

Waste Checklist



How waste smart is your school? This checklist will help provide an audit of what your school is already doing and where there may be opportunities for further actions. It's also useful if you are working on the Waste Module as part of ResourceSmart Schools 5Star Sustainability Certification (5Star).

To complete the Waste Module, your school needs to **complete a minimum of 46 actions** from the list below, including **ALL of the actions in section A1 Current status and research**.

A Workplace / Operational

This section is about how your school can manage waste by assessing the way waste is managed in your school through audits, creating a waste and litter reduction plan, managing litter in your grounds and school yard, and better management of your recyclables.

A1 Current status and research

All actions in section A1 are compulsory

- A1.1** Have you undertaken waste audits at your school?
- A1.2** Have you undertaken litter assessments at your school?
- A1.3** Has this data been entered as your baseline, and any anomalies explained?

A2 Preparation and Planning

- A2.1** Do you have a whole-school waste and litter reduction plan in place?
- A2.2** Have your waste and litter policies, targets and action plan been approved by your school council and/or planning committee?
- A2.3** Is there professional development for staff on waste, litter and associated themes?
- A2.4** Has your school applied for waste reduction related grants and/or entered into any environmental awards or competitions (e.g. ResourceSmart Schools Awards or Nude Food Day)?
- A2.5** Does your school have a green purchasing policy in place?
- A2.6** Do you have interpretive signage such as what to place in bins, two-sided printing reminders and paper reuse reminders?
- A2.7** Do you have systems in place for monitoring waste and recording data?
- A2.8** Do school events target zero waste?

A3 Food Waste

- A3.1** Are students actively encouraged to use reusable drink bottles and lunchboxes (e.g. are

divided lunchboxes on the school equipment list)?

- A3.2** Does your school organise rubbish-free lunch or nude food days at least once a term?
- A3.3** Are food scraps collected from classrooms, staffrooms, yards and the canteen and then used in the compost area and/or worm farm or fed to your school's chickens?
- A3.4** Are you implementing a maintenance regime (e.g. for emptying compost buckets or bins, turning compost and checking worm farms)?
- A3.5** Does your school have a zero target for food scraps going to landfill?

A4 Garden Waste

- A4.1** Does your school compost or mulch its garden waste?
- A4.2** Does your school have (on-site or off-site) well-managed compost bins or heaps, worm farms and/or other animal fertiliser production?
- A4.3** Is composted material used in soil building (e.g. in a vegetable garden)?
- A4.4** Do the plantings in your school favour low leaf loss, low water use and native and indigenous plants to reduce leaf fall?

A5 Paper (reduction, recycling)

- A5.1** Has your school made progress in replacing paper copies with digital or electronic versions (e.g. newsletter, files, assignments, reports)?
- A5.2** Have recycling containers for paper, newspaper and cardboard been placed in classrooms, staffroom, canteen and administration areas?
- A5.3** Are paper reuse containers in place in classrooms, staffrooms and administration areas?
- A5.4** Does your school reuse single-sided paper in all printers?
- A5.5** Is there a paper reduction plan in place: e.g. double-sided photocopying, class sets of worksheets, family newsletters emailed, reduction in photocopying handouts, regular photocopy-free days?

- A5.6** Does your school try to reduce the amount of newspapers, promotional materials and cardboard etc entering the school?

A6 Other recycling and reuse

- A6.1** Have containers been placed in the school yards, staffroom, administration areas and canteen (if school has a canteen & subject to OH&S) for collecting recyclable materials (e.g. cans, bottles, plastic containers)?
- A6.2** Does your school collect ink and toner cartridges (for refilling and/or recycling), and/or mobile phones, computers and peripherals (for recycling or donation)?
- A6.3** Does your school collect materials for social support, charity, donated goods program or fundraising. Eg:
 - > clothing
 - > used furniture
 - > bikes, toys and other goods for reassignment
- A6.4** Does your school collect other products for reuse such as plastic containers, shopping bags and boxes?
- A6.5** Does your school reuse furniture, decorations and other materials at the school or in the local community?

A7 Litter

- A7.1** Are your school yards and other areas mostly litter-free?
- A7.2** Do the students regularly monitor or audit the yard litter?
- A7.3** Are meals eaten in designated eating areas or classrooms or is there another process to minimise litter in the yard (e.g. no wrapped food outside)?
- A7.4** Does your school have a student reward system in place for litter management?
- A7.5** Does the school canteen area have a litter reduction system in place?
- A7.6** Does your school have a system in place to collect litter in the yard (e.g. no wrapped food outside)?
- A7.7** Does your school have sufficient bins with appropriate signage and lids in all relevant area of the school grounds?

B Learning and teaching

Here you can check which activities your school has built into your curriculum to directly engage students in learning and to manage waste and resources more effectively.

- B1.1** Do you have an action plan that to address waste that clearly targets classroom activities across the school?
- B1.2** Are your classroom activities in litter and waste clearly linked to the AusVELS cross-curriculum priority of Sustainability?
- B1.3** Are your classroom activities linked to practical, 'hands-on' activities that encourage:
 - > The use of school grounds as an authentic learning space for nature-based, informal and outdoor learning about waste and litter reduction?
 - > Excursions to provide students with first-hand experience of landfills, local waterways, natural areas and/or to waste education centres?
 - > Links to home-based projects and behaviour change in waste and litter?
- B1.4** Does your school program provide students with the opportunity to take responsibility for classroom activities and programs in waste and litter issues?
- B1.5** Does your school engage indigenous learning perspectives in curriculum development and relate this to waste and litter?
- B1.6** Do you have visitors to school to provide students and teachers with knowledge and motivation around waste and litter?
- B1.7** Are you using the waste and litter data you collect as a curriculum activity to monitor progress in waste and litter reduction in the school?

C Whole school community engagement

How embedded into the life of your school is sustainability and being waste smart? Is the whole school the 'champion', not just one teacher, parent or group of students? Find out below how well your school is engaging with the whole school community around waste.

C1 Policy and reporting

- C1.1** Is the whole school provided with regular information about activities and progress in reducing waste and litter at the school?
- C1.2** Do you seek regular feedback from the whole school and community on the waste and litter activities and programs?
- C1.3** Have you completed and uploaded at least one learning story that celebrates your waste and litter achievements onto school, departmental or sustainability websites?
- C1.4** Is waste and litter education included as a priority or focus area or emphasis in your school goals (e.g. in your school plan, policy, administration and/or curriculum charts)?
- C1.5** Does your school have an events policy to keep litter and waste to a minimum?

C2 Student and parent leadership

- C2.1** Are students involved in planning and managing the waste and litter program (e.g. Student Action Team)?
- C2.2** Is school environment leadership encouraged in students in the school?
- C2.3** Do you have an active School Environment Club or Student Action Team?
- C2.4** Do parents and other members of the school community assist with planning and implementing actions of the waste plan?

C3 Community and communication links

- C3.1** Does your school liaise and/or work with local or regional waste or litter groups to develop school-based or joint projects (e.g. regional education officer from Regional Waste Management Group or council education officer, litter task force or NGOs)?
- C3.2** Have staff and/or students attended local environmental network meetings?
- C3.3** Have staff and students participated in local waste and litter activities (e.g. Clean-Up Australia Day)?
- C3.4** Are questions about the attitudes and changes in waste behaviour at home included in annual parent surveys and wider school community surveys?
- C3.5** Do you include ideas and activities in school newsletters to families about being more waste smart at home?
- C3.6** Do staff and/or students mentor other schools?
- C3.7** Do students and staff have open dialogue about waste and litter-related issues with other schools across the state, nation and globe?
- C3.8** Do staff and/or students give presentations on their school waste and litter programs to other schools?
- C3.9** Does your school liaise with political representatives from local, state and federal governments, local business and local 'friends of groups for support of projects?