

# Waste Wise Schools checklist

This checklist is designed as a planning tool for Waste Wise Schools. It will assist you to identify current practices within the school and potential areas for development.



## Infrastructure and facilities

### Research

- Conduct a waste audit at school
- Review your billing data and waste contract
- Contact current waste management service provider for collection information and data
- Complete a school waste assessment
- Conduct a visual bin audit
- Enter baseline data into waste wise accreditation survey

### Policy and planning

- Professional development for staff on waste wise practices and waste education
- Form a committee with other staff, students and parents
- Write a school waste policy or include waste in your sustainability policy
- Write a whole school waste reduction plan
- Have your policy and plan approved and signed by the school principal
- Apply for a Waste Wise Schools grant
- Set up systems for monitoring waste and recording data
- Use interpretive signage on bins to show correct use
- Create a school sustainable events guide targeting zero waste
- Run ongoing waste audits to monitor progress
- Regularly conduct a school waste assessment to maximise cost savings
- Regularly conduct a visual bin audit to ensure correct use of bins

### Purchasing

- Buy supplies in bulk
- Implement a green purchasing policy, including buying recycled products when available for example paper, plastic containers, toilet paper and hand towels

Choose photocopiers/printers that use recycled paper and print double-sided

Include recycled items on school booklists

Involve cleaning staff in the policies of buying recycled products and reusing items

### Paper and cardboard

Organise separate paper and cardboard recycling bins through your waste contractor

Set targets to reduce the amount of paper

Implement a photocopier policy including restrictions on photocopying, double-sided printing, and regular photocopy-free days

Replace paper copies with digital versions for example newsletters, reports, assignments and in class

Have a 'reuse paper' collection box in offices, classrooms, staffroom, library and so on

Reuse single-sided paper in photocopiers and printers

Put signage next to photocopiers and printers to remind staff to reuse single-sided paper

Have separate paper and cardboard recycling containers in offices, classrooms, staffroom, library, canteen and so on

Reduce the amount of paper coming into the school for example newspapers, promotional material and unnecessary subscriptions

### Food waste

Encourage students to use reusable drink bottles and lunch containers, for example add these to student equipment lists

Run regular waste free lunch days, for example once per week or term

Encourage students to take uneaten food home or run in conjunction with waste free days, for example 'take home Tuesday' and 'waste free Wednesday'

Set up compost and worm farms for fruit and vegetable scraps

Collect fruit and vegetable scraps from classrooms, staffroom, playground and the canteen to use in compost, worm farms or to feed to chickens

Organise a system for collecting food scraps and distribution

Create rosters for the use and maintenance of compost and worm farms

Have a process for collecting the worm farm leachate for bottling and selling

Have students design a label and market the worm farm leachate

Set a target for zero food scraps going to landfill

Consider a lunchtime play-eat swap to reduce lunch food waste, such as students play first then sit to eat

Encourage staff to bring waste free lunches and make the staffroom a 'waste free zone'

Make excursions waste smart by taking bags to separate waste and bring back to school for disposal, for example one for food waste, recyclables and general waste

### Canteen

Provide lunch orders in reusable containers, either supplied by the school or that students bring from home

Use reusable items instead of single-use plastic/disposable items, for example cups/glasses/drink containers, sandwich wraps, cutlery, metal/bamboo straws and icy pole moulds

Install a commercial dishwasher for cleaning reusable items

Purchase items in bulk to minimise packaging, that is food, drinks, stationery, cleaning products

Purchase recycled items

Remove plastic straws

Use food produced in school vegetable garden

Sell homemade foods that are wholesome, nutritious and free from packaging

Put fruit and vegetable scraps in school compost or worm farm

Establish co-mingled recycling for bottles, cans, tins, jars, plastic containers and cardboard

Educate users about changes to the canteen

### Garden waste

Compost or mulch garden waste

Use composted material in school gardens, for example the vegetable garden

Use mulch produced from the school's green waste

Establish a vegetable garden and use worm farm and compost products on the garden

### Other recycling and reuse

Set up a reuse centre where you collect items from the school community that can be used in class activities, for example bottle tops, fabric, offcuts from businesses

Organise co-mingled recycling bins through your waste contractor

Have bins or containers around the school for collecting co-mingled recycling

Set up collection points for recyclable materials, such as batteries, mobile phones, printer cartridges, oral hygiene products, beauty care, stationery, soft plastics, e-waste

Collect materials for social or charity support, for example Soap Aid, bread tags for wheelchairs, ring pulls for Rotary, bottle tops for Envision Hands, eyeglasses for Lions Institute

Place clear signage on recycling bins or containers to prevent contamination

Have a system for regularly emptying the recycling containers

### Education

Embed waste into the school curriculum

Form a whole school curriculum plan for waste topics

Conduct lessons on waste, 3Rs, plastic, worms, composting

Use waste data collected to integrate into curriculum activities, for example maths

Use waste wise curriculum documents to plan in-class lessons, for example message in a plastic bottle

Link classroom learning on waste to the WA curriculum cross-curriculum priority of sustainability

Use the Sustainable Schools WA framework to include waste in the school's long-term plans for sustainability

Link school learning to home-based projects and behaviour change in waste

Allow students to innovate and take responsibility for classroom activities and learning on waste

Take students on excursions to landfill sites, recycling facilities and waste education centres

Invite visitors to the school to share knowledge on waste and motivate students and staff

Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learning perspectives in developing curriculum on waste

## Whole school and community

### Communication

Share results of your waste audit with the school community – assembly, newsletter, public displays

Give spot prizes for waste free practices, for example waste free lunch, placing waste in the correct bin

Present waste wise messages at whole school assemblies

Students design posters to display around the school

Share waste wise tips and messages in newsletters

Educate parents about waste free lunches and example containers

Keep parents informed of any changes, for example waste free lunches

Provide regular feedback about successes and progress to the school community

### Recognition

Awards for classes, such as the most waste free lunches

Individual awards or certificates to recognise student effort

Share your success stories with local media or departmental publications

Enter into environmental awards and competitions, for example Plastic Free July competitions and Waste Authority Infinity Awards

### Student leadership

Involve students on the Waste Wise Committee

Invite students to create solutions for waste management at school

Establish a student leadership team to lead waste wise activities at school, for example Green Team

Student leadership team present waste wise messages at whole school assemblies

Student leadership team wear badges or vests to be easily identified around school

Create a roster to allocate responsibilities to different classes

Use buddy classes to engage younger students

Invent a school mascot for waste

## School community involvement

Invite parents to take part in home surveys

Sell worm leachate and garden produce to the school community

Plan for school events to be waste free

Set up opportunities for sale or exchange of unwanted uniforms

Set up recycling stalls at school fetes/fairs, for example a 'trash or treasure' stall

Hold waste free lunch mornings for parents to share good recipes and ideas, for example homemade muesli bars or how to make your own beeswax sandwich wraps

Invite parents and members of the school community to assist in planning and implementing actions of the waste plan

### Community partnerships

Liaise with local or regional waste education officers to implement projects in your school or local community

Invite local and regional waste education officers to run incursions at school

Invite the local media to attend and report on your waste wise events

Staff and/or students attend local environmental network meetings, for example Sustainable Schools WA

Staff and/or students mentor or present to other schools

Participate in local waste events, for example Clean Up Australia Day or the Garage Sale Trail

Participate in national and global waste initiatives, for example Plastic Free July, Outdoor Classroom Day, National Recycling Week, Keep Australia Beautiful Week

Liaise with political representatives from local, state and federal governments, local business and local 'friends of' groups for support of projects