

**St Joseph's**  
CATHOLIC PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL BULLI  
*Truth and Light*



**CATHOLIC EDUCATION** WEN  
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

## **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Bulli Laudato Si Action Platform School Reflection**

### **Overview**

St Joseph's is a two stream Catholic Primary School that is located within the Parish of St Joseph in Bulli and is one of the 30 systemic primary schools that belong to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Wollongong. The school caters for students in Years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 400 students.

St Joseph's was founded in 1882 in Bulli and has a long, rich and celebrated history within the Bulli community. Our traditions, values and beliefs are inspired by the charism of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph.

Our school community understands the importance of ensuring the school reflects its long tradition in the Josephite charism. Mary MacKillop's words of "Never see a need without doing something about it," hold particular relevance for the ways in which St Joseph's responds to the environmental challenges outlined in *Laudato Si'*.

St Joseph's school life operates around our motto, *Truth and Light*. Our vision is to ignite a passion for learning within a Catholic ethos. We also understand the importance of being agents of truth and light in our commitment to be sustainable stewards and responsible citizens that contribute to the building of a better future for humanity and our planet.

The patron saint of our parish school is St Joseph whose care for Mary and the infant Jesus invites us to consider the ways we care for each other, the world and our environment. We are called to be God's stewards which means managing responsibly the God-given resources we have – our time, our talent and our resources; our treasure. A stewardship lifestyle enhances the relationships we have with God and with one another. Being God's steward means trying to live out a commitment to be more Christ-centred and less self-centred. It involves a conversion of our heart and *Laudato Si' Care for Our Common Home* calls us to have an ecological conversion, a change in the way we live on this earth.

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 Joseph'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 SEM is formulated.

### **Environmental Vision**

St Joseph's School aims to provide programs and practices that care for our common home embedding within the school community a commitment to ecologically sustainable actions that promote and nurture ecological conversion.

Environmental education and action, challenges our perception of teaching and school life, that we might be alert to and create opportunities through the integration of curriculum, prayer and liturgy, resource management, grounds management, whole school planning and school community that contributes to the betterment of our environment and our relationships with one another.

## St Joseph's Contribution to the LSAP

St Joseph's Bulli school belongs to the system of schools in Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong. 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.

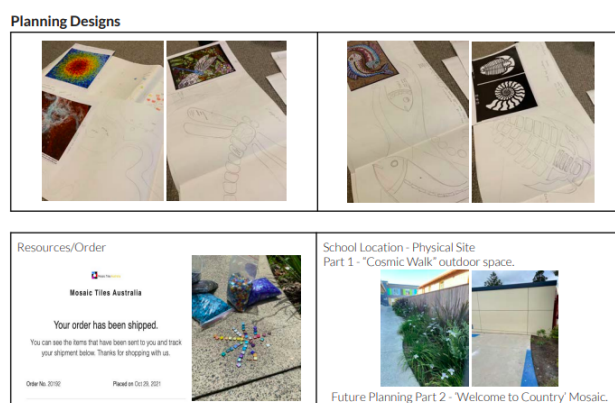
Engagement with eco-spirituality, environmental education and action is a key component of our mission, of being Catholic and is viewed as "core business", not an "optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (LS n217).

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.

## Accomplishments of SEMP I

From 2017 - 2020 St Joseph's Bulli engaged in the SEMP process. The following is an overview of significant environmental actions and initiatives undertaken during the first SEMP cycle.

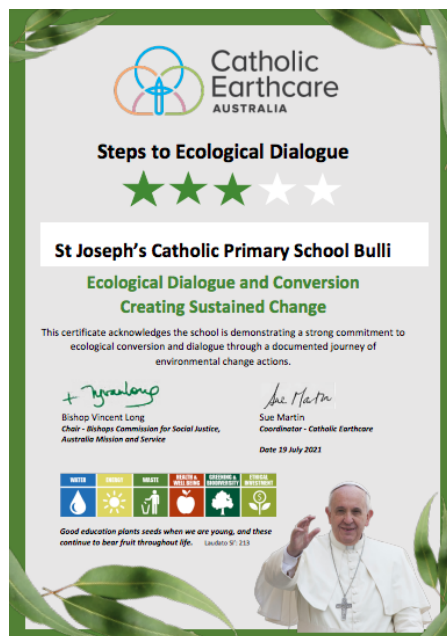
- Implementation of CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy.
- Whole School Recycling and Waste Management incorporates RED bin - general waste, YELLOW bin - paper, cardboard, BLACK bin - 10 cent recyclable plastic bottles (VINNIES Return & Earn), BLUE bin - Sushi & Pizza Containers (in classrooms and playground), class compost bins - used for composting and brought out to playgrounds for break times. Whole school composting system is managed by Year 6's Environmental Team (Green Thumbs). There is also VINNIES Return & Earn (still to be officially reintroduced following Covid restrictions). Canteen and Administration areas have recycling that includes paper and cardboard. Staffroom has recycling that includes green waste, paper and cardboard and coffee pods. We discourage the use of single use plastic for staff events.
- Vegetable gardens (seasonal), maintained by the Yr 6 Environmental Team (Green Thumbs).
- Waste Free Lunches are encouraged each Wednesday.
- School Environment Management Plans (SEMP). Signed off and completed SEMP I and about to embark on SEMP II.
- Professional Development and Staff Formation in eco-spirituality, eco-theology and ecological conversion: Participation in Staff Eco-Spirituality Days - 'Who Is My Neighbour? Called to Ecological Conversion'.
- Involvement in CEDoW Environmental Education Grants Program - Environment Project Title: Cosmic Creation Garden and Welcome to Country Mosaic.



- Member of Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) that aims to support school communities respond to *Laudato Si'* and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability

## St Joseph's is an Earthcare School.

Inspired by Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor and Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message, St Joseph's Bulli is linked to the CEDoW Diocesan Values of Hope, Integrity, Compassion and Justice in line with the Laudato Si' Goals as we walk in the truth and the light of our God. St Joseph's is a Level 3 Certification Earthcare School.



## Current Actions for our School

Last year, St Joseph's devised a SEMP II to be carried out from 2021 - 2024. Through this SEMP, St Joseph's will be building capacity in the following areas:

- Encouraging the whole school community's ownership and responsibility in promoting and supporting the school's ecological conversion journey.
- Document roles and responsibilities for the various environmental actions within the daily routine of the school. (Who, What, Where, Why Procedures).
- Need for staff to continue on their ecological conversion journey through formation in eco theology and eco spirituality addressing EEA Policy Expectation 2.4.
  - In November 2022, St Paul's staff will be engaging in professional development titled: *'Praise Be. Living out Ecological Conversion.'*
- Whole School Engagement with the *Laudato Si' Action Platform*, the seven-year journey towards addressing seven Laudato Si' Goals.
- Need to ensure that learning and teaching programs reflect ecological themes and the learning across curriculum priority of sustainability. Environmental education is integrated into all stages and KLAs.
- Educate and communicate to students, staff and wider school community about the various environmental actions within the daily routine of the school.
- Incorporate an environmental duty (supervision of the WEN Student Committee around environmental actions) into the staff playground roster.
- Creation of Environmental section in school newsletter and school daily overview - eg. *'Environment Matters.'*
- Sharing of SEMP and promotion of specific environmental actions that staff can be involved in.
- Create and celebrate an annual award - *'St Francis of Assisi Award'* - to be given to a student from each class who has exemplified care for God's creation and connection to the environment in both

words and action.

- Building a worm farm and vegetable gardens as part of the school composting system.
- Need to reduce the School's Ecological Footprint.
- Vision and Mission Statement needs to include and/or reference sustainability principles and ecological conversion.
- School is marketed on its green credentials with an update to the School website and relevant inclusions to the Parent Information Booklet.
- A staff member of Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) that aims to support school communities respond to Laudato Si' and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability.

### **Our SEMP Process aligns with the Laudato Si' Goals of:**

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

- St Francis of Assisi Framework Goal
- Engagement in Caritas' Project Compassion, Catholic Mission.
- Return and Earn. All containers available for purchase from the school canteen are 10 cent containers. These 10 cent containers help raise money for St Vincent De Paul who respond to various social issues in our local community.
- St Vincent de Paul - school Mini Vinnies/Social Justice team organises various awareness and fundraising events for SVDP including The Winter Appeal and end of year Christmas raffle.
- Various community projects to raise awareness of local and international issues and money for those in need.

#### **ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS**

- Solar Panels/water tanks
- Staff are encouraged to make sure all lights, televisions and air conditioners are switched off at break times when not in use and at the end of each day.
- Staff are asked not to use air conditioners daily if avoidable and not to make temperature changes.

#### **ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES**

- Return and Earn Programs
- Reinvigorating Waste-Free Wednesday lunches across the school.
- Worm Farm/Composting practices. Compost bins are brought out to the playground each break time to encourage students to use these instead of general rubbish bins.
- The school has paper & cardboard recycling containers in each classroom, staffroom and print room.
- introduction of soft plastic recycling across the school.
- Student practises: School Green Thumbs encourages students at assemblies to reduce the amount of single use plastics, along with the correct use of the bins around the playgrounds.
- Introduction of Waste Free Wednesday raffle to reward students who bring no disposable rubbish to school.

#### **ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

- Scope and Sequences - Embedding ecological themes/Sustainability across K-6 Curriculum
- School ecological leadership team (Green Thumbs) and WEN teachers. This student team works with the Religious Educational Coordinator and Yr 6 teacher to assist with weekly care of the school gardens and vegetable patches as well as with Environmental Masses and Liturgies.
- Sustainability programs.
- Cross-curricular priorities.
- WEN Contact Day.
- WEN Primary Student Day.

#### **ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY**

- Staff and Student Spirituality Days
- World Day of Prayer for Creation: Liturgy and ecological activities

- World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation Staff Spirituality Day for November 2022 - Praise Be. Living out Ecological Conversion

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

- Engagement in Caritas' Project Compassion.
- Return and Earn. All containers available for purchase from the school canteen are 10 cent containers. These 10 cent containers help raise money for St Vincent De Paul who respond to various social issues in our local community.
- St Vincent de Paul Community outreach - school Mini Vinnies/Social Justice team organises various awareness and fundraising events for SVDP including The Winter Appeal and end of year Christmas raffle.
- Involvement in Wollongong Council Community Greening program: <https://wollongong.nsw.gov.au/urban-greening>.
- Various community projects to raise awareness of local and international issues and money for those in need.

## Focus Area Goals (ASSISI Framework)

Across the focus areas the goals of this plan are:

### 1. Whole School Planning

*Environmental Plan (SEMP), Strategic Plan, Governance, Policy, Environmental Team*

### 2. Religious Dimension

*Catholic Social Teaching, Celebration, Liturgy, Prayer, Embedding of eco-theology and Catholic Social Teaching principles in RE Curriculum, Formation in eco-spirituality & theology*

### 3. Teaching & Learning

*Curriculum, Syllabus Perspectives & Materials, Professional Development, Environmental education integrated into all stages and KLAs, Scope & Sequences for environmental education, Curriculum links to environmental action in school*

### 4. Ethical Resource Use

*Individual and School Ecological Footprints, Administrative Practices, Waste Management – recycling, Green catering, purchasing, audits*

### 5. Caring for Country

*Physical surrounds & Maintenance, Biodiversity - Grounds developed to enhance environmental education – eg. "Outdoor Living Classroom", outdoor education, landscaping (equipment, shade, safety and seating reflect an awareness and consideration of environmental impact)*

### 6. Community Relationships

*Networks and Partnerships, Student Life*

## Environmental Education Achievements

At St Joseph's we have been engaged in various environmental actions and initiatives. The following is an outline of past environmental action:

- Year 6 Environmental Team (Green Thumbs). - meets weekly. Responsible for watering, weeding, checking compost and brainstorming of ideas for future environmental projects.
- Waste management includes: RED General Waste, YELLOW paper and cardboard, BLUE Sushi & Pizza Containers (in classrooms and playground). There is also VINNIES Return & Earn (still to be reintroduced following Covid restrictions). Canteen and Administration areas have recycling that includes paper and cardboard. Staffroom has recycling that includes green waste, paper and cardboard and coffee pods. We discourage the use of single use plastic.
- Daily 'Crunch and Sip' is a whole school focus with the green waste collected daily and the compost is managed by Year 6.
- Two vegetable garden plots have been built in the new adventure playgrounds and utilised. The gardens near

the infants grass area behind the Church have been re-established. The newly established garden areas from the building project are maintained by students and teachers.

- Participation in Clean Up Australia Day and Walk Safely to School Day. Whole School liturgies are part of the school calendar and include; World Environment Day, Harmony Day and World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. These days have been shared with staff through a Laudato Si monthly calendar, which is distributed to teachers each month and identifies these important environmental days. A folder of information and activities is also shared with teachers to support this.
- Each year Stage Three participates in World Environment Day activities at the Wollongong Botanical Gardens. The students engage in environmental and sustainable education that the students share and promote with the whole school community. Kindergarten's first excursion is a visit to the Botanical Gardens setting up positive attitudes to the environment.
- Waste-free Wednesday for the whole school. In addition Year 6 conduct daily audits and engage in waste free lunches for the whole week.
- Promotion of re-useable water bottles and the canteen has a reusable lunch order bag (stick beak)
- Water tank needs to be reconnected for future use.
- Solar panels are located on the roof of Stage One and Two top of the school building. Sensor lights are in all classrooms, toilets and administration areas and LED lights.
- Staff formation in Laudato Si, eco-theology and spirituality (Who is my Neighbour? Called to Ecological Conversion, Environmental Action Staff Meeting).

\*Note: Some actions and plans are ongoing and need to be reinvigorated after Covid 19, where many practices were on hold.