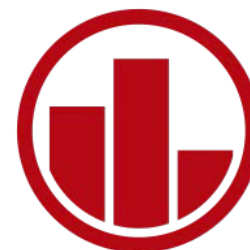
# Opportunities



| Action  | Deliverable   | Timeline   | Responsibility   |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>8.</b> Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.</li> <li>• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 2026</li> <li>• August 2026</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO</li> <li>• CEO</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>9.</b> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> <li>• Investigate Supply Nation membership.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 2026</li> <li>• May 2026</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office Manager</li> <li>• Office Manager</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>10.</b> Identify how specific education resources can be used to deepen meaningful reconciliation in education pedagogy.</p>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become familiar with AITSL's cultural responsive framework and tools and identify how they could be used to deepen culturally responsive pedagogy for your team and networks.</li> <li>• Encourage all staff to sign up to the Narragunnawali platform and for staff to share how they are using the platform and what resources are supporting existing programs and cultural responsive pedagogy and practice. Encourage staff to bookmark our affiliated ECEC services with an RAP on the platform, to increase knowledge and sharing of resources in line with their RAP.</li> <li>• Evaluate existing education materials/resources/programs to ensure they reflect diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, perspectives, and ways of knowing and being.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2026</li> <li>• April 2026</li> <li>• July 2026</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>• Office Manager</li> <li>• Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> </ul> |



# Governance



| Action   | Deliverable   | Timeline   | Responsibility  |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>11.</b> Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.</li> <li>Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.</li> <li>Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>April 2026</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> <li>Manager, Special Education &amp; Family Support</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>12.</b> Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> <li>Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> <li>Provide support to a senior leader to effectively champion our RAP internally.</li> <li>Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2026</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office Manager</li> <li>CEO</li> <li>CEO</li> <li>Office Manager</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>13.</b> Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.</li> <li>Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.</li> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.</li> <li>Communicate our RAP progress to internal and external stakeholders.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June annually</li> <li>30 September annually</li> <li>30 September annually</li> <li>December annually</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office Manager</li> <li>Office Manager</li> <li>CEO</li> <li>CEO</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>14.</b> Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2026</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office Manager</li> </ul>  |



# Contact



|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Name</b>     | Melissa North       |
| <b>Position</b> | CEO                 |
| <b>Phone</b>    | (02) 8850 1269      |
| <b>Email</b>    | melissa@star.org.au |

## STaR Office

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Address</b> | Unit 8/22 Hudson Ave, Castle Hill NSW 2154 |
| <b>Phone</b>   | (02) 8850 1269                             |
| <b>Email</b>   | office@star.org.au                         |
| <b>PO Box</b>  | PO Box 7453, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153       |
| <b>Website</b> | www.star.org.au                            |





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ACTION PLAN**

**REFLECT**



March 2026 - March 2027