



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG



St Francis Catholic College LSAP Reflection

Introductory Statement and Environmental Vision of your school's SEMP.

St Francis is a systemic co-educational Catholic College in the Edmund Rice Tradition catering for students from Pre-school to Year 12 and is the newest school in CEDoW.

St Francis Catholic College is a welcoming and inclusive community that provides a liberating education built on Gospel values, deeply committed to peace and justice. We are committed to ecological sustainability and this SEMP is a key way that we strategically plan for and implement ecological action in our school.

The College was established in 2017 and is the result of a partnership between the Diocese of Wollongong and Edmund Rice Education Australia. The College works closely with neighbouring parishes, particularly Mary Mother of the Church Parish, Macquarie Fields, within whose boundaries the College is built.

St Francis is a truly unique Catholic school and is in a growth area of the diocese and will quickly grow to offer co-educational enrolments from Pre-School to Year 12. St Francis is not a traditional primary school and high school co-existing on the one site, but one school from P - 12.

The motto of "Open Minds, Open Hearts" invites the school community to take seriously the call of ecological conversion to be open to act with justice and with heart for God's creation. We need to take seriously the challenge from Laudato Si' to care for our common home. With our school named after St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology, we see that it is crucial that we take action to be sustainable stewards and responsible citizens that contribute to the building of a better future for humanity and our planet. At St Francis we seek to encourage our students to be responsible global citizens with a strong sense of belonging and we aim to be stewards of creations and of service to others.

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 Francis 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.

Environmental Vision: St Francis Catholic College 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.

Belonging 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.

Implementation of CEDoW Environmental Education Action Policy:

- Engaging in Professional development and collaborative opportunities with the WEN (Wollongong Environmental Network) contacts within the Wollongong Diocese. These dates are annually and give a great opportunity to connect with others and build our capacity to organise and implement sustainable practices at our college.

School Environment Management Plans (SEMP):

- SFCC alongside Beth Riolo, wrote SEMP I in 2018 to commence in 2019 for a 3 year cycle. The SEMP is a working document that the WEN contact attends to on a regular basis in order to improve the environmental practices that occur at the college by both staff and students. The SEMP is also evaluated and adapted each year to ensure the college is working towards the goals set.

Professional Development and Staff Formation in eco-spirituality, eco-theology and ecological conversion:

- The WEN contacts annually attend professional development opportunities with all primary and secondary WEN contacts from the diocese.
- The WEN contacts meet with Beth Riolo twice a year to complete check-ins with our SEMP.
- Regular meetings with staff on the environment committee at the college.
- Celebrating World Environment Day and the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.
- Working towards: whole college staff spirituality programs with a focus on environment and sustainability.
- Working towards: Whole college scope and sequence to be written and collaborated on by all teachers to identify the environmental links to curriculum.

Involvement in CEDoW Environmental Education Grants Program:



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- In 2020, our college was awarded the CEDoW Environmental Education Grant to support the improvement of the waste management system. The project addressed the school's waste management system. As a developing school, this had not been a great focus however, it became more apparent by students, staff and our school community that more needed to be done to address this concern in addition to educating our students about the importance of having a functioning and sustainable waste-management system. At the time, SFCC had paper recycling and landfill waste in classrooms and one-stream waste on the playground-landfill.
- This project is directly linked to "Issue 5: Extend school-wide waste management system incorporating a streamed bin system into each playground area (paper recycling, landfill, Return and Earn, REDcycle soft plastics) within the SFCC SEMP I.
- As a whole-school, our outcome is to incorporate a school-wide waste management system that incorporates streamed bin systems within the playground and classrooms. This project not only reduces waste going to landfill, it is a great opportunity to educate students, teachers and the school community about the importance of recycling and strategies to reduce landfill waste that can also be carried out in their own homes.
- In 2022, we were awarded the CEDoW Environmental Education Grant to continue improving our waste management system to include composting and education our school community about further reducing waste.

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

- SFCC has an environmental committee where students and teachers can volunteer to be a part of.
- Regular meetings with the WEN contacts and teachers in the committee occur. In this time, we discuss current initiatives, check in with how teachers are going with these initiatives and discuss new opportunities we can implement to ensure the school environment is sustainable in various areas of the college.
- Engage in community lead events such as National Recycling Week, Clean Up Australia Day, Plastic Free July and National Tree Day.

Level 3 Certification Earthcare School:

- In 2021, SFCC received [Level 3 Certification](#) as an Earthcare school.
- In 2022, the college will engage in writing SEMP II alongside Beth Riolo. Once this is completed, the college will apply for Level 4 Certification.
- [Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement – Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor](#)
- [Bishop Brian's Diocesan Pastoral Message](#)



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SFCC Values that Connect with the Laudato Si' Goals.

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH

- The college has an environment committee to address issues and raise awareness of sustainability and environmentally friendly practices at the college. We have discussed the needs of the college being a developing school and also performed audits to set goals to work towards. These goals were discussed and collaborated on by the WEN contacts that have been shared with the college. The goals vary but the input in these goals is made by all members of the college. The college has teamed up with WoodiWild to establish the SFCC micro- forest where trees are planted on behalf of the college.

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

- Our school is involved in programs such as St Vincent de Paul Winter appeal, Caritas Australia's Project Compassion fundraising and Christmas Hampers.

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

- Staff are encouraged to make sure all lights, fans and air conditioners are switched off at break times and at the end of the day in classrooms and meeting spaces.
- There is a teacher and students involved as 'electricity monitors' to help promote this within our college.
- As buildings are constructed in the college, they are equipped with Solar Panels, electricity is all connected through sensors so lights, fans and air conditioners can be switched off.

ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

- The college has introduced printing limitations and encourages the reusing of scrap paper for the college and Before/After School Care. We have a waste management system that includes the recycling of paper/cardboard, soft plastics and cans/bottles through the Vinnies Return & Earn Program. Cutlery and serving plates are provided at the college to reduce use of plastic and are also used for college events. As a college, we would also like to reinvigorate current practices at the college post covid lockdown and restrictions.

ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

- Pastoral Lessons for K-12 involve educating students about waste management including Nude Food, recycling various materials and acknowledging environment dates.
- Year 7 are involved in an interdisciplinary project that involves PDHPE, Science & Religious Studies to investigate sustainable practices within food industry
- The college is working towards embedding sustainability across the curriculum and creating a scope and sequence to outline current teaching and learning programs that have a sustainability link.



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ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY

- Celebrating World Environment Day and the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.
- Participating in liturgy and prayer as a WEN contact at professional developments days.
- Religious Educations programs have ecological themes embedded into them.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

- Engagement in events such as Clean Up Australia Day.
- Promote environmental dates throughout the year.
- Environment College website that promotes and shares knowledge about how to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly home.

Overview of SEMP Actions and Environmental Education Achievements

- Created a waste management system that includes recycling of cans and bottles, paper recycling and soft plastic throughout the whole college.
- There is a shared understanding amongst the staff of their key role in the implementation of the SEMP. We have promoted specific environmental actions that staff can be involved in.
- Development of an Environmental Calendar that can be incorporated into the Liturgy Calendar and the School Calendar.
- Creation of liturgies for whole school celebrations on focused ecological days.
- Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the recycling management system, herb garden maintenance and management.
- Ongoing education and communication to students, staff and wider school community about the Return and Earn program, herb garden maintenance and management.
- Promotion of the WoodiWild Trees initiative to the school community.



This is our SEALS (St Francis Awareness Learning Society) Logo we use on all documentation and environmental events at the college.