



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG



LSAP Reflection - 2022

St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Camden

Introductory Statement

St Paul's is a three stream Catholic Primary School that is located within the Parish of St Paul's in Camden 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 614 students. St Paul's is a school that prides itself on being Catholic and highly values the close link that we have with the Parish community.

St Paul's has a long, rich and celebrated history within the Camden community. The Parish was established in 1859 while Archbishop Polding was still in office as the Archbishop of Sydney. John Macarthur provided a building and a Catholic teacher to teach the children of the employees that worked on his estate. In 1840 the Macarthur's donated the present day site for St. Paul's Catholic Church. In 1883 a request was made to St Mary of the cross MacKillop and the Sisters of St. Joseph to establish a properly run school. Thus, our traditions, values and beliefs are inspired by the charism of St Mary of the Cross and the Sisters of St Joseph.

Our 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 Paul's responds to the environmental challenges outlined in Laudato Si'.

Our school motto 'Truth, Love and Faith' highlights our commitment to our faith, the pursuit of truth and the development of students who are engaged in their learning and spirituality. We understand the importance of being engaged both intellectually and emotionally in our commitment to be sustainable stewards and responsible citizens that contribute to the building of a better future for humanity and our planet.

We are also blessed to have St Paul as the patron saint of our parish school whose spirituality influences our daily activities and invites Christ to be gradually formed in us and in those whom we live and work with. This finds an expression in the way we care for our environment.

Environmental Vision

St Paul's Catholic Parish Primary school aims to respond to the challenges from Laudato Si' to walk our own journey of ecological conversion. At St Paul'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 our Laudato Si' Plan 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.

Key Actions and Initiatives

- Implementation of CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy
- Member of Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) that aims to support school communities respond to Laudato Si' and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability
- The WEN contact each year attends professional development opportunities with all primary and secondary WEN contacts from the diocese.
- The WEN contact meets with CEO Professional Officer Beth Riolo twice a year to complete check-ins for the school SEMP.
- School Environment Management Plans (SEMP)
We completed our first SEMP cycle in 2021. The SEMP is a working document designed to improve the environmental practices that occur at the school. The SEMP is also evaluated and adapted each year to ensure the school is working towards the goals set. WE have just written our SEMP II (2022 - 2025). The SEMP informs our Laudato Si' Action Plan.
- Professional Development and Staff Formation in eco-spirituality, eco-theology and ecological conversion
- Celebrating World Environment Day and the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

- In 2021 the St Paul's school community was accredited as a Catholic Earthcare School Level 3.
- Inspired by Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor and Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message

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

Focus Area (Laudato Si' Goals)

Response to the Cry for the Earth

- Whole school systems to improve ecological footprint ie waste free lunches, recycling
- Whole school participation in various environmentally focused days ie Clean Up Australia Day
- Whole school prayer and action ie World day of Prayer for Creation

Response to the Cry of the Poor

- Participation in various charities annually ie St Vincent de Paul, Caritas, Catholic Mission
- Action response to point of need within the local and wider community ie flood response, local St Vincent de Paul chapter, bushfire appeals

Ecological Economics

- *Mindful practices when purchasing and exercising good stewardship of resources*

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles

- *Whole school systems to improve ecological footprint ie waste free lunches, recycling*

Ecological Education

- *Identification of sustainability cross-curricular priority within teaching and learning programs*

Ecological Spirituality

- *Staff spirituality days and prayers focussed on ecological spirituality*
- *Whole school prayer focusses throughout liturgical year to focus on environment/ environmental aspects/ saints*

Community Resilience and Empowerment

- *Promotion of and participation in environmental dates throughout the year*

Environmental Education Achievements

From 2018 - 2021 St Paul's engaged in the SEMP process. The following is an overview of significant environmental actions and initiatives undertaken during the first SEMP cycle.

- *Encouraging staff ownership and responsibility in promoting and supporting the school's ecological conversion journey.*
- *Inclusion of other teachers in the environmental duty (supervision of the volunteer students in the garden) into the staff playground roster. Responsibilities for the environmental duty are clearly understood by teachers and documented on the Staff Weekly overview.*
- *Document the incorporation of ecological themes in liturgy and prayer and acknowledge some key environmental days.*
- *Develop and streamline a school-wide waste management system that is sustainable and part of everyday practice.*
- *Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the waste management system and garden maintenance and management.*
- *Waste-free Wednesday is part of weekly routine. Students and staff are encouraged to cut down on waste and one use disposable packaging.*
- *Expansion of the gardens that can be utilised by the families of the students in gardening group.*
- *Engagement in professional development for environmental education - identifying cross curriculum links for sustainability, programming, scope and sequences.*
- *The gardens contain seasonal vegetables, herbs and some flowers to attract insects.*

- *An Environmental Duty for the WEN Committee.*
- *Continued encouragement for use of re-useable water bottles.*
- *Sensor lights in some classrooms and administration areas and LED lights.*
- *Regular servicing for air conditioners to ensure efficiency.*

SEMP II was planned, written and begun in 2022 and will be utilised for our school's Laudato Si' Action Plan.