

Mullaloo Heights Primary School

• Permaculture Garden • Chickens • Community Links • Used Clothing Bin

Background

Mullaloo Heights Primary School, in the northern coastal suburb of Mullaloo, has been involved in environmental programs since 2002 and has a thriving permaculture garden.

The Waste Wise Schools Program has been a catalyst for Mullaloo Heights Primary School to develop supportive and useful partnerships with local businesses, community groups and the council.

The school's inspiring permaculture garden is proudly sponsored by a range of local businesses and students work with the Friends of Periwinkle Reserve and the City of Joondalup on various projects.

Permaculture Garden

The permaculture garden is always a hive of activity and inspiration at Mullaloo Heights with a plot for each class, where herbs, fruit, vegetables and flowers are grown.

The garden is further enhanced with a frog pond and sculptures making it an attractive place to visit and learn.

Students can observe first hand the full life cycle of plants – including food production. Compost and worm fertiliser are produced on site.

The garden is a source of great pride and enjoyment for the students.



STUDENTS FROM EACH CLASS VISIT THE GARDEN ONCE A WEEK TO WATER, WEED, RAKE AND PRUNE.

“Our visitors can see what a small population can do.” *Year 6/7 student*



THESE TAME AND LOVEABLE CHICKENS WERE HATCHED AND RAISED AT THE SCHOOL.

“We seem to have a lot more native animals and have had a lot more visitors.” *Year 6/7 student*

Chickens

The school's chickens live in a spacious pen, made of cyclone wire with an attached aviary for protection, inside the permaculture garden.

Built using funds from the school's environmental account the pen has a self-feeder for after hours, although the chickens usually enjoy food scraps and pellets fed to them by the students. During the holidays, staff living nearby look after the chickens.



STUDENTS RAISE SEEDLINGS IN THE SHADEHOUSE FOR PLANTING AROUND THE SCHOOL AND ALONG THE FREEWAY.



“My friends and I just love seeing the results and knowing we worked so hard to make something beautiful.” *Year 6 student*

The chickens return these efforts ten-fold by eating weeds from the garden and producing eggs which are packaged in reused egg cartons and sold to parents, the canteen and staff.

To further the environmental campaign, even the chickens’ waste is not wasted – the manure is mixed with lawn clippings and used as fertiliser for the garden.

Savings and Benefits

- Proceeds from egg and *Wormiliser* sales go towards the purchase of new gardening equipment, plants, more chicks and pellets.
- More than 3000 trees were nurtured by students for the *Greening the Freeway* project and some students were involved with the planting of these trees.
- Community members benefit from unwanted clothes – an Anglicare bin for donations from students and their families is located at the front of the school.

Awards and Public Recognition

- 2005 – Visit from Dr Cheong of Brunei Darussalam University.
- 2003 – UN Association of Australia World Environmental Awards – *Best Schools-Based Project*.
- 2003 – Community Services Industry Awards Winner *Being Innovative, Environment and Enterprise Program*.
- 2003 – Department of Environment Award for *Achievement in Environmental Education*.
- 2002 – City of Joondalup *Best Sustainable Project Award for Schools Environmental Challenge*.

Plans for the Future

Future plans at Mullaloo Heights include ongoing recycling and planting of plants and shrubs around the school and in Periwinkle Reserve near the school.



STUDENTS ALSO LOOK AFTER THE ATTRACTIVE NATIVE WATERWISE GARDEN THAT BORDERS THE PERMACULTURE AREA.

“With all of the plants it makes it feel happy, joyful and there’s lots of fresh air.” *Year 6 student*



INVESTIGATING LOCAL FAUNA IN A BUG CATCHER MADE FROM A PLASTIC BOTTLE.

