

Fitzroy High School

Education for Sustainability policy

Vision of the school

Fitzroy High School values children as individual learners who are full of potential and capable of excellence. Our students will be lifelong learners, reflective and creative thinkers, responsible and active citizens, and resilient and adaptable problem solvers able to navigate through an uncertain and constantly changing future. Fitzroy is a learning community where students and teams of teachers work together to:

- Achieve high standards so that all students fulfil their capabilities in academic, intellectual, social, emotional and physical development
- Celebrate diversity and embrace individual differences, including class, culture, race, gender, sexuality and ethnicity
- Build a cohesive, compassionate and proud school community with a productive legacy for the future
- Develop beyond our current capacity through continuous change and review
- Participate in and contribute to our wider community.

Philosophy of the school

Fitzroy High School embraces a bold and ambitious dream: striving for excellence, equity and sustainability. We aim to be a humane learning community in which teachers use relationships to deepen their knowledge of students. This is in order to engage all of them in an intellectually challenging education based on powerful ideas, help them toward social maturity, and prepare them for a life of meaningful possibilities and active participation as local, Australian and global citizens.

Vision of the school's sustainability policy

The vision of this policy is predicated on the United Nations declaration that 2005 - 2014 should be the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Sustainable development involves a change in thinking and practice, recognising the complexity and interconnectedness of environmental, social and economic challenges and looks for new ways to address them.

Education for Sustainability (EfS) is an integral part of sustainable development.

This EfS policy shows how a whole-school commitment to sustainability at Fitzroy High School can change thinking and practice and work towards a vision. The policy provides an indication of the pathways through which Fitzroy High School can further develop their existing engagement with EfS.

Our EfS is our way to the future. While empowering the whole Fitzroy High School community to restore and maintain the Earth's natural systems, it also supports the wellbeing of our students, Australia's future generations, by promoting sustainable lifestyles.

The EfS policy will allow Fitzroy High School students to develop the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary for them to act in ways that contribute to

more sustainable patterns of living. It will enable them, as individuals, and the whole school community, to reflect on ways of interpreting and engaging with the world.

The EfS policy is futures-oriented, focused on protecting environments and creating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action. The actions that will support an EfS policy and a more environmentally sustainable Fitzroy High School require consideration of environmental, social, cultural and economic systems and their interdependence.

This policy statement is designed to support effective EfS programs at Fitzroy High School. It also provides guidelines on the management of school resources and grounds in accordance with ecologically sustainable practice and serves as a starting point for addressing local, Australian and global environmental issues.

This EfS policy describes the:

- rationale for EfS at Fitzroy High School
- three focus areas of Fitzroy High School's EfS policy
- aims and objectives of Fitzroy High School's EfS policy
 - curriculum
 - management of school resources
 - management of school grounds.

Rationale for EfS at Fitzroy High School

Complex changes to the world's natural systems are occurring rapidly. Some of these changes are global, as in the case of the enhanced greenhouse effect and global warming. Often they are national, as with the increasing incidence of blue-green algae in our river systems. Often too, the damage is local, such as the impact of industrial and urban waste, the impact of poor planning, the use of chemicals and the degradation of agricultural land and forested areas associated with land clearing, and poor management practices.

The results of environmental stress are increasingly apparent in our everyday lives. The principle of ecologically sustainable development is central to any EfS policy. It is "*a pattern of activities that meet the needs of the current generation without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their needs*". Ecologically sustainable development relates to those human activities that compromise a balance between economical, environmental and social forces.

The concept of sustainability is about the capacity of the environment to continue to support our lives and the lives of other living creatures into the future. At Fitzroy High School sustainability is both a goal and a way of thinking about how to progress towards that goal. An understanding of what is meant by sustainability is developed through an understanding of the following.

- Progress towards sustainability depends on the maintenance or restoration of the environmental functions that sustain all life and human wellbeing (economic and social).
- The adjunct concept of unsustainability requires the study of the environmental processes producing the degradation of an environmental function (the reduction in natural capital); the human actions that have initiated these processes; and the attitudinal, demographic, social, economic and political causes of these human actions.

- There are a variety of contested views on how progress towards local, national and global sustainability will be achieved and these are often informed by cultural and world views.

The model of EfS is about creating a level of competence in all students that will enable them to contribute to the achievement of sustainable societies. Through EfS, students will acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to form judgements about sustainable lifestyles and to participate in decision-making that concerns the establishment of sustainable practices.

As EfS is incorporated into the Fitzroy High School curriculum, students:

- learn **about** the environment and understand the principle of ecologically sustainable development
- acquire attitudes of care and concern **for** the environment
- adopt behaviours and practices which **protect** the environment
- develop skills to investigate and solve issues **in** the environment

The three focus areas in Fitzroy High School's EfS policy

The three focus areas are:

- curriculum
- management of school resources
- management of school grounds

To achieve the objectives of EfS, Fitzroy High School will address all three focus areas in ways that are meaningful to the students, teachers, school council and the whole school community.

Aims and objectives of Fitzroy High School's EfS policy

Aim of EfS

This EfS policy aims to foster students' knowledge about the environment, as an integrated system, and to develop attitudes and skills which are conducive to the achievement of ecologically sustainable development.

Objectives of EfS

Objectives in the curriculum

Students will develop knowledge and understandings about the:

- nature and function of ecosystems and biomes and how they are interrelated
- impact of people on environments
- role of the community, politics, economic forces and globalisation in environmental decision-making
- principle of ecologically sustainable development
- career opportunities associated with the environment

Students will develop skills in:

- applying technical expertise within an environmental context
- adopting behaviours and practices that protect the environment
- communicating environmental problems to others
- identifying and assessing environmental problems
- resolving environmental problems

- evaluating the success of their actions
- environmental leadership

Students will acquire values and attitudes relating to:

- a respect for life on Earth
- an appreciation of their cultural, local, national and global heritage
- a commitment to act for the environment by supporting long-term solutions to environmental problems

Objectives in the management of school resources

Fitzroy High School will:

- take a whole-school approach to policy development to include such environmental aspects as purchasing, energy monitoring, water consumption and conservation, recycling, waste disposal, gardening and landscaping
- employ best practice in management of resources
- identify learning opportunities for students resulting from the management of the school's resources

Objectives in the management of school grounds

Fitzroy High School will:

- manage the school grounds in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- develop school grounds as part of the overall school plan
- identify learning opportunities for students resulting from the management of the school grounds