



October 2020

GREEN TEAM

Gazette



A big hello to our school community and welcome to the very first Green Team Gazette!

History

The Green Team was first formed in 2018 by a group of year 4 students who saw an opportunity to build a more sustainable future for themselves and their school community. It started small, cleaning up the playground at lunch time but in no time, they had recruited children from across the school and their teacher. Through a wide range of inquiries both within their classes and in their own time, the children have helped to improve sustainable practices at home, at school and even at community events such as the fete. Over the past two and a half years, the Green Team has grown to a membership of over 60 children from across mostly years 3-6, this year opening up to the preps-year 2 due to such great enthusiasm from these young environmentalists! This year the team also welcomed many staff and family members on-board which has enabled the team to branch into a variety of inquiry groups, researching and taking action for their school.

Congratulations!

The Green Team's efforts have not gone unnoticed and this year they have been nominated for a Brisbane City Council WasteSmart Award for schools.

The Inquiry Groups within the Green Team

While we remain a cohesive whole, there were just too many areas of passion to explore! And thanks to the many staff members giving up their time, the Green Team can now research and take action in a variety of areas, each group providing support to each other.

The Green Thumbs

Staff team: Mrs Gillespie, Mr Arnold, Mr Osborne, Mrs Payne

This is our expert gardening group, looking at ways to bring aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly planting practices into our school. Thanks to Mr Osbourne's connections with an expert, the children have been investigating soil health in the existing garden beds in the school. The children learnt how to measure the soil acidity and alkalinity. They are looking into their next steps which involves a bit of problem-solving and planning. If you are interested in gardening or could offer advice, resources or some time to help with sourcing quotes, etc., please get in contact with our P&C contact.



The Waste Warriors

Staff team: Mrs Ford

This team is working on finding ways to reduce the waste leaving GSS to landfill. Last year, lots of research was conducted by the children, finding out how much waste was being produced by the school, where it was going and what alternatives we could explore. We have some wonderful parents helping behind the scenes sourcing quotes for bins and we look forward to having these in the school soon! To help with the implementation of the new system, this team is putting together posters and educational information to help everyone in the school learn how to use these bins and sort their rubbish carefully. In addition to this great work, with the amazing support of the P&C, GSS will soon have a Cash for Containers bin onsite for us to recycle our eligible drink containers. We also have our very own code for those taking containers to the refund points around Brisbane- **C10055214**. The closest Containers for Change depot is located at 78 Andrew Street, Rocklea. The P&C are very kindly donating all funds raised through this program to the Green Team. Thank you P&C!

The Food Waste Fighters

Staff team: Miss Baartz and Miss Horey

This team started off small but with such a big issue, many new members have climbed aboard! When we were visited by Councillor Nicole Johnston last year, she helped us understand just how big the issue of food waste is in Australia (5 million tonnes per year!). This group is in the research phase- finding out what our school community already knows about composting and worm farming and identifying our needs. They are also looking to run an education campaign, helping our school understand the importance of reducing our food waste. If you are a passionate worm farmer or know your compost, please get in touch!



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The Habitat Group

Staff team: Mrs Williams

This is a popular group as the children are very aware that we share our school with a wide range of creatures both great and small (mostly small). The team began with researching their area, who lives here and considering what has impacted upon the habitats of these creatures. The children identified that domestic cats are responsible for the decimation of small animal communities. The children are developing an education campaign to help our surrounding community understand the importance of keeping cats inside, particularly at night. Another avenue of investigation is researching which plants will attract wildlife such as native bees, birds, insects and lizards into our school. For this project, they will work closely with the Green Thumbs as they put together a list of suitable plants. They also want to look into making possum boxes, native bee hives and bird feeders. So if you have the know-how or scrap materials to donate, please let us know!

Events and Education

Staff team: Miss Goeldner

This group will be liaising with all the groups to see what their budgetary and support needs are. They are looking at ways to raise funds for the various projects and raise awareness of environmental issues pertinent to our community. The children are hoping to plan an event this term to help get a start-up fund for garden beds and plants, materials for habitats and possibly even some worm farms or compost bins.

As time goes on and goals are achieved, the Green Team has other ideas they would like to investigate including energy consumption. So many ideas, one step at a time, all driven by the children of Graceville State School.



The Green Team meeting in our Wonder Garden to plan where our next steps.

- All of what the Green Team has achieved over the years has been in part to the amazing support of the P&C and the huge numbers of Graceville families doing what they can in their own homes. At times what we see and hear, regarding the dire situation our Earth is in, can leave us feeling helpless. At times like those I look to the children of the Green Team and am reinvigorated by their enthusiasm and hope. And most importantly, the small determined actions they take every day to make a positive difference to our community. As Jane Goodall says, "What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." I know these children are making the right kind of difference for us now and into the future.

Remember:

- When dropping off your Cash for Containers, use the ID:

C10055214

to help the Green Team raise funds for their initiatives.

- If you see an area you are passionate about, please get in touch with Anita Armstrong (P&C assistant secretary) assistant_secretary@gracevillepandc.org.au to see how you can support one of our inquiry groups. No matter how big or small, your help is welcome!

Thank you for your support of the Graceville Green Team. We look forward to keeping you in the loop with how we progress with our inquiries!



Kind Regards,
Christie Goeldner on behalf of the Green Team