

STELLA MARIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL SHELLHARBOUR

Laudato Si Action Plan Reflection

Stella Maris is a two stream Primary School that is situated within All Saints Parish Shellharbour and is one of the 30 Systemic Primary schools that belong to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Wollongong.

The school vision at Stella Maris is 'Reverence the Story of all People' which encourages every student, every staff member, our parents and friends to work in partnership and support each other in creating a better world for all.

Our community understands the importance of ensuring the school reflects its tradition in projecting into the future. Over the last few years our school population has grown steadily. As our school population grows, it is crucial that sustainable development is a key consideration of all school plans and curricula.

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 Stella Maris 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. Stella Maris Catholic Primary School has and continues to participate in all of these important environment initiatives.

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). Stella Maris has prioritised Ecological Conversation as part of its School Review and Improvement (SRI) initiatives (SRI) for the last three years. Consequently, these environmental initiatives are a significant focus for all members of the school community on a daily basis.

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.

Highlight your school's engagement with...

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School follows the CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy. Each year, every grade participates in various outdoor educational and environmental units of work across a number of Key Learning Areas. This mainly occurs through our Project Based Learning (PBL) initiatives using targeted subjects such as Science, Religion, History, Geography and Creative Arts.

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School has successfully completed a School Environment Management Plan (SEMP I), where all environmental goals and actions were successfully

addressed. From 2017 - 2019 Stella Maris Shellharbour engaged in the SEMP process. The following is an overview of significant environmental actions and initiatives undertaken during the first SEMP cycle.

- The ecological dimension has been named and referenced in the School Vision and Mission Statement. *Social Justice and Stewardship - We Care for God's creation through genuine action, which respects human dignity and the environment.*
- Extension of Waste Management System to include recycling, FOGO, worm farm. Canteen, Staffroom, classrooms, administration and playground.
- Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the waste management system.
- Recycling of printer cartridges and establishment of a collection point.
- Reduction in the amount of wrapping and packaging brought to school, encouraging more environmentally friendly options and healthy eating. Nude Food Days, reusable calico bag for money collection across the school.
- Weekly Laudato Si' Award for students.
- "Green" Catering and hospitality practices are followed where appropriate. ie.- reusable crockery & cups/water jugs/biodegradable, eco-friendly serviettes
- Develop the whole school procedure outlining roles and responsibilities for the maintenance of the garden.
- Document the incorporation of ecological themes in liturgy and prayer and acknowledge some key environmental days. (Ongoing)
- Encouraging staff ownership and responsibility in promoting and supporting the school's ecological conversion journey.
- Engagement in professional development for environmental education - Outdoor Education Development Day with Dr Amanda Lloyd. Staff creation of units of work that correlate with the new Science syllabus related to our rock platforms and sustainability.
- CEDoW Environmental Education Action Grant.
- Return and Earn Vinnies Container scheme.
- Celebrated Laudato Si' anniversary with a whole school community prayer celebration.
- Included Laudato Si' teaching in our classrooms across KLA's.
- Initiated Environmental Leadership group for Year 6.
- Continued to contribute to Clean Up Australia Day.
- Continual awareness made at whole school assemblies to care for God's environment by keeping the playground clean.
- Vegetable garden providing for the canteen.
- Have Solar panels and Water tanks.

The school has developed a SEMP II plan and is currently working through achieving its new environmental initiatives and outcomes.

The staff at Stella Maris Catholic Primary School participates in Professional Development through staff meetings. The school was booked in to engage in the Professional Development workshop 'Who is my neighbour, called to ecological conversation', facilitated by Beth Riolo. Unfortunately due to COVID-19, this had to be cancelled, however, it will occur in 2022.

- Stella Maris has been involved in CEDoW Environmental Education Grants Program.

Environmental Project Title: Shellharbour Rock Pool Project**WEN Contact:** Chris Price **Email:** pricec01@dow.catholic.edu.au**Person overseeing the project:** Chris Price**Environmental Project Description:**

4. This project will equip our staff with expert advice and training to develop higher quality curriculum materials and programming. The students will develop an intrinsic motivation and desire to care for the local environment, both at Stella Maris and the local community and beach.
5. In addition, the project will enable the students to be active participants in environmental restoration and preservation by maintaining the rock pools and harbour. The students will also learn about biodiversity, water efficiency, water conservation and marine biology.
6. The main goal for this project is that the students will learn how to be active participants and confidently contribute to preserving our local environment.

The Diocese of Wollongong 2019 Environmental Education Grant has been extremely beneficial and a contributing factor in assisting both teachers and students to be able to learn, explore and investigate a unique part of God's creation.

Our objective when applying for this grant was to take full advantage of our school's location near Shellharbour Beach and expose and immerse the Stella Maris students to Outdoor Education. The school was fortunate enough to receive an additional \$5000 grant from the State Government on top of the \$2000 from the Diocese of Wollongong. These funds

were used specifically to purchase an abundance of resources, provide professional development for staff and to support the development of programs.

Earlier in the year, our staff participated in a Professional Development opportunity with Dr Amanda Lloyd from Outdoor Connections. She provided examples of numerous ways outdoor education has enhanced learning outcomes for students and brought about a new way of learning. Dr Lloyd also modelled a diverse range of learning experiences at the rock platforms to demonstrate methods of engaging and learning from this local ecosystem.

Since the Professional Development Day, each class has engaged in variety of units of work across many Key Learning Areas such as; Science, Geography, English, Religion and Visual Arts. The units have been designed using the Project Based Learning

model and through careful consideration of cross-curricular opportunities. The students have learnt about biodiversity, water efficiency, water conservation, marine

biology and the impact that tides can have on the rock pool platform.

The successful nature of the project, the enjoyment factor and the enhanced learning outcomes for students, means that this project and units of work can be sustained and implemented for future learning.

The Rock Pool Project is an initiative that has been included in the School Environment Management Plan (SEMP). There are four initiatives to this plan that have been completed, all which all sit under *Issue 6: Strong identification and connection of the cross-curriculum priority of sustainability with teaching and learning programs*. The four actions are:

1. Educate teachers and students through outdoor education utilising our local beach and rock platform environment.
2. Apply for grants (CEDOW Environmental Education Grant, Eco Schools Grant).
3. Staff participate in an Outdoor Education Development Day with Dr Amanda Lloyd.
4. Staff create units of work that correlate with the new Science syllabus related to our rock platforms and sustainability.

Overall, the Rock Pool Project has enabled students to be active participants in environmental restoration and preservation by maintaining the rock formations, pools and local harbour. The students have developed an intrinsic motivation and desire to care for the environment, both at Stella Maris, and within our immediate community.

The school has a member of Wollongong Environment Network (WEN) that aims to support school communities respond to Laudato Si' and implement environmental stewardship and sustainability

Stella Maris has gained level 3 Certification Earthcare School.

Stella Maris is Inspired by Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor and Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message when planning for and implementing environmental actions. See the following link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NZ8KksizLM-c4Dh5wwpxlPBXe2NqyXFK>

Over the course of the year, Stella Maris connects the values of your school with the following Laudato Si' Goals...

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

- STELLA MARIS PARTICIPATES IN SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES SUCH AS PROJECT COMPASSION (CARITAS) TO HELP SUPPORT THOSE WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE.
- Walk to school safely day

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

- Mission Month
- St Vincent De paul Vinnies appeal to raise money for those who are less fortunate.
- St Vincent De Paul Earn and Return
- Soktober

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

- The school is powered by solar panels
- The school produces its own vegetables
- Purchase of recyclable products

ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

- Clean Up Australia Day
- Water tanks
- School wide recycling practices
- Solar panels

ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

- Programming for sustainability in different educational units of work.
- Participates in all green dates (annual significant environment)
- Wollongong Environment Primary Network Day - Professional Development
- World environment day
- Earth Hour

ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

- Participate in the World day of Care for Creation.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

- Clean Up Australia Day
- St Vincent De Paul food hamper appeal

Stella Maris is inspired by the ASSISI Framework and some of the focus goal areas are:
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

Stella Maris will Celebrate Progress by:

Our school will celebrate progress by:

- Reporting progress in the annual school report.
- Regular updates in the school newsletter, Facebook and Instagram.

- Stories for local media: newspapers, television or radio.
- Relevant displays and events at locations inside and outside the school.
- Awards or badges for those involved.
- Promoted at school assemblies.
- Grants and competitions applied for.
- Sharing the skills, positives and challenges of our school's journey with other schools.
- Showcased on the school website.

Stella Maris's School Environment Management Plan (SEMP II) actions are:

Action 1: To continue to offer opportunities for students to create promotional, awareness raising and informative materials that link in with specific environmental days and celebrations.

Action 2: Create an annual 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.

Action 3: Explore avenues for sourcing an annual budget for environmental initiatives and maintenance as well as time allocation for WEN Contact and those involved with environmental responsibilities.

Action 4: Incorporate an environmental duty (supervision of the Environmental Student Committees around environmental actions eg. gardening, worm farm) into the staff playground roster.

Action 5: Document roles and responsibilities for the environmental duty.

Action 6: Reminding staff of ecological and sustainable practices and actions that they can engage in.

Action 7: Staff engage in Spirituality Day exploring ecological conversion, eco theology and eco spirituality.

Action 8: To increase Student learning and engagement in Laudato Si' through focus in RE Creation Units.

Action: 9 Staff engage in professional development on the seven goals of the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

Action 10: At Staff Meeting/or Stage meeting there is time given to check and update the following: key environmental unit for each Year level, identifying cross curriculum links for sustainability (and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, Asia and Its Neighbours) programming, scope and sequences.

Action 11: Continued Reusable Waste free (Nude Food) Lunch Boxes across the school.

Action: 12 Introduce REDcycling to the waste management of the School.

Action 13: Continued monitoring of energy and water consumption across the school community.

Action 14: Recycling the paper towel waste generated in Staff amenities for FOGO.

