



SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL POLICY

Policy No. 1.19

Preamble:

Over the last few years it has become evident that the school community of Wales Street Primary School (WSPS) supports a continued commitment to sustainable practices.

In 2007 a student led Environment Club was established with the assistance of parent volunteers. Also in 2007 WSPS was awarded a Commonwealth Community Water Grant and water tanks were installed to harvest and distribute rainwater, at the same time educating students about the importance of conserving water. A Parent/Teacher/Student Summit was held in 2008 to liaise across the school community about the future direction of the school. Enthusiasm was very evident within the school community for environmental initiatives for “greening” the school and curriculum. A Sustainability Group was formed, with the aim of introducing a triple bottom line benefit to the school in terms of environmental, social and economic outcomes.

In 2009 the staff and School Council developed the following **Vision Statement:**
Wales Street Primary School is a community minded school dedicated to life long learning.

We will achieve this by:

- Creating students who enjoy learning, are creative and self motivated
- Giving opportunities to acquire knowledge, values and life skills
- Promoting excellence and nurturing talents
- Creating reflective thinkers who are socially, environmentally and globally aware

Purpose:

This policy replaces the School Energy Management Policy (2001).

Wales Street Primary School is committed to implementing environmental practices by reducing waste, promoting energy efficiency, reducing water usage, increasing biodiversity within the school, supporting the use of sustainable transport and encouraging local community practice in sustainability. In addition WSPS will continue to embed these environmental concepts within all VELS areas.

Definitions:

Sustainable: Able to be sustained for an indefinite period without damaging the environment, or without depleting a resource; renewable.

Biodiversity: The variation of life forms within a particular habitat or ecosystem, often used as a measure of the health of biological systems.

Greenhouse Effect: Warming that results when solar radiation is trapped by the atmospheric gases that allow sunshine to pass through but absorb heat that is radiated back from the warmed surface of the earth.

Greenhouse Gas: A gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation.

Active transport: Transport using physically active means, eg. cycling, walking.

ResourceSmart Schools – Waste program: A program designed by Sustainability Victoria specifically for schools to reduce their consumption of natural resources and production of waste.

Guidelines for Implementation:

1. Energy

To introduce energy conservation practices and technology to reduce our impact on the natural environment:

- avoiding unnecessary costs associated with inefficient use of energy;
- reducing energy use and associated greenhouse gas emissions.

2. Waste

To continue the development of the ResourceSmart Schools – Waste program within the school community:

- practising the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle;
- educating the school community about the concept of the life cycle of school resources ie. the embodied energy required to produce, use and dispose of each resource.

3. Biodiversity

To improve our outdoor natural environment:

- planting indigenous vegetation that supports indigenous fauna;
- exploring the possibility of developing natural habitat play-spaces as a method of introducing more biodiversity concepts to the school community.

4. Water

To promote behaviour that will reduce water consumption:

- increasing the understanding that water is a precious finite natural resource;
- planting vegetation that is appropriate to our changing much drier climate;
- educating the whole school community about ways to reduce water usage both indoors and outdoors.

5. Transport

To encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport:

- continuing programs that support and encourage active transport to and from school;
- educating the school community about the negative impacts of unnecessary car use.

The implementation of this policy will be driven by the school community including staff, students, parents, visitors and the local community. It will have strong links to the curriculum without adding to teachers' workloads.

School Council and the Facilities Committee including the recently formed Sustainability Group, will also be responsible for responding to specific aims and objectives to achieve a way forward.

Resources:

ResourceSmart Schools – Waste www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for_educators_1193.html

Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES)
www.ceres.org.au/drupal/index.php

Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden

www.rbg.vic.gov.au/rbg_melbourne/ian_potter_foundation_childrens_garden

www.ecobuy.org.au/

Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC) www.vicnet.au/~eeec/

Australian Association of Environmental Education (AAEE) www.aee.org.au

Evaluation: This policy will be reviewed by the school community as part of the three year policy review cycle.