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# Sustainability

## Procedures at St Columbkille's Catholic Primary School



As a community with a long tradition supporting the Josephite sisters, we stand by Mary MacKillop's words "never see a need without doing something about it"

At St Columbkille's we understand that we have a missionary and ecclesial mandate that compels us to participate and respond to the call to care for our common home with strategic planning, formation and concrete actions. This document is an outline of our current practices and strategic plans for the future of our school and the sustainable future of our Earth.

### Each Week

#### Trash Free Tuesday

Each Tuesday students and staff are encouraged to bring lunch and snacks in reusable containers.

#### Green Waste Collection

Each Wednesday classroom green waste (from Crunch 'n Sip) is taken to the worm farm and compost bins.

#### Return and Earn

Each day Return and Earn containers are collected (near canteen) and deposited in local Return and Earn stations.

### The Patch

St Columbkille's has a school garden (located on the Western side of the Monsignor Downey Hall) that was set up by previous Year Six students and community volunteers. Each Wednesday students spend time before school and/or at lunchtime tending to "The Patch". When "The Patch" needs less attention these students work in other garden areas of the school, doing their part to care for God's creation.



### Caring for Country

Our Indigenous team are creating a sensory garden in the Infants Playground, incorporating the planting of Australian natives

### Community Relationships

St Columbkille's has a strong connection and engagement with the local Aboriginal community. For many years we have participated in the annual "Clean Up (Australia) Schools Day" and have celebrated World Environment Day.

### Religious Dimension

- All grades are exposed to learning experiences around Creation.
- Ecological themes are present in Liturgies throughout the year.
- Whole staff formation in Laudato Si, eco-theology and spirituality.
- Whole school celebrations of annual environmental dates.

### Sustainable Infrastructure

During planning of the most recent improvements to our buildings and school grounds, strategies to reduce our ecological footprint were considered. These improvements are seen through:

- Twelve solar panels, sending electricity to the local grid.
- Underground water tanks on the paddock, which are used to irrigate the area.
- Water tank at "The Patch" which is used to maintain healthy growth of the garden.
- All building and external lights are fitted with LED sensor light bulbs.
- Air conditioners are serviced every six months to ensure efficient running.







### Ethical Resource Use

Over the past few years St Columbkille's has implemented many initiatives in the drive to reduce our use of paper

- Learning and teaching programs are digital.
- 1 to 1 iPads in Year 5 and 6.
- Digital display screens in all classrooms, as well as the staff meeting area.
- Newsletters and notes (where possible) are electronically distributed.
- All classrooms and office areas reuse paper, where possible.

Other areas of the school where ethical use of Earth's resources are taken into consideration are:

- All classrooms, office areas and the canteen have paper and cardboard recycling bins which a waste management company collects fortnightly.
- Teachers use of keep cups.
- Students are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles.
- No plastic cups are used in the sick bay – students are encouraged to use their own drink bottles or utilise school crockery.



### Learning and Teaching

- Laudato Si (Pope Francis' second encyclical letter) is taught in all grades.
- Year 6 Community Team, teach correct waste management practices to all grades.
- Classes utilise "The Patch" and other areas of the school grounds in teaching and learning experiences
- Cross curriculum perspective of 'Sustainability' is programmed for and taught across all grades

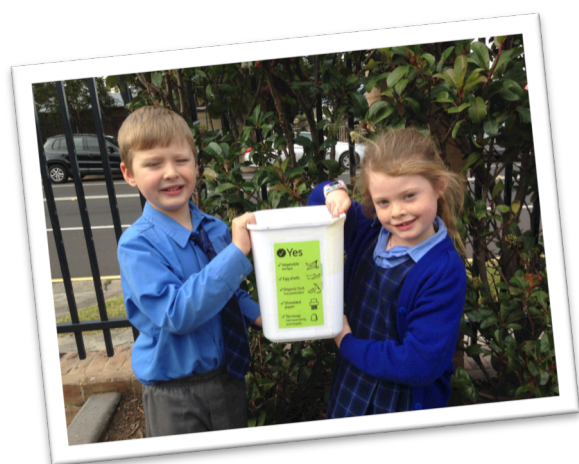
# Where to from here?

The beginning of 2018 saw St Columbkille's write a 'School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP)'. This plan outlines our direction for the next three years on how we will action Pope Francis' call to 'Care for our Common Home'. An overview of these actions can be found below...



## **Issue 1: To develop a more shared school involvement, awareness and ownership of environmental management and maintenance.**

Actions: Current environmental activities are sustainable and school-wide with ownership and participation from the whole school community.



## **Issue 2: To develop and streamline a school-wide waste management system that is sustainable and part of everyday practice.**

Actions: Investigation into current waste management systems will lead us to improved and more sustainable waste management practices within the whole school community.



## **Issue 3: To reduce the School's Ecological Footprint**

Actions: Reduce the amount of wrapping and packaging generated by school community and to encourage more environmentally friendly options for school catering.



### **Issue 4: To identify and connect the cross curriculum priority of sustainability with teaching and learning programs that connects to outdoor spaces.**

Actions: Staff to identify in their units of work, for each Key Learning Area, environmental and sustainability themes and connection to the cross curriculum priority of sustainability. This will see learning and teaching experiences for our students, connected to the implementation and maintenance of the school's outdoor learning areas and gardens.



St Columbkille's are supported and guided in their ecological endeavors through the Diocese of [Wollongong Environmental Education and Action Policy](#) (CEO Diocese of Wollongong 2018)