



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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Editorial

1983 marks the 11th year of production of *The Aboriginal Child at School*. In the first issue the editor, Professor B.H. Watts, set out the basic purposes of the Journal -

Teachers working in the field of Aboriginal education face perhaps the most challenging and urgent task in Australian education. The task is challenging, because these children come from families whose styles of life and values differ in some respects from those of teachers. They therefore demand of their teachers high levels of professional creativity, of understanding and of concern. If teachers are to create satisfactory learning environments for Aboriginal children they must, courteously and realistically, accept them as they are and their homes and communities as significant to them. They must also understand how these children might learn most effectively and it is their professional responsibility to devise ways of capitalising on the Aboriginal pupils' distinctive learning styles and particular strengths.

Throughout Australia today many exciting developments are taking place in schools with Aboriginal pupils. Usually, however, there is little publicity about these programs and teachers some distance away are often unaware of these developments. Unfortunately, then, many creative and successful practices benefit only a small number of pupils. A major aim of this journal is to provide a medium whereby teachers might share with one another their thinking and their successes. Reports from teachers will be included in the section *Across Australia.....From Teacher to Teacher*. I am sure that teachers will accept the invitation to enter, through the journal, into a meaningful and productive dialogue with their colleagues.

A number of articles in this issue focus upon the need to develop classroom teaching strategies that acknowledge the relationship between Aboriginal culture and children's ways of learning, remembering and thinking. The teacher is in an ideal position to observe and note, as Barbara Sayers has done, the characteristic patterns of Aboriginal learning and thought. Perhaps this could be a particular focus for us during the coming year?

Very best wishes for 1983.

Dawn Klein.