

# ENVIRONMENT POLICY

## **Rationale:**

Alphington Primary School (APS) is committed to fostering active citizens with the knowledge, skills, values and world view necessary to contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. The school environment is a key resource providing a safe, inviting and sustainable work and learning environment. APS is a sustainable school with an integrated environmental plan that facilitates learning and actions in areas of biodiversity, energy conservation, waste management and water use.

## **Aims:**

To

- Provide a safe, attractive and sustainable school environment.
- Protect and improve the land (school grounds and surrounds), the local ecosystem, and plant and animal habitats.
- Embed 'Sustainability' initiatives into the APS curriculum to promote student understanding
- Decrease the amount of energy used through greater efficiency and improved practises.
- Minimise water consumption and collect, store and reuse where practicable.
- Minimise landfill waste and increase the amount of material that is reused, recycled and composted.

## **Implementation:**

1. The School Council is responsible for the initiation of ongoing maintenance programs and for the management of improvement projects. The Principal has operational authority over recurrent programs and reports to School Council. The Environment Sub Committee makes recommendations to the School Council on the requirements and priorities for environmental improvement and management. The health and safety of the APS community will be a priority in the application of maintenance programs. School Council approves the use of approved/registered workers carrying out community service orders for routine maintenance projects.
  2. For WorkCover purposes it will be minuted annually that School Council approves the use of volunteer workers to carry our school work and a list of volunteers will be registered for each activity and presented to Council for approval.
  3. Identified hazards or issues will be addressed as a matter of priority.
  4. The school will act as a responsible neighbour.
  5. APS will continue its participation in the AUSSI Vic ResourceSmart Schools Modules to minimise waste, save energy and water, improve biodiversity and cut greenhouse gas emissions.
  6. The AusVELS Sustainability cross-curriculum priority will be integrated into teaching and learning programs.
  7. The sustainability coordination team will inform the school and wider community of sustainable programs and initiatives at APS.
  8. APS is committed to the use and purchase of environmentally and socially responsible materials, products and services whenever they perform satisfactorily, are safe and provide value for money over the lifetime of the product. **See Appendix i**
  9. The school community will be involved in the process of developing a 'Waste Wise' school through the principles of Rethink/Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.
  10. The school community will participate in the process of developing an 'Energy Efficient' school.
  11. The school community will continue to conserve and increase biodiversity in the school yard, utilising the garden area to its full extent, in order to support indigenous plants and animals.
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12. The school community will continue to develop an appreciation of water as a precious natural resource.
13. The school will continue working towards reducing the amount of traffic to and from APS.

**Evaluation:**

The School Council will be responsible for the review of this Policy within the life of the School Strategic Plan.

**October 2014**

This policy was last ratified by School Council in ...

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## **Appendix i**

### **Resource Smart Five Star Accreditation Criterion**

#### **GREEN PROCUREMENT**

Wherever possible and practical the school will purchase the following:

- 100% recycled paper products.
- Recycled and sustainable products for student supplies.
- 100% renewable energy (green power) to supplement the solar power produced at school.
- Low energy lighting (CFL and LED).
- Natural cleaning products with lower quantities of chemical additives.
- Computers with energy compliance and an end of life recycling program.
- Timber and building products from sustainable sources or timber alternatives e.g. Modwood.

Wherever possible and practical the school will avoid the following:

Products which are harmful to the environment or whose production process is harmful to the environment or not sustainable.

#### **WASTE**

- Minimise landfill waste and maximise reusing and recycling waste on a daily basis e.g. paper recycle bins, rubbish free lunches and composting.
- Continue to provide sufficient facilities for recycling of all recyclable waste.
- Promote the reuse principle of paper in classrooms, staffroom and office.
- Reduced use of paper in class e.g. centrally saved documents, mini whiteboards.
- Monitor the use of printer and photocopier paper and encourage all staff and students to reduce their usage e.g. reviewing and editing work prior to printing, default double sided printing, laminating for reuse and reduction to fit more information on each page.
- Establish 'paper free days' whereby school activities have no use of paper.
- Each year level to have ownership of the upkeep of an area of school grounds.
- Maintain litter-free school grounds.
- Students to take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate manner.
- For monitors to collect food waste daily and transfer it to central compost bin.
- Use environmentally friendly or recycled resources in playground maintenance and upgrades e.g. eco-cubby, reclaimed timber seating.

#### **ENERGY**

- Promote a 'switch off and save' policy for technological equipment, lighting and heating/cooling.
  - Increase the use of carbon neutral energy sources e.g. solar panels, passive cooling.
  - Utilise energy saving resources and equipment as efficiently as possible and consider 'Green Procurement' when purchasing.
  - Conduct regular energy audits; maintain records and analyse comparative data of APS consumption over time.
  - Student driven investigations to identify the best and most appropriate methods available to conserve energy.
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## **BIODIVERSITY**

- Plant native (preferably local) trees and plants which are conducive to the APS environment and climate i.e. low water requirements.
- Encourage an appreciation of the natural environment through learning experiences e.g. curriculum, excursions and school camps.
- Continue to enhance our vegetable garden and connected learning program to allow children to experience the links between growing and eating healthy food and learn about the benefit of sustainable practise e.g. reducing food miles.
- To grow and harvest a range of vegetables/herbs to be utilised in the classroom and school events e.g. sensory cooking (herbs), canteen soup day and Italian/Fusion Day.
- Plan, build and maintain a Habitat Garden in the school's grounds to increase the school's biodiversity and to add an important teaching area to promote sustainability e.g. Lizard Lounge.
- Consult local community members on ways to improve our garden e.g. where to plant, what to plant.
- Engage students in the maintenance of our gardens through Sustainability Leaders and Action Teams.

## **WATER**

- Involve the whole school community in water-wise programs to conserve, collect and reuse water e.g. 'turn off policy', water collection and recycling.
- Plant native trees/plants that require minimal watering.
- Monitor water tank storage and usage.

## **TRANSPORT**

- Promote walking and cycling by providing facilities and infrastructure and special events e.g. identify safe routes to school, walking to school, secure bike parking, safe road crossings, walk to school days etc.
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