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Narragunnawali Research Report #6 –
Visions for Reconciliation – May 2017
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Contents

Abstract	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Acknowledgements	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Overview of <i>Narragunnawali</i> and outline of paper	4
Growth and change in engagement of schools and early learning services	6
Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school and with the community – Summary statistics.....	11
Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school and with the community – Factors associated with responses	16
Visions for Reconciliation – Analysing statements within <i>Narragunnawali</i>	18

Abstract

Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning is a national program designed and implemented by Reconciliation Australia. The aim of this current paper is to update the analysis of the factors associated with participation in a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), update the responses to a whole-school or early learning service Reflection Survey (RS), as well as outline a set of preliminary findings related to the Vision for Reconciliation statements provided by RAP Working Groups.

Acknowledgements

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Overview of *Narragunnawali* and outline of paper

Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning is a national program designed and implemented by Reconciliation Australia. *Narragunnawali* (pronounced narra-gunna-wally) is a word from the language of the Ngunnawal people meaning alive, wellbeing, coming together and peace. The program is designed to support all Australian schools and early learning services in developing a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions. The program is designed to be delivered at the whole-school or early learning service level, with benefits for all students and staff, as well as for the wider community.

In a previous set of analysis (*Narragunnawali Research Report #1 - Factors associated with developing a RAP*), the ANU looked at the factors associated with whether a school or early learning service has commenced a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as of November 19th, 2015. The aim was to identify types of schools and early learning services that may not have engaged at the same rate as other schools or early learning services (all else being equal) and therefore areas where Reconciliation Australia might consider focusing additional attention. At the time of the report, educational institutions that engaged at a slower rate included infants/primary schools, preschools, education institutions outside of major cities, those in areas with high migrant populations or low Indigenous populations and those in relatively disadvantaged areas. There were, however, no differences between Independent schools and Government schools once other characteristics had been controlled for, although both had lower probabilities than Catholic schools.

A second report (*Narragunnawali Research Report #2 - Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school or early learning service, and with the community*) focused on those schools or early learning services that had commenced a RAP (a key focus of *Narragunnawali*), and analysed the responses to an initial whole-school or early learning service Reflection Survey (RS). A number of key findings emerged from the analysis. First, there was a considerable degree of uncertainty amongst the RAP Working Group (who filled out the survey) and what was happening within the school or early learning service. A second major finding was that there was a strong relationship between some of the key measures. For example, those schools or early learning services that display a flag are much more likely to have teachers that have completed cultural competency, proficiency or awareness training and are more likely to Acknowledge Country at events at the school or early learning service. Those schools or early learning services where teachers feel knowledgeable about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are more likely to be involved in activities with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The final finding was that there are other characteristics that predict reconciliation activities and outcomes. These point to areas of existing strength, as well as where things can be built on.

The third report (*Narragunnawali Research Report #3: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning – Preparing for data collection*) updated some of the previous analysis and outlined a data collection strategy to augment the analysis of data collected as part of the process of developing a RAP. That report highlighted a very rapid growth in participation in the program, as well as some changes in the factors associated with participation in a RAP. That paper also outlined a proposal for qualitative and quantitative data collection as part of the evaluation of *Narragunnawali*. The quantitative data collection will be combined with a randomised promotion design in order to identify as best as possible the effects of the program. The qualitative interviews will focus on the implementation of the program and associated early learnings.

The fourth report (*Narragunnawali Research Report #4 – The process of developing Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs)*) provided an overview of the factors associated with completing the requirement for the RAP. Most of the analysis for this project has focused on whether the school or early learning service had commenced a RAP. However, this is only the first step in the engagement process. Once a Working Group has been created, the school or early learning service should then undertake the Reflection Survey, create a Vision for Reconciliation, then identify and undertake a set of Actions, including at least 14 that are considered a minimum requirement. Once this has occurred, the RAP is recorded as being complete. There were some factors associated with the probability of completion (for those who have commenced). Catholic and Independent schools (in particular) are more likely to have completed than Government schools. Primary schools are more likely to have completed than secondary schools. There were, however, no differences by the area in which the school is located, or the State/Territory.

The fifth report (*Narragunnawali Research Report #5 – Preliminary data collection findings*) presented preliminary findings from the data collection outlined in Research Report #3. The aim of that report was to document the initial findings from the Baseline Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning Services Survey and to summarise the initial findings from the qualitative interviews of RAP participants and stakeholders. Across the case studies (and the interviews with educational institutions) there was a generally and genuinely positive view towards *Narragunnawali* and RAPs. It was felt that they either provided a framework to embed and expand on existing activities, or as an impetus to undertake activities that had been seen as important, but for which those involved in the school or early learning service did not know how to get started. There were, however, a number of barriers to a more successful engagement with *Narragunnawali* that were identified as part of the interviews. The most common of these were no knowledge of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families that were attending the school or early learning service; difficulty in bringing together a committee with staff buy-in needed; personal beliefs of individual staff members, with some seeing RAPs as ‘another thing’ they have to do; not knowing how they can embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories throughout the curriculum, and a

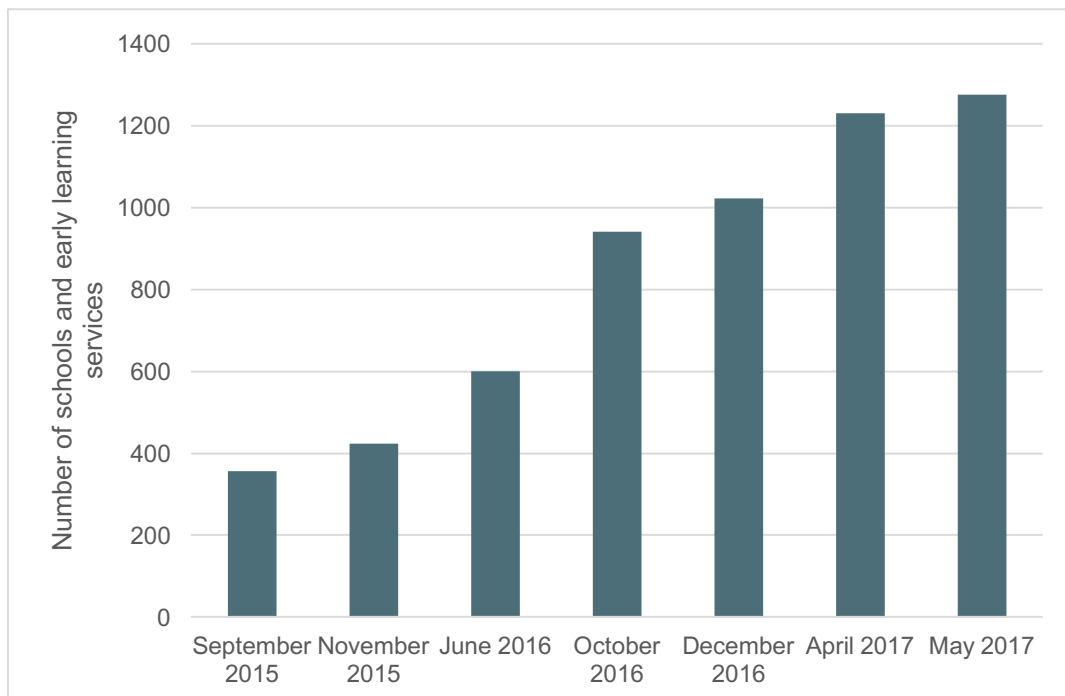
repeated fear of getting it wrong, or not doing it respectfully; and a lack of time to develop the RAP.

This latest report updates two sets of analysis - the factors associated with participation in a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as well as the responses to a whole-school or early learning Service Reflection Survey (RS). The major new set of analysis, however, relates to a mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Vision for Reconciliation statements, provided as one of the activities within a RAP by 633 schools and early learning centres.

Growth and change in engagement of schools and early learning services

Narragunnawali was introduced in 2014 to a small number of schools and early learning services. Analysis for this project commenced in September 2015 at which time there were 357 schools and early learning services that were recorded as having engaged with a RAP. On April 6th 2017, an updated version of the online platform for *Narragunnawali* was launched (Version 2.0). At that stage there were 1,230 schools engaged, whereas by the 16th of May 2017 when data for this paper was made available, this had increased to 1,275 schools and early learning services (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Number of schools and early learning services engaged with a RAP – September 2015 to May 2017



One way to understand the change in schools and early learning services that have been participating in *Narragunnawali* is to re-run the analysis on the factors associated with participation using the data from April 4th 2017. Like with the previous analysis, the

dependent variables is binary – taking on a value of one if the school or early learning service has commenced a RAP and zero if it has not.

Like with previous analyses, in order to analyse the factors associated with commencing a RAP, a regression-style analysis is used. Specifically, we consider whether a particular variable is associated or correlated with having a RAP whilst holding constant or abstracting from all other variables in the model. For example, we know that Catholic or Independent schools are more likely to be Secondary schools than Infants/Primary schools. In our analysis, we look at whether Catholic or Independent schools are more likely to have a RAP than a Government school regardless of whether the school is an Infants/Primary or Secondary one. Similarly, we look at the association between the Indigenous share of the area and having a RAP for a given level of remoteness. This is not quite a causal relationship, as there are other unobserved characteristics that aren't in the model. But it is getting closer to a direct association.

We present the results in Table 1 as marginal effects or the difference in probability of having a RAP compared to a school or early learning service with the base case characteristics. Results from Research Report #1 (November 2015) are presented in the first two columns, the results from Research Report #2 (June 2016) data is available in the third and fourth columns, the results from Research Report #4 (October 2016) is available in the fifth and sixth columns, results Research Report #5 (December 2016) is available in the next two columns, with the final two columns containing the results from just before the updated *Narragunnawali* online platform went live (April 2017).

The base case characteristics are described underneath the table. The marginal effects for the binary variables are then expressed as the difference between a school or early learning service with that characteristic and a school or early learning service with the base case characteristics whilst holding all else constant. The marginal effects for the continuous variables are expressed as the difference in probability from a one-unit change in that variable. The statistical significance of the relationship is given in the final column, as described underneath the table.

The results show a general level of stability in the factors associated with participation in *Narragunnawali*, at least since mid 2016. The factors associated with participation had not changed markedly from previous analysis, with higher rates of participation amongst: Catholic schools (as opposed to Government Schools); Child care Centres (as opposed to preschools)¹; Boarding Schools; those in areas with relatively high Indigenous populations;

¹ There is some uncertainty around the difference between a preschool and a child care centre, with the distinction often hard to make at an individual early learning service. In general, preschools have a greater focus on the delivery of early learning curricula and tend to deliver services to children in the year or two before full-time schooling. Child care centres tend to provide services to a greater age range of students, over a greater number of hours per day. It should be noted, however, that many child care centres deliver preschool programs, and many preschools provide after school care.

those in relatively advantaged areas; and schools and early learning services in South Australia, the ACT, and Queensland.

Table 1 Factors associated with engagement with a RAP – Early and new adopters

Variable name	November 2015 results		June 2016 results		October 2016 results		December 2016 results		April 2016 Results	
	Marginal effect	Significance	Marginal effect	Significance	Marginal effect	Significance	Marginal effect	Significance	Marginal effect	Significance
Catholic school	0.0135	***	0.0154	***	0.0161	***	0.0172	***	0.0259	***
Independent school	-0.0027		-0.0038		-0.0055		-0.0025		-0.0007	
Special school	-0.0084		-0.0129	*	-0.0115	*	-0.0127	*	-0.0161	**
Child care centre	0.0022		0.0025		0.0134	***	0.0149	***	0.0190	***
Preschool	-0.0087	***	-0.0104	***	-0.0053		-0.0046		-0.0024	
Combined year levels	0.0253	***	0.0339	***	0.0314	***	0.0265	***	0.0248	***
Secondary school	0.0142	***	0.0196	***	0.0221	***	0.0226	***	0.0207	***
Single sex school	-0.0001		0.0046		0.0084	**	0.0091	**	0.0118	***
Boarding school	0.0272	***	0.0301	***	0.0324	***	0.0383	***	0.0416	***
School in inner regional Australia	-0.0021		0.0015		0.0039		0.0045		0.0043	
School in outer regional Australia	-0.0101	***	-0.0127	***	-0.0130	***	-0.0124	***	-0.0108	***
School in remote or very remote Australia	-0.0097	***	-0.0140	***	-0.0172	***	-0.0183	***	-0.0164	***
Per cent of area identified as being Indigenous	0.0003	*	0.0004	**	0.0004	*	0.0004	**	0.0003	
Per cent of area born overseas	-0.0002	*	0.0000		0.0001		0.0000		0.0001	
SEIFA advantage/disadvantage percentile of area*	0.0001	***	0.0002	***	0.0001	**	0.0001	***	0.0002	***
Victoria	0.0015		-0.0048	**	0.0009		0.0011		-0.0004	
Queensland	0.0131	***	0.0079	**	0.0112	***	0.0133	***	0.0153	***
South Australia	0.0284	***	0.0343	***	0.0581	***	0.0669	***	0.0693	***
Western Australia	-0.0023		-0.0097	***	-0.0081	**	-0.0070	**	-0.0103	***
Tasmania	-0.0045		-0.0118	*	-0.0117	*	-0.0118	*	-0.0083	
Northern Territory	0.0159		0.0057		0.0045		0.0024		-0.0050	
Australian Capital Territory	0.0757	***	0.0719	***	0.0671	***	0.0639	***	0.0619	***
Predicted probability of base case	0.0138		0.0213		0.0244		0.0251		0.0285	
Pseudo R-Squared	0.0771		0.0609		0.0514		0.0533		0.0525	
Sample size	19,953		19,953		19,961		19,961		19,982	

Note: The base case school is a Government, Infants/Primary, that is co-ed and does not provide boarding and located in a major city. The base-case school has the average values for the three continuous variables from Table 1 in Research Report #1. A higher value for the SEIFA advantage/disadvantage index represents a more socioeconomically advantaged area. Those coefficients that were statistically significant at the 1% level of significance are labelled ***, those significant at the 5% level of significance only are labelled **, and those significant at the 10% level of significance only are labelled *.

A full analysis of changes in participation in *Narragunnawali* since the introduction of the updated platform will be included in the next Research Report (#7). However, an initial analysis suggests that those schools and early learning services that compared to those that had commenced a RAP on the previous platform, those that have commenced a RAP between April 5th and May 16th (inclusive), were more likely to be special schools, early learning services, in relatively advantaged areas, and in the Northern Territory (compared to New South Wales), but less likely to be in South Australia.²

Looking back over the life of the first version of the platform for *Narragunnawali* (Version 1.0), it is possible to identify patterns of change through time. Figure 2 looks at a limited set of characteristics of schools and early learning services, and gives the proportion with that characteristic for institutions that commenced a RAP prior to April 2016, between April 2016 and September 2016, and between October 2016 and April 2017.

Figure 2 Characteristics of schools and early learning services engaged with a RAP – By engagement data

² Discussions with Reconciliation Australia suggest that there has been a recent issue in delivering automated emails to Government schools in SA (they are getting caught up in the spam filter). This has affected approximately 250 individual users and may explain why there has been a slightly lower level of activity in that jurisdiction.

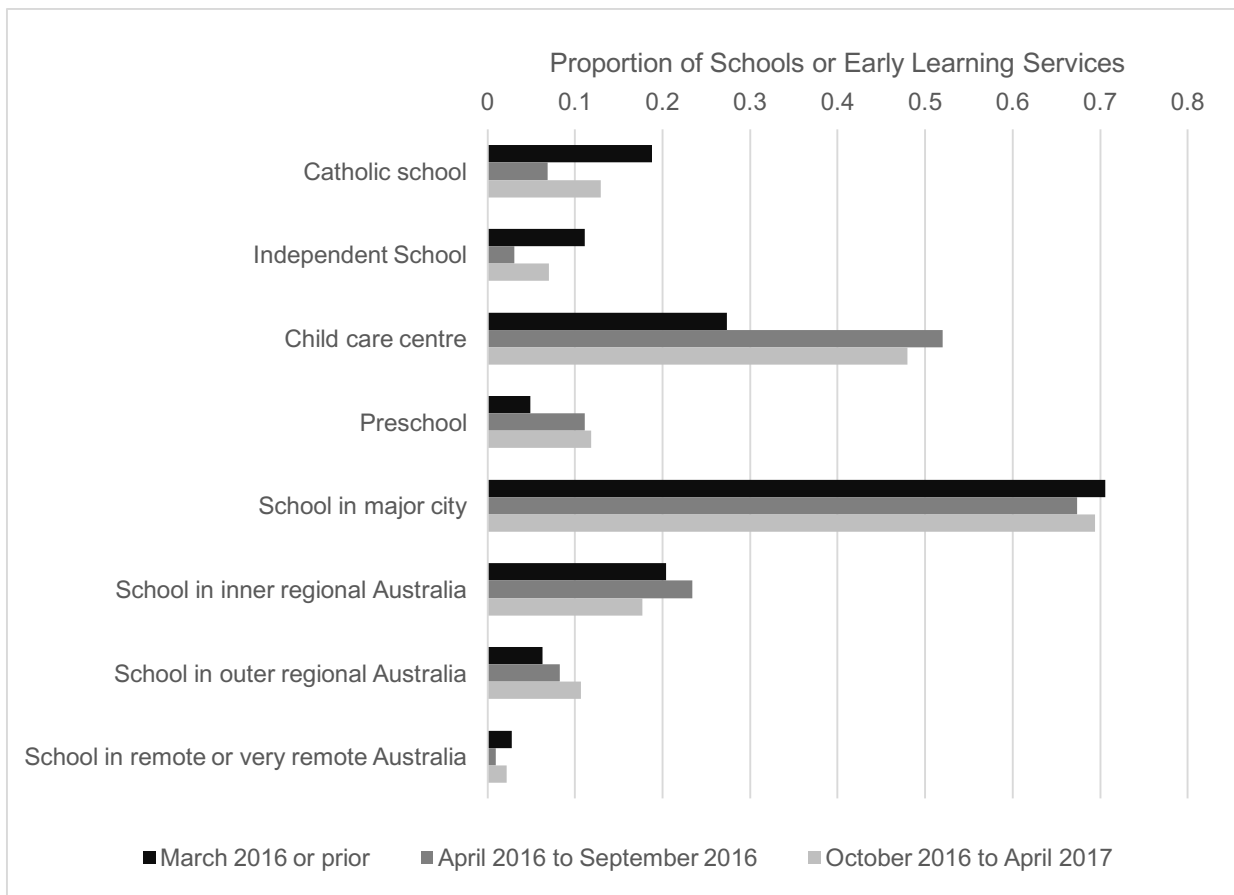


Figure 2 shows a number of changes in the types of schools or early learning services that have engaged with a RAP across the first few years of the program. The first group of schools and early learning services (March 2016 or prior) were much more likely to be Catholic or Independent schools than the more recent institutions. In the year prior leading up to the creation of the new platform, however, there were a much higher percentage of Child Care Centres or Preschools, with far more than half of the two recent cohorts being in the early learning sector.

Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school and with the community – Summary statistics

One aim of this current paper is to focus on those schools or early learning services that have commenced a RAP, and analyse the responses to a *whole-school or early learning Service Reflection Survey (RS)*. The survey was designed by Reconciliation Australia (with assistance from the ANU) to assist RAP Working Groups³ (RAPWGs)

³ The RAPWG is responsible for setting up and leading the RAP and ensuring that it becomes part of the school and early learning service culture. It must include:

- People from the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community
- Principal/Director or executive-level membership or support

to reflect on the current state of reconciliation in their school or early learning service as one of the first steps in developing a RAP. The RS looks at the three main spheres of the school or early learning service – in the classroom, around the school and with the community. There are 24 questions in total. While the RS was designed as a tool for schools and early learning services, it still has significant analytical use.

Report #2 looked at data from 247 schools and early learning services that had completed the survey (as of 11th March, 2016). In this paper, we have information on 757 schools and early learning services that had completed the survey (as of the 5th of April 2017). The latter will include the original sample of schools, with a subset of schools from the former potentially having changed their responses in the intervening period.

In Report #2, we identified six key binary variables that were the focus of the analysis. The results presented in this paper look at the relationship between these six key variables and how they are changing through time. These variables were chosen to be representative of in classroom, around school and with community issues. To make them comparable, they have been converted into a set of binary variables, with a value of one representing the all, most, or often category or categories, and a value of zero representing the unsure, no, or sometimes categories. Full details are given in Table 2, with percentages for the March 2016 data extraction, as well as the April 2017 extraction.

The results show a large change in the percentage of schools and early learning services that were recorded in the yes category for the main binary variables. For the first of these (regularly using resources), there was an increase from 25.6 per cent to 28.2 per cent in the respective set of institutions. There was an even larger increase in the per cent of schools and early learning centres that said that their staff had undertaken cultural competency, proficiency or awareness training (38.1 per cent to 56.6 per cent).

Two of the variables (knowledge and flag) stayed more or less the same through time, whereas there were quite large declines in the per cent of schools and early learning services that reported they acknowledge country (29.1 per cent to 13.7 per cent), and are involved in activities with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (11.2 per cent to 6.6 per cent).

It is very important to not interpret these findings as either positive or negative per se. They do not reflect changes in individual schools, but rather in the mix of schools

-
- Teachers and educators
 - Parent and wider community representatives

engaged in *Narragunnawali*. When the analysis is replicated on the subset of schools and early learning services that were observed in both the March 2016 and the April 2017 survey, there was very little change at the individual school level in responses.

Table 2 Key binary variables

Name	Question	Yes categories	March 2016 %	April 2017 %	No categories
Regularly use	Q 1. How many teachers and educators regularly use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching and learning resources to assist in teaching?	All, Most	25.6	28.2	Only a few, None, Unsure
Knowledgeable	Q 3. How many teachers and educators feel knowledgeable about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures?	All, Most	13.9	12.9	Only a few, None, Unsure
Flag	Q 8. Does your school or early learning service fly or display the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander flags permanently?	Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait flags, Just Aboriginal flag	61.9	58.7	No, Unsure
Acknowledge	Q 9. How often does your school or early learning service Acknowledge Country at regular events?	Always, often	29.1	13.7	Sometimes, Never, Unsure
Competency	Q 13. How many of your staff members have undertaken some level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency, proficiency or awareness training?	All, most, yes	38.1	56.6	No, None, Only a few, Unsure
Activities	Q 21. How often is your school or early learning service involved in activities with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community?	Always, often	11.2	6.6	Sometimes, Never, Unsure

Table 3 looks at the bivariate correlation between the variables. These correlations are bounded by -1 (as one variable goes up, the other goes down) and +1 (as one variable goes up, the other also goes up). A value of 0 for the correlations means that there is no observed relationship between the variables.

Table 3 Correlations between key variables

	Regularly use	Knowledgeable	Flag	Acknowledge	Competency
Knowledgeable	0.3172				
Flag	0.1502	0.1630			
Acknowledge	0.1585	0.2004	0.1938		
Competency	0.1641	0.0910	0.1940	0.0702	
Activities	0.1638	0.2618	0.1038	0.2956	0.0071

The first thing to note from Table 3 is that all correlations are greater than 0. In other words, schools or early learning services that respond yes to one of the questions are no less likely to respond yes to the other questions. There are, however, correlations that have a stronger association than others, and these are highlighted in the table.

Those schools or early learning services that display a flag are more likely to have teachers that have completed cultural competency, proficiency or awareness training and are more likely to Acknowledge Country at events at the school or early learning service. Those schools and early learning services where teachers feel knowledgeable about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are more likely to be involved in activities with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Knowledge was also associated with the regular use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teaching and learning resources to assist in classroom teaching.

The correlations presented in Table 3 do not imply causality. We don't know whether one of the variables is directly influencing the other, or whether the effect runs in the opposite direction. There may also be a third (unobserved) factor that influences them both. However, it is important to recognise that all schools or early learning services in the sample had commenced a RAP. We can assume, therefore, that at least to a certain degree all of the institutions have made a conscious commitment towards reconciliation. The fact that there are large positive relationships between some of the variables (and no negative relationships) gives strong *prima facie* evidence that different aspects of reconciliation are mutually supportive.

Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school and with the community – Factors associated with responses

To extend the analysis of responses to RS, we use characteristics of the schools to look at what is associated with the key binary variables summarised in Tables 2 and 3. In order to analyse the factors associated with the survey response, a regression-style analysis is used. Specifically, we consider whether a particular variable is associated or correlated with answering yes to that question whilst holding constant or abstracting from all other variables in the model. For example, we know that Catholic or Independent schools are more likely to be Secondary schools than Infants/Primary schools. In our analysis, we look at whether Catholic or Independent schools are more likely to regularly use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources (for example) than a Government school regardless of whether the school is an Infants/Primary or Secondary one. Similarly, we look at the association between the Indigenous share of the area and having a RAP for a given level of remoteness. This is not quite a causal relationship, as there are other unobserved characteristics that aren't in the model. But it is getting closer to a direct association.

I present the results in Table 6 as marginal effects or the difference in probability of responding yes compared to a school or early learning service with the base case characteristics. The base case characteristics are in essence a school or early learning service with the reference category characteristics from Table 1 in the previously cited paper for the binary variable and mean characteristics for the continuous variables. For example, the base case against which Catholic or Independent schools are compared is a Government school.

The marginal effects for the binary variables are then expressed as the difference between a school or early learning service with that characteristic and a school or early learning service with the base case characteristics whilst holding all else constant. The marginal effects for the continuous variables are expressed as the difference in probability from a one-unit change in that variable.

Following on from the previous example, the probability of a government school reporting all or most teachers and educators feel knowledgeable about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures was 0.175 (found in the last row of the second column of results). By contrast, an Independent school in the sample with an otherwise identical set of characteristics had a probability of 0.077. The estimated marginal effect (or difference) is therefore estimated to be -0.098. Those variables that are statistically significant at the 10% level at least are marked with a *.

Table 4 Factors associated with key binary variables of reconciliation in the classroom, around the school and with the community

Explanatory variables	Regularly use	Knowledgeable	Flag	Acknowledge	Competency	Activities
Catholic school	-0.044	-0.001	-0.031	-0.041	-0.044	-0.064*
Independent school	-0.112	-0.098*	-0.090	-0.063	-0.112	-0.073*
Early learning centre	0.163	-0.082*	-0.051	-0.130*	0.163*	-0.033
Secondary or combined school	0.127	-0.009	0.152*	0.202*	0.127*	0.177*
Boarding school	0.126	0.133	0.053	0.029	0.126	0.061
School in regional or remote area	-0.057	0.012	-0.073	0.002	-0.057	-0.027
Per cent of area identified as being Indigenous	0.003	0.000	0.009	0.003	0.003	-0.002
Per cent of area born overseas	-0.001	0.002	-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002
SEIFA advantage/disadvantage percentile of area	0.000	-0.002*	-0.002*	-0.001	0.000	-0.001*
Predicted probability for base case	0.496	0.175	0.703	0.208	0.496	0.083

There were three variables that had a consistent association across the six outcomes, either having a statistically significant association in one direction (positive or negative) or no association. The strongest and most consistent association was with socioeconomic status. Those schools or early learning services in relatively advantaged areas were significantly less likely to report that their teachers were knowledgeable about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture, less likely to report they flew at least one of the flags, and less likely to report they were involved in activities with the local community. *Narragunnawali* is a program that provides a framework, advice and support. However, within the current framework, it does not provide funding for activities. What the results in Table 4 show, however, is that it is the relatively advantaged schools that are less likely to report a number of the key aspects of reconciliation in action.

Teachers in Independent schools were reported to be less likely to be knowledgeable on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues (as mentioned earlier). They were also reported to be significantly less likely to participate in activities with the community. These schools may need extra support and/or encouragement to change from this baseline. Finally, teachers in early learning services were more likely to have undertaken cultural competency, proficiency or awareness training, but less likely to report that they were knowledgeable about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culture and also less likely to report that they acknowledged country.

Visions for Reconciliation – Analysing statements within *Narragunnawali*

One of the actions within *Narragunnawali* is for the RAPWGs to draft a Vision for Reconciliation statement. For this paper, we had Vision Statements for 633 schools and early learning services, which contained a total of around 64,500 words. The following word cloud (where the size of words is weighted by the frequency of their appearance), gives a visual representation of the content of the Vision Statements.

Figure 3 Top 100 words contained in Vision Statements

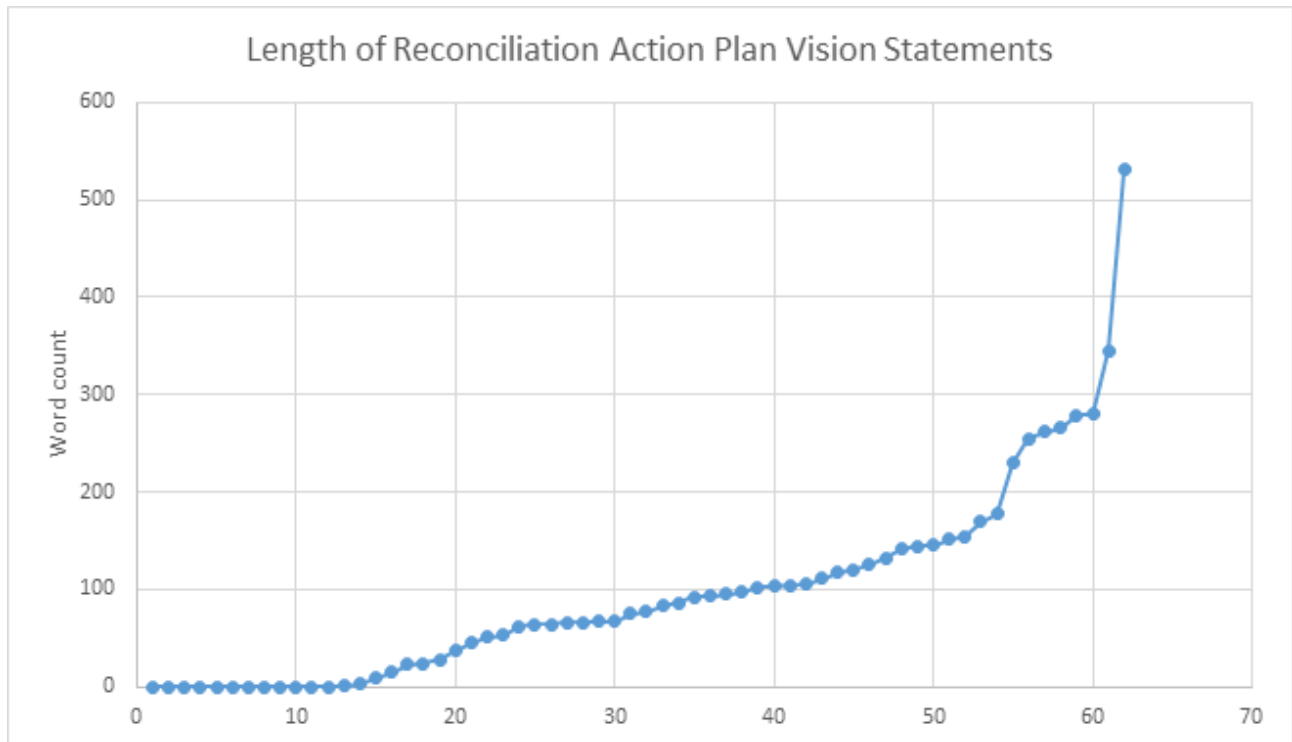


Not surprisingly, the most commonly used words in the Vision Statements were Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and Reconciliation. Other common words that were identified were more instructive. This includes community/communities (595 times), people (450), children (436), culture (403) and respect (322). Perhaps what is most interesting is that the verb with the most common response is 'will' (appearing 363 times) and 'can' (156 times), indicating a strong confidence in the ability of the school or early learning service to achieve its aims.

Despite these common themes, the Vision statements were heterogeneous in terms of length, structure, and content (themes, specificity, etc.). We undertook detailed analysis using a subset of statements (randomly identified from the complete population) to identify themes and variation. All Vision Statements were sorted using Excel's RAND function, and then 10 per cent were manually reviewed. Of these selected, the longest statement was 531 words, whereas roughly one out of every five were blank.

The distribution of word length (from the subset of Vision Statements analysed) is outlined below:

Figure 4 **Distribution of Vision Statement lengths**



Two (anonymised) examples at different ends of the spectrum are listed below:

- Vision Statement #4 – *At <school or early learning service> Reconciliation means that we remember the past hurts and say sorry and commemorate past events. Reconciliation also means that we celebrate the present and the future through creating awareness and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their culture. By doing this we hope to enable people to develop respect for different cultures especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and in turn make connections to this culture for all Australians. At <school or early learning service> we celebrate Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week through whole school liturgies, prayer and various activities. Our curriculum embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and students learn about this in a variety of Learning Areas. We have teachers who are knowledgeable about cultural diversity and we also draw on people from the community to also teach about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture at various time throughout the year. Welcome to country is used at assemblies and gatherings throughout the year and students are familiar with the tradition owners of the land in our area. We have established a <...> group for our older indigenous students so that they are able to come together once a week and share and learn more about their own cultures and backgrounds. Students in this group then become great advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Our vision is to continue to do the things we are*

at the school and build upon them so that Reconciliation is alive and strong in our school community.

- *Vision Statement #20 – To educate our children, staff and families about the relationship we all share as Australians.*

Analysis of the sample text identified four main sets of themes and ideas that occurred frequently, five that sometimes appeared, and two important themes and ideas that rarely appeared. These are outlined in Table 5 below, along with indicative examples.

Table 5 Themes, ideas and indicative examples

Theme and ideas	Example quote 1	Example quote 2	Example quote 3
Frequently appearing			
Respect and recognition	“We are committed to building partnerships based on trust, respect and recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples” –	“Developing an organisational culture here at the service which values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their culture.”	“We look forward to a society that recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people together in a respectful partnership.”
Partnerships and relationships	“As a school, our vision is to create a two-way partnership and to begin building strong relationships between us, and the Indigenous People of Australia.”	“We want to create meaningful relationships with the local elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait community.”	“<school or early learning service> promotes Reconciliation through its relationships with <local University> elders and the everyday curriculum choices we make.
Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures	“We encourage and support the school community to develop a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' culture and history. As a result, we have a responsibility to be informed of the true history, understanding of differences in cultural laws, spirituality and customs of the many cultures that make up our First Nation people.”	“To become more knowledgeable about the Aboriginal History and way of life.”	“Our vision for Reconciliation is built on striving for a culture of respect, friendship and trust. We aim to achieve this by encouraging students and staff to actively embrace diversity. We recognise the special place and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia.”
Sometimes appearing			
Definitions/conceptualisations of reconciliation	“Reconciliation means we remember the past, and look to making Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and	“Reconciliation is about learning the truth about our country’s history and accepting the past.”	“Reconciliation is about respecting the traditional owners of this land and respecting their culture and

	history recognised and celebrated today.”		beliefs. It is about learning to recognise the importance their people have to this land. We believe that a reconciled Australia is one nation which is respectful, equal and inclusive of all people and their cultures.”
References to past and present injustices/harm	“We acknowledge the past injustices that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have suffered and the resilience that they have shown. We understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to experience disadvantage and lack of understanding.”	“At Good Shepherd Reconciliation means that we remember the past hurts and say sorry and commemorate past events.”	“<school or early learning service> views Reconciliation as an opportunity to redress the inequities that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. We believe Reconciliation means paying thoughtfully focused attention to Australia's complex histories and acknowledging the diverse experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have too often endured cruel injustices.”
Acknowledgement of Country, Traditional Owners/Custodians	“We acknowledge the Ngunnawal Land on which we are situated each and every day and use Wiradjuri language in greetings and in song.” –	“<school or early learning service> recognise and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land in which it resides, the <traditional owners>. We all walk on their sacred ground and by acknowledge them in all that we do, by paying our respects at every opportunity, for they are the custodians with the intricate knowledge of this land that we all share today.”	“Firstly respectfully recognise and encourage interactions with the traditional Custodians of the Land we operate on, that being the <traditional owners>.”

Diversity and multiculturalism	“...Recognise, celebrate and embrace the richness of Aboriginal culture, and value the central role it plays in our multicultural community”	“Our school vision for reconciliation is to create a school that nurtures and strengthens students, where diversity is acknowledged and students are encouraged to be the best they can be.”	“We believe in fostering respect for all cultural backgrounds and believe that Indigenous Australian cultures should be an important part of our educational programs.”
Broad commitments to action	“We at <school or early learning service> plan on embarking on a journey to embed an Aboriginal perspective into our Early Childhood curriculum”	“The <school or early learning service> Action Group will be instrumental in supporting Reconciliation within our school and the wider community. We will work with Catholic Education of <State/Territory> to follow policies and procedures relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.”	“We are committed to making our curriculum seamless with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and the wider Australian community.”
Rarely appearing			
Concrete actions to implement the RAP	“Every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student at <school or early learning service> is being supported to match or better the outcomes of their fellow students, demonstrated through data and evaluations of effective personalised learning programs that use best practice in literacy, numeracy and other critical aspects of learning.”	“We will provide awareness of cultural respect and understanding via our curriculum, displays and newsletters. This includes experiences based upon questions from children, planned lessons on key issues and the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world views. We will learn about child-rearing practices, ways of thinking and learning and languages/dialects. This will be represented within songs,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Each group will say an acknowledgment; in their session • As a centre we will embrace indigenous culture in our program e.g. dance, performances, stories, language, native food talks. • As a centre we will display the flags and with the children we will discuss what the flags represent • As a centre we will try and make connections with

		music, art, games, written and visual texts, puzzles, posters and excursions where possible.”	indigenous groups e.g. indigenous playgroup” -
Review processes	“We have established good links with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and we aim to continue to seek their input into our special event days and our on-going creative curriculum.”	“This RAP will be attached to and implemented alongside the weekly planning to eventually form part of our Quality Improvement Plan.”	

