

Environment and Sustainability Policy

Rationale

Newport Gardens Primary School is committed to becoming a sustainable school that protects and builds value in our natural environment. As a registered Resource Smart School we endeavour to reduce our waste streams, promote energy efficiency, conserve water and increase the biodiversity of our school grounds. We will build a whole-school approach to sustainability through learning and teaching curriculum, school community engagement and workplace/daily operations and by continually auditing and analysing data.

Purpose

To embed an environmentally conscious culture within the school community through curriculum and extracurricular activities and sustainable practices

Objectives

- To minimise waste produced by the school and increase the percentage of material that are reused, recycled and composted.
- To reduce the amount of energy used by the school through smarter practices and greater efficiency.
- To increase the biodiversity of the school by planting indigenous species and increasing the habitat area for local wildlife
- To minimise the consumption of water at the school through the improvement of plumbing systems and conservation programs.
- To undertake a 'green purchasing' program to reduce environmental impacts and educate the community on making environmentally friendly choices for life.

Curriculum and Teaching and Learning

Newport Gardens Primary School utilises a Year Overview in regard to core learning considerations. Units of Inquiry are undertaken each term and show a progression of understanding, skill development and conceptual understanding. These units will, when appropriate link to sustainability through:

- Ethical Capability
- Science

- Critical and Creative Thinking
- The Humanities
- Intercultural Capability

Students will partake in the planning and decision-making of environmentally focused units, as part of an annual plan connected to our Yearly Overview for Literacy/Units of Work. Each year level will engage in a Unit of Inquiry with connections to the sustainable objectives within this policy.

Newport Gardens Primary School will develop and deliver Inquiry units of learning that engage students in learning about waste, water, energy and biodiversity.

Implementation

Our School Environment Management Plan (SEMP) as outlined below, covers the four areas of sustainability - Biodiversity, Waste, Water and Energy. The SEMP details our schools performance and broad goals for improvement. School Council and Staff will use these goals to set annual targets within each of the four areas mentioned.

The following strategies will be incorporated into the regular practices of our school community and apply to students and teachers across all grades.

WASTE

- To minimise rubbish and recycle our waste throughout the school, as much as possible, on a daily basis.
- To strive for and maintain litter-free school grounds.
- To take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate manner.
- To continue to have yard clean ups and litter management, such as, eating inside, food only to be eaten in certain areas, nude food days etc.
- To promote rubbish free lunches and reward those who participate regularly.
- To maintain the compost bin/worm farm.

- To be a drop-off point for the community to reuse/recycle mobile phones.
- To collect daily food scraps i.e. chook bin scraps and transport it to Karlsruhe
- To use recycle bins to dispose of paper appropriately. to promote the reuse principle of paper in the classroom, staff room and office areas
- To use recyclable paper for photocopying and encourage staff to be aware of excessive copying and paper use

ENERGY

- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- Include students in the process of developing and maintaining an energy efficient school.
- To minimise energy use by encouraging students to participate in Earth Hour.
- To choose the most appropriate energy saving methods available, such as, sensor lights, blinds and having appliances that are 4 stars plus energy rating.
- To monitor energy use through utilise bills and using available resources to track this usage over time.
- To continue to encourage the 'Walk or ride to School' program that promotes sustainable transport and healthy lifestyle practices.

BIODIVERSITY

- To continue to increase biodiversity in the schoolyard, by planting native plants within the school grounds.

WATER

- To reduce the water consumption within the school.
- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- To use effective means of conserving water, such as, water tanks for use on the school grounds and vegetable gardens.
- To choose the most appropriate water saving methods such as water tanks, water friendly gardens and updating appliances that are 3 stars plus.
- Regularly maintain facilities, such as leaking taps, toilets etc.
- Utilise the Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP) through the appropriate website to analyse excessive use and track water usage over time.

Facilities Management

As part of the Department's responsibility to reduce environmental impact, we commit to:

- regularly checking utility bills to ensure water or energy wastage is not occurring and that waste collection agreements reflect the amount of waste being collected
- raising awareness amongst school leaders, teachers, students and the community about sustainable design and practices
- employing sustainable principles in purchasing goods and services and consider environmental impact when assessing value for money
- taking a whole-of-life approach to assessing the environmental impacts of goods and services and encourage suppliers to meet high standards of environmental performance
- reducing their energy and water consumption by initiating energy audits
- participating in the Victorian Government Schools Water Efficiency Program
- participating in the ResourceSmart Schools initiative

Community Involvement, Responsibilities and Communication

All members of our school community will have opportunities to learn about and become involved in implementing sustainability actions.

Leadership, School Council, Green Team (Staff representatives) & Maintenance Coordinator

- Use Resource Smart Schools to collect, input and analyse waste, water, energy and biodiversity data
- Keep records, report on data and outcomes to staff, students and the school community
- Set and track goals, aims, costing, savings etc. related to waste, water, energy and biodiversity
- Review the SEMP and annual goals each year
- Report to school community through available platforms

Green Team (Senior students)

- organise and promote whole school sustainability activities e.g. Clean Up Australia Day
- participate in sustainability actions during Young Leaders Hour
- promote Green Team activities through available platforms
- assist with inputting and analysing waste, water, energy and biodiversity data

School Staff & Students

- develop and deliver Inquiry units of learning that engage students in learning about waste, water, energy and biodiversity
- empty classroom recycling bins weekly
- participate in whole school sustainability activities

School Community (parents, guardians, Hobsons Bay City Council, local nature groups)

- participate in school-based sustainability projects e.g. tree planting, Biodiversity Week activities, Clean Up Australia Day, landscaping projects
- volunteer their expertise to help maintain and improve our school environment.

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated in November 2022 and is scheduled for review in November 2025.

(in accordance with Resourcesmart Schools criteria and strategies.)