

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College

Wadeye, Port Keats

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College (OLSHTCC) is located at Wadeye (Port Keats) about 400kms SW of Darwin. Wadeye is an Indigenous community of 2500 people who come from 20 clan groups and make up 3 broad ceremonial groups across a broad geographical area known as the Thamarrurr region.

Thamarrurr is a term which describes the way in which senior people of the different clan groups in the region would meet periodically to preside over issues of ceremony, use of natural resources, economic transactions and minor law and justice matters.

The Kardu Diminin people are the traditional owners of the land on which the Wadeye Township is situated. Wadeye was founded as a Catholic mission in 1935 by Fr. Richard Docherty MSC, originally located at Werntek Nganayi (Old Mission).

In 1941 the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart arrived and established a school to teach the children basic skills. OLSHTCC is the largest single employer in the community of Wadeye with over 140 staff with 45 of these being teachers. There are a high number of local Indigenous staff as teachers, assistant teachers, literacy workers and ancillary staff. Current enrolment is over 700 catering for children from Preschool to Year 12. This includes a Families as First Teachers Program (0-3).

Primary and Secondary education are delivered on two campuses situated in close proximity and boasting a number of new, refurbished and proposed classrooms and facilities, including library, manual arts building, mechanical workshop, hospitality centre, science block, IT laboratory and art room.

OLSHTCC is a bi-lingual school where instruction in the first three years of schooling is in the student's first language, which is Murrinhpatha. The use of English as an Additional language or Dialect (EAL/D) strategies is an important underpinning feature of all curriculum areas. The school also has a Literature Production Centre for language resource



production and this serves as a cultural link between school and community.

OLSHTCC also offers a student nutrition program providing breakfast, morning tea and lunch for all students.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- ◆ Teachers work closely with an Indigenous assistant teacher who knows and understands the students, families and their relationships
- ◆ Both teachers and assistant teachers bring a range of skills in a spirit of active and mutual participation in the teaching and learning process
- ◆ 'Learning Together' sessions are on-site meetings where staff learn and plan in a cooperative group providing opportunities to develop teaching skills and to gain or share knowledge about cross-cultural situations and the school curriculum
- ◆ All students learn using English as an Additional language or Dialect. Teachers are provided with introductory and on-going support for teaching EAL/D
- ◆ Religious Education is a key priority for Indigenous people in Indigenous Catholic Community Schools
- ◆ Professional Learning is provided for teachers to deliver school designated approaches to literacy and numeracy

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- ◆ Fruit and Vegetable Shop
- ◆ Butcher
- ◆ Takeaway shop
- ◆ Two doctors
- ◆ Local Football Competition
- ◆ Women's Centre—screen printed material, clothing and handicrafts
- ◆ Boat Ramp

For more information

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