



## Environment Committee Report - Term Four 2022

### Waste-free Wednesday:

- Waste-free Wednesday is going well. The team of Year 5 Waste Warriors is getting weary. Beth will organise a new group for 2023.
- A call for new volunteers for this specific role yielded 2 more helpers. Welcome to Kristen Ring who has recently moved to the school from North Sydney.
- We are very grateful for the support provided each and every week by Beth Dowdle and Angie Penn.
- Sarah spoke about Waste-free Wednesday and reducing packaging and food waste at the Kindergarten orientation on 31<sup>st</sup> October. All agreed that this was a good opportunity to raise awareness before parents buy lunchboxes and get used to single-serve packs of crackers. The presentation slides are now ready to use again next year. We will also aim to include info about WFW in the printed orientation pack.
- There is less than 1kg of waste sent to landfill each Wednesday. Much of that is from the single-serve packaging for hot meals.
- There are encouraging signs that waste is reducing every day of the week. Teachers have noticed that student snacks and sandwiches are mostly in containers now and that it's become normal to take any packaging home so it can be properly sorted and recycled.
- Thanks to Beth organising the Green Team badges. The Waste Warriors are wearing them with pride!
- The girls are also enjoying the task of distributing minis to students who have waste-free lunchboxes.
- The canteen is happy to offer a \$1 item as a reward for helping on WFW. In combination with the badges and the minis role, this incentive should encourage new students to sign up as Waste Warriors in 2023.
- Beth worked with the Waste Warriors to develop a short presentation about Waste-free Wednesdays and 'nude' lunchboxes to share at assembly and SRC meetings. This would help clarify the reasons for WFW and shine a light on the great work the Waste Warriors are doing.
- The Environment Committee continues to communicate with parents about Waste-free Wednesday in the newsletter and on FB. Teachers make regular announcements at assembly and SRC members are encouraged to support their classmates to bring zero-waste lunches.

- An extension of WFW to Tuesdays – to be known as Trashless Tuesdays – is not supported by the school at this time.
- The Environment Committee is still keen to find a way to use house points to develop further engagement with Waste-free Wednesday in 2023. The school confirmed that it is working on a consistent system for collecting house points across different school activities. K-2 students have been placed in houses but this has not been announced yet. A new house point system could be an ideal project for the SRC.

### Centenary year events:

- The Environment Committee supported the Events Committee to minimise waste at some of the amazing 2022 events.
- Fathers' BBQ Breakfast Morning Tea: Committee amplified the BYO cup message and then organised a supply of ceramic cups and water cups on the day as well as a compost bin to divert napkins, food waste, coffee grounds and tea bags from landfill.
- Soccer match at Grahams Reserve: The Environment Committee planned to collect all 10c drinks containers and introduce Recollect and its fundraising opportunity to the community. Postponed - new date unknown.

### Canteen:

- Swap for Good is now in its second year.
- 70 reusable bamboo bento boxes have been donated by Northern Beaches Council.
- Shona and Yvette have experimented with using the boxes. Potato wedges were being served in the boxes on Tuesdays – and all boxes were returned. This is great news as there is no waste station on Tuesdays and we were worried that the boxes would end up in the red bins. However, it was decided that potato wedges were too unhealthy to be a full meal. A half-serve is now available but the boxes are too big so paper bags are used. Yvette is using the boxes for salads on Wednesdays.
- Polly the Penguin, the new bin for 10c containers (smoothie boxes and Emma+Tom juice bottles), is outside the canteen every day. Around 30% of containers are currently reaching the bin, raising \$7-8 per week. Beth will work with the Waste Warriors to promote Polly at assembly.
- A third Year 6 volunteer has not yet been added to the roster each day. It was thought that an extra pair of hands would be useful to take Polly around the playground to collect containers. This may happen in 2023.

### Re-collect:

- Re-collect picks up containers eligible for a 10c refund directly from homes and businesses. Fund can be donated to charity. Community collection drives have been organised at other local schools, raising money for the schools and saving families the hassle of going to the Return&Earn machines.

- Manly West P&C has registered with Re-collect and some messaging began in the newsletter and on social media to introduce Re-collect, describe how it works and ask families to save their eligible containers.
- Once the app has been downloaded, families can organise regular collections from home.
- The Environment Committee would like to launch the initiative with a whole school 'bottle drive' to raise money for a specific goal.
- We will aim to set dates in December and January as many families will have large piles of containers after Xmas entertaining.
- The Environment Committee will present the Re-collect concept at the SRC meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November. Students will be asked if they have good ideas for fundraising.
- The SRC would lead the 'bottle drive' and encourage students and their families to participate.
- Re-collect has left a 240l branded purple bin which is kept in the bin room. Shona takes bags up to this bin as Polly fills up. Collections by Re-collect happen every 3-4 weeks on a Friday morning. The Environment Committee organise pick-up dates, money earned goes straight to the P&C.

### **Lost property:**

- The new lost property area is working very well.
- Karen Crawford is doing a fantastic job of managing the lost property day-to-day. She is washing unlabelled clothing and dropping items at the uniform shop, and collecting and cleaning unlabelled containers and drink bottles for the Environment Committee to sell.
- A new mural is planned for the wall outside lost property. The school will organise a theme with mural artist Robin Martin.
- A team of student volunteers help every day.
- Kate Raynor is now working (paid) to clear out and organise the sports rooms, the hall kitchen (the collaboration with BASC and canteen is happening soon and the chef will use this kitchen) and other storage areas.
- No labelling days are planned yet but the school will follow up with Kate as she has good ideas for a labelling campaign.

### **Lunchbox rescue:**

- Karen Crawford is still collecting and washing unlabelled containers.
- A lunch box rescue stall was set up at the Kindergarten Orientation and plenty of stock was sold. Lots of new parents chatted to us about Waste-free Wednesday and Enviro initiatives while waiting in line for the uniform shop!
- Good quality containers and bottles will continue to be stocked in the uniform shop. The idea has been quite popular; sales have been slow but steady.
- Tubs of free bottles and boxes will be placed outside the fete room on a Friday afternoon towards the end of Term 4 to try and get as many items back into circulation as possible.
- After this, the scratched and dented items will be destined for the recycling bin!

## Saturday markets:

- No more progress with the monthly 'Sustainable Saturdays' markets. Maybe in 2023!
- Note that the Saturday morning organic market has ceased operating – without this key attractor it may be hard to establish Sustainable Saturdays.

## Sustainable travel:

- Plans to celebrate national active travel days (such as Ride2School Day on the third Friday in March and Walk Safely to School Day in mid-May) are on a back burner till 2023/24.
- The Environment Committee has asked Council about any active travel initiatives that Manly West can get involved in 2023 and beyond. Not much is happening in the LGA at the moment but a new Road Safety Officer will be appointed soon to run school projects.
- We will look at setting up a more formal 'Walking Bus' in 2023. Balgowlah Heights PS has three routes and information on the website <https://balgowlah-t-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/supporting-our-students/walking-bus.html>
- We also plan to work with students and parents to identify 'safe routes to school' that can be mapped for all students to use. Other school communities have found this exercise very helpful <https://morelandzerocarbon.org.au/coburg-north-primary-school-ride-stride-map/> Many families are not aware of lanes and back streets that could provide a pleasant and safe walk to school.

## School grounds:

- Mrs Organ has been working with two parent landscape architects to develop a masterplan for the grounds. The area behind the Boyle Street block will be underway from 19<sup>th</sup> December.
- The sandstone blocks for the yarning circle in the Year 6 area will also be installed at this time. Note that there are some Aboriginal carvings on the site. Beth would like to choose some plants for the centre of the circle.
- A quote for the new playground equipment has been accepted. The project is now with Dept of Education asset management as it is a large job (approx \$111k) with some H&S issues. Manly West is in a long queue!

## Angie Penn

- Angie has resigned from her kitchen garden role.
- Both the Environment Committee and the school acknowledge her huge contribution over many years, the last 5/6 years as a staff member. Angie may still work at Manly West as a casual teacher.
- Thanks Angie! We will miss you and your boundless enthusiasm for making Manly West a greener school.
- The students will say thank you at assembly towards the end of term.

## Ideas for 2023

- The Environment Committee was keen to set up a recycling station under the COLA on the last couple of days of term to divert waste from classrooms (stationary, books, artwork, folders, laminated signs) from landfill.
- The school did not support this as the classrooms are cleared out gradually over several weeks. It would be too hard to bring materials to the Environment Committee volunteers on a specific day.
- However, dead pens could be placed in free boxes available from Officeworks, as long as committee members take the old pens off site and return the boxes to Officeworks.
- The school would absolutely love to use refillable white board markers and glue sticks. The Environment Committee will investigate options and costs.
- The Manly West Carnival is planned for September 2023. The Environment Committee would like to run a central waste station again. The model could be similar to 2019, but we are keen to receive feedback and improve. We would also like to work closely with the catering team to further eliminate waste – for example, in 2019 sushi rolls were delivered in unnecessary individual plastic boxes, ice cream should be served in edible cones not single-use tubs, some food (eg burritos, burgers) used plates but could have been served in napkins.
- The school would like the Environment Committee to help with Peddlars Parade in 2023 as the event seems to involve more waste every year.
- There have been no working bees this year, but the Environment Committee will aim to organise some dates in 2023.