

**EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY (EfS) POLICY: 14/8/2016**

**Child Safe Statement**

St Francis of Assisi Primary School upholds the importance of the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people of the school. At St Francis of Assisi, we empower families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns where necessary. In doing so, we develop and implement rigorous risk-management and employment practices.

**1.0 PREAMBLE**

As Catholics, we are called upon to be stewards of the earth and wise custodians of all of God’s creation. In our school we will demonstrate authentic commitment to care for creation by ensuring all school practices are consistent with ecological sustainable ideals. We believe that environmental awareness is everybody’s responsibility and that we will lead the community by demonstrating exemplary practices in waste and water reduction and management, energy usage and development of the school grounds to promote biodiversity and education.

**2.0 PURPOSE**

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School recognises its responsibilities regarding the protection of the environment and the need to educate our community about the importance of living sustainably.

This policy outlines the school’s approach to developing and changing the patterns of behavior and understandings that will bring growth in appreciation and protection of our environment and to allow us to live in a more sustainable way.

The Policy reflects the need to work towards maintaining the St. Francis’ ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic 5 Star Certification, which was achieved by the school in 2014 and will be up for renewal in 2016 and 2017.

**3.0 OVERALL AIMS**

At St. Francis, we encourage the notion that what we do has a positive effect on our environment and that as individuals we can make a difference to how we approach the world we live in.

To realise this notion, our overall aims are:

* For environmental awareness to permeate all aspects of St. Francis community life: spiritual, curriculum, administrative and cultural.
* To improve learning outcomes for all students, teaching practices, management practices and leadership in the area of EfS.
* To think globally and act locally in a whole school and community approach.
* To sustain and improve the natural environment within our school grounds and the surrounding local area and community.
* To take into consideration environmental factors when developing agricultural programs.
* To be committed to the use and purchase of environmentally and socially responsible materials, products and services whenever they perform satisfactorily, are safe and are value for money over the lifetime of the product.
* Encourage our school community to practice environmental responsibility at home and at school.

**3.1 ENERGY AIMS**

* To control energy consumption so that we reduce our impact on the natural environment and avoid unnecessary costs associated with wasting energy.
* To educate students, staff and the St Francis community about the best practice for energy consumption including the use of energy reduction equipment and services.

**3.2** **WASTE AIMS**

* To continue the development of a waste wise ethic within the whole school community.
* To practice waste wise principles of refuse, i.e. reduce, reuse and recycle, to reduce the cost of waste and litter management and to maintain and improve the school recycling procedures.
* To provide and maintain a healthy and aesthetically pleasing learning environment through the reduction of waste and litter.

**3.3 WATER AIMS**

* To appreciate water as a precious natural resource.
* To prompt actions that will reduce water usage.
* To educate the whole school community about ways to reduce water usage both indoors and outdoors.

**3.4 BIODIVERSITY AIMS**

* To improve the natural environment by planting indigenous and native species, by revegetating our boundaries, to develop a community-planting program through Baranduda Landcare and Wodonga council.
* To be active participants in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

**4.0 KEY PRINCIPLES**

St Francis of Assisi Primary School has a responsibility to maintain the Five Star certification from Sustainability Victoria’s ResourceSmart School’s Program that was achieved in 2014.

Education for Sustainability decisions and programs will as their basis, have the Sandhurst CEO document ‘Kinship with the Earth’. ‘Kinship with the Earth’ is a holistic approach to Education for Sustainability. The aim of this Curriculum Framework is to assist our Catholic schools to understand, as Christians, the mandate we have to nurture and preserve all aspects of God’s creation.” (Page 5 Kinship with the Earth, 2012)

The ‘Kinship with the Earth’ Curriculum Framework is structured around the following organising strands or content areas.

* **Moral & Ethical Decision Making-**Informed Conscience, Responding as Christians
* **Social Justice and Sustainability-**Ecological Conversion, Catholic Social Teaching, Scriptural Foundations
* **Building Preferred Futures-**Restoring Hope, Student Democracy & Youth Voice, Knowledge, Skills & Behaviour, Green Skills & Practice and Personal Action.
* **Understanding Sustainability-**Teaching & Learning, School Operations & Processes, Management of Resources, Community Engagement & Partnerships and Story & Celebration. This will be done in the areas of Energy, Waste, Water and Biodiversity in accordance with the ResourceSmart schools Five Star Certification.

**5.0 IMPLEMENTATION**

As a ‘Five Star Certified’ school, energy, waste, water and biodiversity practices are viewed within St. Francis as important priorities in the school Strategic Plan. As such, a framework for teaching EfS in the school revolves around the following principles:

* Teachers will plan and teach explicit EfS units of work, centred on the Sandhurst Diocese curriculum document ‘Kinship of the Earth’ and aligned with the driving domains.
* All units of work will be directly related to the F-10 Victorian curriculum.
* In the early years (F-2), EfS will be taught explicitly for one hour per week, as well as part of ‘Investigations’.
* Students in Years 3-6 will participate in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program on a weekly basis for one semester and complete a semester of EfS units of work.
* Where possible, EfS units will align with ‘Source of Life’ units and will incorporate Indigenous perspectives and studies.
* Teachers will design and implement units of work in many different ways, taking into account the individual differences, abilities and needs of their students.

**6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTATION**

*Kinship of the Earth-* CEO Sandhurst

F-10 Victorian Curriculum

ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic- Sustainability Victoria

**7.0 REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed at least every three years.

Next Review to be completed by: 2019

**8.0 APPENDIX- GUIDELINES FOR PRACTISES AT ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**8.1 Guidelines for Energy Practices at St Francis**

Achieving tangible outcomes revolving around energy practices will include:

* Teaching units of work based around ‘Energy’ in curriculum areas that are clearly linked to Kinship of the Earth and F-10 Victorian Curriculum;
* Including students in the process of developing a more energy efficient school and implementing recommendations made from a student based audit of the school’s energy use;
* Participating in community based programs such as ‘Earth Hour’ and ‘Sandhurst Switches Off’;
* Students using ICT to gain information on and increase understanding of energy issues at a local, national and international level;
* Professional development for staff on use and reduction of energy at work and in the home;
* Reduce the use and costs of energy consumption within the school;
* Use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible;
* Reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions created by decreasing energy use;
* When purchasing new electrical products, choose the most appropriate energy saving option available, where applicable;
* Regularly reviewing the ‘Turn Off and Shut Down' regimes for computers, lights, heating and cooling, hot water and other appliances and new procedures put in place where applicable;
* Continuing to manage efficient airflow through design of schoolhouses;
* Encouraging carpooling or bike riding through specific programs, such as ride to school day;
* Staff and / or students mentor other schools on the school’s energy program; and
* Promote the success of the school’s solar power and other energy reduction programs to increase the school’s profile in the area of energy efficiency and reduction.

**8.2 Guidelines for Waste Practises at St Francis**

For Waste practices, achieving tangible outcomes will include:

* Teaching units of work based around ‘Waste’ in curriculum areas that are clearly linked to Kinship of the Earth and F-10 Victorian Curriculum;
* Student led waste audits of the school grounds and buildings, including review of current waste procedures - i.e the three bin system;
* Promote rubbish free practices in the school through ‘No Wrappers’ program and ‘Nude Food’ days;
* Continually reinforce designated eating areas, whereby students return wrappers to their school bags and place food scraps into ‘chook’ bins;
* Students using ICT to gain information on and increase understandings of waste management issues, including reduce, reuse and recycle at local, national and international levels;
* Staff, students and community members participating in local waste and litter activities, e.g. Clean-Up Australia Day & Albury and Wodonga City councils ‘Halve Waste’ program;
* Reduce amount of copy paper and increase the amount that is recycled;
* Paper use in printers and photocopiers being monitored, reported on and restricted (for students);
* Continuing with the email version of school newsletter and reduce the number of hard copies that are available;
* Investigating the sending home of Student Reports in electronic form;
* All classrooms, staff rooms and the administration area having recycle paper available for teacher and student use;
* Garden waste composted on site;
* Putting waste tips in the school newsletter along with ideas and activities for living more waste wise at home;
* Staff and/or students to mentor other schools and give presentations on their school waste and litter program;
* The success of the school’s waste program promoted through the media to increase the profile of St. Francis in the area of sustainability and environment; and
* Waste and litter targets and action taken to school Leadership for endorsement.

**8.3 Guidelines for Waste Practises at St Francis**

* Participating in local waterways project and activities, e.g. revegetation projects and becoming stewards of the local waterways and wetland;
* Professional development for staff on water use, water reduction and local waterways;
* Visit other ‘Sustainable Schools’ who have adopted the water module, to gain ideas for developing water resources and programs at St Francis; andFor Water, achieving tangible outcomes will include:
* Teaching units of work based around ‘Water’ in curriculum areas that are clearly linked to Kinship of the Earth and F-10 Victorian Curriculum;
* Students to gain information on and increase understanding of water issues including reduce, reuse and recycle at a local, national and international level;
* Completing a water audit on an annual basis;
* Exploring ‘best practice’ for water recycling in the school and put procedures in place to maximise water recycling;.
* Storm water to be used on vegetable gardens and orchard and recycled water from bubblers to be used on gardens near schoolhouses;
* Effective signage about water conservation practices evident in staff rooms, toilets/bathrooms, art rooms and outside areas;
* Plant appropriate native plants to suit the local environment and climatic conditions;
* Using 3-5 star rating fittings and appliances and putting flow restrictors on main use areas
* Annually reviewing and maintaining all taps, drinking bubblers, tanks and pipes;
* Work collaboratively with the wider community and draw on the wisdom of others to implement water conservation strategies - e.g. North East Water;
* Place student work and water tips in the school newsletter along with ideas and activities for living more water wise at home;
* Participating in water based competitions and apply for water recycling grants;
* Staff and / or students mentor other schools and give presentations on the School’s water program.

**8.4 Guidelines for Biodiversity Practises at St Francis**

For Biodiversity, achieving tangible outcomes will include:

* Teaching units of work based around ‘Biodiversity’ in curriculum areas that are clearly linked to Kinship of the Earth and F-10 Victorian Curriculum;
* Students to gain information on and increase understanding of biodiversity issues at a local, national and international level;
* Completing an annual biodiversity audit in the school grounds and use the information to develop a future planting guide, e.g. bird and butterfly attracting plants;
* Using our whole school plan for the future development of our school grounds;
* Supporting community and national programs such as Planet Ark, National Tree Day and Baranduda Landcare initiatives;
* Promoting school activities such as the orchard, vegetable garden and poultry according to permaculture principles;
* Adopting and becoming stewards of the surrounding WRENS land and wetlands;
* Professional development for staff on biodiversity and using the school grounds to further staff understandings;
* Put signage around the college areas, such as frog bogs, lizard lounges, conservation and wetlands;
* Developing a bird hide / outdoor study centre at the wetland;
* Habitat development areas established, maintained and enhanced e.g. nature trail, frog bog, sensory gardens, wildlife corridors, windscapes;
* Conservation areas maintained (including areas adjacent to the school) and remnant vegetation protected
* School community and groups of students supporting wildlife protection and conservation projects - e.g. sponsoring an endangered animal;
* Researching and developing a sustainable farming area in the school grounds - e.g sheep and beehives;
* Regularly conducting an inspection of the school grounds to determine which areas require attention and maintenance;
* Having community events e.g. bonfire evenings and ‘working bees’ to get school community using and involved in the school grounds development;
* Consulting with local arborists about the condition of existing trees and to make recommendations of the best trees to plant in our environment;
* Visit other ‘Sustainable Schools’ who have adopted the biodiversity module, to gain ideas for further developing our school grounds; and
* Staff and / or students mentor other schools and give presentations on the school’s biodiversity program.

**8.5 Guidelines for Green Procurement Practises at St Francis**

* Maximise the purchase of Eco- Labelled/ Environmentally Preferred Products and Services.
* Eliminate unnecessary purchasing.
* Reduce waste to landfill.
* Maximise ‘Fair Trade’ opportunities
* Encourage the sustainable use of resources.

**8.6 Guidelines for the Parent and Student Sustainability Group**

An important component of EfS involves engaging key stakeholders which includes both parent and students.

The Parent Sustainability Group (PSG) will:

* Be lead by the EfS Position of Leadership staff member;
* Consist of community members who are interested, volunteers, elected and/or co-opted;
* Provide leadership and policy direction so that the school can continue to be an ecologically and sustainably active school;
* Consult with relevant stakeholders and provide regular feedback to Leadership and the community;
* Ensure that any initiatives are consistent with sustainable practices and the school’s policies and strategic plan; and
* Meet regularly to evaluate policy and attend school and community forums to share and track progress.

The Student Sustainability Group (SSG) will:

* Be part of Yr. 5/6 leadership program;
* Organise and implement sustainable and environmental projects in the school e.g nude food;
* Support local, national and international environmental/ sustainable activities by organising school events e.g. Earth Hour, Clean Up Australia Day;
* Share information and school initiatives to the school community through articles in the newsletter and make announcements at assemblies; and
* Mentor students and staff from other schools and give presentations on the programs, activities and initiatives that are implemented at St Francis.