



# SUSTAINABILITY

## Policy

### Purpose

Our vision is to engage students, staff and the community in our quest to develop a sustainable school environment which models and promotes:

- > exemplary practices in decreasing consumption of energy, water and the generation of litter and dispersal of waste to landfill
- > the broadening of understanding and awareness of the need to live sustainably whilst enriching the biodiversity of our surroundings; and
- > the trialling of technologies and practical activities, which will assist us and encourage others to achieve sustainability

Within this context and our interactions as part of the local, national and international communities, our understandings are illuminated by these definitions:

#### **'Environmental Education'**

*... a lifelong process of learning that helps people to understand and appreciate the environment and their connection to it.*

*(from "Investing In the Future – Environmental Education for Schools, May 1991")*

#### **'Sustainable Development'**

*... is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

*(World Commission on Environment and Development)*

### Declaration of Commitment

As part of Epping Views Primary School's environmental commitment we will endeavour to practice Waste Wise initiatives, promote energy efficiency, reduce water usage, increase biodiversity in the school gardens and encourage community practice in sustainability. We will also include the environmental plan in all 'Key Learning Areas'.

#### **1. Energy**

To control energy consumption so that we reduce our impact on the natural environment; avoid unnecessary costs associated with wasting energy; educate students, staff and whole community about the best practice for use of energy consuming equipment and services and to conduct an energy audit and maintain records of energy consumption.

#### **2. Waste**

To continue the development of a Waste Wise ethic within the whole school community; to provide and maintain a healthy and aesthetically pleasing learning environment through the reduction of waste and litter; to practice waste wise principles of reduce, reuse and recycle; and to reduce the cost of waste and litter management.

#### **3. Biodiversity**

To improve our outdoor natural environment; by planting trees that are conducive to our environment; upgrading the play areas and making them environmentally friendly; using natural materials that reduce the impact on the environment; to educate the school community about incorporating biodiversity in our every day school life.

## **4. Water**

To promote actions that will reduce water usage; to appreciate water as a precious natural resource; to plant trees and plants that are conducive to our environment and don't need much water; to educate the whole school community about ways to reduce water usage both indoors and outdoors and to conduct a water audit and maintain records of water consumption.

### **Aims and Targets**

We aim to achieve the following goals and targets over the next three years (2009- 2012) to:

- > increase biodiversity in the school ground by 50%
- > reduce indoor waste by 10% - 50%, and maintain our 0% yard litter
- > reduce water consumption by 10%; and
- > reduce energy consumption by 10%

### **Plan for Program Implementation:**

#### **Curriculum Focus**

Units of work in all four areas of Sustainability to be included in the two year integrated Scope and Sequence Plan.

Students in the school will be involved in the planning and decision-making of environmentally focused units, as part of the bi-annual plan.

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

Students will:

- > be lead towards an understanding of the complexity of and how our ecosystem works (e.g. Role of water cycle, climatic change, etc.
- > understand what people do to the environment (e.g. pollution in all its forms, threat to species etc.; and
- > learn what 'economical sustainable development' means through practical experiences and the trialling of proven and emerging technology

#### **Skills**

Using an inquiry approach to learning students will:

- > learn how to observe, identify, assess and seek solutions to problems
- > become flexible thinkers, using lateral thinking skills to seek solutions to problems or resolving conflicting views
- > understand how to use simple technology to achieve desirable outcomes
- > draw conclusions from their experiences and learn how to apply to new situations and/or
- > communicate vision and findings to local and wider audiences, and evaluate the effectiveness of the process.

#### **Values and attributes**

By accepting responsibility for their own actions and developing understandings of those of the wider community students will:

- > develop a strong commitment to the development and maintenance of a sustainable environment and
- > gain an enhanced respect for and understanding of the earth's system and our rich heritage.

## **Energy:**

- > to promote a 'switch off' policy for equipment, lighting and heating that is not being used
- > to install solar panels on the roof of Building C (purple building)
- > to re-invest savings made through conserving energy; and
- > students to engage in units of work relating to energy
- > reduce the costs of energy consumption within our school
- > use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible
- > reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we create to create a healthier impact on the environment
- > choose the most appropriate energy saving methods available; and
- > to include students in the process of developing an Energy Efficient school

## **Waste:**

- > to collect daily food scraps i.e. chook bin scraps
- > for compost monitors to collect waste daily and transfer it to the compost heap
- > for each class to dispose of paper into the recycle bin
- > to promote the re-use principle of paper in the classroom, staff room and office areas
- > to use recyclable paper for photocopying;
- > to maintain the designated outdoor eating area, so as to keep rubbish in one area
- > to minimize and recycle our waste as much as possible on a daily basis
- > to use both sides of all paper in order to reduce waste
- > continue to maintain the Waste Wise canteen by using recyclable packaging
- > to reduce the amount of paper in the school by recycling and reusing it before it gets emptied into the recycle bin
- > to reduce the cost of 'skip' pick-up
- > to reuse garden waste as mulch; and
- > to include the students and staff in the process of developing a Waste Wise school

## **Biodiversity:**

- > to conduct an inspection of the school grounds to determine which areas require attention
- > to have 'working bees' in order to get school community involved in developing our school grounds
- > to consult with local community arborists about the best trees to plant in our environment
- > visit other 'Sustainable Schools' who have adopted the biodiversity module, to gain ideas for developing our school grounds
- > to consult with local businesses about the most effective and environmentally friendly materials to use
- > engage students and staff in the development of the biodiversity program; and
- > to grow and harvest native and exotic plants
- > to use our garden plan for the future development of our school grounds
- > to create an environmental haven for students, staff and parents to enjoy
- > to choose materials that have less impact on the environment
- > for each Learning Area to have ownership of an area in the school; and
- > to include the whole school community in the process of increasing biodiversity in our school

## **Water:**

- > to promote a 'water-wise/turn off' policy for plumbing fixtures
- > to re-invest savings made through conserving water (purchase more water tanks)
- > Students to engage in units of work relating to water;
- > to plant trees that require minimal watering

- > to reduce the costs of water consumption within our school
- > to use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible
- > choose the most effective means of conserving water and
- > to involve students and staff in the planning of water conservation initiatives

### **Community Involvement**

We will encourage community participation in all projects undertaken, as well as, invite parents with expertise to help maintain and improve our school environment.

### **4.0 Evaluation**

A commitment to rigorous evaluation supports sustainability, enabling successes to be celebrated by all participants and clearly defining areas for application in other settings and those requiring further thought/resourcing:

- > VELS outcomes should be clearly identified at all levels
- > quantifiable targets as set out in the ResourceSmart Schools AuSSI Vic modules measure success and our ultimate progress to full accreditation
- > office of School Review Surveys measure parent and staff levels of satisfaction; and
- > a strong commitment to sustainability by the school will pervade Annual Reports and Triennial Reviews

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

**November 2008**

