



# NRM Education

climate change biodiversity water food air waste transport energy



## St Joseph's School Hectorville

### Background Information

For the past four years St Joseph's Hectorville has been focussing on outdoor play spaces with student wellbeing front of mind.

With the mandate from On Holy Ground and growing support from national and global policies, the school declared 2011 the Year of Responsibility and sought to celebrate Mother Earth and safeguard the integrity of all creation. So began their journey into Education for Sustainability (EfS).

Sustainability has been made a priority with the whole school being involved in the EfS learning. The school has established a Sustainability Committee and sustainability is discussed at weekly leadership meetings. Education for Sustainability has been built into the School Development Plan for the next 5 years across 4 dimensions - Community, Teaching and Learning, Administration and Religious Identity. Staff and Students have been involved in the EfS conversations and have identified key priority areas.

### Achievements & Outcomes

Working towards such a big change in consciousness required much conversation around change and building awareness. The school community has been very supportive which has encouraged further investment of time to build sustainability into ongoing thinking and work.

With the important ground work underway, the school is now starting to focus on building sustainability into the curriculum. *"We felt if we had started with education we wouldn't have got the same reaction. It's almost as if we are starting with the heart then with the head; because it's challenging, it needed to be done in the right way"* Assistant Principal Michael Proctor.



The school has always had a strong focus on student voice but getting the students involved in the EfS focus has been particularly important to the school community. Students have had discussions in class meetings, attended forums, are involved in the Sustainability Committee, and through the recent Core Indicators activity, every child had a voice about what's happening at the school and how they want to see the school grow in the area of sustainability.

Student Leaders of the SRC have shared the journey with the Governing council, wider school community and parish. All this student input is being tabled in the School Environmental Management Plan (SEMP).

The SEMP has provided a useful tool for documentation as well as clarity, focus, accountability and good future directions.

### NRM Education Support

*"We have been very fortunate to have support from NRM Education, AuSSI-SA, the Catholic Education Office and key*

*people from other schools"* said Mike Proctor.

NRM Education and AuSSI-SA ran student and staff forums to identify key priorities around Waste, Water, Biodiversity, Energy, Air/Transport, Social and Cultural, and Economic themes. These workshops have helped the school identify the key areas and to see how important addressing Waste was to the students and staff.

*"It's been like an inquiry, once we had worked out the questions it was a matter of how do we proceed in the journey",* Mike Proctor.

### Future Plans

The schools focus areas are implementing the teaching and learning priorities in the SEMP, using outdoor learning environments, working more closely with, and sharing sustainability learning with parents and the greater Hectorville Community.

NRM Education proudly delivers the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative - SA. We acknowledge the support of Local Government and, in particular, those Councils who are working in partnership with NRM Education and the AMLR NRM Board. KESAB environmental solutions is also a key partner and we recognise their ongoing support.