

Case Studies

Name of school: Bradshaw Primary, Alice Springs

School Context: Bradshaw Primary School is an urban, government school in Alice Springs. We have approximately 320 students and approx. 135 of these are indigenous students. Our school has a Science and Technology resource teacher who works with all year levels. This program is now in its 2nd year of operation and is proving to be successful. We have large playing areas with lots of grass; we have an undercover area, a basketball court and a large concourse. We also have arid plants and gardens in various areas throughout the school. We are focusing on an intensive program on water and water conservation.

Issues:

- A lot of water is being used in and out of the school environment and to make students aware of this. We are based in the desert and need to address these issues.

Aim:

- To improve student learning and increase student engagement in their communities through incorporating sustainability into current school practice.

Vision:

- To reduce water consumption in the school and the community. To continue to focus teaching and learning on sustainability throughout the whole school.

What we did:

Learning

- In Science and Technology lessons the Year 5 and 6 students completed a detailed unit related to water issues and water conservation. This involved a number of excursions, guest speakers and activities.
- We formed a working party that has met to work on a School Environmental Management Plan.
- Professional learning for staff to introduce Sustainable Schools.
- Upper primary teaching and learning focus has been on water conservation.
- Students have produced a video advertisement for local television and 3 powerpoints on waterwise plants, water saving devices and about their visit to the Alice Springs bore fields and sewerage ponds. These will be posted up on the web so other students can access them.

Governance

- Ecological sustainability has been incorporated into the schools value statements and whole school curriculum map, that is beginning to be developed by the staff and Project Officer.

Resource Management/School Grounds

- Water conservation focus.
- An arid garden at the Pre-school.
- Have obtained a grant to change the toilets from single flush to dual flush and to install water saving implements in some of the taps.

Community Links

- Strong links with the Waterwise program and the Alice Springs Desert Park.
- Guest speakers from Power and Water.
- Filming of the advertisement from Imparja TV.

What happened?

Educational benefits:

- All the environmental programs are linked to the curriculum.
- The students learnt where Alice Springs obtains its water and completed many activities related to water and water saving issues.
- The students were involved in planning and producing an advertisement about water conservation that is currently being shown on Imparja TV.
- A group of year 6 students were worked with the Alice Springs Desert Park to grow native seedlings and worked with the Pre-school to plant these into a native garden.
- Teachers across the school are integrating the water issues into their curriculum in a way that is appropriate to their students.

Environmental outcomes:

- A native garden has been established at our Pre-school
- We have become a Waterwise school
- We have received a grant from Waterwise to change the toilets from single flush to dual flush and to install regulators to reduce the flow of water in some of the taps.
- Hannah Pollard has received a grant of \$2000 to be spent of improving our school environment.

Social Benefits:

- The students related to a number of different people in relation to our excursions and guest speakers.
- The students worked in groups to plan an advertisement on water conservation.
- Students worked with the film crew from Imparja TV to film the advertisement.
- Students presented their learning at assemblies.

What I learnt:

- Students are interested in learning about something they can relate to.
- Students enjoy hands on activities.
- Many people who work in the community are interested in helping students understand issues related to their expertise.
- There are many opportunities to obtain grants from various organizations.
- Sustainability is an ongoing and slow process. Changes cannot occur overnight.
- Lack of time is an important factor in the school environment.