



# Sustainability Policy

## St Benedict's

Saint Benedict was born into a wealthy family and was sent to Rome for his later education. Here he became concerned by the wasteful and frivolous lives led by many of his peers. Benedict renounced his inheritance and lived a prayerful life in various contexts, eventually establishing monasteries throughout Italy. He is credited as the father of modern monastic tradition.

The Rule of Saint Benedict seeks to foster a fundamental reverence toward the creation that God has made. It does so by asserting clear values or charisms to which we can aspire.

In the context of sustainability, the charism of Stewardship is most relevant. We are called to be stewards of all creation. The many wonders of creation have come from the hand of our God. Benedictine Communities prize good Stewardship through the respectful use of material resources for the good of all, with a special eye to frugality.

## *The Rule of Saint Benedict*

## Catholic

As a Catholic community "...the call to Christian stewardship requires both an active and spiritual response; that all of creation is a sacrament, vivified by the Creator Spirit." As such we must pray, but we must also act.

Humans are both 'earth and breath of God beings' (Genesis 2:7), part of the interconnected community of creation, inter-related with all other creatures. As co-creators with God and as stewards, humans are charged with cultivating and caring for all creation (Genesis 2:15). Care for creation flows out of religious respect for the integrity of creation and concern for the common good - past, present and future (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* n.2415). This church teaching requires an understanding of God's grace in all of humanity and the natural world, 'an integration of nature and culture' and a view of the human person who is in solidarity with all other human beings as part of the human family.

## *Brisbane Catholic Education; Creation We Care – Position Statement*

## Primary School

As an Educational Community, our learners have a curriculum entitlement. This entitlement is The Australian Curriculum.

Within this curriculum, special consideration is given to The Cross-Curricular Priorities, which are embedded in all learning areas. Sustainability is one such priority.

Sustainability addresses; the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability involves individual and collective actions across local and global communities.

Sustainability education is; futures-oriented, focusing on protecting environments and creating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action.

## *The Australian Curriculum v 6.0*

## Rationale

**St Benedict's Catholic Primary School values a whole-school approach to environmental education and awareness.** Emulating Brisbane Catholic Education's: Creation We Care, our school Sustainability Policy is developed around four key components;

- Energy
- Waste
- Water
- Greening and Biodiversity

## Beliefs

At St Benedict's Catholic Primary School we are committed to ensuring students, staff and the wider community actively participate in sustainable practices in the day-to-day workings of our school.

We aim to be a tidy and aesthetically pleasing school by managing and streaming our waste carefully. To do this we will consider the products we purchase, reduce the amount of waste we create, reuse as much as possible and recycle whatever we can (4 R's). By streaming our waste correctly, we can reduce the volume we send to landfill.

In promoting this ecological stewardship within our students we will create authentic learning opportunities. From a business point of view, significant financial and environmental benefits can be achieved through sustainable practices.

## Aims

- Promote ecological values and habits in our students.
- Engage all students and staff in sharing the responsibility of sustainable practices.
- Enhance and broaden school-based recycling and organics programs.
- Examine and audit the waste collected to reduce and re-educate where necessary.
- Assess energy and resource efficiency of school buildings and equipment and improve efficiency where practically possible.
- Enhance the beauty and functionality of St Benedict's Primary School through student engagement in greening and biodiversity activities such as edible gardening.
- Develop a scope and sequence of sustainability education across the school.

## Energy

***At St Benedict's Catholic Primary School we aim to both reduce our reliance on fossil fuel generated energy as well deploy sustainable energy generation such as solar and wind.***

**Energy saving practices may include:**

- Using passive heating and cooling technology such as building design and natural ventilation before opting for electronic cooling such as fans and air-conditioning.
- Installing energy efficient lighting technology such as LED.
- Purchasing only energy efficient appliances.
- Turning off lights, fans and other appliances when not in use.
- Operating dishwashers only when full.

#### **Renewable energy programs may include:**

- Current Solar Photovoltaic system installed on Grade 5 Classroom Block.
- Continue to explore future grants and fund-raising projects to install further Solar Photovoltaic systems or wind generation systems.

## **Waste**

***At St Benedict's Catholic Primary School we aim to follow The Four R's; Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. We also aim to manage our Waste-streams in the most effective manner.***

#### **Sustainable waste management practices may include:**

##### **Refuse**

- Embedding sustainable actions/accountability into purchasing protocols.
- Refusing to use unsustainable products such as plastic bags.
- Refusing products that are highly or individually packaged should also be refused.

##### **Reduce**

- Reducing paper usage / photocopying in the classroom by looking at pedagogical approaches such as digital technologies which reduce our reliance on paper.
- Implementing nude food days to reduce the amount of lunch box waste across the school.
- Exploring methods of correspondence to parents/carers which use digital technologies (schoolbag app), doing away with the need for large levels of photocopying.
- Minimising school litter through students education, rules and procedures.

##### **Reuse**

- Purchasing re-usable resources rather than replaceable/throw-away items.
- Reusing packaging materials for art and craft based activities.

##### **Recycle**

- Streaming classroom paper waste into recycle bins for council collection.
- Streaming lunch area and staffroom waste into the colour coded systems for collection (red indicates landfill, yellow indicates recycling and green indicates organics).

##### **Organics**

- Deploying and maintaining organics programs such as compost and worm-farming to manage organic lunch waste on site.

## **Water**

***At St Benedict's Catholic Primary School we aim to use water responsibility and efficiently.***

#### **Sustainable water practices may include:**

- Considering the water consumption rating of appliances such as dishwashers when making purchasing decisions.
- Utilising rainwater catchment infrastructure such as rainwater tanks and school pond to store and use local rainwater where possible.
- Exploring the use of underground drip feeding for plants and gardens.
- Watering of turf and plants only in early morning or late afternoon to mitigate potential evaporation at peak sun periods.

- Planting native trees and drought-tolerant plants and shrubs to minimise irrigation.
- Educating children about sustainable water use practices in relation to hand washing and art /paint clean up.

## **Greening and Biodiversity**

***At St Benedict's Catholic Primary School we aim to increase the natural beauty and cleanliness of our school environment. We aim to encourage native birds and discourage dominant pest species such as crows.***

### **Greening practices may include:**

- Partnering with local plant nurseries.
- Enhancing / maintaining existing green spaces.
- Maximising native tree numbers to attract native bird species.
- Minimising organic litter to deter pest bird species.
- Promoting gardening clubs.
- Growing edible crops to promote an understanding of food production.
- Converting 'dead spots' to gardens or synthetic turf.
- Providing better edging between paths and gardens.
- Educating students that paths are for walking on, not gardens.
- Giving class / year levels some responsibility for managing green spaces adjacent to their classrooms.
- Establishing a yearly tradition of graduating year 6 students leaving a legacy item/space with our school green-space.