



Mary's Mount Primary School sustainable event guide

Mary's Mount Primary School (MMPS) strives to be a responsible user of the earth's resources, which we believe are part of God's creation. We are committed to reducing our waste to landfill and one of the ways we can do this is by encouraging the minimisation of waste generated during community events. We are mindful to always make attempts to minimise our waste generated during community events.

Events in focus

Any school community event, for example: Breakfast in the Park; Parents and Friends social functions; staff Professional Development days held within school grounds; community breakfasts; morning or afternoon teas; sacramental dinners; after school hours meetings; student winter hot chocolate days; sundowners; and graduation events.

Below is a list of alternative suggestions and notes to reduce waste at our events.

Items to avoid	Alternative suggestions	Notes
Single-use plastic bottled water, plastic soft drink bottles, cans	Use larger soft drink/water bottles (multiple serve) and recycle any bottles or cans in co-mingled recycling or at a Containers for Change collection point. Lids must be removed and placed in our Community Recycling Hub to be recycled.	Soft drink cans are a preferred choice over plastic. Once used they can be placed in our charity collection bins for Wheelchairs for Kids. All remaining liquid must be emptied.
Single-use plastic plates and cutlery	Use reusable plates and cutlery* (<i>*please see the 'Notes' section at the bottom of this table for further details</i>). Use compostable alternatives to single-use plastic (for example, paper/cardboard or bamboo).	If using compostable alternatives, they must be placed in the compost or landfill bin due to food contamination. Avoiding single-use items is the best way to reduce waste. Compostable is preferable to plastic.
Single-use plastic cups, or paper cups which are plastic lined (e.g. take-away coffee cups)	Encourage participants to bring their own reusable cups, such as a keep cup. The keep cup can be rinsed by the owner after use and taken home. Use recyclable paper cups that are not plastic lined.	Recyclable paper cups will need to be ordered ahead of time because they are not readily available in Western Australia. These cups need to be sent over from the eastern states.
Single-use plastic straws	Consider if you need to supply straws. If needed, use paper straws.	
Single-use plastic or foil food containers (e.g. aluminium foil baking trays, take-away tubs)	Replace with reusable ceramic dishes or plastic tubs/tupperware. Names must be placed on the bottom of each dish to ensure it is returned to its owner.	If single-use plastic or foil containers are brought in, reuse them where possible or recycle them by placing them in a co-mingled recycling bin at school or home. <i>Please note: To be placed in co-mingled recycling, these containers must not be food contaminated with food.</i>

Items to avoid	Alternative suggestions	Notes
Single-use wrappers or plastic (e.g. cling film, aluminium foil, zip-lock bags)	Use reusable ceramic dishes or plastic tubs/tupperware with lids or reusable covers, such as beeswax wraps.	If soft plastics are used, they can be collected and taken to a local community recycling point (REDcycle bins at Woolworths or Coles). Foil can be placed in the co-mingled recycling bin as long as it is not contaminated with food. If any wrapper is contaminated with food and is unable to be washed, it must be placed in a landfill bin.
Food waste	If food leftovers cannot be sent home, please place food waste in our school worm farm and compost bins.	No meat, onion or citrus is to be placed in the food waste bins. Larger quantities of bread cannot be placed in the food waste bins.
Balloons	Use bunting or other reusable decorations.	If balloons are used, please ensure they do not escape into the environment. We prefer that helium-filled balloons are never used at an event.
Plastic bags, including biodegradable/degradable bags* (*please see the 'Notes' section at the bottom of this table for further details)	Replace with paper/reusable bags.	Compostable bags are a better choice than plastic or biodegradable bags.

Notes

*MMPS has crockery and cutlery that may be available to borrow for events within school grounds. A volunteer group of community members will be needed to wash and put away items at the completion of the event.

*Avoid biodegradable and degradable plastics. They only break down into smaller pieces (micro plastics), which means the plastic remains in the environment. Compostable items comprise organic matter which breaks down to become soil. Plastic that is biodegradable/degradable should be avoided and must go into landfill bins.

Further information and contacts

For helpful online information, please visit the [Earth Carer](#) and [Plastic Free July](#) websites.

If you have any specific questions, please contact a member of the MMPS Sustainability Committee or our school office. Please visit [WasteSorted](#) for more tips on how to be a [GREAT Sort](#).

Together we can make a difference.

Written and approved in March 2020.

Adapted from the Methodist Ladies' College sustainability events guide.

Thank you to Mary's Mount Primary School and Methodist Ladies' College for sharing this resource.