



WOODBRIDGE CREATING A SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL

KIDS LEAD BY EXAMPLE

EDUCATION Minister David Bartlett visited Woodbridge School this week to launch the 'Engaging Our Community' taskforce initiative

Mr Bartlett said Woodbridge was an excellent example of a school which benefited from making rich community partnerships.

Woodbridge students were identified as champions of their local environment recently when they won the National Landcare Education Award for their whole school sustainability program. A feature of the success of this program has been positive community relationships.

Partnerships help the school join forces with the community to get things done. Principal Alison Grant said the school welcomed community involvement where different generations learned from each other.

"The students are provided with opportunities for authentic learning," Ms Grant said.

"They will be our future community leaders," she said.

As part of the Sustainable Schools Program, students had opportunities to work beside community volunteers with expertise in organic gardening, marine biology, compost systems, landscape planning and water quality.

Students developed positive mentoring relationships with people keen to share their enthusiasm.



HANDS ON: Ken White advises Bridget Kay and Brielle Van Rijn in the garden.

Partners with Woodbridge include Kingborough Council, Greening Australia, the Peppermint Bay Landcare Group, the Kingston RSL, D'Entrecasteaux Rotary and West Winds Community Centre.

"It is not enough just to open the door," Landcare coordinator Nel Smit said.

"Woodbridge School found that in order for the school community partnership to work, it was important to

communicate with the community, to identify and recognise expertise and invite the community to be involved with specific projects with shared goals."

One particularly successful

project in 2006 was 'Footsteps For The Future' — a partnership with Greening Australia and Woodbridge School.

The project saw Green Corps working with students for six months supporting the Whole School Sustainability Program.

This included the rehabilitation of the wetlands, clearing cumbungi weeds and destroying 6000 feral oysters in the nearby bay.

A recycling centre was established and a track was constructed along the foreshore.

Woodbridge student Rosa Miller said blackberries had to be removed before the walking track could be established.

"Now it is an area we can all enjoy and feel proud of," Rosa said.

Ken White, a community representative on the steering committee for the Footsteps For The Future Project, said his involvement with the school helped him appreciate the school and community better.

"We help one another with a shared focus on meaningful projects and working together to enrich the community," Mr White said.

"We have established the Peppermint Bay Landcare Group this year to maintain and build on the school's initiatives."

RSL's role

THE Kingborough sub-branch of the RSL is a great supporter of the school, providing a bursary for students going from Grade 6 to high school. The branch also joins forces with the school when students are restoring Soldiers Memorial Avenue at Woodbridge.

Thai ties

WOODBRIDGE School has strong links with Thailand through its bi-annual student exchange program. Thai students attend Woodbridge school and are hosted by local families. Shannon Kennedy, who hosted Thai student Tiara says: "it is fun to learn about a different culture and country".

This page was produced as part of a Landcare Leadership Program by the 4/5 class group: Carly Swards, Rosa Miller, Samantha Murray, Louisa Edwards, Louisa Haley and Zoe Dowsett-Clark.

Foreshore celebration

IT was a surprise recently to see several "crocodiles" along the Woodbridge Foreshore coastal walk as part of a community sculpture exhibition called Flotsam and Jetsam.

Flotsam is objects found floating in the sea, and jetsam is objects thrown overboard from boats. The exhibition involved artists and students interpreting the foreshore, using recycled materials.

Each primary class made sculptures, some with messages in them and all used objects with a marine theme. The winner, a fish called CSIRO by Richard Martin, was announced by Kingborough Mayor Graham Bury. The student award went to Louisa Haley for her white faced heron sculpture.

There were 32 exhibits celebrating Woodbridge's wonderful foreshore.



ALL AT SEA: The Woodbridge Prep/1 class explores the foreshore.

Battle with the sea

WOODBRIDGE School has taken some amazing steps to save its foreshore.

The school looks out over Peppermint Bay and Bruny Island. Students can look out and watch dolphins as they eat their lunch.

The school is facing an erosion problem and some students worry the school will soon be washed out to sea.

"Twenty metres have gone in 20 years,"

groundsman Garry Bones said.

Students, staff, parents and more than 50 community helpers planted more than 1000 native trees shrubs and grasses this year.

It is hoped the root systems from the trees planted on the eroding banks will stabilise the banks and reduce the erosion.

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