



St Justin's Catholic Primary School, Oran Park



St Justin's Catholic Parish Primary School is a four stream school serving the parish of St Mary MacKillop Oran Park. It is under the supervision and direction of the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Wollongong. The school has enrolment from Kindergarten to Year 6 with approximately 840 plus students.

Founded and enlivened by the person of Jesus Christ, St Justin's school community strives to pursue a quality Catholic education for all, through 'faith, reason and harmony'.

St Justin's Catholic Parish School works in collaboration to build an authentic and innovative community that will:

- Endeavour to build strong partnerships between home, school and parish by making God's word known to all.
- Be leading innovators in a child centered, contemporary model of learning.
- Acknowledge and support the needs of individuals and celebrate achievements within an authentic quality education that develops a love of learning.
- Develop a safe and supportive environment where all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Promote socially minded learners and inquirers through a diverse range of teaching and learning experiences.

Our vision and mission statements invite the school community to take seriously the call from St Francis in *Laudato Si'* to care for our common home. At St Justin's we understand that we are educating our students to be responsible global citizens exercising good stewardship.

This School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) is a tool that will enable us to document, implement, reflect and celebrate sustainability as we respond to the challenges from *Laudato Si'* to walk our own journey of ecological conversion. At St Justin's we understand that we have a missionary and ecclesial mandate that impels us to participate and respond to the call to care for our common home with strategic planning, formation and concrete actions and it is within this context that this SEMP is formulated.

Since 2015 following the release of *Laudato Si'*, Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong has taken seriously Pope Francis' prophetic call for an ecological conversion and has proactively responded in a strategic, planned approach whereby sustainable practices and ecological values are promoted and supported across the system of schools in the Wollongong diocese.

Engagement with eco-spirituality, environmental education and action is a key component of our mission, of being Catholic and is viewed as "core business", not an "optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (LS n217)

This strategic approach has involved schools embedding ecological values into school programs and practices that promote an ecological and sustainable culture, encouraging everyone to live out his/her ecological vocation and engage in caring for our common home.

Through collaboration with the Diocese of Wollongong, St Justin's Oran Park has responded to the ecological calls of our common home by way of:

- Implementation of CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy
- Implementation of School Environment Management Plans (SEMP)
- Engaging in Professional Development and Staff Formation in eco-spirituality, eco-theology and ecological conversion.
- Involvement in CEDoW Environmental Education Grants Program, leading to the purchasing of soft-plastic bins and composting bins to help streamline our waste management systems.
- Being an active member of Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) that aims to support school communities respond to Laudato Si' and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability through open dialogue and a student-led environment team.
- Level 3 Certification Earthcare School achieved in 2021.

Inspired by Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor and Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message, St Justin's Oran Park have used the following two documents to guide our journey towards ecological conversion.

- [Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor](#)
- [Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message](#)

St. Justin's School is a community inspired by Gospel values taught by the Catholic Church and exemplified by our Patron, St. Justin. Through our school motto "Faith, Reason and Harmony", we are committed to educating the whole child in a Christ-centered environment that fosters faith development, lifelong learning, and the awareness of each person's responsibility to care for our world. Our Community responds to the cry of the Earth by monitoring our use of power and planting gardens to protect biodiversity. The cry of the poor is met through our donations to sister schools and foreign countries that are suffering as a result of climate change. St. Justin's promotes the adoption of sustainable lifestyles through recycling, promoting walking and cycling, and avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic, etc.). Ecological education is a mandated focus with each grade integrating ecological awareness into at least one unit of work, staff attend PD's and environment contact days so they can then share this information with their wider school community. Ecological spirituality is practiced regularly. Students and staff participate in prayer and liturgies that promote creation and the ecological challenges of Earth.

St Justin's Oran Park acts not just in word but in deed. Collaboration with Beth Riolio the Professional Officer (Environment-Advocacy-Outreach) of Wollongong Diocese has led to the creation of a School Environment Management Plan or SEMP. This document outlines our goals and actions taken towards ecological conservation.

Issue 1: Encouraging the whole school community's ownership and responsibility in promoting and supporting the school's ecological conversion journey.

Actions:

- Sharing of SEMP and promotion of specific environmental actions that staff can be involved in.
- Creation of Environmental section in school newsletter - eg. "Environment Matters" and notifications through Staff communication meetings and channels.

Issue 2: Desire to establish a formal Environmental Committee that includes staff and students.

Actions:

- Discuss with the school leadership proposal to create a formal Environmental Committee.
- Invitation issued to join the School Environmental Committee.

Issue 3: To encourage a school-wide reduction in waste and streamline the system so that it is sustainable and part of everyday practice.

Actions:

- Evaluating current practices for waste management and current consumption that can improve St Justin's environmental footprint encouraging more ethical behaviour.
- Document roles and responsibilities for the various environmental actions within the daily routine of the school.
- Apply for a CEDoW Environmental Education Grant to fund the purchase of resources to support waste management procedures and signage.
- Educate and communicate to students, staff and wider school community about the waste management system.

Issue 4: Document the incorporation of ecological themes in liturgy and prayer and acknowledge some key environmental days.

Actions:

- Development of an Environmental Calendar that can be incorporated into the School Calendar.
- Creation of liturgy for the whole school celebration of World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

Issue 5: Desire to create a designated Prayer garden and Sensory Garden.

Actions:

- Begin a school vegetable garden initiated by staff and then maintained by students, with produce sold for donation to Catholic EarthCare Australia.
- Research and investigate possibilities for prayer garden and sensory garden.
- Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the maintenance of the prayer garden and sensory garden.
- Incorporate an environmental duty into the staff playground roster.

Issue 6: Need to reduce the School's Ecological Footprint

Actions:

- Environmental Committee to liaise with the Principal and with administration, school caterers and the canteen coordinator and devise strategies to reduce the waste generated by the canteen, catering events and the students.
- Develop Green Catering Procedures written for canteen, school and hospitality events.

Achievements include the completion of a prayer garden, a school vegetable garden and flower patch, whole school liturgies focusing on ecology such as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, development of an Environmental Calendar that can be incorporated into the School Calendar, the creation of Environmental section in school newsletter - eg. "Environment Matters" and notifications through Staff communication meetings and channels as well as the forming of a student led environment team.