Education for Sustainability

A guide to becoming a sustainable school
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Introduction

The United Nations has declared 2005–2014 to be the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Sustainable development is recognised as a critical priority for the world.
Sustainable development

Sustainable development considers the integration of social, economic and environmental factors in local, national and international development. It involves changes in thinking and practice that recognise that all these areas are interconnected.

Sustainable development is about ‘using, conserving and enhancing the community’s resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased’.

A global phenomenon

The global movement for sustainable development became significant in the latter part of the twentieth century, as expressed at the Earth Summit in 1992. Clear indicators have since emerged that ecological systems across the world are under threat and in many cases have deteriorated beyond rescue. Threats include climate change, increasing levels of resource consumption and waste, pollution, decreasing water quantity and quality, and issues related to rapid urbanisation and consumerism. Other threats relate to local and global relationships based on inequalities in wealth, power, trade, gender, race and resource distribution, among other things. Environmental deterioration across the world has demanded a recognition that we have to look beyond economic progress to achieve sustainable societies.

Changes in thinking and practice

Sustainable development involves a change in thinking and practice, recognising the complexity and interconnectedness of environmental, social and economic challenges and looking for new ways to address them.

Sustainable development often challenges the status quo of how societies function and the systems that underpin current ways of thinking, valuing and behaving. While the complexities of sustainable development can appear distant from our daily lives, there is a growing recognition that the world’s ecology and development are fundamentally linked. An example of this is the increasing awareness that climate change will have far-reaching implications for all life on our planet.

Education for Sustainability (EfS)

Education has a strong role to play in achieving sustainable development in South Australia in the twenty-first century. Education for Sustainability (EfS) is a global initiative that develops the learning practices we need to make these changes and create a more sustainable society. EfS recognises that communities need to challenge existing ways of thinking and doing to bring about fundamental transformations for sustainable development.

EfS and environmental education

Environmental education has been taught inside—and outside—most South Australian classrooms for decades. Some whole-school approaches to environmental education have integrated learning about water, waste and energy conservation (among other themes) into their everyday practice.

In EfS, these approaches become more integrated and systematic across schools and communities, due to a guiding vision. This collaboratively-developed vision and its associated values underpin community-wide cultural change towards sustainability. As a result, all decision-making considers environmental, social and economic consequences.
Quality education
EFs mirrors the concern for education of high quality. It is:
- interdisciplinary, holistic and multi-method
- values-driven
- concerned with critical thinking and problem solving
- based on participatory decision-making
- locally relevant.

EFs:
- inspires us to believe that we have the power and the responsibility to effect positive change on a global scale
- considers the long-term future of the equity, economy and ecology of all communities
- fosters the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future
- is a primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development, transforming our visions for society into reality
- builds the capacity for such futures-oriented thinking.²

A sustainable school
Sustainable schools develop a shared vision, values, understandings and practices to build a more sustainable community. The whole community, including students, staff, families, government, business and community groups are partners in creating sustainable lifestyles. Such a school values:
- a whole-school approach to EFs
- community-developed vision and values
- the equality of all participants
- respect for self, others and the environment
- student voices and student action
- community partnerships and relationships
- long-term thinking and decision-making
- health of ecological systems
- diverse cultural perspectives
- holistic thinking
- sustainable lifestyles.

What can be done?
Schools are in an ideal position to model sustainability practices that inform and influence the broader community. An example is the increasing use of photovoltaic cells (solar panels) in schools. Schools are choosing to install solar panels to provide students with opportunities to monitor energy consumption, and to focus attention on real and important sustainability issues. This provides communities with direct information about the need for renewable energy and specific details about solar energy’s use and effectiveness, whilst achieving real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. By introducing effective sustainability practices, schools can be at the forefront of an emerging culture of sustainability in communities.

Benefits to schools
The schools and preschools involved in the program have found many benefits in becoming more sustainable. These include:
- creation of a healthier school community
- provision of meaningful, locally relevant, practical learning for students and educators
- exploration of innovative and creative ways of learning
- significant environmental and social achievements in the school and local communities
- substantial financial savings through effective management of utilities and resources
- access to a range of resources including human, physical and financial through networks and support agencies
interconnection of environmental education programs and other initiatives across the school
opportunities to develop important learning partnerships.

**Becoming sustainable**
There are many starting points for schools engaging in EfS. Each school is unique and will approach its journey towards sustainability in ways that best meet its particular context and needs. A whole-school approach will take time to develop and consolidate. The steps below can be a guide to getting started and continuing the journey.

**Preparing and planning**
Steps to plan and prepare for EfS:
- convene a group of interested people under the auspices of the governing council, to prepare and present a proposal for EfS
- undertake a review of current programs, directions, and values across the school, involving as many members of the community as possible (e.g. families, environmental experts, local business, government and community organisations)
- highlight the existing strengths of the school upon which to build a holistic, integrated approach to EfS
- develop a clear vision and values involving the whole community
- set up structures to examine, encourage and support broad and fair participation
- develop a whole-school management plan for EfS that integrates successful programs and sets new strategic directions.

**Applying EfS in schools**
Steps to apply EfS:
- focus curriculum and learning on EfS
- develop specific action plans with timelines, responsibilities and resource considerations
- encourage the participation of all community members.

**Ensuring the future**
Steps to continuously improve EfS:
- regularly review, monitor and update plans
- collate and interpret the data from sustainability strategies
- regularly review the school’s vision and values
- recognise, celebrate and support effective strategies and achievements.

**Key considerations**
There are a number of key considerations necessary for an effective EfS initiative. Such an initiative needs to be:
- relevant to school and community needs as well as to national curriculum and EfS priorities
- resourced with expertise, supporting materials, facilitators and long-term financing
- reflective and placed within a ‘learning organisation’ culture
- responsive, with a structure able to respond to new developments, and local and cultural settings
- reformative, with the capacity to inspire change.3

The EfS website provides examples of effective practice from schools across Australia.
Explore online at www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs
The Model

The AuSSI-SA model demonstrates the relationships between all elements of EfS. The model shows that EfS activities and programs need to be developed around a culture of sustainability.
The Model: built around school culture

The model shows the four elements of EfS operating together to form a culture of sustainability within a school and its broader community. In turn, a culture of sustainability enables the growth of sustainability in the four elements.

In conjunction with the rubrics (see following page), the model can be used to support design and planning for EfS at the school level, and to identify current strengths and areas for development.

The Understanding, Learning, Community and Managing elements provide ‘entry points’ for schools to get involved in EfS. Rubrics are provided to help with this (see the following section).

Some schools find it useful to start in one element and incorporate the others over time. A truly sustainable school, however, is one that integrates—and acts in—all of the elements.

The dimension of Culture is of primary importance. The school culture, identity and values play a big role in setting directions and building common commitments, and strongly influence the way issues of sustainability are dealt with in the school and its community.

The following sections provide descriptions and more detail on Culture and each of the four elements.
The Rubrics

The EfS model is supported by separate rubrics that describe stages on the journey to sustainability.
The elements and Culture

There are four interconnected elements to the AuSSI-SA model: Understanding, Learning, Community, and Managing. Culture is the active and dynamic centre of the model, indicating its critical role in EfS.

The four elements and Culture have separate rubrics that describe stages on the journey towards sustainability. In their use here, the rubrics provide a kind of grid by which a school can assess its progress towards EfS.

Each rubric provides:
- a common language for discussing EfS
- clear directions and indicators for learning and change
- a means of engaging with, and communicating improvements to, the broader community
- evaluation, monitoring and decision-making tools to promote continuous improvement.

How to use the rubrics

As a starting point, a school can determine where in each rubric they believe they are presently situated. There might be several different views within a school as to its position within each one. This should stimulate discussion on EfS. Using the rubrics, schools will be able to identify their progress towards sustainability.

The rubrics will continue to evolve and grow with our learning. Schools are encouraged to take the rubrics and develop them for their particular context and needs.

The rubric columns: charting progress

The columns of every rubric show development towards sustainability, from left to right. They are organised as:
- starting: a school realises the need for change, questions current practices and identifies possible directions
- challenging: a school is actively involved in challenging practices and establishing processes for change
- committing: EfS is being integrated into the life of the school and its broader community
- transforming: the school, with its community, is continuously learning and living sustainable lifestyles.

The challenge is to transform current ways of thinking, valuing and behaving to create a sustainable society. The vision of sustainability will continue to grow and evolve as an understanding of the requirements for sustainability develops over time. Achieving sustainability outcomes is a critical part of the learning process: EfS is a ‘journey’, not a ‘destination’.

The rubric rows: aspects of learning

Each of the rubrics is divided into three rows, with each row representing critical aspects of that element. All aspects are important in education for sustainability. Every part of a rubric needs to be considered as both interconnected and interdependent.

Educators require a new set of skills, such as envisioning, critical thinking and reflection, dialogue and negotiation, collaboration and building of partnerships.

Daniella Tilbury and David Wortman (2004)
The Culture rubric

The dimension of Culture is of primary importance.

A culture of sustainability underpins the identity and sense of purpose of the whole school.

Vision and values
The development of a vision and values is an effective starting point for a school to realise a culture of sustainability. A process to develop a vision and values should include the broadest possible community participation, to foster a common commitment to sustainability. This process will respect and use democratic and participatory decision-making and cooperation.

Everyone involved will need to reflect on their beliefs and values, because sustainability is a personal and collective challenge. Educators are challenged to consider the purposes of education and their own role in sustainable communities.

In a sustainable school, a vision and values for sustainability are practised, renewed and shared across communities to build more sustainable lifestyles. The renewal process provides continuity and direction over time.

Interconnectedness
Sustainable development recognises the complex interconnections of social, environmental, cultural and economic factors. In building a culture of sustainable development, schools learn to consider and integrate these factors in their decision-making. The many and varied cultural perspectives in a community, such as Indigenous and multicultural world views, are valued in this learning process. A sustainable community will understand and value the dynamic interconnections with local, national and international communities.

Whole-school approach
A shared culture of sustainability and associated values, principles and practices provide an overarching way of connecting a school. A culture of sustainability develops with whole-school and broader community commitment to the vision and values. The whole school includes students, families, staff, and a broad range of communities. ‘Staff’ includes educators, administrators, schools services officers, cleaners, grounds-people and other crucial members of the school community. The whole school committing to achieve sustainability is a powerful force for change. When there is a commitment to a culture of sustainability, it is evident in everyday expectations and practice.
Our school develops a culture of sustainability with the wider community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision and values</th>
<th>Starting</th>
<th>Challenging</th>
<th>Committing</th>
<th>Transforming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to examine our school’s sustainability vision and values is identified</td>
<td>Our school undertakes an inclusive community process to develop its sustainability vision and values</td>
<td>There is evidence of a commitment to the vision and values through all areas of school life</td>
<td>Core vision and values are practised, renewed and shared across communities to build more sustainable lifestyles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Interconnectedness | Our school considers how to integrate the social, environmental and economic factors of sustainability | Some of our practices reflect a balance between social, environmental and economic factors | Our school places equal value on social, economic and environmental factors when making decisions | Through a culture of sustainability, social, environmental and economic factors are integrated |

| Whole-school approach | Individuals consider and identify their role in education for sustainability | Groups consider ways to coordinate and integrate their work with the school’s sustainability vision | There is a whole-school commitment to achieving the sustainability vision | Our school is part of a sustainable community |

At Victor Harbor Primary School, the Student Environmental Action Group has related our values to environmental sustainability in school and community and made links between values and social responsibility.

Brenton Robins,
Victor Harbor Primary School

Find out more at www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs
A sustainable school embarks on an ongoing inquiry into sustainability. The understanding that develops from this process underpins school practices.

**Learning and change**
Understanding is the basis upon which each aspect of EfS is considered and discussed. Understanding sustainability requires an ongoing process of learning and change that challenges perceived knowledge and values. In this way, it fosters new ways of thinking and acting as a sustainable community.

**Learning for sustainability**
Schools are involved in an ongoing dialogue, reflecting on what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how these practices fit with sustainability. Learning and actions are not just ‘about’ or ‘for’ sustainability, but are undertaken ‘as’ sustainability. This means that communities are engaged in actions, living their vision of sustainability.

**A sustainability inquiry**
Questioning is an effective way to start and encourage inquiry into the nature and implications of sustainability.

Questions might include:
- How can we re-establish the ecological integrity of the planet for the long term?
- How can holistic thinking help us to achieve sustainability?
- How does an understanding of different world views help us work with others to practise EfS?

An inquiry into sustainability should include and be informed by local, national and international communities and priorities. The inquiry becomes a continuous process where achieving sustainability is an integral part of learning. A cohesive approach to sustainability learning involves overlapping and complementary inquiry processes.
Our school nurtures the understanding, skills and values required to move with our community towards sustainability.

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<tr>
<th>Understanding</th>
<th>Starting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning and change</td>
<td>Our school is learning about sustainability</td>
<td>Our school is learning to become more sustainable</td>
<td>Questioning and reform underpin change towards sustainability</td>
<td>Ongoing processes of learning and change challenge perceived knowledge and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning for sustainability</td>
<td>Our school recognises that sustainability is a priority</td>
<td>Our school is practising sustainability in some aspects of schooling</td>
<td>There is commitment to ongoing learning and application of sustainability</td>
<td>Our school, with its extended communities, is a model of sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sustainability inquiry</td>
<td>Our school begins an inquiry into sustainability</td>
<td>Current practices are challenged through an inquiry process</td>
<td>Inquiry processes are collaboratively developed and implemented across our school</td>
<td>Interconnected inquiry processes underpin sustainability learning in our community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Highbury Primary School, there is heightened awareness of how human use and interaction with social and natural systems is important if the world is to have a positive future.

Erica Womersley, Highbury Primary School
The Learning rubric

In the light of sustainability issues, a school’s curriculum, learning environments and pedagogies are subjected to continuous review and reform.

**Curriculum**
A successful EfS program will integrate curriculum, learning processes and pedagogies. Innovation, creativity and action underpin the curriculum for EfS. The South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework provides a strong mandate for learning about ecological and social sustainability across multiple learning areas and using the Essential Learnings.

School communities are encouraged to use the SACSA Framework, the school EfS vision, and local priorities and needs to develop a relevant, multi-disciplinary local curriculum. Examples of different approaches which can be the focus of curriculum discussion and decision-making within local contexts can be found on the EfS website.

**Learning environment**
There are many diverse and interesting learning environments and opportunities, within both schools and broader communities (including national and global communities). These environments provide relevant and important places to learn for sustainability. There is an increasing need for people to reconnect with natural environments as part of building respect and developing stewardship for local environments.

By actively working to achieve sustainability in a broad range of environments, students are developing the values, skills and agency to realise their place in natural systems and their role as global citizens. Acting to effect change can instil optimism and hope.

**Pedagogy**
Education for sustainability values practical and hands-on learning. Learning involves a collaborative process of inquiry, action and reflection to continuously improve sustainable behaviours. This is a holistic approach that integrates knowledge, values and actions. Learning is designed, with student involvement, to be meaningful, purposeful, interesting and relevant. The educator becomes a facilitator who ensures that all students have opportunities to be listened to and participate in actions for sustainability. Success in achieving sustainability outcomes guides a cycle of ongoing improvement.
Our school’s curriculum, learning processes and pedagogies help us to achieve a more sustainable lifestyle in and with our wider community.

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<th>Committing</th>
<th>Transforming</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>Our school reviews curriculum and identifies opportunities for EFS</td>
<td>Our school develops an innovative EFS curriculum that includes community priorities</td>
<td>The whole school community is committed to an integrated curriculum that achieves EFS outcomes</td>
<td>There is a continuous process of review and reform with the whole community to evolve an EFS curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning environment</strong></td>
<td>Our school identifies the range of potential learning environments to support action-based learning inside and outside the school</td>
<td>A range of environments support action-based learning for sustainability</td>
<td>Our school commits to using diverse environments to take actions for sustainability</td>
<td>Sustainability and educational outcomes are achieved through action-based learning in diverse environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedagogy</strong></td>
<td>Our school reflects on current teaching practices and identifies the value of student voice and participation in change processes</td>
<td>Educators and learners design and engage actively with sustainability experiences</td>
<td>Sustainability outcomes are achieved with students across the curriculum</td>
<td>A learning community collectively leads sustainable change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Community rubric

A school community is much more than its staff and students. A school is part of many broader, diverse communities—local, national and international.

Community connections
Sustainable schools actively make connections and build relationships within their communities. Local priorities and events provide a strong basis for making these connections, which are nurtured through ongoing and mutual communication. Communication strategies include invitations to school presentations and events, displays in local shopping centres and libraries, and media articles that help to raise community awareness of the school and its sustainability initiatives, and inspire broader community participation.

Schools are encouraged to share their learning with each other. Networking and sharing develop the solidarity and support that will enable schools to be successful over time. They can also initiate cultural exchanges with, for example, indigenous communities, to share different perspectives and understandings of sustainability. The networks created will bring people together to lobby for and support sustainability initiatives.

Building capacity
Creating a sustainable community requires the development of skills and practical capacities of individuals and organisations.

Families and other people in the community have valuable knowledge, skills and talents and can be powerful allies in EFS. School structures and processes provide ways in which families can participate and provide leadership through such activities as convening a sustainability sub-committee or leading environmental events.

Schools have a diverse range of skilled people in their community. Technicians, business people, tradespeople and managers, local government officers and environmental education providers, to name a few, can become an integral part of enabling sustainability outcomes.

Developing partnerships
The establishment of partnerships across agencies and organisations is vital to the success of EFS. Partners support sustainable schools in many ways, including:

- provision of expertise
- clarification of key messages
- development and provision of educational resources that actively engage learners
- provision of physical, financial and human resources
- participation in actions for change.

The EFS website provides further details of possible partners and the support they can offer. Each school can assist other schools by encouraging community partners to link to the website. The promotion of businesses and non-government organisations and the possibility of them working with other schools and stakeholders could provide a strong incentive to community partners to be visibly and actively involved.
### Community

Our school achieves sustainability with its communities

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<th>Community connections</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our school recognises the need to connect with our community</td>
<td>Our school actively builds connections with community members</td>
<td>Community connections are supported, renewed and extended to achieve sustainability outcomes</td>
<td>The school and community is leading and living sustainable lifestyles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Building capacity | There is a discussion with the local community about learning and working together to achieve sustainability | Opportunities are provided to develop skills, understandings and values for sustainability | The whole community commits to increase its capacity to live more sustainably | Whole communities continuously increase their capacity to live sustainable lifestyles |

| Developing partnerships | The role of the community as a contributor to EIS is investigated | Our school and community members work in partnership to identify sustainability issues and opportunities | Partnerships are formalised and integrated into the vision for sustainability | Partners nurture relationships and interconnections through living sustainably |

Since hosting a Sustainable Schooling Expo for the five schools and their communities in our district, our school community has a broader understanding of and interest in sustainable practices, what they could look like and what they might mean for developing our preferred future.

Allison Pickford, Meadows Primary School

Find out more at www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs
The Managing rubric

By aligning school policies, procedures and systems into an EfS vision, changes can be initiated for a school and sustained over time.

**Leadership**

EfS is a democratic process that welcomes participation—everyone can be a leader. All are encouraged to be active in planning, implementing and reviewing changes to achieve sustainable outcomes. EfS provides opportunities both for student ‘voice’ and agency.

Being involved in decision-making and daily practices helps all participants to understand the impacts of their choices and behaviours. Sustainable schools have documented improved levels of personal growth, commitment, energy and enthusiasm for all involved.

The ways that schools are organised and managed provide varied opportunities to lead and practise EfS in purposeful and relevant ways.

**Governance**

A school’s EfS vision is strengthened by making its vision part of its Site Learning Plan. This Plan will be developed and ratified by student governance, staff and governing council to formalise the school community’s commitment to their sustainability vision.

When school governance is centred on democratic decision-making processes, students are more likely to engage and contribute meaningfully to the life of the school. By participating actively at all levels of school governance, students develop the skills to support, challenge, re-create, or replace systems.

**Planning and management**

Continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes is possible through cycles of inclusive planning, implementation, monitoring and review. The collection of data allows improvements to be noted and priorities for planning and action to be identified.

Examples of readily available data include:
- learning outcomes
- student retention statistics
- utilities costs
- power, water and other resource use.

Schools can develop a management plan to help establish short-, medium- and long-term actions. The management plan outlines priorities for activities such as writing grant applications, allocating budgets, and defining professional development needs.

A whole-school culture of sustainability will be reflected in such areas as:
- staff selection processes
- induction policies for new staff
- information booklets for relieving teachers
- school hire agreements
- policy development (e.g. purchasing and disposal policy)
- after-hours care.

A school’s policies, practices and procedures can support EfS by clarifying and ‘normalising’ whole-school expectations of behaviour.
Our school’s leadership, governance and management processes foster Education for Sustainability

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<th>Transforming</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our school recognises EfS as a democratic process within which everyone can be a leader</td>
<td>Leadership opportunities are provided to students, staff and the wider community</td>
<td>Everyone has a role and is nurtured as a leader in EfS</td>
<td>All participants are leaders in achieving sustainability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Governance | EFS is introduced and discussed within governance structures | There is formal agreement to integrate EfS into school priorities and directions | Governance structures support and develop EfS | A culture of sustainability underpins all governance decisions |

| Planning and management | Our school brings together information to support the decision to make EfS a priority | A collaboratively developed management plan guides the implementation of EfS | Sustainability data informs an ongoing cycle of planning, review and management action | Planning and management processes continuously improve sustainability |

Find out more at www.decs.sa.gov.au/efs

Our Student Environment Group is lobbying for a more whole-school commitment to sustainability. They are leading the push for sustainability to be formalised throughout the school and have already won over the school council.

Rob Carthew, Unley High School
An important component of EfS is the collection, evaluation, use and presentation of data to inform planning. With a commitment to continuous improvement, the whole community will move towards sustainability.
Data
Quantitative data can provide useful information to track EfS progress in issues such as student attendance or energy use. From this data, trends and priorities can be identified. Qualitative data can include anecdotal information and more structured feedback, perspectives and opinions. A combination of both types of data adds richness and depth to the evaluation process.

Schools can collect initial (baseline) data to identify needs and set targets. As their journey continues, more data can be collected to demonstrate the outcomes of sustainability initiatives. This may involve the monitoring of a school’s performance in aspects of waste, water, energy, school habitat, school retention, social health, transport use and procurement.

By taking part in coordinated EfS data collection, schools will be well placed to develop and grow, in line with national and international trends towards sustainability.

Auditing
EfS can actively involve students in auditing and monitoring environmental performance at school, in homes and in local communities. Students can track resource consumption through waste, water and energy audits. Tools to do this are available from a range of websites and organisations, including local government. Ecological footprint audits, community attitude surveys, transport surveys, biodiversity and other ecological investigations can also be a part of a school’s curriculum. By taking action based on this data, schools can continually improve their sustainability performance.

Auditing tools and additional information are available on the EfS website.

External evaluation
Coordinating ongoing internal and external evaluation provides insights into areas for improvement. Other sustainable schools, student teams, district teams or consultants can undertake external evaluation. Schools may also consider submitting their achievements for state, national and international awards.

Annual report
South Australian schools provide their communities with an annual report that outlines achievement and growth for the preceding twelve months. EfS can be reported on both quantitatively and qualitatively in this report. This also provides staff at the district level with valuable information about the school and its priorities. Changes to a school’s position in the rubrics are a very good way of recognising and acknowledging developments in their quest for sustainability.

The EfS website
The EfS website is a resource that has been developed to support this Guide and add substance to its principles and ideas. The website provides inspiration, resources and practical assistance for schools on their journey to EfS. It includes:

› school case studies
› curriculum support materials
› links to other projects and initiatives
› links to resources
› planning templates
› auditing tools
› publications
› contacts.


Sustainable development is not about maintenance of the status quo, but rather about the direction and implications of change.

UN DESD 2005
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Steering Committee
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Trialling schools
Aldgate Primary School, Arbury Park Outdoor School, Belair Primary School*, Birdwood High School, Black Forest Primary School, Booleroo Centre District School, Christies Beach High School* & Southern Vocational College, Cornerstone College, Cowandilla Primary School*, Edithburgh Primary School, Eudunda Area School, Gawler High School, Glen Osmond Primary School, Hallett Cove Preschool*, Jervois Primary School, Kangaroo Island Schools, Kaurna Plains School, Mawson Lakes R–7 School, Mulga Street Primary School, Norton Summit Primary School, Port Vincent Primary School*, Renmark Children's Centre, Ross Smith Secondary, Stansbury Primary School, Stradbroke Primary School, Tintinara Area School, Unley High School*, Vale Park Primary School, Victor Harbor R–7 School, Willunga Waldorf School
* Special thanks to these schools for providing opportunities for photographic sessions.

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Photography
About AuSSI-SA

The Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI), through the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources, is supporting more sustainable communities by encouraging schools to incorporate Education for Sustainability (EfS) into their learning and management practices. ‘Schools’ includes childcare, preschools, kindergartens, and child/parent centres. Catholic and independent schools are also included.

A key objective of AuSSI is to integrate existing environmental education programs and activities into a coordinated framework in order to achieve positive environmental, economic, social and curriculum outcomes. More importantly, the initiative goes beyond this by encouraging schools to develop an ethos and culture of sustainability.

South Australia formally joined AuSSI in 2004. AuSSI-SA was initially developed through a broad consultation process, involving educators, students and community members, which established the values and aims of the program. The group developed a model for EfS, contributing decades of experience in schools, across communities and a broad cross-section of government and community organisations.

AuSSI-SA is a joint initiative of the Departments of Environment and Heritage, and Education and Children’s Services. Through South Australian schools, AuSSI-SA brings people together to facilitate an understanding and commitment to achieving sustainability.

AuSSI-SA is:

› a partner in developing the national AuSSI
› supporting schools to implement the model for EfS
› helping to plan and communicate sustainable outcomes
› introducing EfS into systems planning and policy in central office and school districts
› influencing curriculum innovations to include EfS
› forming partnerships with environmental education service providers to achieve improved environmental and educational outcomes
› sharing EfS stories across the State
› establishing a network for EfS.
