

Increasing the Biodiversity of our School- Garden Update

Biodiversity means the variety of living things in the natural world meaning, all the plants, animals, insects, and microorganisms that live on our planet.

Biodiversity is so important because these living things work together in our environment to maintain and support life on earth. The more diverse the more resilient to change our natural environment becomes.

Over the last two years students would have noticed some big changes in our school grounds. The courtyard gardens have been totally renovated. The original plants were old, overgrown, and difficult to manage. The area needed constant pruning and cutting back. This was a problem because we had to get rid of the organic matter and it was mainly going to landfill because we couldn't fit a lot in the green bin from the council.

As part of our commitment to become a sustainable school, we are trying to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. We especially don't want any organic matter going to landfill because once buried underground organic matter produces methane which is a greenhouse gas that is contributing to global warming and climate change.

The new garden beds have been mulched to reduce weeds and evaporation of water. The new plants are all Australian natives and two of the garden beds have small gum trees which will provide a great focal point when they flower throughout the year.

Students were asked for their input and wanted plants to represent the house teams. We have a good variety of small acacias, grevilleas, malaleucas and banksias in the garden beds. The plants, excluding the gum trees, should not grow much higher than sixty centimetres so the area will remain open and visible from all viewpoints.

The native plants will attract native birds and insects. We have already noticed the return of wattle birds feeding on the nectar of the grevilleas.

We are hoping that the logs and rocks will create habitats for lizards.

Our students and school community have commented on how beautiful the area is looking and students have been so respectful by not walking on the garden bed and edges.

