

West Leeming Primary School

- Greenteam Departments • Paper and Cardboard • Compost and Worm Farms
- Sales Department • Batteries • Litter Reduction

Background

West Leeming Primary School – 12 minutes south of the Perth CBD – has been involved in Waste Wise activities since 2002 as part of a vibrant environmental program.

What began as a Year 7 paper recycling program is now a system where student-led departments operate within the school, overseeing a holistic yet highly manageable program.

The environmental activities at West Leeming Primary School now run like a well-oiled machine, finetuned over the years to create a program where the students themselves are responsible for management and ongoing evaluation.

Greenteam Departments

The Greenteam Departments include:

- Promotions
- Energy
- Records
- Bins and School Recycling Facility (SRF)
- Aluminium Cans
- Plastics
- Cork
- Worms
- Cardboard
- Compost
- Tree Maintenance
- Skip Bin
- Batteries.

Department representatives become specialists in their area and provide support and leadership to other students in the school.



RECYCLING FOR THE PLASTICS DEPARTMENT.

Currently the Year 3 class runs the recycling of paper, batteries, corks, plastics and photocopier cartridges.

A Year 7 Greenteam operates the compost and another operates the recycling of cardboard.

The whole school is involved in collecting items for reuse and recycling, providing scraps for worms and compost, donating used batteries and keeping the school litter-free.

Some classes, including pre-primary, also operate their own worm farms.



WEIGHING THE PAPER DEVELOPS MEASURING AND RECORDING SKILLS.

The School Recycling Facility (SRF) is the hub of Waste Wise activities. This well-organised garden shed houses equipment, recyclables, worm fertiliser and compost.

Once a week during Recycling Time, the Greenteam Departments carry out their assigned tasks, including collection and recording amounts of paper, cork and batteries and harvesting worm fertiliser.

Paper and Cardboard

Reducing is the most effective method of waste management. To encourage staff and students to use fewer resources, items such as photocopy paper must be purchased from a class budget.



CARDBOARD IS COLLECTED DAILY FROM THE CANTEEN, OFFICE AND UNIFORM SHOP, FLATTENED AND PLACED IN BALES FOR AMCOR, WHO COLLECT FIVE FULL BALES TWICE EACH TERM.



“My friends and I want to be Waste Wise because seeing the results is satisfying. Also, knowing that we are helping the environment and helping animals is good.” *Year 7 student*

This means every piece of paper has cost the class money and needs to be used wisely. In the classroom, photocopy paper used on one side is saved for draft work. Double-sided paper, collected weekly by the Paper Department is weighed, sorted and emptied into six yellow-lidded bins provided by the City of Melville, and collected fortnightly for recycling.

By weighing the paper, the school can keep track of how much is recycled weekly, reward classes with the highest amount of recycled paper and keep encouraging students to do their bit. The Radical Recyclers Award is presented weekly at assemblies to the school’s best recyclers.

The students of West Leeming have diverted more than 7 tonnes of paper from landfill through recycling.

Each tonne milestone is celebrated with the planting of a tree and a fun activity based on the 3Rs.

Compost and Worm Farms

A small bucket for vegetable scraps is in each classroom, the staff room and the school canteen. Scraps are collected daily, weighed and added to the worm farms or one of two compost tumblers.

With each class contributing 2-4 kilograms of vegetable scraps each week, the total amount of scraps chopped for compost in 2005 was just over 1.5 tonnes.

Two tumblers – one purchased with Waste Wise Youth Grant funds – are used in a three-week cycle to produce rich and healthy compost for the school’s vegetable gardens and new trees.

A compost tumbler begins its cycle with two catcher-loads of grass clippings from the school gardener. The photographs show what happens next:



VEGETABLE SCRAPS ARE CHOPPED BY ROSTERED YEAR 5-7 CLASSES FOR COMPOST AND WORM FARMS.



SCRAPS ARE ADDED TO THE COMPOST TUMBLER.



SAWDUST AND SHREDDED PAPER ARE ADDED NEXT – THESE ARE BOTH DONATED BY LOCAL BUSINESSES.



NEXT, THE TUMBLER IS ROTATED 10 TIMES.



COMPOST AND LIQUID FERTILISER FROM THE SCHOOL’S FOUR WORM FARMS ARE BOTH USED ON THE PRE-PRIMARY AND YEAR 1 VEGETABLE GARDENS.

Making compost is a fine art and the Compost Department keeps a close eye on whether the mix is too dry or moist. Dry leaves are collected and added to the compost as required. After two weeks, the tumbler is rotated for a week without any additions and then the resulting compost is bagged.



PRINTED ON THE COMPOST BAGS IS A SPECIAL SRF EMBLEM, DESIGNED BY A STUDENT, INCORPORATING THE SCHOOL LOGO AND THE RECYCLING ARROWS.

Sales Department

West Leeming parents are keen shoppers at the school where the Sales Department sells worm fertiliser (\$3 for a two-litre bottle) and compost (\$5 a bag) from a small stall once a week. Compost bags are reused so parents are encouraged to return them when they are empty.





CRUSHED AND TABBED CANS DONATED BY STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE WORTH THE MOST FACTION POINTS. THE CANS DEPARTMENT FINISHES THE JOB AND PLACES CANS AND TABS IN TWO SEPARATE BAGS FOR RECYCLING.

Batteries

Batteries are collected by the school community for safe disposal. The Battery Department students ensure safety by handling leaking batteries with gloves and placing them in a separate container.



Litter Reduction

Frubit the Frog is the school's much-loved environmental mascot. Each class is allocated an outdoors area and at student assemblies, Frubit presents the *Environmental Awareness Award* to the class with the cleanest area, along with Go Green reusable bags (donated by Woolworths Bull Creek) to individual students who are helping to keep their environment clean.

Curriculum Integration

Waste Wise activities are integrated into all learning areas. Some examples from the Year 7 class are:

- PowerPoint presentation on West Leeming's Waste Wise Program for visitors and neighbouring schools
- Gifted students compiling information for the recycling page on the school's website
- Using Publisher to produce a recycling brochure for the school community.

Other Activities

- Go Green reusable cloth bags are being sold to students and parents by the recycling team as part of the national Plastic Bag Famine.
- Assembly backdrops and costumes are stored and reused by other classes and neighbouring schools.
- Used corks brought in from home are donated to Guides WA for recycling.
- Recycle bins (for plastic and liquidpaperboard drink containers) are placed in all eating areas and the staff room. These are emptied during Recycling Time into bins for co-mingled recycling, collected weekly by the local council.
- Students from the Skip Bin Department monitor the general waste daily. Any recyclables that make their way into general waste are reported and sometimes even traced back to the offender!
- Used photocopier cartridges are placed in a box supplied by Corporate Express, which collects a box of 10 used cartridges for free and supplies a new box.



SENIOR STUDENTS TAKE ON THE ROLE OF FRUBIT AND MAKE LUNCHTIME APPEARANCES TO PROMOTE A LITTER FREE SCHOOL.



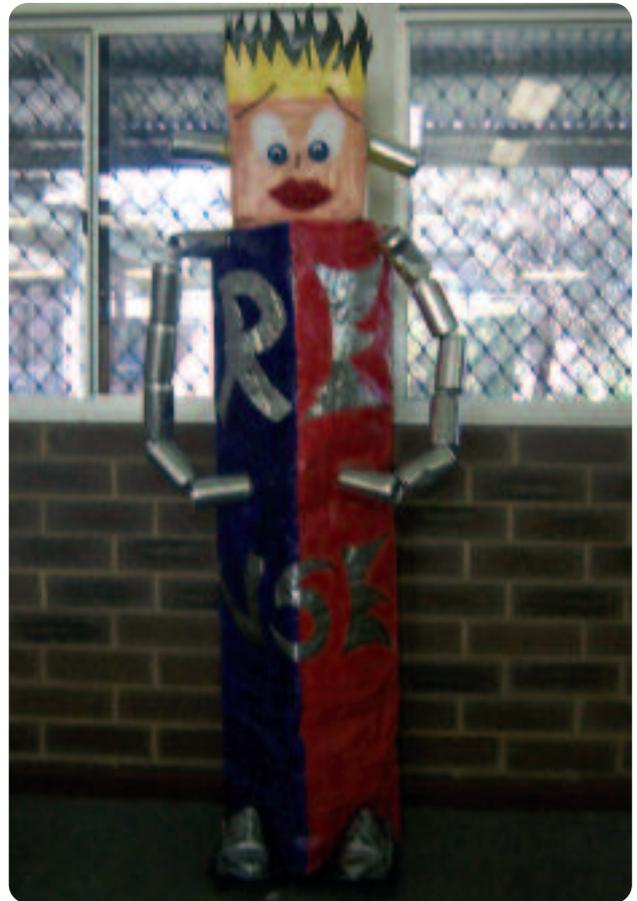
“Our school motto is INVOLVEMENT and it is through involvement, not just awareness, that our students reduce their negative impact on the environment.” *Kerry Brown, Environmental Coordinator*

Savings and Benefits

- **Two skip bins full of general waste have been reduced to only one each week, diverting more than 140 cubic metres of reusable or recyclable waste from landfill and saving an estimated \$1000 in general waste collection costs each year.**
- Collins Recycling of Willetton purchases West Leeming Primary School's aluminium cans. The money raised, about \$250 per year, is used towards the Year 7 graduation gift to the school.

Awards and Public Recognition

- 2005 – Winning school for selling the most reusable bags for Stockland (\$500 cheque plus \$200 voucher for the 200 bags sold). Highest sellers, the Year 7 class, won a class party with a magician.
- 2005 – Visit from Dr Cheong of Brunei Darussalam University as part of research on environmental education in WA.
- 2004 – Finalist in the Wakakirri Story Dance Festival. Year 4 and 5 students created a robot from cans, milk bottles and other reused materials.
- 2003 – Department of Environment Certificate of Achievement.



BRUCE THE ROBOT WAS A PROP IN THE SCHOOL'S WAKAKIRRI PERFORMANCE AND IS NOW USED TO PROMOTE THE 3Rs AT THE SCHOOL.

“I encourage my little brother to remember which bin is the recycling bin at home.”

Year 7 student

