

Ivanhoe Primary School



Environmental Sustainability 2015

www.ivanhoeps.vic.edu.au



Environmental Sustainability at Ivanhoe Primary

The Sustainability Committee is a group of parents volunteering with the school to improve our environmental footprint. We are working towards completing the ResourceSmart Schools accreditation and actively working towards key sustainability improvements for the school each year.

In 2015, the following programs have been started; Food Waste Recycling with Green Cones, Waste Audits and Paperless communications-through Skoolbag.

We are always in need of more parents, contact Stacey Morland, if you'd like to get involved. stacey.r.morland@gmail.com 0401 881 558.

Food Waste Recycling with Green Cones

This year members of the Sustainability Committee have installed 10 Green Cone Food Waste Digesters around the school grounds. The Green Cones take food waste only and breaks it down primarily into water and carbon dioxide. This process requires oxygen, heat and microorganisms to take place. The benefits of this system is it takes care of itself, requiring little maintenance, it does not require turning like traditional composts, deters vermin, and improves soil fertility.

Currently 8 classrooms, the staffroom and the canteen have a green cone. On average we divert;

- 1kg of food waste per classroom per day,
- 0.6kg for the staffroom and
- 1.1kg for the canteen.

The green cones have a limited intake per day; we estimate we need one cone per classroom, plus an active compost bay system to fully divert all the schools' food and green waste from landfill.

Five green cones were given to the school through our participation in the Banyule Council Food Waste Behaviour Survey and another five were funded by a 2014 grant from Banyule City Council.

The green cones are available for home use, why not start composting your food waste. For more information on green cones contact Banyule Council Waste Education on 9490 4532 or the Green Cone supplier – Hatlar Environmental – (03)9629 5300.

Coming Soon – Garden Waste Composting

Currently all garden waste and the majority of food waste from the school goes to landfill. This is literally a waste. When food and garden waste are sent to landfill they decompose without oxygen to produce methane (a greenhouse gas) and they are also a potential source of leachates (liquids that drain from landfills) that can contaminate surface and ground water.

If food and garden waste are composted on site at the school, the organic material and nutrients they contain can be reused as fertiliser around the school grounds and hence reduce the school greenhouse gas emissions.

To help the school achieve this aim, the Sustainability Committee are currently building a 4 bay compost system that will take garden waste especially from the Working Bees and surplus food waste from classes that do not have access to one of the Green Cones.

Waste Audit

On Friday 4 August, students from Grade 3S, Liz Stearne (Grade 3S teacher and then school Sustainability Coordinator), Stacey Morland (parent & Sustainability Committee member) and Margaret Morgan (Waste Education Officer - Banyule City Council) performed a visual waste audit on six classroom bins and a yard waste bin. Bins were emptied and the contents separated into waste,



soft plastics, mixed recycling (hard plastics, aluminium, foil), and food waste and then the students visually estimated the proportions of the waste.

Classroom Bins

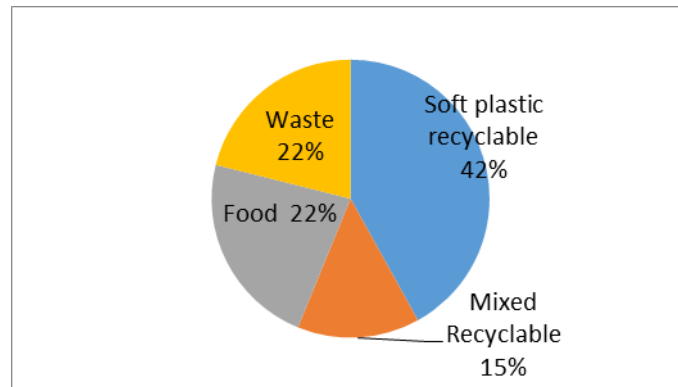
Classroom bins are 46L and are emptied daily. We discovered that across the six classroom bins audited, the largest waste requirement was 34L with the average being just 17L. Bins contained significant recyclable materials;

- Soft plastics averaged 42% per bin (or approximately 7L)
- Food 22% (approximately 4L)*
- Mixed recycling 15% (approximately 1.5L)

Waste 22% (approximately 22L)

**Only one of the classes audited has a Green Cone for food waste recycling.*

Ivanhoe Primary School – Waste Audit – Classroom bin



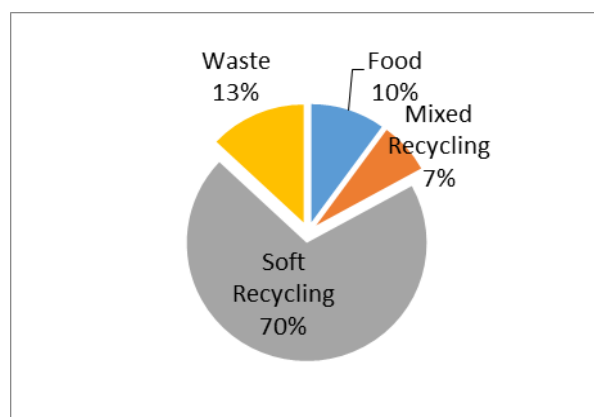
Yard Waste

Yard bins are 120L and are emptied weekly. The bin audited was 90% full so we estimated 108L. We again discovered significant recyclable materials

- Soft plastics averaged 70% per bin (or approximately 70L)
- Food 10% (approximately 11L)*
- Mixed recycling 7% (approximately 7L)

Waste 13% (approximately 13L)

Ivanhoe Primary School Waste Audit - Yard bin





Results

The audits tell us the school could reduce waste going to landfill by 80% or approximately 60,000! through recycling our soft plastics, diverting more food, and recycling hard plastics and aluminium.

This information will be used as the basis for applications for Sustainability grants offered by Banyule Council, our local RSL's and Bendigo Bank.

Paperless Communications in Skoolbag

Ivanhoe Primary has piloted using Skoolbag for online permission slips to reduce paper generation and waste. The school's first permission slip, garnered 57% of the student slips returned through the application, which represents 60% of a ream of paper not printed to distribute the forms.

The grade 5 teachers are planning to pilot using Skoolbag for class announcements in term 4 2015, more information about this program will be reported in 2016.

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