



**Ss Peter and Paul Kiama**  
A Catholic Parish Primary School Diocese of Wollongong



*Empowerment for the challenges of life's journey*

## **Introductory Statement**

Ss Peter & Paul School is a co-educational Catholic Primary School Catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Catholic Education has a long history in the Kiama area, beginning when the Sisters of St Joseph who first taught at the Catholic School at Jamberoo. In 1908, St Joseph's School in Kiama was established, at this time lessons were taught in the old Railway School Building. On January 20th, 1952, the present Parish Hall was opened and used for classrooms.

Over the years various building projects have been completed to accommodate the changing demographics and needs of the school community. This has included the eastern classroom block (1961), brick double storey classrooms (1981), a new Library and four new classrooms which were built on land adjacent to the convent (1981-1994).

In 1974 the school's name changed to Ss Peter & Paul bringing all Parish buildings under the patronage of the same Saints. In 2008 an extensive building program commenced which saw the demolition of the demountable block and the Convent. The building program was supported by Federal government grants, parish funds and a parent building levy. Stages 1 and 2 of the project were completed in 2010.

Between 2020 and 2021 all open learning spaces have been enclosed with glass walls and doors allowing for more workable and flexible learning spaces that provides for a growing school population and the challenges of teaching into the 21st century.

From 1887 to 1990, the Sisters of St Joseph played an essential role in Catholic Education in our Parish. We are grateful for and very proud to acknowledge their work. By 1990, there were no Sisters teaching in the school and their ministry became one of pastoral care in the parish.

The school vision at Ss Peter and Paul is 'Empowerment for the challenges of life's journey' which invites each of us to take seriously our own journey of ecological conversion. We need to take seriously the challenge from Laudato Si' to care for our common home. At Ss Peter and Paul we see that it is crucial that we take action to be sustainable stewards and responsible citizens that contribute to the building of a better future for humanity and our planet.

Our community understands the importance of ensuring the school reflects its long tradition in the Josephite charism established by St Mary



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MacKillop. Her words of “Never seeing a need without doing something about it” hold particular relevance for the ways in which Ss Peter and Paul respond to the environmental challenges outlined in Laudato Si’.

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 Ss Peter and Paul 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 SEM is formulated.

### **About the Local Environment and Community**

Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School is situated right on the beach in Manning Street, Kiama. Kiama is a beautiful coastal town full of character and history, surrounded by sand and sea on one side and rolling green hills on the other. It is a 30 minute drive north to Wollongong, 90 minutes to the city of Sydney and 45 minutes south to Nowra.

A high proportion of the population have post secondary school qualifications and work in professional or managerial positions.

Kinder to Year 6 are all located on the same upstairs level and are a flexible learning environment. The school office and library are situated on the ground level. The parish Church is also located within the school grounds. The design of the school has been very deliberate to ensure that while we have flexible arrangements, the students remain connected to the learning environment. The openness of the environment contributes to the feeling of welcome and collaboration that permeates our school culture. Students have access to technology and it is in close proximity to the learning spaces. The physical environment has natural shade and human made structures that provide for learning outdoors. Designated learning spaces are provided for the teaching of Music and Art.

Ss Peter and Paul has three different playgrounds including: Basketball court and multi-purpose grassed areas that also includes Coronation Park which is a public area. The infants playground has play equipment which was updated in 2018. There are limited trees shading all



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playgrounds with an Aboriginal garden that is maintained and updated annually. The previous landscape master plan to incorporate vegetable/herb gardens, native plants and trees is near completion. The beautification of the front entrance and a reflection area was completed in 2018. All areas are currently utilised and linked to learning and teaching that connect to ecological and sustainability principles.

### **Strategic alignment to the Diocese of Wollongong**

Since 2015 following the release of Laudato Si', Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama 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 Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama.

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 "optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (LS n217).

This strategic approach has involved Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama 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.

### **As a school we have been engaged in:**

- Implemented the CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy
- Produced a School Environment Management Plans (SEMP)
- Engaged in Professional Development and Staff Formation in eco-spirituality, eco-theology and ecological conversion
- Applied for CEDoW Environmental Education Grants Program



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- Allocated a Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) Contact that aims to support school communities respond to Laudato Si' and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability
- Accredited Level 3 Certification Earthcare School

**As a school we are Inspired by Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement and Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message:**

[Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor](#)

[Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message](#)

- **Connect the values of your school with the Laudato Si' Goals...**

### **RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH**

At Ss Peter and Paul, staff and students are focused on adopting renewable and energy efficient measures throughout the school to include replacing light bulbs with more energy efficient LED lighting and putting solar panels on the roof to use efficient power sources. Through these practices, we are able to monitor energy consumption across the school community and raise awareness of energy saving practices. In addition, the Environmental Leadership Team focuses on maintaining a sustainable herb garden to sell to the school and wider community. We use water tanks in the school garden to collect water and maintain our garden space.

### **RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR**

At Ss Peter and Paul we have a Mini Vinnies team who focuses on caring for our local community - we have winter appeals, christmas appeals, food drives and toiletry collections. We also have a Social Justice Team who does advocacy and fundraising for international appeals, including Caritas: Project Compassion, Mission Month for Catholic Mission.

### **ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS**



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As a school, Ss Peter and Paul acknowledge the economy as a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. We consciously try to take action to choose companies with sustainable production and consumption - purchasing organic etc. We also have a focus on ethical investments - we choose to purchase things from Kiama, swap and sell rather than buying things that are new. We have divested in fossil fuels and instead we are choosing options like solar panels. When we get people and labourers to work at Kiama, we ensure that we protect the dignity of workers and make sure they are supported, paid appropriately and treated with dignity of the human person.

### **ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES**

At Ss Peter and Paul we have a focus on the Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, which is grounded in the idea of sufficiency, and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy. We are reducing waste and recycling - we have implemented a procedure for bins including the FOGO bins, we have promoted the use public transport and students riding and walking to school and as a school we avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic bags) with the inclusion of a waste free Wednesday and a change in lifestyle choices.

### **ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

As a school we have a focus on the cross curriculum priority of Sustainability. The cross-curriculum priority of sustainability is addressed through learning areas, but does not constitute the curriculum on their own. Through the priority of Sustainability, students develop the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary to contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. As a Catholic school we also have Religious Education units that focus on 'creation'.

### **ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY**



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We have engaged in **whole staff Spirituality Days: Who is my neighbour? Called to Ecological Conversion (2019)** and **Praise be: Living our Ecological Conversion (2022)**. As a school we also acknowledge and celebrate World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and World Environment Day with a liturgy or prayer service each year.

### **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT**

The Ss Peter and Paul community is passionate and empowered to care for creation. Our goal for the coming years to have to have stronger parent partnerships in relation to the environmental initiatives - as a school we need a 'Everyone's business approach'. Community engagement and participatory action will be further developed at various levels.

### **Environmental Education Achievements**

With the implementation of SEMP I and SEMP II we have been able to achieve some of the following goals linked to the Assisi Framework:

- Encouraging staff ownership and responsibility in promoting and supporting the school's ecological conversion journey.
- Established a formal Environmental Committee that includes staff, parents, parishioners and students.
- Document the incorporation of ecological themes in liturgy and prayer and acknowledge some key environmental days.
- Engagement in professional development for environmental education - identifying cross curriculum links for sustainability, programming, scope and sequences.
- Develop and streamline a school-wide waste management system beginning in classrooms (Compost, Landfill, Recycling Paper/Cardboard/Plastic bottles) that is sustainable and part of everyday practice.
- Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the waste management system, compost, garden maintenance and management.
- Implementing Waste-free management (nude food Tuesdays) on a weekly basis.
- A Laudato Si' Award for classes that demonstrated behavioural change in energy usage was introduced.



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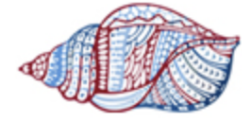
- Allocation of garden beds to classes and timetabled organic waste management for worm farms.
- Aboriginal garden incorporated into learning and teaching activities.
- Solar panels on buildings.





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