

# Laudato Si' Action Plan

## Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama



### Overview

Ss Peter & Paul School is a two stream co-educational Catholic Primary School catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Catholic Education has a long history in the Kiama area, beginning when the Sisters of St Joseph who first taught at the Catholic School at Jamberoo. In 1908, St Joseph's School in Kiama was established. In 1974 the school's name changed to Ss Peter & Paul bringing all Parish buildings under the patronage of the same Saints. The school is one of the 30 systemic primary schools that belong to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW).

CEDoW understands that Catholic Schools have a missionary and ecclesial mandate that impels them to listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. 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)

We are called to respond to the environmental crisis of the 21st Century by proactively engaging with Pope Francis’ challenge from Laudato Si' for an ecological conversion. Since 2016 CEDoW has intentionally engaged in a strategic, planned approach whereby sustainable practices and ecological values are promoted and supported across the system of schools.

This involves schools embedding ecological values into school programs and practices that promote an ecological and sustainable culture that encourages everyone to live out his/her ecological vocation and engage in caring for our common home.

## About the Local Environment and Community

Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School is situated right on the beach in Manning Street, Kiama. Kiama is a beautiful coastal town full of character and history, surrounded by sand and sea on one side and rolling green hills on the other. It is a 30 minute drive north to Wollongong, 90 minutes to the city of Sydney and 45 minutes south to Nowra.

A high proportion of the population have post secondary school qualifications and work in professional or managerial positions.

Kinder to Year 5 are all located on the same upstairs level, and the building contains three flexible learning spaces. Year 6 is located in a separate building which contains two classrooms and a breakout space. The school office and library are situated on the ground level. The parish Church is also located within the school grounds. Also situated on the ground level are the school hall and canteen. The hall is used for large school gatherings, sport, music and drama lessons. The design of the school has been very deliberate to ensure that while we have flexible arrangements, the students remain connected to the learning environment. The openness of the environment contributes to the feeling of welcome and collaboration that permeates our school culture. Students have access to technology and it is in close proximity to the learning spaces. The physical environment has shaded areas and human made structures that provide for learning outdoors.

Ss Peter and Paul has three different playgrounds, including the infants playground, the basketball court, and a multi-purpose grassed area that also includes Coronation Park, which is a shared public area. The school also utilises the natural environment of the beach for various sports and teaching and learning experiences. The infants playground has play equipment which was updated in 2018.

There are limited trees shading all playgrounds with an Aboriginal garden that is maintained. The school has vegetable/herb gardens, native plants and trees. The beautification of the front entrance and a reflection area was completed in 2018, with a Yulunga welcoming sign added in 2023-2024, painted collaboratively by Uncle Kevin Butler and Ss Peter and Paul students and staff. All areas are currently utilised and linked to learning and teaching that connect to ecological and sustainability principles.

This plan fits into whole school planning through the following:

The overall mission of CEDoW is articulated in Lighting the Way, the Strategic Direction Plan that was launched in 2023. This LSAP/SEMP connects directly with the Mission Dimension of the Catholicity and Mission Policy

4.3 develop a School Environment Management Plan (SEMP) that:

4.3.1 is informed by the six areas of the ASSISI Framework and the Laudato Si' Action Goals

4.3.2 includes actions that are informed by the CEDoW Environmental Assessment Tool

4.3.3 is reviewed and updated on a 3-year cycle

Ss Peter and Paul Kiama is involved in CEDoW's Continuous Catholic School Improvement (CCSI) process, as are all schools in the Wollongong diocese. Through this we review all aspects of school life, seeking to make improvements in all areas to the betterment of our students.

This ongoing improvement continues, especially in the area of ecological conversion and sustainability.

This plan connects to whole school planning through the following:

- The School Strategic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- The School Annual Improvement plan (AIP)
- Reported on in the school annual report
- Integrated with curriculum programs & links to extra-curricular activities for students

### **Connect the values of your school with the Laudato Si' Goals...**

**RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH** At Ss Peter and Paul, staff and students are focused on adopting renewable and energy efficient measures throughout the school to include replacing light bulbs with more energy efficient LED lighting and putting solar panels on the roof to use efficient power sources. Through these practices, we are able to monitor energy consumption across the school community and raise awareness of energy saving practices. In addition, the Environmental Leadership Team focuses on maintaining a sustainable herb garden to sell to the school and wider community. We use water tanks in the school garden to collect water and maintain our garden space.

**RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR** At Ss Peter and Paul we have a Mini Vinnies team who focuses on caring for our local community - we have winter appeals, christmas appeals, food drives and toiletry collections. We also have a Social Justice Team who does advocacy and fundraising for international appeals, including Caritas: Project Compassion, Mission Month for Catholic Mission.

**ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS** As a school, Ss Peter and Paul acknowledge the economy as a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. We consciously try to take action to choose companies with sustainable production and consumption - purchasing organic etc. We also have a focus on ethical investments - we choose to purchase things from Kiama, swap and sell rather than buying things that are new. We have divested in fossil fuels and instead we are choosing options like solar panels. When we get people and labourers to work at Kiama, we ensure that we protect the dignity of workers and make sure they are supported, paid appropriately and treated with dignity of the human person.

**ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES** At Ss Peter and Paul we have a focus on the Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, which is grounded in the idea of sufficiency, and promoting sobriety in the use of resources and energy. We are reducing waste and recycling - we have implemented a procedure for bins including the FOGO bins, we have promoted the use public transport and students riding and walking to school and as a school we avoiding single use items (e.g. plastic bags) with the inclusion of a waste free Wednesday and a change in lifestyle choices.

**ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION** As a school we have a focus on the cross curriculum priority of Sustainability. The cross-curriculum priority of sustainability is addressed through learning areas, but does not constitute the curriculum on their own. Through the priority of Sustainability, students develop the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary to contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. As a Catholic school we also have Religious Education units that focus on 'creation'.

**ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY** We have engaged in whole staff Spirituality Days: Who is my neighbour? Called to Ecological Conversion (2019) and Praise be: Living our Ecological Conversion (2022). As a school we also acknowledge and celebrate World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and World Environment Day with a liturgy or prayer service each year. **COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT** The Ss Peter and Paul community is passionate and empowered to care for creation. Our goal for the coming years to have to have stronger parent partnerships in relation to the environmental initiatives - as a school we need a 'Everyone's business approach'. Community engagement and participatory action will be further developed at various levels.

#### Environmental Education Achievements

With the implementation of, SEMP II we have been able to achieve some of the following goals linked to the Assisi Framework:

- ❑ Established a formal Environmental Committee that includes staff, parents, parishioners and students.
- ❑ Document the incorporation of ecological themes in liturgy and prayer and acknowledge some key environmental days
- ❑ Identifying cross curriculum links for sustainability, programming, scope and sequences
- ❑ Develop and streamline a school-wide waste management system beginning in classrooms (Compost, Landfill, Recycling Paper/Cardboard/Plastic bottles) that is sustainable and part of everyday practice
- ❑ Develop whole school procedures outlining roles and responsibilities for the waste management system, compost, garden maintenance and management
- ❑ Allocation of garden beds to classes and timetabled organic waste management for worm farms.
- ❑ Aboriginal garden incorporated into learning and teaching activities.
- ❑ A Laudato Si' Award for classes.
- ❑ The ecological dimension named in the school Vision and Mission Statement.
- ❑ An annual award given to a student from each class who has exemplified care for God's creation and connection to the environment in both words and action.