

Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor

Findings Report 2010-2011

Project funded by



Project partners:



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the support and commitment of a number of people and organisations. Windermere Child and Family Services, Monash University and the Cardinia Shire Council would like to particularly thank the Melbourne Community Foundation and Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd for contributing funding for this very valuable and innovative project.

We would like to extend our enormous gratitude to the various government departments, agencies and community members who contributed to this project over the past year. We were greatly encouraged by the positive responses of attendees who welcomed the opportunity to participate and have input into this project.

Acknowledgement goes to the member organisations on the project steering group:

- Berwick Grammar School
- Maranatha Christian School
- Minaret College
- Officer Primary School
- St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

Secondly, this report would not have been complete without the contributions made by the range of other agencies and communities consulted:

Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services; Department of Human Services; Department of Planning and Community Development; Victoria Police; Vic Urban and Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Thank you also to the members of the Southern Integrated CALD Child and Family Network who provided valuable input throughout the conduct of the project.

We are delighted to be involved in the Building Harmony Program and look forward to continuing the relationships already started with the participating Harmony Program schools.

The Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor Findings Report 2010-2011 was prepared by Carolyn Agius & Tim Cooper (Cardinia Shire Council) and Dr. Andrew Joyce & Alana Russo (Monash University) on behalf of the Building Harmony Project Group (November 2011).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2. PROCESS	10
2.1 Brief project outline: Introduction.....	10
2.2 Building Family and Community Resilience in Cardinia Growth Corridor Research Project.....	13
2.3 Literature Review and Research Process	14
2.4 Ethics Approval and Informed Consent.....	23
2.5 Governance and Partnership Development	23
2.6 Project Partners	26
2.7 Participating Schools.....	27
3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	30
3.1 Project Launch	30
3.2 Project Delivery	31
3.3 2011 Rotary Community Services Award.....	37
3.4 Activities Evaluation Tool and Analysis	37
3.5 A Year in Review: Staff Feedback.....	38
4. FIRST YEAR FINDINGS OF THE BUILDING HARMONY PROJECT	40
4.1 Evaluation Framework.....	40
4.2 The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist and Analysis ..	40
4.3 Student Surveys Data Collection and Analysis	43
4.4 Summary of First Year Findings from Student Surveys.....	43
4.5 Evaluation Summary	46
5. PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL AND MEDIA RELEASES TO DATE	46
6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....	46
7. CONCLUSION AND ASPIRATIONS.....	49
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY	51
9. APPENDICES.....	54
Appendix I: Letter of Endorsement.....	54
Appendix II: Monash University Student Survey Letter to Parents.....	55
Appendix III: Monash University Student Survey Consent Form.....	57
Appendix IV: Steering Committee Terms of Reference	58
Appendix V: Activities Evaluation Tool	61
Appendix VI: Activities Evaluation Tool Program Evaluation Data Summary	62
Appendix VII: The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist	69
Appendix VIII: Questionnaires (Student Surveys)	76
Appendix IX: Promotional Material and Media Releases.....	81

Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor

Findings Report 2010-2011

Windermere Child and Family Services- Cardinia Shire Council- Monash University

Report prepared by Carolyn Agius & Tim Cooper (Cardinia Shire Council) and Dr. Andrew Joyce & Alana Russo (Monash University)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Building Harmony Project was informed by a two year research project titled "Building Family and Community Resilience in Cardinia Growth Corridor: A Case Study of Officer". Windermere Child and Family Services, Cardinia Shire Council, Monash University, Growth Area Authority, Vic Urban, Victoria Police, AV Jennings, DHS and a wide range of agencies worked collaboratively to enable the success and findings of this report. The aim of this research was to develop a response to growth corridor human service demands, so as to develop ways of establishing relationships with the new community in Officer.

One of key findings of this research was the need to place concerted effort on building and fostering healthy communities by the early engagement of culturally diverse individuals and families moving into the new growth corridor.

In November 2009, as a direct result of this research, Windermere Child and Family Services were successful in receiving 2 years of funding from the Melbourne Community Foundation (auspicing organisation of philanthropic group Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd) to implement an action research project titled "Building Harmony in the Officer Growth Corridor". This enabled the engagement of the Cardinia Shire Council and Monash University.

Windermere Child and Family Services went on to undertake wide ranging consultation with the schools in Officer, to gain their interest and commitment to the concept of the Building Harmony Project. This resulted in the forming of partnerships with the participating Harmony Program Schools (Berwick Grammar School, Maranatha Christian School, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School).

The designated geographical area to implement the Building Harmony Project is the suburb of Officer, located within the Cardinia Shire. The Cardinia Shire is located southeast of Melbourne and is considered one of the most rapidly growing residential areas of Melbourne (Forecast ID, 2011). Population forecasts suggest that the Shire will experience a 103.86% population increase by 2031 (Forecast ID, 2011). Much of this development is happening within the growth corridor of Officer, with a new wave of couples and families migrating from neighbouring municipalities. It is anticipated that the Officer Precinct alone will attract a 1593.76% increase, with the current population of 1780 expected to rise to 30,149 residents by 2031 (Forecast ID, 2011).

The Shire of Cardinia currently has a very small culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population. However, predictions founded on the migration patterns flowing south-eastward from Melbourne's centre suggest that the Shire is likely to experience an influx of CALD population groups, as the neighbouring municipalities; City of Casey and Greater Dandenong, have already experienced (Forecast ID, 2011).

Furthermore, the establishment of various multi faith schools will undoubtedly attract increasingly diverse community members into the Shire. The Cardinia Shire has welcomed 6 additional schools to Officer since 2006. Prior to this, Officer Primary School was the only school operating in the Officer region. The seven schools that are now operating within the suburb include: Officer Primary School, Maranatha Christian School, St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Heritage College, Minaret College, Berwick Grammar and Brethren College.

Year 1 of the Building Harmony Project (2010), predominantly consisted of laying the foundations for project implementation in 2011 and building essential relationships and partnerships between the participating schools in Officer. A steering committee was established and is supported by the principals of the participating Harmony Program schools.

Monash University then conducted an extensive literature review to make recommendations towards the design and implementation process of the 'Building Harmony' project. The literature review successfully addressed a number of key areas, ascertaining the need for the Building Harmony program to be implemented within the Officer region, including;

- Identifying cultural diversity education programs which have already been conducted within schools, focusing on the strategies which were used. This section also includes a brief discussion on bullying and respectful relationship education. Strengths and weaknesses of these programs were identified to advise the direction of this project.
- The evaluation tools that were used to measure the success of these projects were identified and critiqued.
- Several program/project recommendations were made.
- Evaluation recommendations were made.

The literature review incorporates a broad range of published and online resources, including local and international practices, to make recommendations that are evidence based and strongly in alliance with best practice. The literature review intends to offer guidance towards the activities that aims to promote harmony with schools, and makes recommendations towards the evaluation process including the identification of tools to evaluate the efficacy of the project.

Following this process and the establishment of the steering committee, priorities were identified which have driven agreed project objectives. Although the steering committee have identified a comprehensive list of key objectives, there are two key elements that have influenced the project. Firstly, direct intervention through the delivery of student programs will allow staff and students to explore their own values and will also provide participants with the opportunity to learn about the cultures and values of the surrounding Harmony Program Schools.

Secondly, as the Building Harmony program is an action research project, a thorough research plan was identified to gain insight into staff and student values. Data was analysed through two primary channels; the first area of research to be undertaken was a survey titled the “School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist”, which all participating school principals were asked to complete. After undertaking a lengthy consultation process with the Monash University Ethics Committee, a questionnaire was also implemented for student completion.

School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist

All participating school principals were asked to complete a survey titled the “School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist”, which took place in November 2010. The survey was used as a tool to evaluate the schools overall cultural and religious values. Survey results were also able to provide insight to professional development opportunities.

Principals were then asked to recomplete the survey in November 2011. This assisted in determining a variation in school values over a twelve month period, since the implementation of Harmony Program activities in 2011.

Summarised responses from the first “School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist”, completed in November 2010, suggest that:

- During the time that the surveys were completed, the schools had not yet experienced the diversity within their respective schools to fulfil some of the question, identifying some of the statements as not being applicable to their school.
- There is an acknowledgement from the schools that staff professional development was not a priority at the time of completing the survey, particularly due to the student population present during the completion of the initial survey, within the respective schools.
- Staffing and student opportunities are not based on culture, however on individual merit.
- Although schools self ranked highly in the area of the supports in place for new students, there is an evident need for the participating schools to continue their forward planning in supporting the appropriate integration of new students within their schools, particularly those of culturally diverse backgrounds.
- There is a need to advance the involvement of community outreach programs within the educational institutions, in order to enhancing community connectedness.
- Culturally sensitive conflict resolution approaches have not yet been identified within the schools, however conflict resolution more broadly is addressed within the schools

Repeating the School-Wide Culture Competence Observation Checklist revealed improvement on a number of indicators. The following indicators averaged below 4 in Term 1 and above 4 in Term 4 indicating that by the end of the year schools felt that they were almost always or always meeting these criteria:

- “Linguistic and content objectives are addressed for second language learners”
- “Youth “voice” is considered in decision-making by regularly meeting with randomly selected groups of students to obtain feedback.”

- “Professional development is offered that addresses race/ethnicity/nationality.”
- “Teaching strategies accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a variety of grouping strategies, hands-on activities, visuals, oral language development, reading/writing workshops, etc.”
- “Community outreach programs regularly survey the perspectives of various local community constituency and stakeholder groups, including parents.”
- “Parent involvement programs exist for all culture groups.”
- “The inevitability of intercultural conflict is recognized by peer mediation programs and/or other proactive approaches to conflict resolution.”

Pleasingly through the project the schools felt that more professional development was offered in relation to the needs of CALD students provided through the Harmony project and the schools were now better equipped to cater for the need of CALD students and parents should their schools become more multicultural in the future. Some of the programs schools felt were useful included Restorative Justice, Harmony Program, Behaviour Management Policy, CASSE pilot school (Creating a safe school environment).

Some of the more general improvements noticed by the schools included increased respect that students showed to children from other cultures and a general increase in interest in other cultures. One of the consistent comments in relation to the benefit of the project also included the networking opportunity and the building of positive and sustainable relationships between the Officer schools:

- *“The Harmony Project has been an enlightening and empowering project. It has brought together many of our school leaders and students. A lasting network has been formed.”*
- *“The project has helped us to develop links with other schools and with leaders in the community, enabling schools to support each other.”*

Student Surveys

All students were invited to complete an online survey between May 18 and 19, 2011 and recompleted the same survey on October 14, 2011. Similar to the School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist, it was anticipated that the re-completion of the student surveys would assist in determining any change in values towards cultural diversity as a direct result of program implementation.

The questionnaire is made up of two surveys that address the participating student’s knowledge of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity. The first survey identifies how well students understand values such as respect, responsibility and equality, whether they feel that the school appropriately responds to students from all different backgrounds, and whether they feel that they have made good friendships with their peers. Example items are, “I think everyone should be treated equally,” “No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school,” and, “I will stand up for other students”. The second survey is a short questionnaire called the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. This questionnaire has items about student resiliency and ability to handle challenges. The results of the questionnaires will help to determine any change in values towards cultural diversity as a direct result of program implementation.

Ninety-six students out of a possible 145 completed the surveys in Term 2 which is a 66% response rate and this figure was 99 students in Term 4 (68%). Of these students, 76% were in grade 6 and 24% grade 5, and 41.7% were female and 58.3% male. There were 11 students born overseas and 36 students that had at least one parent born overseas, Afghanistan being the most common country with 11 students having at least one parent born in Afghanistan.

For the questions on whether students understood the terms safety, effort, respect and self-responsibility there were five response options from:

1= I don't know what this means
 3= Unsure
 5= I understand this very well

Students rating themselves as 4 or 5 were grouped together as having an understanding of the term. For safety, 99% of students understood the term in Term 2 and 4, 96.9% for effort (91.9% in Term 4), 95.9% for respect (95% Term 4), and 91.6% for self-responsibility (96% Term 4). When asked to write down what religions they knew, 68.8% were able to name two or more religions. This increased to 76.8% in Term 4.

For the values questions students read a number of statements and then had to respond according to the following criteria:

1= Strongly Disagree
 2= Disagree
 3= Undecided
 4= Agree
 5= Strongly Agree

The following Table provides percentage figures of those that either strongly agreed or agreed with an item in Term 2 compared to Term 4.

Values Results

Question	% Strongly agree or agree Term 2	% Strongly agree or agree Term 4
It is important to aim for excellence	84.2	97.0
I always do the best I can	88.4	92.9
I think everyone should be treated equally	92.6	97.0
Everyone at school gets a fair go	81.1	85.9
I will stand up for other students	84.2	91.9
I know that someone at this school would help me if I was being bullied or denied my rights as a student	83.2	86.9
Students at this school are generally honest with one another	68.4	69.7
Students at this school should act according to how they feel	50.5	64.6

I am polite and well mannered to other students	87.4	94.9
I am polite and well mannered to teachers	94.7	96.0
I am aware of how my behaviour makes other people feel	88.4	91.9
I am aware of the practices of other religions	81.1	90.9
I get involved in the school community	75.8	68.7
I get along with students who are different to me	82.1	93.9
I have a good relationship with my teachers	82.1	86.9
I believe we can learn valuable things from other cultures	81.1	90.9
I believe we can learn valuable things from other religions	75.8	83.8
No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school	72.6	81.8
I can resolve conflicts with other students without fighting	78.9	83.8
I know what the benefits of school are	86.3	90.9
The values of this school and those of my family are similar	73.7	74.7

The results reveal that before the project commenced the students already had a strong sense of tolerance and diversity and felt that they could benefit from an understanding of different cultures and religions. However, it was pleasing there was still over or close to a 10% improvement on some of the key indicators for this project:

- “I am aware of the practices of other religions”
- “I get along with students who are different to me”
- “I believe we can learn valuable things from other cultures”
- “I believe we can learn valuable things from other religions”
- “No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school”

The following Table provides results to determine whether those positive attitudes are reflected in positive social behaviours.

Social Relationship Results for Term 2 and Term 4 (Term 4 results are presented in parentheses)

Question	% Lots of times	% Sometimes	% Never
I assist other students when I can	41.5 (46.4)	52.1 (43.3)	6.4 (10.3)
There have been times when other students have shown concern for me	31.9 (36.1)	58.5 (49.5)	9.6 (14.4)
I show respect to people, no matter who they are	46.8 (56.7)	41.5 (25.8)	11.7 (17.5)
This term, I have been bullied by another student or a group of students	16.0 (25.8)	21.3 (20.6)	62.8 (53.6)
I was made fun of and teased in a hurtful way	18.1 (25.8)	19.1 (16.5)	62.8 (57.7)
I was called mean and hurtful names	16.0 (23.7)	14.9 (20.6)	69.1 (55.7)
Kids ignored me, didn't let me join in, or left me out of things on purpose	8.5 (23.7)	29.8 (26.8)	61.7 (49.5)
I was hit, kicked or pushed around	9.6 (23.7)	13.8 (11.3)	76.6 (64.9)

Kids told lies or spread nasty stories about me and tried to make other kids not like me	7.4 (23.7)	18.1 (15.5)	74.5 (60.8)
I had money or other things taken away from me or broken	10.6 (21.6)	8.5 (8.2)	80.9 (70.1)
I was made afraid that I would get hurt	10.6 (24.7)	8.5 (7.2)	80.9 (68.0)
I was bullied in another way	10.6 (23.7)	10.6 (9.3)	78.7 (67.0)

The pro-social behaviours of assisting other students and showing respect were consistent with the attitude results with 80% of students saying they have shown or received these behaviours. The bullying items reveal that around a third of students had experienced some form of bullying. While there was an increase in the number of students expressing positive attitudes to other religions, cultures, and 'difference' in general, this wasn't necessarily reflected in a decrease in bullying behaviour even though perceived 'difference' is one of the facets of bullying behaviour.

According to standard diagnostic criteria for the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, there were 74.5% of students in the 'normal' category, 18.1% of students in the 'borderline' category and 7.4% classified in the 'abnormal' category. There was an improvement in Term 4 with 81.5% of students in the 'normal' category, 9.8% of students in the 'borderline' category and 8.7% classified in the 'abnormal' category. Those classified in the 'borderline' or 'abnormal' category indicates students at risk of mental health problems but this is not a diagnostic test of mental illness. Those students that had experienced some bullying were much more likely to be at risk of mental health problems, $\chi^2(1) = 3.95, p < .05$ and the same again in Term 4, $\chi^2(1) = 7.98, p < .05$.

All the different evaluation methods used in this project were able to show positive change which increases confidence in the efficacy of this project. The schools were able to list specific changes in policies and programs that had occurred as a result of their involvement in the Harmony Project and felt that students showed an increased respect towards children from other cultures. In the pre and post student surveys there was an increase in the number of students that agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware and could learn from other religions and cultures. Despite improved attitudes there was no reduction in the frequency of bullying behaviour and future research needs to develop a more specific evaluation tool that can measure both discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. After some of the key activities students themselves commented on self-improvement related to an increased understanding of different cultures and religions and enjoyment in meeting people from different backgrounds which corroborates the findings of the pre and post attitude surveys.

The Building Harmony Project is unique because it is one of very few Australian prevention projects that respond to diversity issues as new populations arrive within an identified growth corridor. It is amongst the very few diversity projects that measures and evaluates the impact of minimising racism and racial discourse through direct intervention. Additionally, the research methods will enable recommendations to be identified at varied levels, as it serves dual purposes, evaluating staff as well as the students.

Windermere Child and Family Services, Cardinia Shire Council, Monash University and the participating Harmony Program Schools, look forward to and take pride in the research findings informing good practice for other growth corridor regions across Australia.

2. PROCESS

2.1 Brief project outline: Introduction

The journey began in 2009 when Windermere Child and Family Services submitted a project proposal to the Melbourne Community Foundation for the Building Harmony Project. Upon the success of the application, Cardinia Shire Council and Monash University formed a partnership for the delivery of the unique action research project. From here the steering committee, made up of the five Harmony Program Schools (Berwick Grammar School, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School) was formed and 8 months later, in November 2010, the Building Harmony Project was formally launched at Berwick Grammar School.

Upon receiving funding for the implementation of the Building Harmony Project, the project partners spent considerable time developing contractual arrangements, MOU's and a clear project work plan, outlining project specific goals, tasks, milestones and achievable outcomes. Through this process Windermere Child and Family Services, the Cardinia Shire Council and Monash University established clear governance arrangements i.e. partner agency roles and responsibilities in effectively meeting our accountability to the funding body.

The designated geographical area to implement the Building Harmony Project is the suburb of Officer, located within the Cardinia Shire. The Cardinia Shire is located southeast of Melbourne and is considered one of the most rapidly growing residential areas of Melbourne (Forecast ID, 2011). Population forecasts suggest that the Shire will experience a 103.86% population increase by 2031 (Forecast ID, 2011). Much of this development is happening within the growth corridor of Officer, with a new wave of couples and families migrating from neighbouring municipalities. It is anticipated that the Officer Precinct alone will attract a 1593.76% increase, with the current population of 1780 expected to rise to 30,149 residents by 2031 (Forecast ID, 2011).

The Shire of Cardinia currently has a very small culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population. However, predictions founded on the migration patterns flowing south-eastward from Melbourne's centre suggest that the Shire is likely to experience an influx of CALD population groups, as the neighbouring municipalities; City of Casey and Greater Dandenong, have already experienced (Forecast ID, 2011).

Furthermore, the establishment of various multi faith schools will undoubtedly attract increasingly diverse community members into the Shire. The Cardinia Shire has welcomed 6 additional schools to Officer since 2006. Prior to this, Officer Primary School was the only school operating in the Officer region. The seven schools that are now operating within the suburb include: Officer Primary School, Maranatha Christian School, St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Heritage College, Minaret College, Berwick Grammar and Brethren College.

Data obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that approximately 94% of Cardinia Shire residents are born in English speaking countries. Therefore, the anticipated influx of CALD population groups coupled with the sudden development of several faith and culture based schools within the predominantly mono-cultural suburb of Officer has the potential to cause negative racial attitudes between students and community members. The Building Harmony Project has been funded in anticipation of this, intending to work with schools to minimise the adverse social impact of this demographic shift.

Ensuring social connectedness within a diverse society requires social insight, moral development and intercultural skills. The effective response to an increasingly diverse society needs to be handled with absolute diligence and sensitivity. This can be achieved by creating a community that is socially aware and understanding of culturally diverse community members. This is of particular significance in emerging growth corridor areas such as Officer, central to the expanding Cardinia Shire growth corridor. It is for this reason that the aim of the Building Harmony Project is to build the capacity of young people from diverse backgrounds, and that of their families to live harmoniously in the emerging community of Officer, where it aims to prevent crime based on race and diversity, in growth corridors based on preventative interventions.

Similarly, schools are a forum which has the potential to equip students with appropriate knowledge and understanding about the beliefs and cultures of others. This deep understanding is believed to reduce forms of racial bias and prejudice attitudes, positively affecting the cohesion of multicultural society. It is imperative that this teaching extends beyond superficial activities. The promotion of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity must be deeply ingrained within school cultures, and reinforced through explicit curriculum teachings. Furthermore, a community approach which includes interschool interaction and cooperation is most effective. The Officer Harmony Project has the potential to positively affect the social attitudes within this rapidly diversifying region through the implementation of a multi-level, evidence based project. A project which involves explicit teachings of respect and cultural diversity, complemented with implicit teachings through high levels of interaction and collaboration is considered the most effective means of producing positive and lasting outcomes.

The overall project objectives that have been identified for the Building Harmony Program is to:

- Develop knowledge about cultural diversity. This involves learning about different cultures, change, cultural identity, and differences and similarities within and between groups.
- Develop a diverse perspective outlook in which students learn that knowledge is a social construction which is intrinsically linked to culture and experience, enabling children to understand that there is more than one way of looking at the world.
- Develop knowledge about social equality, including learning about racism, discrimination and gender. This includes teaching methods of combating these within ones boundaries of influence.
- Develop skills and values to preserve cultural diversity, including respect for autonomy.

- Develop a broad social competence in which children understand the importance of respect and empathy, coupled with skills to resolve conflict.
- Develop a governance model where the participating schools will continue to collaborate on identified project objectives that will enhance cultural respect and harmony.

The operational project objectives that have been identified for the Building Harmony Program is to:

- Measure cultural and religious respect levels at the participating “Harmony Project” schools, pre and post project implementation.
- Identify social/integrated recreation opportunities for the Harmony program, in collaboration with the participating schools with the view to compliment existing curriculum.
- Influence the cultural and religious respect levels of participating students and schools in a positive manner.
- Develop a thorough evaluation process which will provide evidence to validate the project objectives and support the long term viability of the identified initiatives.
- Provide evidence that will create opportunities for funding of similar activities and projects.
- Develop a detailed work plan in partnership with Windermere Child and Family Services for the Building in Harmony Project.
- Establish a Project Steering Group, consisting of key stakeholders made up of those directly involved in the projects: Windermere Child and Family Services, Cardinia Shire Council and participating schools.
- Establish a project executive that will support the Building Harmony project and is committed to its long-term sustainability.
- Work in partnership with Monash University to undertake project evaluation, conduct a literature review and develop a framework for reporting purposes.
- Implement and evaluate tools to gather evidence based information that will inform best practice.
- Implement programs and activities in accordance with the Year 2 work plan.

The above mentioned program objectives will be achieved through various means. However there are key elements that will guide the project. Firstly, direct intervention through the delivery of programs will allow staff and students to explore their own values and will also provide participants with the opportunity to learn about the cultures and values of the surrounding Harmony Program Schools.

Secondly, as the Building Harmony program is an action research project, a thorough research plan was identified to gain insight into staff and student values. Data will be analysed through two primary channels; the first area of research to be undertaken was a survey titled the “School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist”, which all participating school principals were asked to complete in November 2010. The survey was used as a tool to evaluate the schools overall cultural and religious values and was instrumental in providing insight into professional development opportunities that could be offered through the Building Harmony Program.

Principals were then asked to recomplete the survey in November 2011. This assisted in determining a variation in school values over a twelve month period, since the implementation of Harmony Program activities in 2011.

After undertaking a lengthy consultation process with the Monash University Ethics Committee, a questionnaire was also implemented for student completion. The questionnaire was made up of two surveys that addressed the participating student's knowledge of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity and was used to gather baseline data on the participants cultural and religious respect levels.

All students were invited to complete an online survey between May 18 and 19, 2011 and recompleted the same survey on October 14, 2011. Similar to the School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist, it was anticipated that the re-completion of the student surveys would assist in determining any change in values towards cultural diversity, as a direct result of program implementation.

2.2 Building Family and Community Resilience in Cardinia Growth Corridor Research Project

The Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor was heavily informed by the Building Family and Community Resilience in Cardinia Growth Corridor research project. The project, which was led by Windermere Child and Family Services, Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council, with the invaluable support of the member organisations on the project development group (consisting of 13 local and state organisations), aimed to develop a response to growth corridor human service demands. It was anticipated that strategies to establish proactive community relationships and friendships within the new Officer community would be identified so that community members would be less reliant on services. Additionally, service gaps were identified to guide and improve social connectedness as well as infrastructure development, during the planning stages of the Officer Precinct.

More than 60 interviews were conducted with local and regional organisational representatives and residents of Officer.

Monash University staff also undertook a thorough literature review process. One of the key findings that arose from this was the change in cultural demographics, with an expected increase in culturally diverse community members moving to the Cardinia Shire, namely Officer. This prediction was informed particularly by the demographical changes that have taken place within the City of Casey, neighbouring municipality of the Cardinia Shire.

Similarly, report findings identified:

1. The need to establish strong social and community relationships particularly in response to concerns about major shifts in the population and how this needs to be appropriately addressed.
2. The need for early provision of accessible community infrastructure.

The next step within the research project was to create partnerships, addressing areas that are central to family well being. This included: health, mental health, education, early childhood development, policing and community safety, ecological sustainability, cohesive neighbourhoods embracing diversity of Indigenous and multi

ethnic families and inclusiveness of diverse abilities. A direct result of this was the inception of the Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor project.

2.3 Literature Review and Research Process

1.0 Introduction:

The Shire of Cardinia is located southeast of Melbourne and is considered one of the most rapidly growing residential areas of Melbourne (Cardinia Shire Council, 2010). Population forecasts suggest that the area will experience a 51.86% increase by 2031 (Cardinia Shire Council, 2010). Much of this development is happening within Officer, a suburb within the Shire, as the large farming properties undergo residential development.

The Shire of Cardinia currently has a very small culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population. However, predictions founded on the migration patterns flowing south-eastward from Melbourne's centre suggest that the Shire is likely to experience an influx of CALD population groups, as the neighbouring City of Casey has already experienced (Cardinia Shire Council, 2010). Furthermore, Officer has recently seen the development of five six schools. Until 2006 Officer Primary School remained the only school within the suburb. However, today there are seven schools within this region, these are; Officer Primary School, Maranatha Christian School, St Bridges Catholic Primary School, Heritage College, Minaret College, Berwick Grammar and Brethren College.

Throughout history, rapidly diversifying demographics have frequently encountered attitudes of resistance and racial tension (Denson, 2009; Johnson, 2003). Therefore, the anticipated influx of CALD population groups coupled with the sudden development of several faith and culture based schools within the predominantly mono-cultural suburb of Officer has the potential to cause negative racial attitudes between students and community members. The Officer Harmony Project has been funded in anticipation of this, intending to work with schools to minimise the adverse social impact of this demographic shift. Evaluations and meta-analysis research of diversity related initiatives promoting positive intergroup relations consistently indicate positive outcomes, affirming the value and potential of the Officer Harmony Project (Denson, 2009).

Throughout this literature review several intercultural school based programs will be identified with specific exploration of the implemented strategies. These will be used to make recommendations towards the design and implementation process of the Officer Harmony Project. Furthermore, several tools used to evaluate intercultural and diversity education initiatives will be identified, thus providing a guiding framework for the evaluation design of the Officer Harmony Project.

2.0 Intercultural, respect and values education:

2.1 Theoretical framework:

Stephan and Stephan (2000) identified intergroup fears and threats as major contributors towards prejudice attitudes. These can include realistic threats from a particular group, symbolic threats from an out-group, intergroup anxiety during interactions, and negative stereotypes (Oskamp, 2000). Therefore, intergroup bias is considered a multifaceted phenomenon consisting of attitudes, emotions, behaviour and cognitive stereotyping (Denson, 2009; Wilder & Simon, 2001). As the

population within Australia becomes increasingly diverse, it is imperative that multilevel action is taken to combat racial bias as such threatens the cohesion of society. In response to this, intercultural education is perceived as being important for all children and is frequently endorsed as a facet of good education (Leeman, 2006). Schools have been identified as an effective forum to promote and facilitate interculturalism, assisting children to develop positive intergroup relations, incorporating principles of respect, understanding and acceptance (Enburg, 2004; Johnson, 2003; Leeman, 2006).

Many intercultural and value promoting initiatives have been implemented in educational institutions throughout Western countries and cultures. Evaluations and meta-analyses of interventions consistently indicate positive outcomes (Denson, 2009; Oskamp, 2000). Furthermore, benefits of intercultural, interfaith, values based education extend beyond reductions in racial bias, to include a range of improvements including increased responsible behaviours, academic diligence, and enhanced student and teacher relationship and wellbeing (Lovat, Tooney, Dally & Clement, 2009). These benefits reiterate the importance of the Officer Harmony Project, whilst creating an evidence base which can be used to promote high levels of engagement from principals and teachers within the respective schools.

School based initiatives promoting values and positive intercultural relations share the overarching goal of reducing intergroup bias (Denson, 2009). Therefore the common objective of these initiatives is for children to learn principles of acceptance, respect and understanding whilst developing skills to live within an ethnically and culturally diverse society (Leeman, 2003). Merely delivering information to schools is an inadequate approach, but rather initiatives must be multilevel, interactive, comprehensive and engaging. Intercultural initiatives are not always transferrable to other population groups, however, it is valuable to explore and consider other initiatives as these can indicate best practice and provide an evidence base to guide initiatives within other communities (Johnson, 2003).

There are two dominant forms of intervention and these are most effective when implemented simultaneously as they compliment, reiterate and reinforce each other; these are the explicit enlightenment approach and the implicit interactional approach. The enlightenment approach includes structured and intentional programs which engage students in diversity related ideas, racial cultural awareness, explicitly teaching values of respect and acceptance (Denson, 2009). The enlightenment approach intends to expand the knowledge that people have of other groups, breaking down misconceptions and fears which are believed to foster to prejudice attitudes. This approach is successful as knowledge and understanding reduce the perception of threat, which in turn reduces prejudice (Denson, 2009). This form of teaching imbeds diversity and harmony principles into activities, discussions, role-playing, films and readings (Abond and Levy, 2000).

Living well within a diverse society requires social insight, moral development, intercultural skills and sensitivity. Therefore, being able to recognise and respond to cultural diversity is paramount within multicultural Australia. A comprehensive list of intercultural educational objectives has been compiled to guide the selection and development of educational content;

- Develop knowledge about cultural diversity. This involves learning about different cultures, change, cultural identity, and differences and similarities within and between groups.
- Develop a diverse perspective outlook in which students learn that knowledge is a social construction which is intrinsically linked to culture and experience, enabling children to understand that there is more than one way of looking at the world.
- Develop knowledge about social equality, including learning about racism, discrimination and gender. This includes teaching methods of combating these within one's boundaries of influence.
- Develop skills and values to preserve cultural diversity, including respect for autonomy.
- Develop a broad social competence in which children understand the importance of respect and empathy, coupled with skills to resolve conflict.

Underscoring each of the aforementioned objectives is the intent to impart awareness, sensitivity and respect towards difference; this is the crux of intercultural education. Within primary schools it is more appropriate for intercultural education to focus on relational aspects, whilst within high schools the inclusion of social and political insight can also be beneficial. The explicit enlightenment approach to intercultural education has been associated with improved racial understanding and cognitive development. Furthermore, when cultural diversity exists within one school, there is an association with improved school experience.

Direct, explicit intercultural education has previously been the dominant form of interventions, however, the implicit interactional approach has recently been gaining credibility (Leeman, 2003). The interactional approach involves intentionally bringing diverse groups together to encourage positive interactions within the safe, protective school environment (Batelaan, 2001). This can involve sporting activities, social activities and other intercampus events (Denson, 2009). Research has indicated that intercultural interaction is positively related to the promotion of racial understanding and reduction of racial bias, with additional benefits including improvement in school satisfaction, social self-confidence and critical thinking skills (Denson, 2009). However, it must be noted that positive intergroup contact relies heavily on the provision of appropriate conditions. When supportive conditions are not in place, the interaction has the potential to have an adverse effect in which racial bias is heightened. Intercultural interaction is most likely to produce positive outcomes when all students are pursuing a shared goal, there is equal group status, and authoritative figures are supportive of the intergroup interaction (Denson, 2009).

Research has indicated that the efficacy of the explicit enlightenment approach to intercultural education is increased and longer lasting when complemented with intergroup interaction. Furthermore, a whole school approach in which teachers are enthusiastic and supportive, aptly infusing intercultural education into multiple constituents of the curriculum are also more likely to achieve successful and lasting outcomes.

2.2 Project case studies:

Four case studies have been selected to provide real and practical examples of the way which the aforementioned theoretical frameworks have been adapted, developed and implemented within schools.

2.2.1 Case study one:

The Australian International Academy, Melbourne, Victoria.

The Australian International Academy is an independent educational institution which balances the curriculum between secular and Islamic education. Several of the college objectives focus on building tolerance and appreciation of other cultures within the Muslim character of the students. The goal and objectives of the Australian International Academy indicate a whole-school culture of diversity acceptance and appreciation. This is further exemplified within the 36 values explicitly identified by the school which include tolerance, acceptance, understanding, respect, freedom, care, compassion, and cooperation. Teachers are expected to model these values and students are expected to adhere to them. These values are further reinforced within the structure of the curriculum. This includes explicit curriculum teaching, interschool visits, extracurricular programs, interfaith programs, celebration of Harmony Day, leadership and personal development programs.

2.2.2 Case Study Two:

Promoting interfaith and intercultural understanding through government, catholic and independent school perspectives: Arncliffe Public School and Arncliffe West Infants School, Sydney NSW.

Arncliffe Public School and Arncliffe West Infants School have attracted attention due to their work with other schools to promote understanding and respect for other cultures. The Arncliffe Public School and Arncliffe West Infants School initiated the establishment of a Harmony Committee comprising of principals from eight local schools. This partnership enables multiple forms and levels of interaction, promoting tolerance and appreciation of diversity. Each school developed a simple, concise set of values in consultation with students, these included; 'we respect everyone's rights to be safe and happy', and 'I show respect to teachers and others'. These values are integrated and reinforced within all curriculum activities.

Principals within the committee meet once a term to maintain relationship, support one another and plan future actions. The initial network between schools gave teachers an opportunity to connect, and schools an opportunity to share resources. Several projects have evolved from the partnership between the schools. These include;

- The identification of student leaders from each school. While the principals meet each term, student leaders also assemble and engage in a range of activities which promote positive relationships, these include games, art, creative writing, formal conversation, informal conversation, and debate, all which encourage friendship and acceptance.
- A play was written and performed by a selection of students from each school with the theme of 'Harmony'. This was performed to a large audience of parents from all eight schools and was an effective way to publically promote the values of the schools.
- Students were selected from each school based on their creative ability. Students worked collaboratively to write and illustrate a book. Several fundraising activities were held to fund the publication of the book, providing

extended intercultural interaction opportunities, in which people were coming together with a shared purpose.

- The schools collectively celebrate Harmony Day, organising several activities around this, including games and a picnic.
- The eight schools host interschool sport carnivals, allowing large numbers of students and parents to interact and construct positive relationships.

2.2.3 Case Study Three:

Student wellbeing and cultural diversity project - Preston Girls Secondary College.

This project intended to build relationships and connections between students and their school, through the embracing of cultural and linguistic diversity and the promotion of mental health and resilience. This was implemented through a variety of strategies, including explicitly teaching diversity; the inclusion and mental health promotion within classes; the development of a group program resource which relates to the classroom teachings; connecting with parent groups to discuss the issues of the school and the students as a means of encouraging parental, in-home support; the establishment of a steering committee with representation from all partners; regular staff consultation and feedback; and regular student consultation and feedback. The school engaged with a variety of stakeholders, including Austin Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture, Migrant Resources Centre North East, and Preston Girls Secondary College. The four stages of the project have been briefly outlined below;

Stage one:

- Identifying need.
- Identifying and engaging partners.
- Establishing a steering committee, an evaluation committee, a program development committee, and a professional development working group.

Stage two:

- Identify gaps in the professional development of the teaching staff and the classroom materials.
- Adjustment of the professional development program to include necessary content.
- Make decisions on classroom materials.
- Steering committee became consciously engaged with broader school community (staff, school council).

Stage three:

- Project implemented in classroom.
- Continued meeting of steering committee.
- The subcommittee meet after each session to reflect.
- Professional development delivered to staff.

Stage four:

- Evaluation.
- Planning for following year.

The evaluation of this project indicated that students were highly interested and engaged within the activities presented. The most commonly expressed benefits included increased understanding about where other students came from, different cultures and interests. Students stated that this understanding made them feel more connected to each other, improving the social cohesion and connectedness of the school.

2.2.4 Case Study Four:

Values Education.

In 2004 the Australian Government dedicated funding to support the implementation of the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools. Twenty-five school clusters were developed from 143 schools around Australia. Each cluster designed, implemented and evaluated their values education projects and the findings have been collated within a comprehensive report which is a valuable resource of strategy ideas and best practice.

Common findings provide recommendations for future education strategies, these include; ensure that shared language is consistently used across and between schools; use value-focused pedagogies within the whole curriculum; integrate values education into the curriculum, rather than a separate or additional topic; explicitly teach values without making assumptions that children know what they mean; model values implicitly to reinforce the explicit learning; develop engaging approaches which connect students to local contexts; consciously incorporate intercultural understanding and social inclusion; provide teachers with professional learning and collaboration opportunities; encourage innovation in teaching approaches; collect and monitor data for continuous improvement of strategies.

Each school cluster designed their own strategies to implement values education, and therefore the following is a selection of innovative strategies/actions obtained from summaries of the 25 school clusters.

- A landscape gardening project in which students contribute towards a shared garden space;
- Workshops between schools in which older students have the opportunity to teach younger children;
- Peer support leaders which have a values promoting role and a leadership presence within all school activities;
- Weekly school assemblies which reinforce values;
- Students from each school working collaboratively to write and perform a play;
- Interschool celebration of specific days e.g. Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, Aboriginal Reconciliation Day;
- School levels go on excursions together;
- The development of a cluster intranet website where students can easily connect, discuss activities they have participated in, and issues which interest them. The virtual space encourages children to challenge stereotypes, as they interact with diverse groups they learn that everyone thinks differently, whilst forming friendship and establishing trust;
- Exploring and showcasing cultural identities through art, music, dance, story writing, drama and photography. These can be presented to the broader community;

- Forums with interested students from each school where they can reflect on values and the activities. This enables them connect, listen to others opinions and further form relationships with people from different schools, religious or cultural groups;
- A collaborative exhibition on 'What makes you Australia?' in which different students can express similarities among Australians, whilst appreciating and celebrating the diversity of the population;
- Creating specific values education staff teams within each school
- Regular interschool visits;
- Using the peer support programs which most schools have to facilitate values education;
- Drama classes which explore values and conflicts through theatre;
- Writing and publishing class stories;
- Community spaces project;
- Peer group projects which involve interaction between buddy classes and the broader community. This could involve buddy classes hosting a morning tea or a concert within a local retirement village;
- Establishing Student Action Teams (SATs) as a student informant and representative body;
- Using Socratic circles in class discussions.

3.0 Evaluation:

3.1 Theoretical framework for evaluation:

Questionnaires are the most common instrument used to evaluate intercultural education initiatives. However, it is imperative that such tools are thoughtfully designed, with consideration of the fact that thoughts, attitudes, feelings and emotions are not always cognitively apparent. Research suggests that racial bias and prejudice attitudes operate at conscious and unconscious levels (Blair, 2001; Leeman), and therefore, various instruments have been designed to evaluate these explicit and implicit forms of racial bias (Enburg, 2004). However, a well-designed tool that uses self reported responses is considered adequate for the respective project.

Teaching respect and acceptance of intercultural and interfaith diversity is inseparable from the teaching of other values. Therefore, such is closely related to anti bullying and personal wellbeing initiatives. The evaluation tools sourced for the purpose of the Officer Harmony Project includes a collection of different racial, social and emotional wellbeing evaluation instruments. A comprehensive initiative with the central focus of promoting harmony, intercultural and interfaith tolerance has the potential to produce benefits which extend beyond cultural and religious understanding, and therefore a multi-topical evaluation instrument will allow for exploration of a range of social and personal improvements.

It is imperative that the evaluation instrument uses language which is appropriate for the intended age group. Similar themed questions benefit from being grouped together to increase readability and coherency which maximise the likelihood of accurate responses. Prior literature has indicated that lengthy surveys are at increased risk of being completed in a hurried and inaccurate manner, and therefore the survey length is considered important. It is imperative that the questionnaire

intentionally uses inviting, relational language to avoid participants perceiving there to be a right or wrong answer, and to encourage honest opinions, feeling and thoughts to be expressed. A design which records responses on a Likert scale or a thermometer reading has benefits of being easy to complete and analyses, however, the option of open ended questions encourages a deeper examination into personal thoughts and feelings, allowing a dimension of exploration that Likert scale responses omit. Furthermore, the evaluation instrument must include questions which are aligned with the specific objectives of the Officer Harmony Project.

3.2 Evaluation tools:

After considering the intention of the Officer Harmony Project and exploring potential strategies, it can be asserted that the evaluation intends to determine if the project has positively affected the cultural respect and harmony of the children within the schools of the respective region. The selected evaluation tool/s will be used to obtain pre and post intervention data which will indicate the change in proportion of children who report positive attitudes and knowledge about cultural groups and diversity. Literature has indicated that promoting harmony within schools includes developing personal skills within students to better manage their own behaviour, as well as respecting others in general. Therefore, it is suggested that the evaluation tool ascertains information on three aspects of the children's attitude, awareness and wellbeing. These are; social relations, emotional strengths and weaknesses and diversity attitudes.

The following list contains a selection of evaluation instruments which have academic credibility. The indicators which relate to the Officer Harmony Project include an increase in positive attitudes related to diversity, a decrease in bullying and an increase in self-esteem. It is believed that the following instruments, an adaption of these instruments, or a selected compilation of the following instruments would extract the information relevant to the identified indicators. Each listed instrument has been added as an appendix.

- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire.
- The Peer Relations Questionnaire for Children.
- The School Interracial Climate Scale.
- Care and Compassion Questionnaire.
- Fair Go Questionnaire.
- Friendship and Acceptance Questionnaire.
- Values Education Survey for Students.
- Student Values Survey.
- Taking the Human Rights Temperature of your School.
- Modern Racism Scale.
- Encouraging Tolerance and Social Cohesion through School Education: Questions for discussion with students.
- School Safety Scale.
- Some questions could be adapted from Oskamp

4.0 Recommendations:

4.1 Program recommendations:

- Explore what schools are already doing around values and intercultural education, so the gaps can be identified or so the Officer Harmony Project can build on pre-existing structures;
- Develop a presentation which promotes the benefits of being highly involved within the Officer Harmony Project to achieve maximum enthusiasm, cooperation and engagement;
- Establish a committee between the principals;
- Establish a committee of students;
- Establish a committee of teachers;
- Establish a 'brand' for all diversity and value related activity;
- Develop a common mission/goal between all schools;
- Explore diversity related resources and methods of working them into the school curriculum;
- Encourage collaboration in areas such as sport, art and drama;
- Promote joining together for class excursions;
- Collaborate for community activities i.e. Clean up Australia Day;
- Develop an intranet between partnership schools to facilitate regular interaction between students;
- Encourage school communities to celebrate diversity related days together, i.e. Harmony Day, Aboriginal Reconciliation Day;
- Have a joint 'presence' at community events i.e. Yakaboo, The Pakenham Show, The Berwick Show;
- Promote the inclusion of values and intercultural education as a core subject;
- Develop a comprehensive resource pack which makes it easy for teachers to design classes;
- Interschool buddy projects;
- Assist schools to develop systematic strategies to increase interschool interaction and cooperation.

4.2 Evaluation Recommendations:

- Evaluation tool appropriate for pre and post intervention use;
- Pilot test the instrument on a selection of children to ensure the structure and language are appropriate;
- Include in the post test only a selection of qualitative questions related to the process of the project i.e. what the students enjoyed/didn't enjoy;
- Select three tools to assess the social relations; emotional strengths and weakness and diversity attitudes of the students.

5.0 Conclusion:

The recent establishment of several faith based schools within Officer coupled with predictions of increasing culturally and linguistically diverse population groups has the potential to cause racial conflict within this suburb. Schools are a forum which have the potential to equip students with appropriate knowledge and understanding about the beliefs and cultures of others. This deep understanding is believed to reduce forms of racial bias and prejudice attitudes, positively affecting the cohesion of multicultural society. It is imperative that this teaching extends beyond superficial activities. The promotion of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity must be deeply ingrained within school cultures, and reinforced through explicit curriculum teachings. Furthermore, a community approach which includes interschool

interaction and cooperation is most effective. The Officer Harmony Project has the potential to positively affect the social attitudes within this rapidly diversifying region through the implementation of a multi-level, evidence based project. A project which involves explicit teachings of respect and cultural diversity, complemented with implicit teachings through high levels of interaction and collaboration is considered the most effective means of producing positive and lasting outcomes.

2.4 Ethics Approval and Informed Consent

To ensure that the welfare and confidentiality of survey respondents was handled with uttermost care and of high standard, the Building Harmony Steering Committee was required to undertake an ethics approval process through the Monash University Ethics Committee. This included the participating students being fully informed of the voluntary nature of the survey.

As part of the ethical committee approval process, the Monash University Ethics Committee also requested that all participating schools complete and return a “Letter of Endorsement”. All school principals were asked to sign this letter to confirm their support and approval of the Building Harmony surveys being completed within the respective schools. The student surveys could not be completed until the Letter of Endorsement was returned.

Additionally, as survey respondents are aged less than 18 years, a condition of the continuation of the research was that a letter and a parental consent form be distributed to parents. An inability to return the student consent forms resulted in the student being ineligible to complete the student surveys. An inability to take part in the surveys did not have impact on the student’s participation in the remaining Harmony Program activities.

To ensure the wellbeing of participating students and to maintain the integrity of the program, it was obligatory that the ethical committee approval process was finalised prior to the commencement of the students completing the surveys. Consequently, the student surveys were completed 3 months after the originally identified date, due to ongoing consultation with the Monash University Ethics Committee.

Please refer to Appendix I to view the Letter of Endorsement.

Please refer to Appendix II and III to view the Monash University Student Survey Letter to Parents and the Monash University Student Survey Consent Form.

2.5 Governance and Partnership Development

The relationships that have been formed since the inception of the Building Harmony Program include not only those between Windermere Child and Family Services, Cardinia Shire Council, Monash University and the participating Harmony Program schools, but the strong relationships that have been created between the schools has been absolutely crucial to the long term effectiveness and sustainability of the Building Harmony Program.

Membership of the Building Harmony Project steering committee includes representation from all five participating schools, the Community Strengthening Officer employed by Cardinia Shire Council, representation from Windermere Child

and Family Service and Monash University when appropriate. All partners have united in sharing a common goal, which is to bring harmony into the lives of these children, particularly related to embracing the cultural and religious respect levels of the diverse individuals and families who are choosing to reside within the Cardinia Shire.

The role of the Building Harmony Project Steering Committee has been to provide input, evaluate strategies and contribute to the project implementation, in line with the program objectives. The project has, and continues to build the capacity of all children and young people in Officer, irrespective of cultural background, to live harmonious and productive lives. Furthermore, this project has been successful in facilitating partnerships between the various government and faith schools in Officer to develop strategies, in order to further raise cross cultural awareness and understanding.

The Building Harmony Steering committee have created a Terms of Reference, which all members have agreed to, in order to identify the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the committee and to ensure the smooth delivery on behalf of the project group.

Please refer to Appendix IV to view the Steering Committee Terms of Reference.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the Building Harmony Steering Committee are:

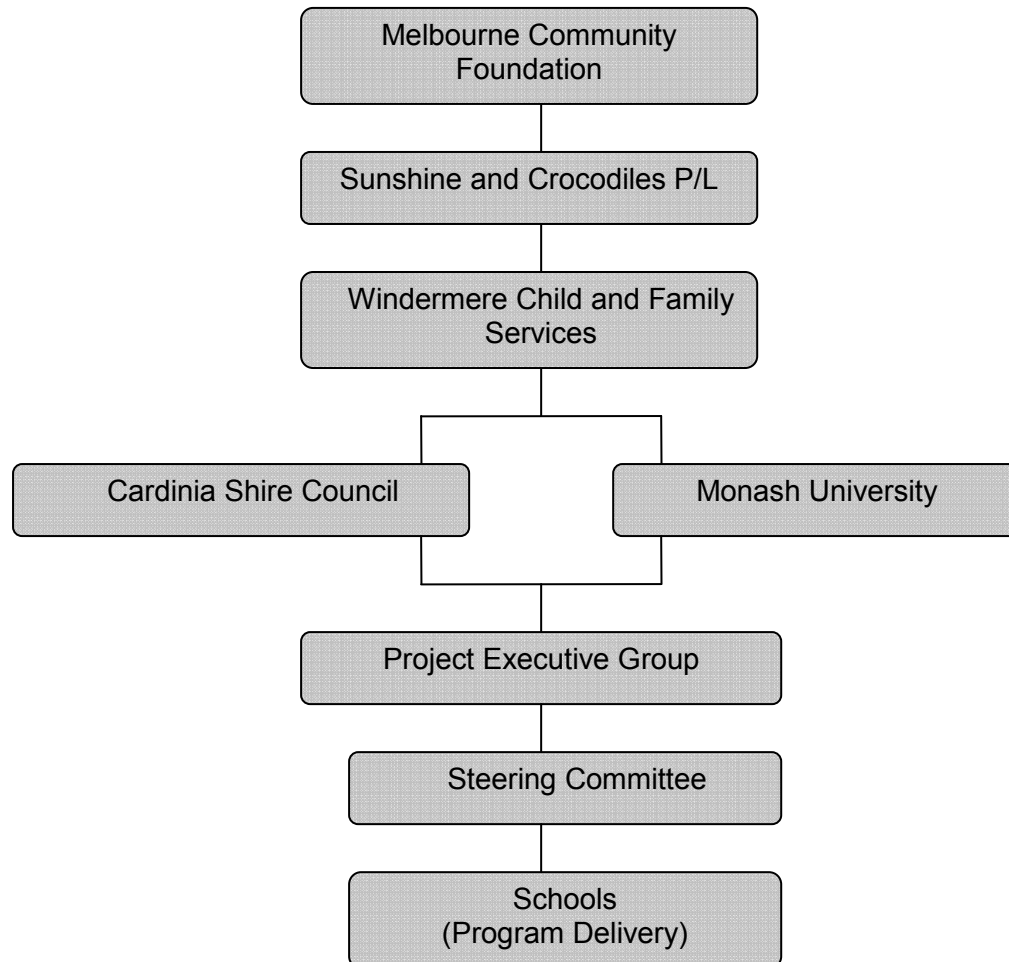
- To advise and assist in the development of tools to gather evidence based information.
- To identify social and integrated recreation opportunities in the Building Harmony Program.
- To provide feedback to Cardinia Shire Council, Windermere Child & Family Services and Monash University regarding progress of the project.
- To champion and promote the project locally and within individual school governance models.
- To gain endorsement of the evaluation tool from individual school governance models.
- To assist and develop specific projects that will be implemented in 2011 with an aim to creating opportunities for participating schools to increase cultural and religious respect levels.
- To oversee and support the implementation of these projects in 2011.
- To build relationships with key stakeholders.

The Building Harmony Project Executive Group was formed in June 2011. The Project Executive Group is attended by Cardinia Shire Council's Manager of Community Strengthening, Windermere's Business Development Manager, a representative from Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council's Community Strengthening Officer. The purpose of the Project Executive Group is to ensure that all project members remain informed about the direction of the Building Harmony Program. It also provides members with the opportunity to reflect on the program and implement improvements accordingly, so that program outcomes are maximised to the fullest potential.

Flow Chart

Please see below to view the Governance Structure of the Building Harmony Program.

Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor



Key Staff

Pam Usher
Cheryl De Zilwa
Garry McQuillan
Stephen Sparrow
Serap Ozdemir
Tim Cooper
Dr. Andrew Joyce
Carrolyn Agius

Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd
Windermere Child and Family Services
Cardinia Shire Council
Cardinia Shire Council
Windermere Child and Family Services
Cardinia Shire Council
Monash University
Cardinia Shire Council

Building Harmony Steering Committee Members

Doug Bailey
David Gleeson

Berwick Grammar School
Maranatha Christian School

Simon Greely	St Brigid's Catholic Primary School
Judy Linossier	Maranatha Christian School
Masouda Keshtiar	Minaret College
Sue Nelson	Officer Primary School
Tim Cooper	Cardinia Shire Council
Carrolyn Agius	Cardinia Shire Council
Serap Ozdemir	Windermere Child and Family Services

2.6 Project Partners



Cardinia Shire Council

The Cardinia Shire Council was formed in 1994 and is made up of the former Pakenham Shire as well as some of the suburbs and townships of the former Sherbrooke and Cranbourne shires.

The role and function of local government is set out by the Local Government Act 1989. Council provides over 100 different services to its local residents and is required to adhere to 47 different acts and regulations.

Cardinia Shire is among the fastest growing Victorian municipalities; the Shire is growing by an average of five families every day and is home to 76,335 people (ID Forecast, 2011). Located 45 kilometres east of the Melbourne CBD, the Shire extends from the Dandenong Ranges in the north to Westernport Bay in the south. It comprises rapidly growing residential areas and rural farmland accessed by the Monash Freeway and the Princes Highway.

Its features include significant wetlands, densely vegetated rolling hills, plains and swamps. It also includes unique Aboriginal cultural landscapes used by the Bunurong people until early explorers and settlers opened up the land for farming and agricultural development.

Post-war soldier settlement farming, orchards and residential expansion saw the growth of existing townships which continue to accelerate as the population grows and demand for housing and jobs increase.



Monash University

The Departments of Occupational Therapy and Health Social Science at Monash University regularly conduct evaluations for federal, state, and locally based organisations. The teams are experienced in evaluation of health service programs utilising a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to meet the objectives of the various projects that we support. We believe in drawing on the expertise within the contracting organisation, and where possible we seek to build the evaluation knowledge and experience of staff within the contracting organisation as part of our approach towards project evaluation. Dr. Andrew Joyce is currently a lecturer in the Department of Occupational Therapy and over a ten year period has taught research methods, community development, settings based approaches to health promotion, and health promotion evaluation. He has extensive experience providing evaluation support and training to a range of services, including local government and community agencies.



Windermere Child and Family Services

Windermere Child and Family Services commenced operations with their formation in 1851, of what later became known as The Melbourne Orphanage in Windermere Crescent, Brighton. In the ensuing years, the organisation has evolved and grown, providing a broad range of programs across multiple service sites throughout the Southern Metropolitan Region. Windermere Child and Family Services has a long history of working in collaboration, and forming effective informal and formal relationships at all levels with philanthropy, government and other service providers.

Windermere Child and Family Services improves wellbeing in children, families and communities by enhancing their potential, building resilience and connecting them to the community. Windermere is a leading community-based agency, which makes a significant difference to the life of every child, family, and individual with whom it works. Our innovative services provide clients, staff and the community with opportunities to learn, grow and achieve their life goals.

2.7 Participating Schools

All participating Harmony Program schools were asked to provide an overview of their educational facility for the purpose of this final report. Thank you to all who took the time to provide the comprehensive summaries of their respective schools.



St Margaret's School
Berwick Grammar School

Berwick Grammar School

Berwick Grammar School (BGS), brother school to St Margaret's opened its doors to its first intake of young men from Years 5, 6 and 7. The opening of Berwick Grammar School at the commencement of Term1, 2009 was the culmination of many years of planning, strategising, surveying the community and raising of the necessary physical and intellectual capital to achieve the goal of opening a boys only independent school.

The vision of St Margaret's, a coeducational school from ELC to Year 6 and a girls only school from Year 7 to year 12, was to provide a quality education, for all members of the family from Early Learning Centres to Year 12. With the opening of BGS this vision has been achieved and boys can now benefit from the vision, values and quality education of a St Margaret's school at their own purpose built site, on 20 acres in Tivendale Road Officer.

Berwick Grammar School, in designing and constructing a contemporary boy's only education facility, is standing tall in the community, with the trend over the last twenty years being for schools to merge genders and provide coeducational opportunities. In fact BGS will be the only independent boys school opened this century in south eastern Victoria.

The task of creating a school for boys and taking it from a dream and turning it into a reality has been an interesting and exciting journey. From the ground up everything that is now Berwick Grammar School had to be surveyed, planned and executed. The selection of land and the building process was a key target. A 20 acre site was chosen to allow space for the boys to move and to grow and ovals, basketball courts, tennis courts, soccer fields and campsites to be developed, the large site also allowed room for new innovations in building and education as they become apparent in the future.

At present the following buildings are operational; Administration and Library, Middle School which includes classrooms at each year level and Science and Design Technology Laboratories, The Performance Centre which houses Music and Physical Education, and the McDonald Senior School Building which opened in 2011.



Maranatha Christian School

Maranatha is a co-educational, three-campus school for Christian families, located in the South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. We see ourselves as providers of high quality education and focused on enabling each student to achieve individual excellence. The vision for, and roots of the school, extend back to our Dutch migrants in the early 1950's. They sought to establish a school with a curriculum taught from a biblical world view. It was also important to the founders that the school be non-denominational and be governed by parents, as opposed to any one church. After about 20 years of fund raising and planning, Maranatha was officially opened on 7 March 1970 with classes from Prep to Grade 6.

From small beginnings we have grown into a multi-campus school. We are a Christian community of people, from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds, with common values and beliefs. Our second campus opened in 1983 at Endeavour Hills, followed by our third campus which opened in 2006 at Officer. Our building programme continues as our school steadily grows.

Maranatha Christian School is founded on the understanding that many parents want a school which reinforces the spiritual values taught at home. Fundamental to this succeeding, is the partnership between parents and the school.

Maranatha Christian School is governed by The Association for Christian Education of Dandenong. It is a public company, limited by guarantee and subject to regulation by the Australian Securities Commission and the Corporations Law. Membership is required of parents with children attending the School. Membership is also open to past students and others who are committed to Christian Parent-Controlled education. At Maranatha Christian School the authority that parents have is exercised through the elected Board of Directors. The school is affiliated with Christian Education National (CEN). Being a Christian Parent-Controlled School, Maranatha is not governed by any one church or denomination.

The Cardinia Campus (Officer) of Maranatha Christian School has grown from 87 students at the beginning of 2006 to 300 students at the beginning of 2011. Our campus began with four classrooms and a library, now we have many buildings and a significant P-6, and 7-12 programs with a breadth of VCE offerings of which we are justifiably proud. Our strength areas as a campus lie in music, sport/PE, and senior science/maths. We are fortunate to have a strong sense of community, so our families feel very much part of the growth.



Minaret College

Minaret College is a co-educational independent Islamic school. It was established in 1992 to provide an integrated curriculum for children from Prep to Year 12. The integrated curriculum includes subjects which are taught in the Victorian Education System, in addition to Islamic Studies, Qur'an, Hadith and Arabic. As part of the curriculum, students perform mid-day prayer (Salat-ul-Zuhur) in the school mosque, during lunch time. The objective of the College is to instil Islamic morals, manners and values in its students so that they can feel proud to be called Australian Muslims. The College aims to encourage and assist young people in developing the skills, attitudes and forms of knowledge both secular and Islamic, which they will carry with them into mature adulthood. Thus, our College endeavours to ensure that all students have access to a common and comprehensive education by which they gain the knowledge they need to participate in a democratic multi-cultural society.

It is the view of the College that students should be challenged, extended and offered success in a worthwhile learning environment. They will also be given the opportunity to take increasing responsibility for their education. This involves holding high expectations for each student and the maintenance of a disciplined working environment, for fostering and rewarding students' efforts. The College believes that sound teaching and learning practices should offer young people the opportunity to grow as autonomous Muslims adults and introduce them their rights and responsibilities within their respective community. The College strives for excellence in the education it offers and believes that this expression refers not only to subject knowledge and skills, but also to morals, attitudes and organizational skills needed to prepare students for life in a rapidly changing world. Accordingly, the College is responsive to its students' individual needs through its curriculum and activities. The College recognizes individual differences among students as well as their different learning abilities and their need to succeed. Therefore, the College offers a variety of learning experiences for students help them develop self-esteem and a sense of understanding for a wider diverse society



Officer Primary School

At Officer Primary School, 'we live to learn and learn to live'. Situated in the south east growth corridor, within a small but growing township, the school is focused on

achieving strong learning outcomes for its students within a 'family' small school environment. Parents are attracted to our school by our smaller size, our caring approach, our reputation for supporting the development of every individual and our range of exciting and unique learning programs. The last three years have seen significant changes in our surrounding community with future housing development and the opening of several new state and independent schools. Enrolments have decreased to around 175 in 2010 and this is predicted to continue in 2011. The school has 9.2 teaching staff and 6.6 Education Support Staff. Around 14% of students are supported by disabilities funding, many more have special needs. Our school facilities have been refurbished to create an orderly learning environment and we pride ourselves in the attractive grounds which contain some unique features to engage and excite students.

Specialist programs offered by the school include a highly successful Physical Education program and the Arts, extending to a whole school performing Arts project in 2011. We are also applying innovative approaches to the use of ITC, with every class using interactive white boards.

Officer Primary School offers a semi rural, small school environment within the growth corridor. We pride ourselves in knowing all children and seeking the best for each child.



St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School in Officer first opened its doors in February 2010. St. Brigid's is one of three schools in the St. Michael's Parish, Berwick, which is led by Father Peter Slater. We are active members of our Parish community, contributing to a wider community.

Starting with 44 students at the beginning of 2010, we have already grown to 94 students in Term 1, 2011. With the fast development of the South East corridor we look forward to continuing our growth in servicing Catholic families in the future.

As a school community we try to uphold the values of Knowledge, Strength, Faith and Hospitality, as demonstrated by our namesake St. Brigid of Kildare. Our vision is to create a modern, contemporary and innovative approach to learning that is purposeful and relevant to the lives of children and families today. We believe in partnerships in learning and fostering a nurturing atmosphere in which staff, parents and children work as a team to develop in the children the skills to meet life's challenges with confidence, resilience and enthusiasm.

3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

3.1 Project Launch

Tuesday, November 16th 2010 saw the official launch of the 'Building Harmony in the Growth Corridor' project. The launch was held at Berwick Grammar's Officer Campus and was extremely well attended by students, staff and families from the participating schools as well as a large number of service providers across the

southern region of Melbourne whom all attend the South East Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities network established and fostered by Windermere Child & Family Services.

The 16th of November was a religiously significant day in the Islamic calendar as Muslims across Australia celebrated Eid-UI-Adha.

Eid-UI-Adha is the celebration of sacrifice and marks the end of Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. It takes place on the 10th day of Dhul-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

Eid-UI-Adha is a day of happiness and a day to forgive and forget any differences. It was fitting then that the other four participating schools and project partners were invited to share in a barbecue hosted by Minaret College prior to the official ceremonies. The barbecue was run by families from Minaret and a wonderfully warm and welcoming atmosphere kicked off the launch of the project.

Windermere Child and Family Services utilised their existing relationships and ensured the launch was attended by a number of influential figures. These included the governor of Victoria Professor David de Krester AC and his wife. Lily D'Ambrosio MP, the previous Minister for Community Development, Sarah Davies CEO of the Melbourne Community Foundation, Inspector Wayne Viney from Victoria Police, Cheryl De Zilwa CEO of Windermere Child & Family Services, Garry McQuillan CEO of Cardinia Shire Council and the Mayor of the day Cr. Graeme Legge.

The highlight of the ceremony was the participation of the five partner schools who sang a wonderful rendition of 'We are Australian' and a DVD produced by Windermere Child and Family Services capturing the initial thoughts and feelings of the students, informing the audience on what building cultural harmony meant to them.

A special mention needs to be made regarding Pam Usher, Chairperson of the Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd who is the patron of the Building Harmony Project. Pam was present at the launch and has been a magnificent supporter of this concept since its inception and whom without her financial contribution we would not be able to deliver this important work.

3.2 Project Delivery

Year 2 of the Building Harmony Project (implementation phase), has seen the planning and delivery of a range of culturally focussed activities:

Building Harmony Student Leadership Program

This event took place on Thursday 10 March 2011. Twenty students, who were identified as young leaders and Diversity Champions within the participating Harmony Day schools, attended a 5 hour session at the Cardinia Shire Council. The day included presentations from Cardinia Shire Council CEO Garry McQuillan, Cardinia Shire Council Mayor Councillor George Blenkhorn and the Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services Team. Speakers explored with students the theme of leadership and diversity. A qualified local artist was also contracted to support the students in painting on canvass, focussing on the idea of cultural diversity.

The students went on to display their art work and presented on the days outcomes to Cardinia Shire Council staff at the “Taste of Harmony” event, which was held during Cultural Diversity Week, on Wednesday 23 March.

The attached table outlines an overview of the activities that were delivered during the student leadership program.

Harmony Program Student Leadership Group Outline
<p>Map of the world activity Upon their arrival, guest speakers, students and teachers were asked to place a pin, on the large world map picture, on an area that represents their cultural heritage. This activity was used to acknowledge and highlight the many different cultural backgrounds that were present in the room on the day.</p>
<p>Introduction to the Student Leadership Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were welcomed and congratulated for being selected to take part in this program. • The purpose of the Harmony Program was reiterated to the leadership group and an explanation was given around the change of demographics within the Cardinia Shire, namely around the growing number of multicultural groups. • An outline of the program was provided to the students and purpose explained. • The leadership group was reminded that this program was an opportunity to meet new young people and make new friendships and for this reason, all students will be split up to work with other students from the different Harmony Program Schools. • Students were provided with an opportunity to ask questions.
<p>People Bingo (<i>Getting to know you activity 1</i>) As there were 4 students per school, these students were split up into 4 groups of 5 students (one student from each of the 5 multi faith schools to work in one of the 4 groups). This was achieved by placing different coloured stars on the students name labels. This prevented the students creating their own working groups of friends that they already knew.</p> <p>The first part of this activity involved students finding group members with the same coloured star as themselves. Students then had an opportunity to introduce themselves to each other.</p> <p>Students were then provided with an A3 sheet of Bingo squares. Students had to complete as many Bingo Squares within their group before extending more widely to find students who could help them complete their bingo sheet. To win, groups must have completed a row of squares marked horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Upon completion, of this activity, students were to call out PEOPLE! As an enticer, the first group to finish was able to have a lucky dip. Students had 3 minutes to complete this task.</p>
<p>Post Activity Upon completion of the activity students were asked the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did teams work out (communicate) what pattern you wanted to use? • Did you learn anything about the people that you work with on your team? • Do you find that you share a similar experience with any of your team mates? • Do some of your team mates have experiences that you don't have?

<p>These questions were completed with a point being made that we all have things in common, as well as some differences and that we have come together today having had many different types of experiences.</p>
<p>Presentation completed by Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services staff member Kaylie Sinbeck presented to the Student Leadership Group about Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services and the programs available through the team.</p>
<p>Throw us a Question (<i>Getting to know you activity 2</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were asked to stand in a circle. • Students were explained the purpose of the game, which was to throw the beach ball, containing various questions, to somebody that they do not know and to try to call their name out. • When the student catching the ball, comes into contact with it (receives it), they needed to see what question their right thumb was on or closest to and had to read the question out to the wider group, before answering it. • The questions that were asked addressed personal experiences and focused on leadership (for example; who is your role model and why) and culture (for example; what is a cultural tradition that your family celebrates). • Students were required to sit down once they received the ball and answered a question.
<p>Types of Leaders and Cultural Diversity Activity Students were asked to regroup according to the coloured star on their name label. The following four questions were laid out around on the room, on butchers paper:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What makes a good leader? / What makes a bad leader? 2. Ask young people who they see as leaders?(for example; politicians, Nelson Mandela, Princess Diana, Mother Teresa, Julia Gillard, School Principal, School Captains, Sports Captain, a religious leader etc). Why do students see these people as leaders? What traits do these leaders have? 3. What is cultural diversity and multiculturalism? What do you think of? What does it represent? How does it make you feel? What are some cultural traditions that different cultural groups may have? How is cultural diversity positive? (for example; food, dance, religious beliefs, clothing). <p>Students were given 3 minutes to answer each question. At the completion of 3 minutes, the students were asked to move on to the next question, in a clockwise direction. The students were supported by teachers who assisted with this activity.</p> <p>After all of the student groups had worked on all 4 of the questions, the students were asked to read out the various answers that had been written down on the butcher's paper. All 4 questions were explored in greater detail.</p>
<p>Presentations from Cardinia CEO Garry McQuillan and from Cardinia Mayor, Cr George Blenkhorn</p>
<p>Oral Presentations The student leadership group were asked to work together to complete an oral presentation exercise on cultural diversity and leadership. Students were explained that they would be using this presentation to present to attendees at the Cardinia Shire Council "Taste of Harmony Lunch".</p>

Young people were encouraged to think about the following areas:

- Leadership
- Celebrating different cultures within Australia
- Own heritage / ethnic background and how it differs to others
- Language
- Dress
- Values and beliefs
- Religion and associated practices

Groups concluded this activity by presenting their completed project to the wider group.

Statements from the Building Harmony Student Leadership Group:

Some of the statements that came from the oral presentations include:

"I learnt that it is good to try different foods and to go somewhere in the world. I learnt that it doesn't matter if people are from different backgrounds, we are all humans and we can be friends. It doesn't matter if we are from different backgrounds, we can all have peace. You can do anything if you put your mind to it". (Michael, Berwick Grammar School)

"I learnt to try different foods, to accept people for who they are and all of the different languages". (Natasha, Maranatha Christian College)

"I learnt that Australia has really changed. Everyone from different cultures live here. Travelling is something good. You experience new things and how other people live. If you want to do something like be a doctor, just put your mind into it. Get to know people from different beliefs and cultures". (Ahmad, Minaret College)

"I learnt to accept everyone for who they are and to respect other religions. I learnt that after you learn something, then you should take that and try to make it better. It doesn't matter what you want to do, you can do everything you put your mind to". (Tylah, Officer Primary School)

"Today I learnt leaders are great people that listen to people and help people. Leaders are always organised. I learnt people don't want war, people want to make peace from different countries". (Xavier, St Brigid's Catholic Primary School)

Lunch

Canvass Art

After lunch, Linda Starke (a local artist) worked with the students to create a piece of art work, on canvass art, which represented culture. As a result, the students created paintings that acknowledged their individual culture.

Conclusion

Students were asked to complete program evaluations

All participants were provided with a certificates

Tabloid Sports Carnival

The Tabloid Sports Carnival is designed to engage children in physical challenges. It is a sports event that invites children to experience a variety of fun activities that encourages skill development, problem solving, fitness, perseverance and cooperation.

On Wednesday 21 March 2011 (Harmony Day), approximately 150 senior school students, from the participating Harmony Program schools, participated in a Tabloid Sports Carnival at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, with a theme of "values" being explored with the students. Participants were divided up to provide students with the opportunity to meet new young people from the various multi faith schools and to encourage the building of positive relationships. The day was concluded with a Halal barbeque for all.

A Taste of Harmony Event

The Taste of Harmony lunch encourages staff across the nation to embrace cultural diversity within the workplace. This event is held annually to celebrate cultural diversity within the workplace and encourages staff to share a dish that represents their heritage.

On Wednesday 23 March, Cardinia Shire Council hosted their Taste of Harmony event. More than 60 people attended the event, comprising of Cardinia Shire Council staff members, including Mayor Councillor George Blenkhorn, the student leadership group participants, teachers and parents. The lunch included an array of foods from many different cultural backgrounds. The students completed an oral presentation to staff around diversity and leadership and displayed their canvass art to staff. The student's art work was also included in a recipe book, which was provided to Cardinia Shire Council staff and the leadership program participants to commemorate the 2011 event.

Attendees also heard from Boon Law (Development Contributions Officer), who shared his life story about his family and on moving to Australia. The Cardinia Shire Council Taste of Harmony event concluded with a cultural dance from Sudanese Community members, which students and staff took part in

Joint Literature Project on the children's novel "Boy Overboard" and an interactive workshop with author Morris Gleitzman

During Term 2, all participating Harmony Program schools studied a book titled "Boy Overboard" by children's writer Morris Gleitzman. The story is based on a family in Afghanistan who fled the country due to fear of persecution.

On Thursday August 4, Morris Gleitzman visited Officer Primary School and undertook a one hour workshop with all of the participating Harmony Program students, with a focus being on his book. Morris Gleitzman's talk coincided with the Islamic celebratory month of Ramadan. This initiative gained extensive publicity and was successful in informing the wider community and organisations about the Building Harmony Program.

As part of the Building Harmony Program, all students were provided with a copy of the "Boy Overboard" novel. To fully maximise the outcome of this activity, all

students were asked to complete an insert which was glued into the front cover of all of the books. Information on the insert included the student's first name and age, the name of their school, country of birth and parent's country of birth. Students were also asked to write about something that they have learnt from the Building Harmony Program.

Prior to Morris Gleitzman's arrival on August 4, students were then paired up with other participating Harmony Program students, where they took part in a discussion which was facilitated by teaching staff.

Participating Harmony Program students then had the opportunity to hear from a senior primary school student from Minaret College, who had the courage to share her story of immigrating to Australia from Afghanistan with her family. The presentation detailed why the student's family made the choice to move to Australia and shared with the Building Harmony group, her journey to Australia.

The workshop was inspiring, educational and motivating and the students left having a greater awareness of cultural backgrounds and new friendships.

Professional development and cross cultural training

Cross cultural training has been provided to teaching staff and professionals within the Cardinia Shire to assist in their response to CALD students and CALD community members, whose needs may differ to those who have lived in Australia for a longer period of time.

On Friday August 26, the Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health delivered "Introduction to Cultural Diversity" training to teaching staff and community workers. A range of themes were explored, including integration into the community and difficulties associated with this, assumptions and ignorance, cultural differences, trends and settlement pressures and personal and cultural barriers.

It is anticipated that this is the first of a series of professional development opportunities that will be delivered to teaching staff and community members as part of the Building Harmony Program.

Visual Arts Activity

Grade 5 and 6 students have taken part in a cultural visual arts project which celebrates the theme "Harmony: Understanding Each Other". This project was completed in October 2011, where students came together to finalise their art work. This was another opportunity which allowed and encouraged dialogue to take place around diversity in a safe and supportive environment.

On Wednesday 3 November, a formal launch was held at the Cardinia Cultural Centre, the Cardinia Shire Council's premier multi-purpose community facility. The launch again focussed on cultural diversity and on the Building Harmony Program.

There was a vast representation of attendees at the launch consisting of teaching staff and principals, students and parents, as well as Cardinia Shire Council Councillors and management and Windermere staff and management.

Prior to the formalities taking place, attendees were invited to share a Halal lunch. The formal proceedings were then led by a student from Berwick Grammar School and a student from Maranatha Christian School. Cardinia Shire Council's Mayor, Councillor George Blenkhorn was invited to review 2011 and reflected on the activities that have taken place to date, before officially launching the 2011 Building Harmony Program Visual Art display. Participating Harmony Program students also had the opportunity to share with the audience their personal accounts of their participation in the Building Harmony Program and attendees were delighted with two cultural dance performances from a Bollywood dance group as well as Fijian dance group. This concluded the Visual Arts launch and the Building Harmony Program activities for 2011.

Following the launch, a one week exhibition of the students art work was held at the Cardinia Cultural Centre for parents and the general public to enjoy.

As schools are generally time poor, it has been of great importance that the identified projects suit the school curriculum. This not only enhances the outcomes of these initiatives, however this will enable the participating schools to continue to replicate these activities in the future.

3.3 2011 Rotary Community Services Award

On Tuesday 3 May, representatives from the participating Harmony Program Schools, Cardinia Shire Council and Windermere Child and Family Services attended the 2011 Rotary Community Services, alongside Pam Usher, managing director of Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd. The second annual Gala event took place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and provides an opportunity to bring together Community Service Organisations and the businesses that support them, to formally acknowledge their amazing contributions and showcases the wonderful work that is being done. The 2011 Rotary Community Services Awards panel, in consultation with the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund awarded the Building Harmony Program 1st place for the work that is being done within the Cardinia Shire to actively engage young people of all backgrounds and the projects efforts to promote diversity.

3.4 Activities Evaluation Tool and Analysis

For each of the key activities that were implemented throughout 2011, students were asked to provide feedback on what they liked best about the activity, what they learnt and how it could be improved. They were also asked to make a general rating from 1 to 10 of what they thought of the activity. The average score of the 2011 Building Harmony Program activities, provided by participating Harmony Program students was 8.4 out of 10. The individual activity rating average was:

- Student Leadership Group: 8.19
- A Taste of Harmony: 9.7
- Tabloid Sports Carnival: 7.5
- Morris Gleitzman: 8.22

Many of the key benefits noticed by students centred on some of the key themes of the project such as increased in understanding of different cultures and religions:

- *“I learnt about different cultures and how they act with their traditions.”*
- *“It is good to learn about different cultures and experience what they do for a living.”*
- *“That it doesn’t matter what religion or what culture you come from- they are no different to us I learnt lots of amazing things like people from different cultures in Australia belongs together.”*

One of the most common responses from students related to the development of friendships across schools and their increased confidence to develop friends from different backgrounds:

- *“I learned that you don’t have to stick with your friends all the time and it’s nice to be with different people, with different religions, beliefs and cultures.”*
- *“I learnt that people from different religions can have a good time together.”*
- *“I liked meeting new people and getting to know them and their cultures and religions.”*
- *“I learnt that talking to people that you haven’t met before isn’t actually that scary.”*

Other more general benefits the students noticed were leadership qualities and improved teamwork skills.

- *“That a good leader listens carefully.”*
- *“No matter who you are you can be a leader.”*
- *“I learnt that with team work and leadership you can achieve many things.”*
- *“Learning how to be a much better school leader and role model.”*
- *“How we showed team work and personal skills to complete tasks.”*

Students were also asked to make recommendations for improvements to program delivery. Most of the suggested improvements related to the logistics of the activities such as the amount of time for each activity, availability of seating, provision of breaks and sharing lunch. There was however, one general suggestion of extending the program to other schools.

Please refer to Appendix V to view the Activities Evaluation Tool.

Please refer to Appendix VI to view the Activities Evaluation Tool Program Evaluation Data Summary

3.5 A Year in Review: Staff Feedback

Upon completion of the 2011 Building Harmony Program Activities, steering committee members were invited to provide feedback about the benefits, challenges and highlights of the Building Harmony Program. The student participant group were also asked about key learning’s throughout 2011 and their responses were consistent to the feedback provided through the Activities Evaluation Tool Analysis. Please see below to refer to the staff responses.

Steering committee members reported the benefits of the program as being the connections that have been made with other local schools and principals. For example:

- *“This has created the formation of a close knit group who have made a commitment to making the program work.”*

The recognised class room / student highlights of the program included the student's realisation that there are many schools of different cultural and religious backgrounds in the Officer Precinct. The building of relationships between the children through the shared activities was also highlight acknowledged by the steering committee.

Staff responses to the program challenges identified a dominant theme around the time constraints within the schools, competing priorities and having to meet deadlines (internal school deadlines as well as Building Harmony Program expectations).

Classroom challenges included the students developing the big picture insight into why they have engaged with the other schools. Ensuring the students were displaying appropriate behaviours, particularly when coming together and when representing their respective school(s), was also an area that required monitoring.

A range of program highlights has come about as a result of the Building Harmony Program. These highlight have influenced the professional working environment as well as the students;

Student highlights have included the enthusiasm of the participants, who have looked forward to, and wanted to be involved in the Building Harmony events. The Morris Gleitzman activity and the Visual Arts Project were particularly memorable activities that the students embraced. A particularly notable highlight of the program is the informal activities that have been developed from the students coming together. For example, whilst taking part in the Visual Arts activity, students from Berwick Grammar School, Minaret College and Officer Primary School liaised with teaching staff to organise a cross-school cricket game. This came about through the discussions that have taken place amongst the students during formal activities.

The Harmony Program has also brought about various highlights for the staff and steering committee. The Rotary Community Services Award was a particularly momentous occasion for the steering committee, whose hard work was recognised at the high profile event. There have also been a number of indirect highlights that have come about as a result of the program. For example, learning about the schools and building relationships has eliminated the sense of competitiveness that may have otherwise occurred. Supporting each other, particularly through the sharing of resources, such as school libraries and school buses, external to the program has also been identified as a program highlight.

4. FIRST YEAR FINDINGS OF THE BUILDING HARMONY PROJECT

4.1 Evaluation Framework

A pre and post evaluation design was used for this project around the key areas identified in the literature review that could be expected to improve from this project: diversity attitudes of the students, social relations, and emotional well-being. The limitation of a pre and post design is that without a control group there is less ability to conclude that any change that does occur was due to the intervention. There could have been other programs that may contribute to the result or maturation may influence results. To overcome this limitation different methods were used which can compliment and overcome the limitations of one particular method in determining the effectiveness of a program, referred to as triangulation.

In this project data source triangulation (using more than one data source) and methods triangulation (two or more evaluation methods such as interviews and surveys) was used to evaluate program effectiveness. A cultural audit tool for schools to complete pre and post program, student surveys to complete pre and post program, and surveys for students to complete after key activities were the different data sources used to evaluate program effectiveness. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used within these different data collection instruments to again increase the strength and scope of the evaluation method.

4.2 The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist and Analysis

All participating school principals were asked to complete a survey titled “School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist”, which took place in November 2010. Principals were then asked to recomplete the survey in November 2011. The checklist was used to evaluate the schools on their cultural and religious values. A rating of below 4 indicates that schools felt that to date, the criteria had only been met sometimes and on some occasions, never. A rating of 4 and a 5 indicated that the schools had always or almost always, met the criteria.

Survey results were also able to identify professional development opportunities that were consequently implemented in 2011. This tool assisted in determining a variation in school values over a twelve month period, since the delivery of the Harmony Program activities in 2011.

Results from the first series of completed School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklists in Term 1, suggested similarities in values from participating schools. For example, all of the schools ranked themselves highly (between a 4 or 5 out of 5) on the following statements:

- *“Literature selections in the curriculum reflect a variety of cultural perspectives (classrooms and library)”.*
- *“There are identified support programs to promote achievement and retention of lower achieving groups”.*

Additional feedback was given about this statement, including: “Literacy & numeracy support groups as well as the special need support”, “Intervention programs in key areas / literacy and numeracy” and “Special needs programs / special needs teacher”.

Four of the participating Harmony Program Schools ranked themselves at a five out of a possible five to the following statement:

- *“There is a program in place to facilitate the adaption of new students into the school and classroom”.*

Additional comments that supported this statement were: “New arrival programs and ESL group support”, “Tool shed / build something / move around to classrooms”, “Evolving / Will formalise over time” and “Orientation Program”.

Three of the participating Harmony Program Schools self rated at a five out of a possible five to the statement:

- *“Connections are made to students’ culture and prior knowledge.*

Supporting comments suggest that this has been accomplished through student reflections, parent meetings and through faith and values.

Interestingly, the statement: *“Racial/ethnic representation in advanced placement classes, honors classes, and gifted programs is balanced”* received either NA or with added comments such as “Always on merit”, “Qualification for academic programs based on performance”, “Based on merit”, “Merit/everyone gets an opportunity” and “Cater for all wellbeing”.

Similarly, the statement *“Teachers representing diverse groups are actively recruited by the principal and the district”* was not rated by the majority of the schools. Comments were consistent in highlighting that recruitment is based on merit, not on ones culture.

Statement twenty-two; *“Teaching strategies accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a variety of grouping strategies, hands on activities, visuals, oral language development, reading/writing workshops, etc”* received comments highlighting that these needs are addressed as they arise and where appropriate. The fourth respondent ranked their school at a three, commenting that this statement was not really applicable to their school and the fifth self-ranked at a four.

The results from Term 1 suggested that:

- During the time that the surveys were completed, the schools had not yet experienced the diversity within their respective schools to fulfil some of the question, identifying some of the statements as not being applicable to their school.
- There is an acknowledgement from the schools that staff professional development was not a priority at the time of completing the survey, particularly due to the student population present during the completion of the initial survey, within the respective schools.
- Staffing and student opportunities are not based on culture, however on individual merit.

- Although schools self ranked highly in the area of the supports in place for new students, there is an evident need for the participating schools to continue their forward planning in supporting the appropriate integration of new students within their schools, particularly those of culturally diverse backgrounds.
- There is a need to advance the involvement of community outreach programs within the educational institutions, in order to enhancing community connectedness.
- Culturally sensitive conflict resolution approaches had not yet been identified within the schools, however conflict resolution more broadly had been addressed.

Repeating the School-Wide Culture Competence Observation Checklist in November 2011 revealed an improvement on a number of indicators. The following indicators averaged below 4 in Term 1 and above 4 in Term 4 indicating that by the end of the year schools felt that they were almost always or always meeting these criteria:

- “Linguistic and content objectives are addressed for second language learners”
- “Youth “voice” is considered in decision-making by regularly meeting with randomly selected groups of students to obtain feedback.”
- “Professional development is offered that addresses race/ethnicity/nationality.”
- “Teaching strategies accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a variety of grouping strategies, hands-on activities, visuals, oral language development, reading/writing workshops, etc.”
- “Community outreach programs regularly survey the perspectives of various local community constituency and stakeholder groups, including parents.”
- “Parent involvement programs exist for all culture groups.”
- “The inevitability of intercultural conflict is recognized by peer mediation programs and/or other proactive approaches to conflict resolution.”

Pleasingly the schools felt that more professional development was offered through the Building Harmony Program, in relation to the needs of CALD students. Consequently, the schools were now better equipped to cater for the needs of CALD students and parents should their schools become more multicultural in the future. Some of the programs that the schools felt were useful included Restorative Justice, Harmony Program, Behaviour Management Policy, CASSE pilot school (Creating a safe school environment).

Some of the more general improvements noticed by the schools included increased respect that students showed to children from other cultures and a general increase in interest in other cultures. One of the consistent comments in relation to the benefit of the project also included the networking opportunity and the building of positive and sustainable relationships between the Officer schools:

- *“The Harmony Project has been an enlightening and empowering project. It has brought together many of our school leaders and students. A lasting network has been formed.”*
- *“The project has helped us to develop links with other schools and with leaders in the community, enabling schools to support each other.”*

Please refer to Appendix VII to view the School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist

4.3 Student Surveys Data Collection and Analysis

All students were invited to complete an online survey between May 18 and 19, 2011 and recompleted the same survey on October 14. The questionnaire is made up of two surveys that address the participating student's knowledge of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity. The first survey identifies how well students understand values such as respect, responsibility and equality, whether they feel that the school appropriately responds to students from all different backgrounds, and whether they feel that they have made good friendships with their peers. Example items are, "I think everyone should be treated equally," "No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school," and, "I will stand up for other students". The second survey is a short questionnaire called the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. This questionnaire has items about student resiliency and ability to handle challenges. The results of the questionnaires will help to determine any change in values towards cultural diversity as a direct result of program implementation.

Please refer to Appendix VIII to view the Questionnaires (Student Surveys)

4.4 Summary of First Year Findings from Student Surveys

Ninety-six students out of a possible 145 completed the surveys in Term 2 which is a 66% response rate and this figure was 99 students in Term 4 (68%). Of these students, 76% were in grade 6 and 24% grade 5, and 41.7% were female and 58.3% male. There were 11 students born overseas and 36 students that had at least one parent born overseas, Afghanistan being the most common country with 11 students having at least one parent born in Afghanistan.

For the questions on whether students understood the terms safety, effort, respect and self-responsibility there were five response options from:

1= I don't know what this means

3= Unsure

5= I understand this very well

Students rating themselves as 4 or 5 were grouped together as having an understanding of the term. For safety, 99% of students understood the term in Term 2 and 4, 96.9% for effort (91.9% in Term 4), 95.9% for respect (95% Term 4), and 91.6% for self-responsibility (96% Term 4). When asked to write down what religions they knew, 68.8% were able to name two or more religions. This increased to 76.8% in Term 4.

For the values questions students read a number of statements and then had to respond according to the following criteria:

1= Strongly Disagree

2= Disagree

3= Undecided

4= Agree

5= Strongly Agree

The following Table provides percentage figures of those that either strongly agreed or agreed with an item in Term 2 compared to Term 4.

Values Results

Question	% Strongly agree or agree Term 2	% Strongly agree or agree Term 4
It is important to aim for excellence	84.2	97.0
I always do the best I can	88.4	92.9
I think everyone should be treated equally	92.6	97.0
Everyone at school gets a fair go	81.1	85.9
I will stand up for other students	84.2	91.9
I know that someone at this school would help me if I was being bullied or denied my rights as a student	83.2	86.9
Students at this school are generally honest with one another	68.4	69.7
Students at this school should act according to how they feel	50.5	64.6
I am polite and well mannered to other students	87.4	94.9
I am polite and well mannered to teachers	94.7	96.0
I am aware of how my behaviour makes other people feel	88.4	91.9
I am aware of the practices of other religions	81.1	90.9
I get involved in the school community	75.8	68.7
I get along with students who are different to me	82.1	93.9
I have a good relationship with my teachers	82.1	86.9
I believe we can learn valuable things from other cultures	81.1	90.9
I believe we can learn valuable things from other religions	75.8	83.8
No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school	72.6	81.8
I can resolve conflicts with other students without fighting	78.9	83.8
I know what the benefits of school are	86.3	90.9
The values of this school and those of my family are similar	73.7	74.7

The results reveal that before the project commenced the students already had a strong sense of tolerance and diversity and felt that they could benefit from an understanding of different cultures and religions. However, it was pleasing there was still over or close to a 10% improvement on some of the key indicators for this project:

- “I am aware of the practices of other religions”
- “I get along with students who are different to me”
- “I believe we can learn valuable things from other cultures”
- “I believe we can learn valuable things from other religions”
- “No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school”

The following Table provides results to determine whether those positive attitudes are reflected in positive social behaviours.

Social Relationship Results for Term 2 and Term 4 (Term 4 results are presented in parentheses)

Question	% Lots of times	% Sometimes	% Never
I assist other students when I can	41.5 (46.4)	52.1 (43.3)	6.4 (10.3)
There have been times when other students have shown concern for me	31.9 (36.1)	58.5 (49.5)	9.6 (14.4)
I show respect to people, no matter who they are	46.8 (56.7)	41.5 (25.8)	11.7 (17.5)
This term, I have been bullied by another student or a group of students	16.0 (25.8)	21.3 (20.6)	62.8 (53.6)
I was made fun of and teased in a hurtful way	18.1 (25.8)	19.1 (16.5)	62.8 (57.7)
I was called mean and hurtful names	16.0 (23.7)	14.9 (20.6)	69.1 (55.7)
Kids ignored me, didn't let me join in, or left me out of things on purpose	8.5 (23.7)	29.8 (26.8)	61.7 (49.5)
I was hit, kicked or pushed around	9.6 (23.7)	13.8 (11.3)	76.6 (64.9)
Kids told lies or spread nasty stories about me and tried to make other kids not like me	7.4 (23.7)	18.1 (15.5)	74.5 (60.8)
I had money or other things taken away from me or broken	10.6 (21.6)	8.5 (8.2)	80.9 (70.1)
I was made afraid that I would get hurt	10.6 (24.7)	8.5 (7.2)	80.9 (68.0)
I was bullied in another way	10.6 (23.7)	10.6 (9.3)	78.7 (67.0)

The pro-social behaviours of assisting other students and showing respect were consistent with the attitude results with 80% of students saying they have shown or received these behaviours. The bullying items reveal that around a third of students had experienced some form of bullying. While there was an increase in the number of students expressing positive attitudes to other religions, cultures, and 'difference' in general, this wasn't necessarily reflected in a decrease in bullying behaviour even though perceived 'difference' is one of the facets of bullying behaviour.

According to standard diagnostic criteria for the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, there were 74.5% of students in the 'normal' category, 18.1% of students in the 'borderline' category and 7.4% classified in the 'abnormal' category. There was an improvement in Term 4 with 81.5% of students in the 'normal' category, 9.8% of students in the 'borderline' category and 8.7% classified in the 'abnormal' category. Those classified in the 'borderline' or 'abnormal' category indicates students at risk of mental health problems but this is not a diagnostic test of mental illness. Those students that had experienced some bullying were much more likely to be at risk of mental health problems, $\chi^2 (1) = 3.95, p < .05$ and the same again in Term 4, $\chi^2 (1) = 7.98, p < .05$.

4.5 Evaluation Summary

All the different evaluation methods used in this project were able to show positive change which increases confidence in the efficacy of the Building Harmony Program. The schools were able to list specific changes in policies and programs that had occurred as a result of their involvement in the Harmony Project and felt that students showed an increased respect towards children from other cultures. In the pre and post student surveys there was an increase in the number of students that agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware and could learn from other religions and cultures. Despite improved attitudes there was no reduction in the frequency of bullying behaviour and future research needs to develop a more specific evaluation tool that can measure both discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. After some of the key activities students themselves commented on self-improvement related to an increased understanding of different cultures and religions and enjoyment in meeting people from different backgrounds which corroborates the findings of the pre and post attitude surveys.

5. PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL AND MEDIA RELEASES TO DATE

There has been an extensive amount of local media and community coverage, since the launch of the Building Harmony Program in November 2009. This includes the formal invitation from Windermere Child and Family Services to the community service sector, for the Launch of the Building Harmony Project and media releases (pre and post) pertaining to the launch of the Building Harmony Program.

A variety of media releases have also been completed to highlight the activities that have taken place within the project implementation phase of the Building Harmony Project, including the Student Leadership Day, the Tabloid Sports (2011 Harmony Day) event and the 2011 Cardinia Shire Council Taste of Harmony event.

To view all of the media-related publications regarding the Harmony Program during its first year of operation, please refer to Appendix IX.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Being a new initiative, the Building Harmony Program has provided the steering committee, students and schools in creating invaluable social skills and connections. Similarly the program has also helped to inform the Project Executive and Steering group on program strengths, as well as gaps and recommendations to guide and enhance the next phase of the Building Harmony Program. Upon reflection of the program implementation phase, the following recommendations have been identified by the Project Executive Group, the Building Harmony Steering Committee and the Cardinia Shire Council to strengthen and enhance the current model of the program. The recommendations include:

Participatory Study:

The implementation of a 5-10 year participatory study has been recommended, in order to substantiate the advantageous outcomes of the program as a result of direct intervention.

The positive outcomes that are expected to derive as a result of the Building Harmony Program are taking place in a timely manner, in anticipation of the growth that is predicted to occur within the Cardinia Shire.

Between 2011 and 2031, the Shire is expecting a population growth of an additional 79, 284 residents, bringing the forecasted 2031 residency to 155, 619 (a 103.86% increase of the current population).

The urban growth corridor of Officer (current target area of the Building Harmony Project), is currently home to 1780 residents. Forecasts suggest that the population in Officer will rise to 30,149 new residents by 2031 (a 1593.7% increase of the current population). Of this amount, 5724 of the residents (equating to 19%), will be young people aged 12 to 24 years. (Informed Decisions, 2011).

It is expected that the rise in population will also attract a rise in culturally diverse community members, who are part of a secondary movement group, migrating particularly from the City of Greater Dandenong and the City of Casey. These alarming statistics identify the need for a reputable, sustainable program such as Building Harmony to continue to be delivered alongside a time of significant growth in population and educational institutions within the Cardinia Shire.

2012 Student Activities

The 2012 Building Harmony Work Plan will be guided by current evidence-based literature that have previously identified and evaluated the effectiveness of school-based activities.

It is intended that this will continue to improve the efficacy of the identified interventions, which have been determined through research, to have had a direct correlation between the activities that have been implemented, with the desired changes in the behaviours of the participants. To be specific, the continued and further enhancement of the cultural and religious respect levels of participating Harmony Program students will be the primary outcome as a result of this.

Parent / Guardian Involvement

Extending the program perimeters to include parent / guardian involvement has also been identified as a strategy which will continue to strengthen the Building Harmony Program. For example, inviting parents to Building Harmony events or inviting parents to information sessions specific to the program could serve multiple benefits.

Activities such as the above stated will provide a platform for parents to be informed of the Building Harmony Program and its purpose. This will not only provide parents with the opportunity to increase their social knowledge and learn about respect and acceptance of people irrespective of cultural background or religion, however it will also enable parents to be kept informed on what their child is learning at school. This will serve as a platform for parents to have discussions with their child about social harmony in an environment external from school.

Furthermore, inviting parents (for example, two from each school) to come together to form a steering group has also been identified as a recommendation to enhance the current model. An initiative such as this will bring parents from different schools

together to assist in the delivery of the school based activities. This will not only work toward educating the parent group about the Building Harmony program, however it will provide an opportunity for the participating parents to learn about the different cultural and religious backgrounds of their fellow steering group members. A group such as this would also provide additional support (in the form of adult presence) during the Building Harmony Program activities. Consequently, this may influence the sustainability of the program.

In order for this to be achieved, a mapping process would be undertaken to evaluate which schools have a Parent Teacher Association (or a similar operational group). Once identified, parents could self nominate or a recommendation may come from the relevant school principal. A parent forming part of the steering group would be subject to the approval of a Working with Children Check.

Consideration to the participating Building Harmony Program Schools

Continuing to be considerate to the time constraints of the participating Harmony Program schools will ensure the ongoing success of the Building Harmony Project. Schools are time precious due to their requirements to adhere to the curriculum, as well as additional expectations. Consequently, schools having to balance internal deadlines with the Harmony Program deadlines have at times been a challenge of the program. It is for this reason that the activities implemented should complement and enhance the existing curriculum, as opposed to adding to the current workloads. This model will continue to appeal to the schools and will in turn ensure the ongoing success of the Building Harmony Program.

A strategy that may assist in alleviating the additional workload for principal staff could be to invite a nominated class room teacher to take part in the steering committee meetings. This could prove to benefit program outcomes as the nominated staff members do theoretically, work more closely with the students. As a result, teacher representation will be in a greater position to guide the Harmony Program activities, so that they fit in line with the classroom curriculum and will be kept better informed on the day-to-day tasks and deliverables of the program.

Creating an annual calendar of events, that schools can choose to opt into or not, has also been recommended to ease the work pressures of schools. The calendar of events would display a total of 8 activities, which would include one formal event and one informal activity per term. This will enable schools to account for the activities within their annual planning and if additional pressures arise, schools may choose to exclude themselves.

Working toward sustainability

The notion of basing a dedicated Building Harmony Project Manager, within one of the five participating schools, to coordinate the program, has been highlighted as a step toward ensuring the sustainability of the Building Harmony Program. It is recommended that program funding be attached to this position, to support the delivery of activities. This will enable the participating schools to assume a greater role within the broader program and will enable the project manager to work more closely with the school staff. This model could be used as a pilot to similar project management roles being implement more widely throughout Victorian Schools.

A separate research element to enhance the program

The adoption of a second phase research component, to be delivered by Monash University, will continue to validate and identify the positive outcomes and successes of the Building Harmony Program. This will be done through the implementation of a control group. The control group will be a school, that to date, has not taken part in the Building Harmony Program. This will enable Monash University to compare the attitudes of the students who have not taken part in the interventions, to the students that have. It is anticipated that there will be a favourable change in values and attitudes of the students taking part in the Building Harmony Program.

The second phase research component is expected to further enhance the Building Harmony Program and will be done so in a sensitive manner that is not disruptive to the student's education or welfare or to staff workload. It is hoped that the research could be used as a means to endorsing the program activities as a strategy toward building inclusiveness within the Cardinia Community. This information will help to deliver the Building Harmony Program more widely throughout the Cardinia Shire and potentially in schools throughout Australia.

The final recommendation that has been identified to further enhance the current research component, as well as the Building Harmony Program on a greater level, is the implementation of a more specific evaluation tool that can measure both discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. This will assist in determining when responses related to "bullying" are culturally focussed.

7. CONCLUSION AND ASPIRATIONS

The 'Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor' project has provided Windermere Child & Family Services, Cardinia Shire Council and Monash University with a unique and innovative opportunity to conduct research and implement programs that aim to build cultural and religious harmony in the emerging growth corridor of Officer in Melbourne's south-east. The first twelve months of the project was focused on establishing and fostering relationships between the five participating schools, Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian School, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School.

The participating schools embraced this opportunity and all committed to sharing ideas and resources to drive the direction of the project and build a sense of friendship and togetherness that has enabled this concept to be extremely successful in all it has achieved to date. The spirit of cooperation has established a platform that will meet one of the key objectives of the project; that is to create a sustainable environment where the initiatives introduced during the funding period are able to be maintained and grown through the network that now exists amongst the participating schools.

This platform and the milestones achieved thus far have encouraged and inspired our patrons The Melbourne Community Foundation and Sunshine and Crocodiles Pty Ltd to provide an additional twelve months funding that will ensure the program implementation and research will continue throughout 2011.

Research has demonstrated that early intervention projects that build a sense of community and harmony also provide an opportunity to address social issues such as disconnected youth and youth crime.

All partners to this project are extremely proud of the structures and processes implemented but particularly the relationships that have been built and continue to grow. We believe that this is a best practice model and hope to share research findings and successes where applicable and with the permission of Windermere Child & Family Services.

On behalf of all partners to this project we extend our sincere thanks for the invaluable support and encouragement given by so many and look forward to the continued delivery of the highest quality programs possible throughout 2012 and beyond.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abond, F., & Levy, S. (2000). Interventions to Reduce Prejudice and Discrimination in Children and Adolescents. In S. Oskamp, *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination* (pp. 23-45). United States of America. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Batelaan, P. (2001). Learning to respect. *Intercultural Education*, 12 (3), 237-245.

Blair, I. (2001). Implicit stereotypes and prejudice. In G. Moskowitz, *Cognitive social psychology: The Princeton Symposium on the Legacy and Future of Social Cognition* (pp. 259-374). United States of America. Erlbaum.

Cardinia Shire Council. (2010). *Statistics*. Retrieved June 1, 2010, from www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

Cardinia Municipal Public health and Wellbeing Plan 2009 – 2013. (2009). Retrieved June 1, 2010, from www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Retrieved June 12, 2010 from www.curriculum.edu.au

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (2005). *At the Heart of What We Do: Values Education at the Centre of Schooling*. Retrieved June 14, 2010, from: www.curriculum.edu.au

Denson, N. (2009). Do curricular and cocurricular diversity activities influence racial bias? A meta analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 79 (2), 805-838.

Enburg, M. (2004). Improving Intergroup Relations in Higher Education: A critical examination of the influence of educational interventions on racial bias. *Review of Educational Research*, 74 (4), 473-524.

- Erebus International. (2006). *Encouraging Tolerance and Social Cohesion through School Education*. Retrieved May 29, 2010, from: http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/Encouraging_Tolerance_Final_Report.pdf
- Hu, S., & Kuh, G. (2003). Diversity experiences and college student learning and personal development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 44, 320-334.
- Johnson, L. (2003). The diversity imperative: building a culturally responsive school ethos. *Intercultural Education*, 14 (1), 17-30.
- Leeman, Y. (2006). School leadership for intercultural education. *Intercultural Education*, 14 (1), 31-45.
- Lovat, T., Toomey, R., Dally, K., & Clement, N. (2009). *Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience*.
- Mills, C. (2008). Making a difference: moving beyond the superficial treatment of diversity. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 36 (4), 261-275.
- Oskamp, S. (2000). *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination*. United States of America. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Oskamp, S., & Schultz, P. (2004). *Attitudes and Opinions*. United States of America. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Preston Girls Secondary College. (2003). *Student Well Being and Cultural Diversity Project*. Retrieved June 20, 2010, from: www.sfys.infoxchange.net.au
- Stephan, W., & Stephan, C. (2000). An Integrated Threat Theory of Prejudice. In S. Oskamp, *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination* (pp. 23-45). United States of America. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Thomas, K., Tran, N., & Dawson, B. (2010). An inclusive strategy of teaching diversity. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 12 (3), 295-311.

Tibbitts, F. (2005). *UNESCO International Bureau of Education: Literature review on outcomes of school based programs related to 'learning to live together'*. Retrieved June 18, 2010, from: www.hrusa.org

Wilder, D. & Simon, A. (2001). In *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: intergroup process, Affect as a cause of intergroup bias*, eds. Brown, R., Gaerter, S. (pp. 153-172). Cambridge. Blackwell Publishes.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Endorsement

MONASH University



Professor ***
Chair, SCERH
Monash University
Vic 3800**

Friday 25 February 2011

Re: CF10/3348 – 2010001765 Building Harmony Project- Cardinia Growth Corridor

Dear Professor *****,

Approval has been granted for the project, "Building Harmony Project- Cardinia Growth Corridor" to be conducted through our service/school. We have commissioned Dr Andrew Joyce to conduct the evaluation and have informed all members of the service/school community of his involvement in this project. We are looking forward to the results of his work.

Yours Sincerely,

.....

Appendix II: Monash University Student Survey Letter to Parents

5 April 2011

Explanatory Statement – Parents / Guardians

Title: Building Harmony Project- Cardinia growth corridor

My name is Andrew Joyce and I am a lecturer in the Department of Health Science at Monash University. I am assisting with the evaluation of the Building Harmony in Officer Project on behalf of Windermere Child and Family Services, Cardinia Shire, and schools based in Officer. The project, which was launched in November 2009, has a number of strategies to improve cultural and religious harmony for all members of the school community and has a particular focus on fostering partnerships between the schools in Officer.

As part of the evaluation, children in years 5 and 6 will be asked to complete two short surveys in Term 1, and then the same two surveys in Term 4 to see if there has been any change over the year. The first survey has a number of items about how well students understand values such as respect, responsibility and equality, whether they feel that the school appropriately responds to students from all different backgrounds, and whether they feel that they have made good friendships with their peers. Example items are, "I think everyone should be treated equally," "No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school," and, "I will stand up for other students."

The second survey is a short questionnaire called the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. This questionnaire has items about student resiliency and ability to handle challenges. We feel this is important to include as teaching children about values and respect should also increase their ability to relate better to peers and handle social and academic challenges. Example items are, "I try to be nice about other people. I care for their feelings," and "I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence." If you would like to view any of the questionnaires, copies are available on request from your child's school office.

All together the surveys will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Students will complete the questionnaires during class time in Term 2, and again in Term 4. All surveys will be completed electronically and all responses will be completely confidential. Students will be informed that participation is entirely voluntary and that they can withdraw at any stage. If they choose to not complete the surveys this does not in any way impact their participation in the activities related to the Harmony project. They will be able to fully participate in all those activities. According to university protocol, the survey results will be kept in a locked file for five years and will remain confidential.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research <insert your project number here, i.e. 2006/011> is being conducted, please contact:
<p>Andrew Joyce Lecturer Department of Occupational Therapy Monash University - Peninsula Campus PO Box 527, Frankston VIC 3199, AUSTRALIA Phone: +61 3 9904 4447 Fax: +61 3 9904 4613 Email: andrew.joyce@med.monash.edu.au</p>	<p>Human Ethics Officer Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH) Building 3e Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800</p> <p>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 1420 Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au</p>

Thank

you.



Andrew Joyce

Appendix III: Monash University Student Survey Consent Form

MONASH University



5 April 2011

Parental consent for participants under the age of 18 years

Title: Building Harmony Project- Cardinia growth corridor

NOTE: Signed written consent will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records.

I agree that _____ (insert child's name) may take part in the above Monash University research project.

The project has been explained to _____ (insert child's name) and to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to allow _____ (insert child's name) to:

Complete the surveys at the commencement and completion of the project

Participant's name: _____

Participant's Age: _____

Parent's / Guardian's Name: _____

Parent's / Guardian's relationship to participant? _____

Parent's / Guardian's Signature _____

Date: _____

Appendix IV: Steering Committee Terms of Reference



‘BUILDING HARMONY PROJECT’

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Scope

The purpose of the Building Harmony Project Steering Committee is to provide input and evaluate strategies and a project plan, in line with the program objectives. This project is funded for a one year period. The project aims to build the capacity of children and young people from diverse backgrounds in Officer to live harmonious and productive lives. Furthermore; this project will facilitate partnerships between the various government and faith schools in Officer to develop strategies in order to further raise cross cultural awareness and understanding in the Growth Corridor.

2. Objectives

The role of the Project Steering Committee is to:

- Advise and assist in development of tools to gather evidence based information.
- To identify social/integrated recreation opportunities in Harmony program
- To provide feedback to Monash University evaluation tool
- To champion and promote the project locally and within individual school governance models
- To gain endorsement for evaluation tool from individual school governance models
- To assist and develop specific projects that will be implemented in 2011 with an aim to creating opportunities for participating to schools increase cultural and respect levels
- To oversee and support the implementation of these projects in 2011
- To build relationships with key stakeholders including Windermere Child and Family Services, Council and participating schools.

3. Membership

A membership of the Building Harmony Project steering committee will include the representation of a Council Officer and a representative of key partner organisations. Membership will also include will schools from within the Officer growth corridor.

a. **Commitment of Members**

Members must be willing to contribute to the activities of the Building Harmony Project Steering Committee and participate in achieving its objectives. If required, members must also be prepared to contribute to working groups for specific projects.

4. Operational Functions

a. **Meetings**

Meetings will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The venue will be rotated.

b. Chairperson and Minutes Taker

- It is desirable that the Chairperson will be a shared role.
- The Minutes will be taken by a representative from Cardinia Shire.
- Agenda items will be requested two weeks prior to the meeting, however items can be forwarded at any time.
- A draft agenda will be provided to members one week prior to the meeting.
- Minutes will be taken and distributed to members.
- Follow up actions and/or correspondence will be allocated at the meeting and person/s responsible recorded in the minutes

5. Roles and Responsibilities

a. Responsibilities of the Chairperson

The Chairperson will ensure meetings run effectively and achieve its objectives. The Chairperson will need to

- Commence meetings on time and ensure meetings are kept to time.
- Involve all participants in discussion.
- Facilitate the discussion and keep order of the meeting.
- Summarise points of view presented and identify the points of agreement and disagreement.
- Identify the tasks of the Group is to undertake and who will undertake them.

b. Responsibilities of the Minute Taker

The minute taker plays a vital role in recording the outcomes of the meeting accurately:

- The format agreed by the group will be used to discuss minutes.
- The minutes will be distributed within two weeks of the meeting.

6. Dispute Resolution

It is the responsibility of all parties involved in conflict to first attempt to resolve the matter individually.

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, then the issue will be raised with the executive group to resolve or seek further mediation.

All other conflict will be taken to an independent person for resolution agreed upon by all parties.

7. Review

The Building Harmony Project Steering Committee will review the Terms of Reference annually, or as otherwise necessary.

8. Execution

Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor- Partnership Group

Windermere Child and Family Services

Executed for and behalf of **Windermere Child and Family Services, Inc** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature

Cardinia Shire Council

Executed for and behalf of **Cardinia Shire Council** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**Monash University**

Executed for and behalf of **Monash University** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor- Participating Schools****Berwick Grammar School**

Executed for and behalf of **Berwick Grammar School** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**Maranatha Christian School**

Executed for and behalf of **Maranatha Christian School** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**Minaret College**

Executed for and behalf of **Minaret College** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**Officer Primary School**

Executed for and behalf of **Officer Primary School** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature**St Brigid's Catholic Primary**

Executed for and behalf of **St Brigid's Catholic Primary** in accordance with its constituent documents:

Name

Signature

Appendix V: Activities Evaluation Tool

Building Harmony in the Cardinia Growth Corridor

Program Evaluation

What did you like best about today's program?

What could be improved?

What did you learn from today's program?

On a scale of 1 – 10, how would you rate today's session:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Proudly supported by:



Southern Integrated
CALD CFS Network



St Margaret's School
Berwick Grammar School



Appendix VI: Activities Evaluation Tool Program Evaluation Data Summary

The average score of the 2011 Building Harmony Program activities, provided by participating Harmony Program students was 8.4 out of 10.

The individual activity rating average was:

Student Leadership Group: 8.19

A Taste of Harmony: 9.7

Tabloid Sports Carnival: 7.5

Morris Gleitzman: 8.22

Approximately three quarters of the responses received for the social and educational benefits of the Building Harmony Activities included themes around:

- Culture
- Tradition
- Getting to know people
- Embracing non judgemental behaviours
- Leadership qualities
- Making new friends / friendship
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Religion
- Acceptance of others irrespective of culture, religion or school
- Cardinia Shire Council's Mobile Youth Bus (MYBus)

Students were also asked to make recommendations for improvements to program delivery.

Key improvements related to:

- Timeframes for activities
- Activities
- Available seating
- Provision of breaks
- Sharing lunch
- Extending the program to other schools

Qualitative Analyses (*Student Responses*)

Activity: Student Leadership Group

Average Scoring	8.19 out of 10 (mean score) <i>n</i> =18
Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To accept people for who they are.- About Youth Services and all the fun activities you can do.
Educational Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tips on leadership.- How to be a leader.- How to be the best leader.- That food is an important part of culture.- There are lots of different backgrounds.- Painting because we were able to paint anything related to culture.- Learning how to be a much better school leader and role model.- That a good leader listens carefully.- No matter who you are you can be a leader.- Leadership skills and multiculturalism.- I learnt a lot about Multiculturalism, leadership and how lucky I am to be in Australia.
Recommendations for improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A break time.- Some more activities.- Getting morning tea.

Qualitative Analyses (*Student Responses*)

Activity: A Taste of Harmony

Average Scoring	9.7 out of 10 (mean score) <i>n</i> =7
Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- I also think the schools were mixing together well and it was great to get a book on the recipes.- It was cool to see the African dancing.
Educational Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- It was great the food was fantastic and the different types of food were good to try.- The different ways of cultures and ways people celebrate.- I liked all the foods and the way everyone (<i>the students</i>) did the speech.- I learnt about different cultures and how they act with their traditions.- It is good to learn about different cultures and experience what they do for a living.- Where different foods came from.- There is lots of different food around the world.
Students who thought that the activity could have been better	

Qualitative Analyses (*Student Responses*)

Activity: Tabloid Sports Carnival

Average Scoring	7.5 out of 10 (mean score) <i>n</i> =122
Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I learned that you don't have to stick with your friends all the time and it's nice to be with different people, with different religions, beliefs and cultures. - I liked meeting new friends. - I liked the BBQ. - I liked how we were split up instead of our grade 6s all being together. - I liked the MYBus (<i>Cardinia Shire Council's Mobile Youth Facility</i>). - The MYBus thing it had awesome things in it. - To mix with other kids from different schools. - I liked meeting new friends. - It's easier to work together than alone. - That you can make new friends from other schools. - I learnt how to make more friends. - Meeting new people. - Friendship and how many schools we have around our school. - That not everyone is the same. - That making new friends is easy. - Meeting new people and bonding with the different schools in our community. - That it doesn't matter what religion or what culture you come from- they are no different to us. - I learned that we should always try different kinds of sports and not to be shy. - I learnt that I should treat people the same way I would like to be treated. - How to go up and talk to other people. - That winning is not just fun, playing and meeting new people are fun too. - How to make new friends. - I learnt that working as a group you need a leader and they have to be respectful, friendship, leadership and more. - Going inside the MYBus - I learned that everyone should respect each other and play nicely. - I learnt lots of amazing things like people from different cultures in Australia belongs together. - I learnt that people from different religions can have a good time together. - I learned that I should not talk when someone is. - It's fun playing with people that you didn't know. - That I should not doubt people. - How we showed team work and personal skills to complete tasks. - Working in a group is better than doing your own thing. - I learnt how to work as a team.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I enjoyed interacting with new kids and making new friends. - Getting all the schools together and making new friends. - That anyone can work with anyone no matter what religion you are. - I learnt that just because a person is from a different religion doesn't mean they are any different to any one else. - No matter, what all religions can be friends. - I learnt how to get involved with people I don't know. I also learnt some new skills and how to respect and teamwork. - I like how we could all be friends and talk to each other. All the teachers were nice. I think that we respected each others cultures by eating the sausages without pork. - Different cultures aren't bad people. - I learnt to be less shy, to introduce myself to new people and to be more respective of other religions and cultures. - I learnt that we all need to cooperate to get the job done. - To get along with other nationalities. - To respect one another's backgrounds and that all people can come together and be one. - A different perspective from a Muslim School. - Event though some people believe in different things they can still be really nice. - That there are many different cultures in Australia. - I learnt that even though we are all different it doesn't mean we can't mix. - I learnt that it's not a bad thing to go play with other people even if they're not from the same culture as you.
Educational Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What perseverance is. - It doesn't matter what culture you are everyone can come together and work together. - That there are more different cultures. - That there are lots of different cultures in the area. - That different cultures create one community. - I learnt about cooperation. - Team contribution and leadership. - I learnt that with team work and leadership you can achieve many things. - That Harmony Day is about people getting together - It is not about appearances it is about what us in the inside. - That we all have different cultures.
Students who thought that the activity could have been better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional times for the activities. - More equipment. - More time to go on the MYBus. - Better activities. - Being more nice. - More activities. - No MYBus because then there is no mixing between schools and everyone for themselves in the MYBus.

Qualitative Analyses (*Student Responses*)

Activity: Morris Gleitzman Workshop

Average Scoring	8.22 out of 10 (mean score) <i>n=121</i>
Social Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You can't judge a book by its cover. - You can't judge a person by how they look. - We got to meet people we didn't know. - Everyone got a new friend. - All people are the same no matter what they look like or sound like. - What I liked was that we got to meet people we didn't know. - It doesn't matter what your religion or nationality you're still a nice person. - Being paired up with other people. - We got to meet different schools and people we didn't know. - I learnt about my person I swapped books with. - Getting to play with the other schools. - To get along with other schools. - I liked meeting new people and getting to know them and their cultures and religions. - That no matter how different people are we can all get along. - When we got to meet other people from different schools I made 2 new friends. - That you can make friends with everyone. - How to make new friends. - I learnt about another person and their background. - Playing footy at recess with people from a different school. - Meeting our partners for the book swap as I met someone who was born in South Africa but they didn't look South African but looked more English. - How to respect and understand and not to judge each other. - I learnt that talking to people that you haven't met before isn't actually that scary. - That kids are kids no matter what religion. - I learnt that the inside matters more than the outside. - I learnt that it doesn't matter what culture or country you come from you can still be friends. - That no matter what school or religion you believe in you can still be friends.
Educational Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We got to learn how Morris Gleitzman writes his books. - Being a refugee can be very hard. - Learning about all different cultures. - Seeing Morris in person. - Meeting Morris Gleitzman. - That all Muslims aren't evil and that everyone is equal. - That we're not that different. - Stories about religions. - That you can be something if you try. - All the different celebrations people have. - Why my partner moved from South Africa to Australia. - The things authors have to do to write a book. - Why Muslims wear a head scarf.

Students who thought that the activity could have been better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It would have been good if it had been a bit longer so more questions could be answered. - It would have been good if we shared lunch together. - Maybe having recess together and longer time to talk to your partner. - Maybe having a sausage sizzle. - Have chairs. - We should have nearly the whole school playing a big game of netball or something. - The amount of schools because we need to get this program happening around the country. - Having more than one person to swap books with. - That we weren't all squished up. - Maybe Morris Gleitzman could talk for less time. - More time with the person you swapped books with. - Having a break.
----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Appendix VII: The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist

THE SCHOOL-WIDE CULTURAL COMPETENCE OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

School District:	
School:	
Principal:	
Researcher(s):	
Review Date:	

Instructions: Rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Never 2= Almost Never 3=Sometimes 4= Almost Always 5=Always) the extent to which you observe each of the following criteria for cultural competence. Please note or provide evidence or documentation to support your rating.

	Observation Area/Domain and Criteria	Scale	Evidence/Documentation
School Vision/Mission			
1	There is a school Mission Statement or Vision Statement that includes a stated commitment to diversity and/or global citizenry.	1 2 3 4 5	
Curriculum			
2	Literature selections in the curriculum reflect a variety of cultural perspectives (classrooms and library).	1 2 3 4 5	
3	Global perspectives are integrated into curricula at all grade levels (world history and geography, culture studies, languages).	1 2 3 4 5	
4	Linguistic and content objectives are addressed for second language learners.	1 2 3 4 5	

Confidential

© Bustamante and Nelson, 2007. *The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist*. All rights reserved.

Student Interaction and Leadership			
5	Racial/ethnic representation in advanced placement classes, honors classes, and gifted programs is balanced.	1 2 3 4 5	
6	Youth "voice" is considered in decision-making by regularly meeting with randomly selected groups of students to obtain feedback.	1 2 3 4 5	
7	There is a variety of student leadership opportunities for all students.	1 2 3 4 5	
8	Students of different groups integrate socially outside of the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5	
9	There are identified support programs to promote achievement and retention of lower achieving groups.	1 2 3 4 5	
10	Students are involved in community service and service learning activities.	1 2 3 4 5	
11	There is a program in place to facilitate the adaptation of NEW students into the school and classroom.	1 2 3 4 5	

Confidential

© Bustamante and Nelson, 2007. *The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist*. All rights reserved.

Teachers			
12	Teachers representing diverse groups are actively recruited by the principal and the district.	1 2 3 4 5	
13	New teachers are formally inducted through orientations and structured mentoring and support programs.	1 2 3 4 5	
14	Teachers team vertically and horizontally according to individual strengths, leadership abilities, and interests.	1 2 3 4 5	
15	Efforts are made to consciously integrate diverse teacher teams.	1 2 3 4 5	
16	Professional development is offered that addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) race/ethnicity/nationality b) sexual orientation c) special needs d) language and dialect 	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5	
17	Informal teacher leadership roles are recognized.	1 2 3 4 5	

Confidential

© Bustamante and Nelson, 2007. *The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist*. All rights reserved.

18	Professional development is focused and long term.	1 2 3 4 5	
Teaching and Learning			
19	Instruction is differentiated to address students with special needs, while challenging all students.	1 2 3 4 5	
20	Researched strategies that account for various learning styles are used in classrooms.	1 2 3 4 5	
21	Connections are made to students' culture and prior knowledge.	1 2 3 4 5	
22	Teaching strategies accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a variety of grouping strategies, hands-on activities, visuals, oral language development, reading/writing workshops, etc.	1 2 3 4 5	
Parents and Outer Community			
23	Community outreach programs regularly survey the perspectives of various local community constituency and stakeholder groups, including parents.	1 2 3 4 5	

Confidential

© Bustamante and Nelson, 2007. *The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist*. All rights reserved.

24	Parent involvement programs exist for all culture groups.	1 2 3 4 5	
25	National and global ties are established through partnerships with similar organizations.	1 2 3 4 5	
26	The electronic community is realized and utilized for relationship building and sourcing best practices.	1 2 3 4 5	
Conflict Management			
27	The inevitability of intercultural conflict is recognized by peer mediation programs and/or other proactive approaches to conflict resolution.	1 2 3 4 5	
28	Practices to ensure classroom and school safety for all are in place (e.g. including systems for addressing bullying or developing positive student relations).	1 2 3 4 5	
Assessments			
29	Authentic student assessments are used to complement standardized tests.	1 2 3 4 5	
30	Formative and summative program evaluations are conducted to ensure continual improvement.	1 2 3 4 5	

Confidential

© Bustamante and Nelson, 2007. *The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist*. All rights reserved.

31	Teachers and administrators are evaluated by various constituency groups (other teachers, students, colleagues, self, supervisor, etc.).	1 2 3 4 5	
32	Organizational traditions are examined periodically to check for exclusive/inclusive practices.	1 2 3 4 5	
33	Celebrations reflect various cultures and introduce the community to new cultures. Representation at events and celebrations is diverse.	1 2 3 4 5	

General Observations:

Comments:

Appendix VIII: Questionnaires (Student Surveys)

Values Education Survey for Students

Section 1

Age (years, months):

Gender:

Birthplace:

If known, birthplace of father:

If known, birthplace of mother:

Section 2

Please indicate how well you understand the following ideas by circling a number from 1 to 5

Key:

1	2	3	4	5
I don't know what this means		Unsure		I understand this very well

1. Safety	1	2	3	4	5
2. Effort	1	2	3	4	5
3. Respect	1	2	3	4	5
4. Self-responsibility	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3

Please rate the extent to which you agree that each statement below is true by circling a number from 1 to 5. Circle one number only for each statement.

Key:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. It is important to aim for excellence	1	2	3	4	5
2. I always do the best I can	1	2	3	4	5
3. I think everyone should be treated equally	1	2	3	4	5
4. Everyone at school gets a fair go	1	2	3	4	5
5. I will stand up for other students	1	2	3	4	5

6. I know that someone at this school would help me if I was being bullied or denied my rights as a student	1	2	3	4	5
7. Students at this school are generally honest with one another	1	2	3	4	5
8. Students at this school should act according to how they feel	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am polite and well mannered to other students	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am polite and well mannered to teachers	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am aware of how my behaviour makes other people feel	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am aware of the practices of other religions	1	2	3	4	5
13. I get involved in the school community	1	2	3	4	5
14. I get along with students who are different to me	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have a good relationship with my teachers	1	2	3	4	5
16. I believe we can learn valuable things from other cultures	1	2	3	4	5
17. I believe we can learn valuable things from other religions	1	2	3	4	5
18. No particular ethnic groups are excluded at this school	1	2	3	4	5
19. I can resolve conflicts with other students without fighting	1	2	3	4	5
20. I know what the benefits of school are	1	2	3	4	5
21. The values of this school and those of my family are similar	1	2	3	4	5

Section 4

Please rate how often the following has occurred in the last 4 weeks.

Key:

1

Lots of times

2

Sometimes

3

Never

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. I assist other students when I can | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. There have been times when other students have shown concern for me | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. I show respect to people, no matter who they are | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. This term, I have been bullied by another student or a group of students | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. I was made fun of and teased in a hurtful way | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. I was called mean and hurtful names | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. Kids ignored me, didn't let me join in, or left me out of things on purpose | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. I was hit, kicked or pushed around | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. Kids told lies or spread nasty stories about me and tried to make other kids not like me | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. I had money or other things taken away from me or broken | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. I was made afraid that I would get hurt | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. I was bullied in another way
What way? _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Section 5

Please list the names of as many schools that you know that are in Officer?

Please list as many different religions that you have heard of?

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

S 11-17

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain. Please give your answers on the basis of how things have been for you over the last six months.

Your name.....

Male/Female

Date of birth.....

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am restless, I cannot stay still for long	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I usually share with others, for example CD's, games, food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get very angry and often lose my temper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would rather be alone than with people of my age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I usually do as I am told	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I worry a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am constantly fidgeting or squirming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have one good friend or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am often unhappy, depressed or tearful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other people my age generally like me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am kind to younger children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am often accused of lying or cheating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other children or young people pick on me or bully me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often volunteer to help others (parents, teachers, children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think before I do things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I take things that are not mine from home, school or elsewhere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I get along better with adults than with people my own age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have many fears, I am easily scared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

Please turn over - there are a few more questions on the other side

Overall, do you think that you have difficulties in one or more of the following areas:
emotions, concentration, behavior or being able to get on with other people?

No	Yes- minor difficulties	Yes- definite difficulties	Yes- severe difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered "Yes", please answer the following questions about these difficulties:

- How long have these difficulties been present?

Less than a month	1-5 months	6-12 months	Over a year
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties upset or distress you?

Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties interfere with your everyday life in the following areas?

	Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
HOME LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FRIENDSHIPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CLASSROOM LEARNING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEISURE ACTIVITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Do the difficulties make it harder for those around you (family, friends, teachers, etc.)?

Not at all	Only a little	Quite a lot	A great deal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your Signature

Today's Date


Thank you very much for your help

© Robert Goodman, 2005

Appendix IX: Promotional Material and Media Releases

Year 1 Promotional Material and Media Releases

Windermere Child and Family Services Invitation to the Launch of the Building Harmony Project



invitation

**Windermere Child and Family Services,
The Governor, Professor David de Kretser, AC**

Invites you to attend the launch of

**Building Harmony in the Growth
Corridor-Cardinia Project**
funded by the
Melbourne Community Foundation

A project that aims to build cultural harmony in the new-growth corridor by investing in prevention programs to ensure that new communities are socially and culturally sustainable


Guest speakers include:
Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Community Development
Cr Graeme Legge, Mayor Cardinia Shire Council
Insp. Wayne Viney, Cardinia Police, South East
Sarah Davies CEO Melbourne Community Foundation

Date: Tuesday, 16th November 2010
Venue: Berwick Grammar School
38 – 46 Tivendale Road
Officer (Mel Ref 214 J1)
Time: 2 to 4 pm

RSVP
Monday 25th October 2010

Please confirm your attendance by email at pearsonr@berwickgrammar.vic.edu.au
or for further information please contact Serap Ozdemir on 9705 3200.

Proudly supported by:



Launch of the Building Harmony Project



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Governor, Professor David de Kretser, AC to launch Building Harmony Project

For the first time in Australia a unique prevention program is underway researching values and attitudes amongst a multicultural community in the growth corridor. Taking a lead role, Windermere Child and Family Services is addressing this issue with partners Cardinia Shire and Monash University, and funding from the Melbourne Community Foundation. The Building Harmony project aims to build cultural harmony in the new-growth corridor by investing in prevention programs to ensure that new communities are socially and culturally sustainable.

Over 300 community representatives, service providers, government representatives, children and families will attend the launch on Tuesday, 16th November 2010 at Berwick Grammar School, 38 – 46 Tivendale Road, Officer (Mel Ref 214 J1) at 2pm.

Guest speakers include Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Community Development, Cr Graeme Legge, Mayor Cardinia Shire Council, Insp. Wayne Viney, Cardinia Police, South East, Sarah Davies CEO Melbourne Community Foundation

About the Project

Living well within a diverse society requires social insight, moral development, intercultural skills and sensitivity. Therefore, being able to recognise and respond to cultural diversity is paramount within multicultural Australia particularly in a new growth corridor.

The Shire of Cardinia is located southeast of Melbourne and is considered one of the most rapidly growing residential areas of Melbourne (Cardinia Shire Council, 2010). Population forecasts suggest that the area will experience a 51.86% increase by 2031. Much of this development is happening within Officer, a suburb within the Shire, as the large farming properties undergo residential development.

The Shire of Cardinia currently has a very small culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population. However, predictions founded on the migration patterns flowing south-eastward from Melbourne's centre suggest that the Shire is likely to experience an influx of CALD population groups, as the neighbouring City of Casey has already experienced (Cardinia Shire Council, 2010). Furthermore, Officer has recently seen the development of six schools. Until 2006 Officer Primary School remained the only



school within the suburb. However, today there are seven schools within this region, these are; Officer Primary School, Maranatha Christian School, St Brigit's Catholic Primary School, Heritage College, Minaret College, Berwick Grammar and Brethren College.

Throughout history, rapidly diversifying demographics have frequently encountered attitudes of resistance and racial tension (Denson, 2009; Johnson, 2003). Therefore, the anticipated influx of CALD population groups coupled with the sudden development of several faith and culture based schools within the predominantly mono-cultural suburb of Officer has the potential to cause negative racial attitudes between students and community members.

In 2009 Windermere Child and Family services submitted a project proposal titled 'Building Harmony' to the Melbourne Community Foundation that aims to build the capacity of young people from diverse backgrounds, and that of their families to live harmoniously in the emerging community of Officer, central to the expanding Cardinia Shire growth corridor. Windermere was successful in receiving funding from the Melbourne Community Foundation in November 2009 which enabled the engagement of Cardinia Shire and Monash University to assist in the delivery of the project.

The Building Harmony Project intends to work with schools to minimise the adverse social impact of this demographic shift.

Schools are forums that have the potential to equip students with appropriate knowledge and understanding about the beliefs and cultures of others. This deep understanding is believed to reduce forms of racial bias and prejudice attitudes, positively affecting the cohesion of multicultural society. It is imperative that this teaching extends beyond superficial activities. The promotion of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity must be deeply ingrained within school cultures, and reinforced through explicit curriculum teachings. Furthermore, a community approach which includes interschool interaction and cooperation is most effective.

The Officer Harmony Project has the potential to positively affect the social attitudes within this rapidly diversifying region through the implementation of a multi-level, evidence based project. A project which involves explicit teachings of respect and cultural diversity, complemented with implicit teachings through high levels of interaction and collaboration is considered the most effective means of producing positive and lasting outcomes.

About Windermere

Windermere improves wellbeing in children, families and communities by helping to realize their potential, building resilience and connecting people in the community. Windermere is also the largest independent welfare agency in Melbourne's South-East. We are also Victoria's oldest charity with a heritage back to 1851. Today, we



school within the suburb. However, today there are seven schools within this region, these are; Officer Primary School, Maranatha Christian School, St Brigit's Catholic Primary School, Heritage College, Minaret College, Berwick Grammar and Brethren College.

Throughout history, rapidly diversifying demographics have frequently encountered attitudes of resistance and racial tension (Denson, 2009; Johnson, 2003). Therefore, the anticipated influx of CALD population groups coupled with the sudden development of several faith and culture based schools within the predominantly mono-cultural suburb of Officer has the potential to cause negative racial attitudes between students and community members.

In 2009 Windermere Child and Family services submitted a project proposal titled 'Building Harmony' to the Melbourne Community Foundation that aims to build the capacity of young people from diverse backgrounds, and that of their families to live harmoniously in the emerging community of Officer, central to the expanding Cardinia Shire growth corridor. Windermere was successful in receiving funding from the Melbourne Community Foundation in November 2009 which enabled the engagement of Cardinia Shire and Monash University to assist in the delivery of the project.

The Building Harmony Project intends to work with schools to minimise the adverse social impact of this demographic shift.

Schools are forums that have the potential to equip students with appropriate knowledge and understanding about the beliefs and cultures of others. This deep understanding is believed to reduce forms of racial bias and prejudice attitudes, positively affecting the cohesion of multicultural society. It is imperative that this teaching extends beyond superficial activities. The promotion of social harmony, respect and cultural diversity must be deeply ingrained within school cultures, and reinforced through explicit curriculum teachings. Furthermore, a community approach which includes interschool interaction and cooperation is most effective.

The Officer Harmony Project has the potential to positively affect the social attitudes within this rapidly diversifying region through the implementation of a multi-level, evidence based project. A project which involves explicit teachings of respect and cultural diversity, complemented with implicit teachings through high levels of interaction and collaboration is considered the most effective means of producing positive and lasting outcomes.

About Windermere

Windermere improves wellbeing in children, families and communities by helping to realize their potential, building resilience and connecting people in the community. Windermere is also the largest independent welfare agency in Melbourne's South-East. We are also Victoria's oldest charity with a heritage back to 1851. Today, we



continue to help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families in the community. We operate from 21 locations and 10 municipalities serving a population of over 1.2 million people. Windermere address: 48 Webb Street, Narre Warren 3805

For interviews or for more information contact:

Carina Venturi

Windermere Child and Family Services

Phone: 03 9705 3200

carina.venturi@windermere.org.au

www.windermere.org.au

Launch of the Building Harmony Project

Wednesday, 24 November, 2010, Page 23

Unity in diversity study

By Lilly O'Gorman

BERWICK Grammar School in Officer was the harmonious hub of Cardinia Shire last week, when dignitaries and local schools gathered to launch a study into diverse cultures within the growth corridor.

Five schools are participating in the study 'Building Family and Community Resilience in Cardinia Growth Corridor: A Case Study of Officer': Minaret College, Maranatha Christian School, St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Officer Primary School and Berwick Grammar School.

It is a joint initiative of Wimmera Child and Family Services, Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council.

It will analyse the religious and

non religious schools and the rapidly growing migrant population moving into what has recently been a traditional rural area in the shire.

Speaking at the forum, Wimmera CEO Cheryl De Zilwa said the aim was to build a positive culture of tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

"These programs are examples of preventative activities designed to work with the community to prevent problems we anticipate emerging if not addressed early," Ms De Zilwa said.

Guest speakers also included the Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser, mayor of Cardinia Shire Graeme Legge, CEO Melbourne Community Foundation, Sarah Davies and Police Inspector Wayne Viney.



Wimmera CEO Cheryl De Zilwa addressed the audience at Berwick Grammar School in Officer, at the launch of a study of cultural diversity in Cardinia Shire. 56195 Picture: Kim Cartmell

Year 2 Promotional Material and Media Releases

Student Leadership Group

Diversity is the spice of life

CULTURAL Diversity Week was celebrated last month with a range of activities, hosted by Council. The week's events encouraged community members and Cardinia Shire Council staff to embrace cultural diversity.

A Leadership Day was held at Council, as part of the Building Harmony Project, which aims to build positive relationships amongst cultural groups. Students from Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School took part in the program where students from the five multi faith schools learnt about leadership and culture.

Cr Blenkhorn said Cultural Diversity Week was an important event highlighting the beauty in each others' differences.

"Cardinia Shire is the fourth-fastest growing municipality in Victoria and the only designated growth area south east of Melbourne. With a population of 77,233, expecting to more than double by 2031, we have people from diverse cultures joining our community, with 540 primary immigrants in the last three years. We welcome them with open arms," Cr Blenkhorn said.

The Building Harmony project is a joint partnership between Windermere Child and Family Services, Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council.



Mayor Cr George Blenkhorn and CEO Gary McQuillan celebrating all things diverse with students Katlin Wright, Maryann Abdul, Kelly Leek, Xavier Wilson, Abdul Samad Mohammad and Ryan Holland from five multi faith schools in Officer.

Student Leadership Group

MEDIA RELEASE

Young leaders build harmony in Officer precinct

Twenty grade five and six students from five multi faith schools located within the Officer precinct completed the Building Harmony Leadership Program this month.

Students from Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School took part in the program where they learnt about leadership and culture.

Students were treated to presentations by Cardinia Shire Council CEO Garry McQuillan who shared some words of encouragement and spoke about leadership.

Mayor Cr George Blenkhorn also spoke and reflected on migrating from England to Australia.

A highlight of the program was the involvement of a local artist who worked with the students on exploring cultural diversity.

The final artwork was used for a recipe book which was distributed at Council's 'Taste of Harmony' luncheon on Wednesday 23 March 2011. This signified the completion of the program, where the students presented on culture and leadership to Council staff.

Council's Diversity Project Officer Carolyn Agius said all participants should be commended on the efforts made to learn about the differences in culture and religious values.

"The program allowed the young leaders to explore cultural and leadership values and develop skills which can be utilised within their school and local community".

The Building Harmony Program is a joint partnership between Windermere Child and Family Services, Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council.

The program has been funded by the Melbourne Community Foundation to support the participating schools to embrace cultural diversity, with an expected change of demographics to occur within the Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.

Proudly supported by:



A Taste of Harmony Event

MEDIA RELEASE

Taste of cultural diversity in Cardinia Shire

Cardinia Shire Council celebrated Cultural Diversity Week (21–25 March) with a range of activities for local schools and Council staff.

The events encouraged schools participating in the Building Harmony program and Council staff to acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity within Cardinia Shire.

On Monday 21 March, 150 students from St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College and Officer Primary School celebrated Harmony Day by coming together for a Tabloid Sports Day. The theme of the day was 'Values, resilience and respect'.

The five multi-faith schools finished the event with a Halal barbecue and jumping aboard Council's MYBus.

On Wednesday 23 March, over 55 Council staff, student leaders, teachers and parents from the participating schools took part in Council's 'Taste of Harmony lunch'.

The lunch celebrated cultural diversity within the workplace and encouraged staff to share a dish from their cultural background. There was a personal account from a Council staff member, presentations from the student leaders and a dance from Sudanese community members. Attendees were presented with a cook book to commemorate the event.

Council's Diversity Project Officer Carolyn Agius said it was exciting to see a range of Council activities celebrating cultural diversity.

"It is imperative to prepare and support the increasing number of culturally diverse groups within the Shire.

"This is a milestone year in seeing Council's commitment toward educating the community about this," Ms Agius said.

The Building Harmony Program is a joint partnership between Windermere Child and Family Services, Monash University and Cardinia Shire Council.

The program has been funded by the Melbourne Community Foundation to support the participating schools to embrace cultural diversity, with an expected change of demographics to occur within the Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.

Proudly supported by:



Building Harmony Program Receives Rotary Community Services Award



Some of the partners recognised by Rotary for the 'Building Harmony in the Growth Corridor' project.

With an eye on racial harmony

WINDERMERE Child and Family Services won at the Rotary Community Service Awards in Melbourne this month for an initiative involving local schools.

The welfare organisation and its sponsor Sunshine and Crocodiles Foundation through the Melbourne Community Foundation, was recognised for the project 'Building

Harmony in the Growth Corridor'.

The project is a partnership between Windermere, Cardinia Shire Council, Monash University, four local faith-based private schools and a public primary school.

The aim of the research project is to prevent and measure potential racial attitudes

that may develop in a new community, specifically in the developing area of Officer which is predicted to be part of one of a significantly growing CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) populations.

Windermere received the major prize of \$15,000 which will go directly into the Building Harmony in the Growth Corridor project.

The second annual Rotary Community Service Awards were held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on 3 May.

The gala event brought together community service agencies and the businesses and organisations that support them.

Rotary hails harmony project

By Justin Robertson

CARDINIA Shire's Building Harmony Program was recognised by Rotary's Community Services Awards held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre earlier this month.

The partnership between Cardinia Shire Council, Windermere Child and Family Services and Monash University was commended on the night as well as the work with the project's participating schools, Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School.

Cr Blenkhorn said congratulations were in order for the hard work put in by all the organisations and schools involved in the

project. "This is such an important project highlighting the beauty in each other's differences," he said.

"With a population of 77,233, expecting to more than double by 2031, we have people from diverse cultures joining our community, with 540 primary immigrants in the last three years. We welcome them with open arms."

The program, which aims to build positive relationships among cultural groups in the growth corridor, received the major prize of \$15,000.

As part of the Building Harmony Program, a group of students from the multi faith schools completed a leadership program.

Students learnt about leadership and culture and were treated to presentations by council CEO

Garry McQuillan, who shared some words of encouragement and spoke about leadership.

Cr George Blenkhorn also spoke and reflected on migrating from England to Australia.

The program has been funded

by the Melbourne Community Foundation to support the participating schools to embrace cultural diversity, with an expected change of demographics to occur within Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.

A recipe for local harmony

CARDINIA'S Building Harmony Program has been recognised by Rotary's Community Services Awards at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The program, which aims to build positive relationships among cultural groups in the growth corridor, took out the major prize of \$15,000.

It is a partnership between Cardinia Council, Windermere Child and Family Services and Monash University.

Cr George Blenkhorn said the partnership was strongly supported in its efforts by Berwick Grammar, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College and Officer and St Brigid's primary schools.

"Students from the multi-faith schools completed a program where they learnt about leadership and culture. A local artist worked with the students exploring cultural diversity," Cr Blenkhorn said.

"The final artwork produced was used for a recipe book which was distributed at a celebratory lunch in March."

Project details phone: 1300 787 624.

Harmony award for Council

Last month Council was acknowledged (alongside the project partners) with a Rotary Community Services Award for the Building Harmony Program. The program is run under a partnership with Windermere Child and Family Services and Monash University, with support from Berwick Grammar School, Maranatha Christian College, Minaret College, and Officer and St Brigid's Catholic primary schools. It supports the participating primary school students to embrace cultural diversity in the community.

CONNECT CARDINIA August–September 2011 **5**

Interactive Workshop with Children's Writer Morris Gleitzman

Students in harmony



Morris Gleitzman engaged his young audience, encouraging them to embrace cultural diversity. Pictures: Kim Cartmell

LOCAL students learned about religious and cultural diversity during a visit from well-known children's author Morris Gleitzman.

The renowned writer discussed his novel 'Boy Overboard', which tells the story of a young Afghani boy named Jamal and his family's dangerous quest to seek refuge in Australia.

As part of the Building Harmony program, 160 students from participating schools gathered at Officer Primary School for the workshop.

Cardinia Shire Council's Diversity Project Officer Carolyn Agius said the visit, which took place during the Islamic celebration of Ramadan, was a wonderful opportunity for the children to discuss topics such as embracing cultural diversity and respecting religious differences.

"Events like this are important steps forward in educating children as well as the community about understanding and respect," Ms Agius said.

Last month the program was recognised by Rotary's Community Services Awards and received the major prize of \$15,000.

The Building Harmony Program is a joint partnership between Council, Wimmera Child and Family Services and Monash University.

The program has been funded by the Melbourne Community Foundation and teaches students to embrace cultural diversity, in anticipation of the expected change of demographics to occur within the Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.



160 students from schools throughout the shire attended the workshop at Officer Primary School.

Building Harmony Visual Arts Launch

Pakenham News Page 2 - Star News Group
Thursday 10 November 2011

Star

P21



Maddy from St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Noah from Berwick Grammar School, Garrett from Maranatha Christian School, and Belal from Minaret College in front of their artwork display at the Cardinia Cultural Centre. 7181
Picture: Stewart Chambers

Tender harmony

A VISUAL arts exhibition at the Cardinia Cultural Centre last week marked the end of a successful year of activities focused on embracing cultural diversity.

Students from five local schools attended the exhibition launch, which featured student artwork as well as photographs of the year's activities as part of the Building Harmony project.

The Building Harmony project

is a joint partnership between Cardinia Shire Council, Wimmera Child and Family Services and Monash University. Participating schools include Berwick Grammar School, Maranatha Christian School, Minaret College, Officer Primary School and St Brigid's Catholic Primary School.

The project has been funded by the Melbourne Community Foundation. It aims to support the participating schools in embracing

cultural diversity, with an expected change of demographics to occur within the Cardinia Shire over the next 10 years.

The range of activities students participated in throughout the year included a Student Leadership Day, Tabletop Sports Day, Cardinia Shire Council's Taste of Harmony Event, a literature review with a focus on Morris Gleitzman's book 'Boy Overboard'.