

RATIONALE

Barkers Vale Public School recognises the importance of sustainability in ensuring the health, happiness, and opportunities of current and future generations. Our school acknowledges the need to adapt to and contribute to the mitigation of the evolving impacts of Climate Change. Further, we accept that sustainable practices are widely considered to be of great import by the local community and hope to actively promote and further develop this community sentiment. We will achieve this by reducing our ecological footprint through the adoption of sustainable practices in the everyday running of the school as well as by taking active steps to promote food security and biodiversity within the school grounds. By embedding sustainability into all areas of the curriculum, and instilling a sense of ownership and pride in improving the environment, we aim to demonstrate exemplary practices in waste management, water and energy usage, and develop the school grounds to promote food production and biodiversity.

PURPOSE

Energy

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

Waste

To establish a waste mitigation and reduction 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 practise waste wise principles of reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose; to limit the use of fossil fuel derived resources in classrooms; to compost and utilise all organic material within the school grounds and to reduce the cost of waste and litter management.

Biodiversity

To improve our outdoor natural environment by; planting endemic trees and shrubs as bush food and habitat for local wildlife; practicing regenerative agriculture; involving our school community in the development and maintenance of outdoor spaces; using natural materials that reduce the impact on the environment; conducting an audit of flora and fauna in school grounds and adjoining areas; inviting local indigenous elders and ecologists to share and further knowledge.

Food Security

To develop and reimagine gardens and school grounds to be ongoing and productive by; practicing organic farming methods without the need for extensive external inputs; planting seasonal, climate appropriate foodstuffs; involving our



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school community in the development and maintenance of the garden; enlisting local farmers, horticulturists and permaculture experts to share knowledge; investigating appropriate animals which produce food or encourage food production; developing student and staff knowledge on the production, care and preparation of a range of appropriate foodstuffs.

Water

To encourage the school community to reduce water usage; to appreciate water as a precious natural resource; to educate the community on ways to reduce water usage indoors and outdoors; conduct water audits; to maintain records of water consumption; to investigate and improve water catchment and storage infrastructure.

GUIDELINES

Energy

- Reduce the use of energy consumption within the school.
- Use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- Include students in the process of developing and maintaining an Energy Efficient school.
- Reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Monitor solar output versus overall consumption.
- Increase solar system as necessary to meet or exceed overall consumption.

Waste

- To minimise rubbish and recycle/reuse our waste throughout the school, as much as possible.
- To improve and maintain worm farms and compost bins to be used as organic inputs into school grounds.
- To investigate fixed recycling/resource sorting options and implement the most appropriate.
- To include the school community in the process of developing a Waste Wise school.
- To minimise unnecessary printing, photocopying and laminating.
- To source 100% recycled and sustainably sourced products wherever possible.
- Students and staff to take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate manner.
- To promote rubbish free lunches and reward those who participate regularly.
- To involve community members in maintenance of school grounds.
- For each class/year level to have ownership in the upkeep of an area of school grounds.

Biodiversity

- To investigate and consult with local indigenous leaders and local ecologists/environmental education leaders on types of suitable habitat.
- Conduct an audit of current biodiversity within school grounds and surrounds to inform design.
- To procure and plant a wide range of bushfood species.
- Removal of problem species which effect endemic species.
- Build and install suitable habitat/nesting boxes for local wildlife.
- Establish native beehives and bee BnBs and ensure that there is a range of year long flowering plants which support them.
- Investigate suitable regenerative agriculture and soil improvement options.

Food Security

- To develop a garden plan, for the future development of our school grounds.
- To improve onsite composting and organic inputs such as worm teas, homemade natural fertilizers etc.
- To utilise our garden area to its full extent and practice companion planting and crop rotation.
- To plant seasonal nutritious foods.

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- To plant native foodstuffs and investigate their use in traditional and contemporary indigenous cultural practices.
- To plant and maintain appropriate low maintenance food producing trees.

Water

- To reduce the water consumption within the school wherever possible.
- To investigate options for catching water
- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- To involve students and staff in the planning of water conservation initiatives.
- Assign students to monitor water usage and report wastage.

AIMS AND TARGETS

We aim to achieve the following goals and targets over the next three years:

Energy

Normalise energy reduction in all areas of school through the implementation of student energy monitors who ensure unused devices are turned off when not in use. By end 2022.
Conduct an audit of energy use and identify areas for improvement. End 2023.
Investigate and if budget allows (energy grants or community fundraising) install a solar system to generate more energy than we consume. End 2024

Waste

Introduce waste warriors to monitor lunch waste and compost and classroom paper usage. End 2022
Ensure that we have an adequate array of colour coded bins for recyclables, compostables, and general waste and that all members of the school community are familiar with their use. End 2023
Ensure 90% of all paper products in use in the school are recycled. End 2024

Biodiversity

All students engage in regular biodiversity focused curriculum through kitchen garden program. End 2022
Establish chicken pen with regular student involvement in all aspects of their care. End 2023
Design build and regularly use a yarning circle/outdoor learning space and establish a range of habitat nesting boxes. End 2024

Food Security

Establish kitchen garden program. End 2022
Established and well-maintained fruit orchard. End 2023
Community focused food and seed preservation in operation. End 2024

Water

Normalise water use reduction in all areas of school through the implementation of student water monitors who minimise water wastage. By end 2022.
Design and install a drip irrigation system for school gardens. 2023
Conduct an audit of water use and identify areas for improvement. End 2024.

IMPLEMENTATION

CURRICULUM FOCUS

There will be an environmental focus delivered through our kitchen garden unit across all year levels. Students will also engage in investigations and future sustainability planning

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within their regular classes

Energy

- To promote a 'switch off and save' policy for technological equipment, lighting and heating/cooling.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to energy.
- Students will investigate the best ways to conserve energy.

Waste

- To assign students to dispose of waste and recycled products daily in the appropriate manner.
- To assign students to monitor rubbish free lunches and each term award the class who has the most rubbish free lunches.
- For monitors to collect food waste daily and transfer it to the compost bin.
- For students to dispose of paper into recycling bins.
- Use recycled paper for printers, photocopiers and student workbooks.
- Promote the reuse principle of paper in classrooms, staffroom and office.

Biodiversity

- Students to engage in units of work relating to sustainability.
- Consult local community members on ways to improve our garden (e.g. Where to plant, what to plant).
- Involve community members in planting and maintaining our gardens.
- Engage students and staff in the maintenance of our gardens.
- To grow and harvest a range of vegetables/herbs to be utilised in cooking classes.
- Build a chicken coop and use chickens to assist in regenerative agriculture.
- With community assistance design and build an outdoor yarning circle for use as an outdoor environmental learning space.
- Design and build habitat/nesting boxes.

Food Security

- Students to engage in units of work relating to food security
- Student input into design and location of garden and plantings.
- Investigate and make safe nutrient rich organic inputs for plantings
- Planting and maintenance of seasonal nutritious foods.
- Develop community garden swap/seed saving initiative to maintain food heritage and longevity.

Water

- To promote a 'water-wise turn off' policy.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to water conservation.
- To assign students to monitor water usage and report wastage.
- Plant trees and plants that require minimal watering.
- Design and install a drip irrigation system for school gardens.

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We will encourage community participation in environmental projects undertaken, as well as, invite parents with expertise to help maintain and improve our school environment. We will also promote sustainable living through educating the school community through our students. We will investigate and apply for grants through DET, other government bodies as well as NGOs to assist in funding.

RESPONSIBILITY/ COMMUNICATION

All people within our school will be informed and responsible for implementing these programs. Teaching staff, SLSOs and office staff in conjunction with the Principal will be responsible for keeping records and reporting on the outcomes and progress of each program to the wholeschool community, through school newsletters and the annual report. The parties involved will provide reports to staff and School Council outlining the goals, aims, costing, savings and other relevant issues. Each of the programs will be subject to annual review by school staff, students and School Council.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle and updated as needs arise.