

TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM

PUBLIC PEDAGOGIES INSTITUTE

KAREN CHARMAN
MARY DIXON
JAYSON COOPER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY ::	PAGE 1
RECORDING A CURRICULUM ::	PAGE 2
OVERVIEW OF TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM ::	PAGE 4
AREA PROFILE ::	PAGE 7
KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE LAND ::	PAGE 8
KNOWLEDGE OF PLACE ::	PAGE 10
KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY ::	PAGE 16
KNOWLEDGE OF CHANGE ::	PAGE 18
KNOWLEDGE OF POPULATION GROWTH ::	PAGE 22
KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURE ::	PAGE 26
KNOWLEDGE OF EDUCATION ::	PAGE 31
THE VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND THE TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM ::	PAGE 33



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Public Pedagogies Institute (PPI) acknowledges the Ancestors
Elders and Emerging Leaders of the Kulin Nation.

We acknowledge that the land on which we meet and communicate from is the place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. The Kulin people's living culture had, and has, a unique role in the life of these regions. PPI supports the aim of Reconciliation Australia to build better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians. As non-Aboriginal residents and visitors to this southern land we understand and respect the significance of recognising the traditional owners.

+
—
01
—
+
+
+
+



THE KULIN NATION OF CENTRAL VICTORIA

RECORDING A CURRICULUM

What a community knows is often not recognised. However, community is what a business, formal education, community organisation as well as individuals contribute to and, indeed, create. The Public Pedagogies Institute understands that each community has specialized knowledge and when we need to access that knowledge we go to that community. However, there are few sites of official recording of knowledge – museums and historical societies do this with a particular focus. Our educational institutions do this through Curriculum Documents. These latter are organized in Australia by State and also by national organisations. Our schools and their locality are measured against these curricula. The results of which are then used to name and describe communities. We sought to find the knowledge that comes from the community. This document is a record of the knowledge that is circulating now in 2018 in Werribee, Victoria. We decided to use the term curriculum as 'curriculum documents', as used by educational institutions, reflect a full body of knowledge.

+

02

+

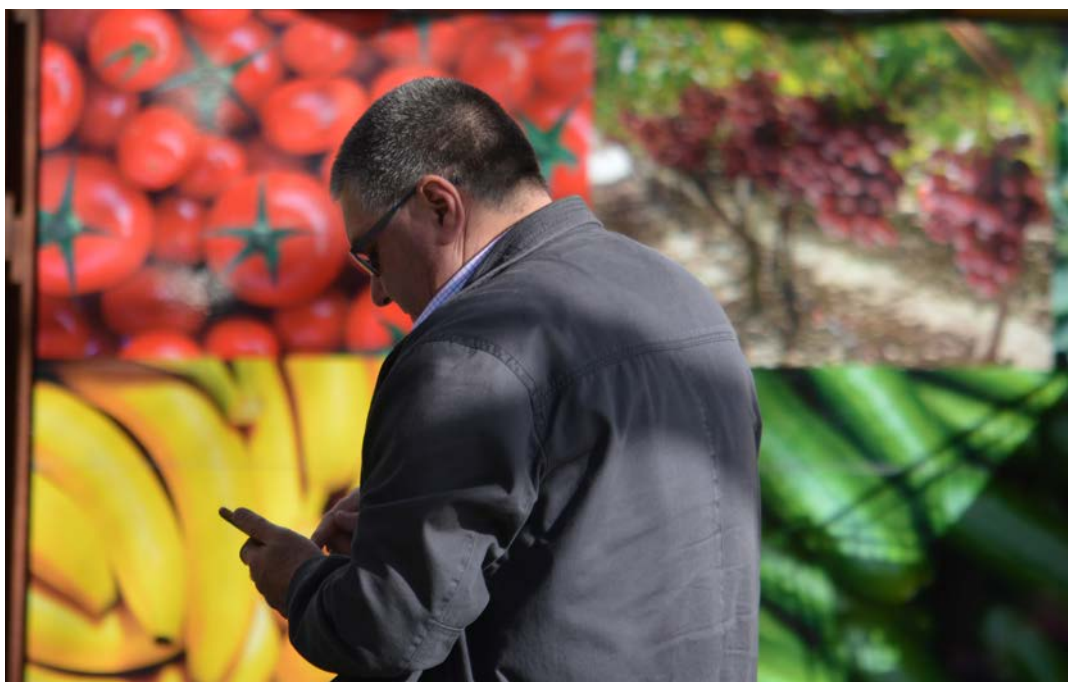
+

+

+

The authors recognize that this is not complete - the task of accessing all the knowledge of every individual and every place in Werribee is larger than our capabilities.

The 'Towards a Werribee Curriculum' booklet contains a brief description of each area of knowledge illustrated by photographs from Werribee. 'Towards a Werribee Curriculum' will be of interest to those who wish to know Werribee and to local schools and community organisations.



This booklet was created by a team of educational researchers from the Public Pedagogies Institute.



OVERVIEW OF TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM

Curriculum is mostly associated with the parameters of knowledge in education. This booklet is concerned with what a Werribee Curriculum might look like. What learnings would occur if you were to spend time in Werribee? How would these learnings be encountered? This booklet seeks to explore and provide some answers to these questions. However, it is not meant to be definitive. We recognise that as Werribee continues to grow and therefore as it changes new knowledges will come and new learnings will occur.

+
—
04
—
+
+
+
+
+
Towards a Werribee Curriculum is a culmination of a series of interviews where we asked people to explore their thoughts on what they considered significant knowledge that is held in Werribee. In understanding the significant knowledge held in Werribee we used three distinct approaches. The first was interviews undertaken in public spaces such as the Werribee Library; Wyndham Community and Education Centre; The Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre and The Arts Incubator. The second approach was through a public event—the Werribee Pop Up School. This was held in Station Place in 2017. Community groups and individuals shared their knowledge through both performance and exhibition and passers-by were invited to share their knowledge in interviews. Finally, public documents from Werribee have been examined for the knowledge they represent. Direct quotes from interviewees are included in this curriculum. They are presented in italics to distinguish them from the words of the authors. The name of the speaker is not given as all participants were advised they would be anonymous.

Through our interviews with the people of Werribee we identified seven knowledge areas. These areas are: Knowledge within the Land; Knowledge of Place; Knowledge of Community Knowledge of Change; Knowledge of Population Growth; Knowledge of Culture and Knowledge of Education. One aspect of this curriculum that continued to surface is the strong identification with this suburb by the people who live and work in Werribee. Community and place are so strongly intertwined that although other knowledges emerged a sense of community within place was by far the strongest.



THIN

REMEMBER.
HONOUR.
AND
RESPECT.

THE NEWS



AREA PROFILE

Werribee has a population of approximately 48,000 people and is located 32 km south-west of Melbourne's Central Business District within the City of Wyndham local government area.

It is situated on the Werribee River and covers an area of 23.8 square kilometres (9.2sq. miles). It is part of the Greater Melbourne metropolitan area. The Werribee River flows for approximately 110 kilometres. A linear park follows the river along much of its course.

Farming areas can still be seen on the road or train journey from Melbourne. The town of Werribee has a central shopping strip. The housing in Werribee has a distinctly different profile to that of Melbourne. 80% of private dwellings in Werribee are separate houses compared with 66% of those in Melbourne. 10% of Melbourne private properties are high density whereas in Werribee there is only .2% of private dwellings which are high density.

Werribee's population is growing at a fast rate. In Werribee 62.6% of people were born in Australia. The most common countries of birth were India 4.5%, England 2.8%, New Zealand 2.6%, Myanmar 2.3% and Italy 1.8%.

Although Werribee has a strong rural background in the 2016 Census only 1.1% of the population identified as employed in agriculture fishing or forestry. The major areas of employment in 2016 were retail (11%), transport, postal and warehousing (10.4%), health care and social assistance (10.3%) and construction (8.8%)[^].

+

07

+

+

+

+

[^]The data in this section was sourced from <http://www.abs.gov.au/census> accessed February 2019



KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE LAND

Werribee has a deep connection within the land. The word Werribee is indigenous for backbone or spine. The Aboriginals who lived in this area were made up of three groups: Marpeang bulluk who lived on the western margin of the river through Wyndham, Kuung jang balluk lived on the eastern side of the river

and Yalukit William lived on the eastern side of the river around the bay as far as St Kilda.

Indigenous knowledge forms a large part of the Werribee Curriculum and is held by indigenous people. This knowledge of indigeneity is also strongly present for non-indigenous people. People

spoke of recognising the first people as the traditional owners of the land and believed others in Werribee also recognised this. In speaking about knowledge of the indigenous past there is also a recognition of the growth of the indigenous population.

There is a large stolen generation community here and I feel safe in identity

There is such a fantastic history of Aboriginal people along the river and the different tribes that were on either side of the river. It is still quite contested land depending on where you are. I love it that we have the fastest growing indigenous population. Because of the increasing population knowledge of the past is growing I think there is a real willingness to know and embrace indigenous culture here and to say they were the first people here and to acknowledge what's happened. I think that is happening a lot.

There is a sense of excitement expressed by people as to what the growth in this population might mean. Indigenous and non-indigenous people have knowledge of the Wyndham City Reconciliation Plan and the knowledge of the Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre (WACC) as a tangible outcome of this Reconciliation Plan. The sense of the Community Centre is as a safe space and a space to for cultural practices.

Information about the Reconciliation plan can be found [here](#)

https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/Reconciliation%20Action%20Plan_0.pdf

And information about the WACC can be found [here](#)

<https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/community-support/waccc-wyndham-aboriginal-community-centre-committee>

+
—
09
—
+
+
+
+



+
—
10
—
+
+
+
+



KNOWLEDGE OF PLACE

The Werribee River is a significant place. The River itself begins as a small creek in the Wombat State Forest and travels approximately 110 kilometres to Port Phillip Bay.

There is active involvement in the river through the Werribee River Association. Established in 1981, this organisation seeks to protect the natural environment of the whole of the Werribee River. The Werribee River Walkers are also integral to the connection people have to the river. The shops in the main street of Werribee have mostly been built with their backs to the river. To walk a block beyond this precinct reveals a town that is cradled by this waterway. Despite the placement of the shop fronts the river is experienced in different ways.

The River is more important than the beach, we swam in the river.

Swimming holes.

Aboriginal people along the river.

The troubled river - a very spiritual place.

Buildings built facing away from the river only now a few towards the river

Of course, there was an Indigenous population here the river was a meeting place for three tribes.

One of our swimming holes was called Abos Hut, we called it abo's hut we were picking up remarks from our parents and our grandparents and now there is a plaque and it was a midden.

I can still walk that river and name every swimming hole, locals can.

Council have done a lot work with walking paths along the river that have got new people to Werribee walking the river.

The ford it still goes down, there is no bridge across it. There are two fords there is that ford and there is the ford that goes to Werribee Park.

Werribee is situated in the outer west of Melbourne. Colonisation and white settlement occurred in the 1850s and the area was originally named as Wyndham. Since the 1850s the area has grown considerably, however there are still memories of Werribee as a country town. Despite the geographical boundaries butting against neighbouring suburbs there still remains a distinct knowledge of place. How people see Werribee varies considerably. For some, Werribee is a suburb of Melbourne being as far as you can get from Melbourne but still be a part of it. For others, it is not connected to Melbourne but an entity in its own right.

I feel like I am in a different town, the city is like very busy... full of people.

Definitely this is separate from Melbourne. It's calm here. It is quiet. Basically, where you come to from the stress of work.

Werribee itself is a city in its own right.

I still feel like it is part of Melbourne, as far out as you can go and still be part of Melbourne.

Werribee is somewhere people want to return to after a day working or studying in Melbourne. Depending on where you look affects an understanding and a sensibility of place. Standing in Werribee, a resident can have a view towards the Melbourne CBD, another towards the You Yangs and lastly Werribee South which has the market gardens and beach.

In Werribee, there are people who have lived here all their lives and hold generational history and speak that knowledge. The Werribee Zoo and Wineries, the Werribee Mansion are valued as places that are changing what has externally been a negative perception of Werribee. There remains the memory of a map of Melbourne published in The Sun with an icon of a toilet bowl for Werribee. The connection with the sewage farm and the imagined associated smell still comes up as a comment directed toward people who have recently moved into the suburb.

This knowledge of these respective sites is spoken with pride but often this pride is mixed with an understanding that certain parts of Werribee are locations of trauma. The Mansion is recognised as a massacre site. Indigenous people connected to the Mansion were killed by placing poison in the flour to 'deter' stealing. There also emerged other memories of massacres. Importantly, as time passes fear was expressed that particular parts of the past will not be remembered. The Mansion contributes to a re-imagining of Werribee, away from the stigma associated with the sewerage treatment plant as it can be interpreted as reflecting a grand past. However, there are generational memories that find this re-positioning of the knowledge of Werribee Mansion uncomfortable.

Because we were on border of the Mansion the Chirnsides were alive in our minds but they were the devils who poisoned the aboriginals and buried them in the orchard so do I get shocked when people come to me and say they want to name a primary school Chirnside primary and I think no you don't not if you have lived

+

11

+

+

+

+

here for a long time.

We didn't play in the orchard we didn't go near the orchard.

The Mansion and Homestead where they used to sit and take pot shots at indigenous people from the veranda.

Arsenic in the flour, the wailing could be heard across the plains.

I never use the word settlers I always say invaders

At times Werribee was described as a country town and the main street reflects this. Older generations remember a strong rural experience.

+
—
12
—
+
+
+
+

The old Werribee people – community feeling- everybody knew everybody and everybody helped everybody- there were farmers- sheep coming over the ford- for the market- there were country things that went on – the mechanics hall for the deb balls- sheep dog trials-back then young people went to work in the city or on farms or doing apprenticeships in Werribee

The younger people who have moved to Werribee value the low-rise shopping strip in the main street.

Really like the shopping strip it has country feel but still close to the city.

I have lived close to a low-rise shopping strip before near Lygon St but this is different. It feels like the shops in the main street here are family run.

I love Werribee I really do.

The demarcation of Werribee as a place is in opposition to other parts of the Western suburbs.

When we were growing up the rivalries our boys would fight the Newport boys.

Beating Williamstown in the football is still the biggest thing on the calendar.

Knowledge of place also spoke to an earlier divide between Catholics and Protestants.

Two histories of Werribee, Protestant history celebrated a 100 years in 1963. Telling the stories of the families the Chirnsides who were Presbyterian and the Wedges. Not the story of the Catholics, St Andrews was the Catholic school.



Prior to World War 2 there was Italian migration. However, these early Italian immigrants were subsequently interned during World War 2. In many ways in Werribee is the story of Australia over time.

Ruts in the road from the carts on the way to the goldfields.



+
13
+
+
+
+







KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY

In Werribee, there is a sense that there will be community because of the long-standing sense of community.

Werribee is made up of many communities. The long-standing generational connections are referred to as 'old Werribee'. The sense that the past can still be experienced is one knowledge of community.

If you hadn't been here all of your life you were an outsider. People who had lived here forever or at least since European settlement owned the knowledge of the place and everyone else didn't know very much. There was a real line between those who belonged and those who had come from somewhere else.

This is not to suggest that in the past the community has been homogenous. The separation of communities along religious lines of Catholic and Protestants, the internment of Italians during the 2nd World War and the attempted annihilation of indigenous populations point to distinct, but connected communities. The work of many organisations is concerned with community.

If you see anything that needs to be done get up and do it.

The perception from the Karen community, who are some of the newest arrivals to Werribee, is that there is help for people who are refugees. However, the knowledge that people such as the Karen community bring with them from other places is often not utilised.

The value of understanding the depth of what people who come from other cultures carry into a place and how it is undervalued, under- utilised and misunderstood.

We are doing the hardest work in the Country because we are trying to grow community.

There are language barriers, and, in some instances, this makes feeling a sense of connection with a broader community difficult. However, older community members who have come as refugees see Werribee as a place of benevolence. There is also a sense of safety and peacefulness that generates an experience of co-existence. The perception of the relationship between people, whether they are rich or educated or not, is that they speak to each other in the same way. There is a sense that you can live freely. However, for some young people who have come as refugees the perception of the community is as a place where bullying and violence occurs if you are seen as too different. This is particularly the case if you don't speak English very well. In amongst these differing experiences is the work that is constantly going into ensuring strong community.

We can see business as mode of integration, visible, new curriculum around place, religion and culture.

When we started the Wyndham Humanitarian Network back in 2005 that was a network that was started because at that time there were no settlement services out this way primary settlement started to happen here where as previously it had only happened in the inner city. People were travelling from here to Footscray to get any

services they needed in their first five years.

People say assimilate. There is nothing wrong with keeping your culture.

The statistics available on growth reflect the whole of The City of Wyndham. Wyndham's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, at 0.8% and growing, is the largest in all of Greater Melbourne. Wyndham City Council is working with the local Aboriginal community to develop the Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre. It is co-located with a new family and community centre in Wyndham Vale and will be "a culturally safe place for strengthening community and improving coordination and connection of services and programs for Aboriginal people living in Wyndham" (source Wyndham Learning Strategy)

The significant number of Italians in the 1920s who made this area their home before the huge influx of immigrants after the second world war is reflected in the two mausoleums in the Werribee Cemetery. The market gardens area in Werribee South was populated by a number of Italian farmers who leased land from the Catholic Church. During the Second World War many of these were interned as prisoners of war. This interment lead to a food shortage. There remains an Italian Social Club that attests to the longevity of Italians in Werribee.

Prime agricultural land and food security is more important than population.

The market garden area is considered significant to food production and is protected from housing sub-division. As such it stands in a space of continuity and as a marker of 'old' Werribee.

+
—
17
—
+
+
+
+





+
—
18
—
+
+
+
+

KNOWLEDGE OF CHANGE

How do you balance what is existing with preservation of what was versus what is to come?

Once there would have been a strong sense of the distinct geographical space of Werribee as being clearly country. The continuous improvement of public transport and freeways moving people to and from Melbourne has changed and made Werribee more accessible. Broader economic determinants mean houses are more affordable than those closer to Melbourne. The necessity of services understood to be needed in metropolitan Melbourne had to be fought for in Werribee. What kind of value base is evolving with community is a contested space.

There is ongoing and constant discussion of change in all its manifestations. One of the most contentious areas is that of the economic imperatives and impacts of change.

We measure everything by economy...not the social value.

Werribee is a growing place...I remember how barren it was, the Plaza was only 3 shops.



+
19



+
+
+
+

The low-rise spatial configuration of Werribee is what contributes to the enjoyment of living here. Many young people indicated they would stay living in Werribee. The You Yangs, the River and a feeling of community continue to be experienced as significant. This is in contrast to the ideas of development such as the Werribee East Employment Precinct or high-rise building in Watton Street. The new infrastructure that is planned for Werribee East could change the demographic. A different outsider could arrive.

If you've got high quality jobs that are available in Werribee think what it will do to housing prices and housing development. If you are a white-collar worker who has a job and a family, why wouldn't you move here?

Change is also considered for its social implications particularly the cultural profile of the community.

However, as other parts of this curriculum attest to this has not necessarily changed peoples' perception and importantly experience of Werribee. There can be a feeling that what is causing change is the influx of new people. While this does bring with it different belief systems and in turn different places of worship or new language schools it does not mean that what 'old' Werribee seeks to preserve is not valued.

A migrant family that has moved in 5 or 6 years ago has no connection to the land.

Now there is an anti-African sentiment less acceptance and less tolerance because of rapid growth, not knowing their neighbours, mortgage stress.

Learning through the migration waves.

The more recent people are so interested in the history.

We have Saturday schools where we teach Arabic and we have Church, our own religion.

Social cohesion is a massive challenge. You can even see it on the train. You see people speaking Punjab and people who obviously speak English look at that and feel a sense of segregation.

Community is important here- I am third generation here

Change is also apparent and critiqued in regard to the architectural changes as Werribee changes from rural to city and the numbers of people and houses increase.

It is nearly the end of the country city divide. We are going to have multi storey apartments in Watton Street.

Its big now.

The traffic is shocking.

Where I work there are generational connections.

Now I have people in my street, in and out of the houses a high turnover of people, people just everywhere.

This aspect of population growth is significant and is addressed in depth in the following section.



KNOWLEDGE OF POPULATION GROWTH

It is widely recognised that Wyndham is a growth area – currently it is the third fastest growing local government area in Victoria. (<http://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/wyndham>)

This section of the curriculum is not focused on the actual growth and rates of growth. The emphasis here is on knowledge about and from growth. This knowledge has been most readily expressed by long term Werribee residents who have experienced the growth and the subsequent changes. This section first provides the statistical growth background data needed to appreciate the site of this knowledge. Knowledge of growth includes recognition of both negative and positive aspects of growth. Finally, growth is not an isolated issue and links to other areas are identified.

POPULATION GROWTH IN WERRIBEE

The 2019 population forecast for Werribee (locality) is 48,116, and is forecast to grow to 90,437 by 2041. <https://forecast.id.com.au/wyndham/about-forecast-areas/?WebID=160> This is across an area of 23.8sq.km.

The long-term residents are those that have seen the growth of the population. Unlike the recent arrivals to Werribee, they have experienced this growth and critique it as an identifier of Werribee. For new arrivals the current population is what they see as Werribee. They talk of population growth in terms of what is to come and how is it occurring across Wyndham.

NATURE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF POPULATION GROWTH

Population growth is monitored for its speed. In Werribee the growth is seen as fast and this can be very attractive as it offers possibilities of change and the promise of dynamic growth as

one local resident claimed:

'The growth rate is massive and never ending' 'Its BIG now'

This growth, particularly at this speed, changes the perception of the nature of Werribee from being:

A little town when my grandparents came here' to now being a city reaching out to the city of Melbourne.

THE VALUE OF CONNECTIONS IN POPULATION GROWTH

Fast growth within a set bordered area suggests increased proximity between people. The development of connections between people who are in close proximity supports community well-being. This was emphasised by staff at the Wyndham Community & Education Centre. The population growth enhances and extends the

'friendly and warm community'.

Although Werribee is a fast-growing community the long-term residents emphasised the value of seeing ownership of their community and a focus on their small and friendly neighbourhoods within the larger community.

You are a part of the community you own it!

Connections are made in diverse ways- not just through organized structures etc. As noted

In a busy street now my neighbours know me because of the dogs.

POPULATION AND WERRIBEE HISTORY

Population growth, particularly when it is

complicated by fast growth rates, affects the history of the area. The growth rate itself is an historical event. It is located against time and is also recorded as a rate of measurement. For one long-time resident

'(It's) very different now when I was growing up the population was 8000 and the Catholics were on one side of the river and others on the other side and we didn't mix ...Now it's over 23,000...There were 2 histories of Werribee so they say and many said one was very Protestant.'

Werribee's recent history is being shaped by new population groups from overseas and from Melbourne.

THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF POPULATION GROWTH

People just everywhere

a high turn-over of people

Now I have people in my street in and out of the houses

Population growth does mean an increase in the number of people and this is seen at odds with the desire for Werribee as the quiet country town. As one resident noted this is exacerbated in these digital times:

I miss the old Werribee – bit quieter and with social media you hear a lot about things you didn't hear before

There are organisations working to align connectivity and proximity in order to address this negative aspect of growth.

Increased demands on infrastructure are part of the growth process:

And the infrastructure can't keep up.

The traffic is shocking.

It's hard for people to move around the municipality. -

Population growth is interwoven with knowledge of Place, of Culture, of Community and of Change. Although these areas are addressed separately in this curriculum document, their power is appreciated when the overlaps are recognised.

+

23

+

+

+

+



QUALITY PRODUCE
Wombok & Cabbage
\$1.49 kg



KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURE

Change has been a significant issue in Werribee for some time. This has resulted in changes to the 'Werribee culture'. These cultural changes are being addressed in both formal and informal ways in Werribee. The knowledge of culture circulates in a wide range of discussions – the formal policy discussions at the Wyndham Community & Education Centre, exchanges at the historical society and the RSL, discussions in the library.

The knowledge of culture that resonates in these conversations focusses on the cultural exchanges and support for those from overseas, the respect and recognition of Indigenous cultures and the change in Werribee culture as it emerges from being a country town. This section of the curriculum considers each of these knowledge areas in turn.

CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE FROM MIGRATION

Everyone in Werribee is a migrant

People from all walks of life and cultures

According to the 2016 Australian census 62.6% of people in Werribee were born in Australia. However, only 40% of people had both parents born in Australia. This is critical for consideration of the depth of cultural diversity which lives in Werribee. A 5th generation Werribee grandmother asserted:

We are learning through the migration waves.

Werribee is home to people from over 160 countries. 29.4% of the households speak a language other than English at home. This is commensurate with the % across Victoria. Among the languages spoken in households in Werribee are:

Karen 1371 households - 3.4% of households

Italian 1182 households - 2.9% of households

Punjabi 562 households - 1.9% of households

Hindi 539 households - 1.3% of households

Arabic 497 households - 1.2% of households

http://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC22736

This wealth of language indicates the breadth and depth of cultural knowledge which has come to Werribee. This culture is expressed in many ways beyond language.

One of the Werribee interviewees has both parents who were born in Ethiopia. They asserted that the role of the Ethiopian community inside the Werribee community,

'is to preserve language, community, religion. The Community Centre works as a mosque in a way. We have Saturday schools where we teach Arabic and we have Church, our own religion'.

Cultural traditions are supported in community groups and in council organisations such as Wyndham Community & Education Centre. There the Karen community have an active weaving centre. This is positioned as a central project at the Centre:

The Karen people sit here in the middle of this centre- doing art not separate in a gallery.

One of the Karen women who is a mother of five and spent 20 years in a refugee camp before coming to Australia comments that she is lucky to have come to here. She then went on to explain the work of the Karen Community in Werribee. This includes maintenance of traditions, contribution to the wider community and sharing of their language.

An important aspect of knowledge of culture was recognition of the creation of new culture as migrants and long-term residents reach out to each other sharing their cultural knowledge and learning the cultural knowledge of the other. It was noted by staff at Community & Education Centre and by staff at Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre that there is strong demand from new migrants for knowledge of the history of Werribee and a desire to learn how to pay respect to Indigenous communities. In the same way long term residents recognise the waves of migration which have led to the current Werribee culture. As one long term resident remarked:

In the 1970s it was mainly market gardens- they treated you like you were part of the family

Mainly Greeks some Aussie some Italian. The connections are still there in my street- another neighbor Vietnamese- gives me nectarines.

THE CULTURE OF A COUNTRY TOWN

My grandparents were here when it was just a little town. All roads lead me back to Werribee.

The culture of Werribee as a small country town was spoken of by long term residents. One recalled

'I remember how barren it was'.

However, this view as a small country town is also identified and valued by recent arrivals as this quote from a resident of only a few months:

it is regional- as if you are in a country farming area.

The small town/country town culture of Werribee is described as:

The wide open spaces

The pace is slower

The people are lovely

The sense of community

Its calm here

Low rise it's a nice feeling

More family like

It is quiet

The Salvation Army Band at the train station

Singular shops not necessarily big brands

*Where you come to from the stress of work
family orientated*

This cultural reading of Werribee is not complete or settled. Indeed, with the population growth and the prediction of an even greater growth there is a reading of Werribee as a city with all the possibilities of a city culture. For some this is a merging of Werribee with the city of Melbourne. For others

'Werribee itself is a city in its own right'.

The imminent growth is a source of discussion about what is worthy of being maintained in the culture of Werribee, what is at risk and what are the affordances of such significant growth. The future culture of Werribee is now highly contested but for some 'Definitely this is separate from Melbourne'.

'Werribee is part of Melbourne but also on the edge of nothing.'

+

27

+

+

+

+







KNOWLEDGE OF EDUCATION



There are thirteen schools in Werribee, 5 government primary schools; 3 non-government primary schools; 1 non-government p-12; 3 government secondary schools and 1 non-government secondary school. A number post-secondary institutions also have a presence in Werribee, Victoria, Federation, Deakin and University of Melbourne alongside the Gordon Institute and GOTAFE.

Some of these institutions speak to rurality such as the Melbourne University's school of Veterinary Studies. Deakin University offers support services for its students as well as students from the Gordon TAFE. Both Victoria University and the Gordon offer vocational education courses. Werribee is also home to Wyndham Technical School. There a number of private colleges offering accredited and non-accredited courses.

The composition of the schools has changed over time reflecting migration. In the early 1990s schools were not very diverse with the exception of the Catholic schools where there were children from different backgrounds. Now young people have to travel to their schools but the transport is not easy.

Attesting to the demand for learning outside of formal educational institutions is the WCEC. This organisation responds to community need.

Wyndham Community and Education Centre (WCEC) is a large community education provider across the municipality. WCEC has its origins in Werribee. This centre carries the knowledge of education and a strong understanding of the failures of more formal educational institutions. This knowledge is strongly reflected in programs for young people. Students who seek schooling outside the mainstream'

When I started our only venue was the cottage and that is now our youth venue.

The people here are weaving the material to go over to Tarneit for people to do the sewing classes or whatever they might be doing. So now the weavers have actually decided that they would like to learn how to do the upholstery side of it.

Students from VCAL can go onto a Social Science Degree at Federation

+
31
+
+
+
+

University and some of those are now on the Board of the WCEC.

There is knowledge held in Werribee of education that understands schooling and preparation for employment as geographically specific. In some instances, young people who have disengaged from mainstream schooling return to education through studying VCAL at the WCEC. For some of these young people Melbourne is remote and their lives revolve almost completely around Werribee.

Young people live in their own bubble and have an insider experience. They have not necessarily been to the city unless the Centre takes them.

There is knowledge of university but resistance to the push for further study. Aspirations are to find work locally. The possibility of connection and community is foregrounded as strongly as schooling. As a part of the Werribee Pop Up School VCAL students contributed photographs and short pieces of writing about a significant part of Werribee. Many students photographed the WCEC.



THE VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND THE TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM

TOWARDS A WERRIBEE CURRICULUM CURRICULUM	VICTORIA CURRICULUM Cross-Curriculum Priorities	VICTORIAN CURRICULUM CAPABILITIES	VICTORIAN CURRICULUM LEARNING AREAS
Knowledge of Place	Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures	Critical and Creative Thinking	The Arts
Knowledge of Community	Learning about Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia	Ethical	English
Knowledge of Change	Learning about Sustainability	Intercultural	Health and Physical Education
Knowledge of Culture		Personal and Social	The Humanities
Knowledge of Education			Languages Mathematics Science Technologies

+
—
33
—
+
+
+

Information regarding the Victorian Curriculum accessed
<http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/> Feb 14 2019

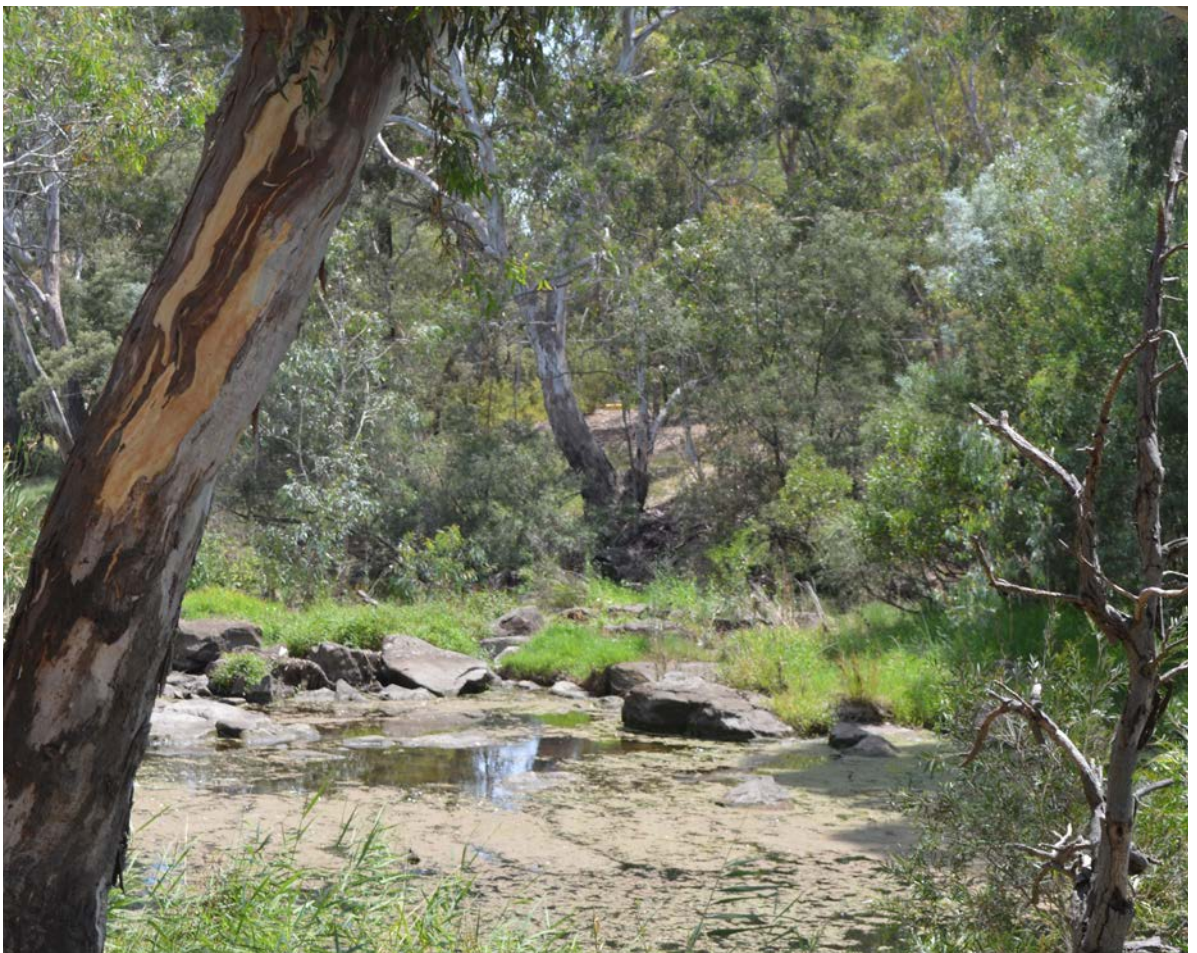
A curriculum is a description of knowledges that are important and prominent for a community and which they identify as important for themselves and for others to know. It is often regarded as the stories we tell our next generation about ourselves. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority asserts: 'The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship'. The current Victorian curriculum is largely constructed through disciplined based knowledge such as mathematics and English. It also includes

capabilities and cross curriculum priorities. Strong synergies are evident between these latter two categories and the Towards a Werribee Curriculum

The 'Towards a Werribee Curriculum' is written from the perspective that a curriculum is not a fixed or a closed description, but moves and changes with people, contexts and times. In this curriculum the voices of the people of Werribee themselves speak about what constitutes important and prominent knowledge.

There are significant overlaps between the Victorian Curriculum and the Towards a Werribee curriculum. These are strongest across the cross-curriculum priorities and the Werribee Curriculum. Knowledge of Place, of Culture, of Change, of Community and of Growth have strong application in 'Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures', 'Learning about Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia' and 'Learning about Sustainability'. Similarly, intercultural, personal and social capabilities are strong themes in the Werribee curriculum. Notable in the comparison of curricula are the presence of place and change and of culture as areas of knowledge in the Towards a Werribee Curriculum. The Werribee community articulate both contextual and embodied knowledge which occur in space and over time, in movement, in physicality and the senses. The notion of knowledge as inseparable from place and context is not strongly reflected in the Victorian Curriculum.

The 'Towards a Werribee Curriculum' is a strongly connected and relational curriculum, in which capabilities and understandings offer powerful affordances across different areas of knowledge. These affordances include addressing the challenges of belonging and of change, learning and being with others. The Knowledge from Werribee represented in this curriculum is deeply embedded in the past, in the present and looking to the future. The convergence of time is a vibrant theme underpinning understandings of place and culture and change. The Werribee curriculum is resonant with the relationships between these areas of expert knowledge. The river, the relationship to the city of Melbourne and also to the country locate and form this knowledge in distinctive and specialized ways.





Public Pedagogies Institute (PPI) would like to thank Wyndham City Council for their contribution to the work of PPI in Werribee. PPI would also like to extend acknowledgement and thanks to the people of Werribee for the contribution of their knowledge.



[FACEBOOK.COM/PUBLICPEDAGOGIES/](https://facebook.com/publicpedagogies/)

[WWW.PUBLICPEDAGOGIES.ORG/](http://www.publicpedagogies.org/)

A Public Pedagogies Institute publication 2019

