GREEN PURCHASING POLICY

Overview

RedGum – The Waldorf School of Central Victoria, is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment. We also desire to maintain a culture that is considerate, nurturing, inclusive and respectful to the surrounding environment and those who live here. This policy outlines the environmental and sustainable expectations that apply when purchasing items for daily use, events or activities. This policy refers to any member of staff, parent or guardian of an enrolled student who attend RedGum – The Waldorf School of Central Victoria (RedGum or the School).

Vision and principles

RedGum acknowledges the critical role sustainability plays in maintaining the health of the Earth's ecosystems. As an institution, we are committed to becoming a model of sustainability, not only through conscious resource management but by actively embedding environmental awareness into every aspect of our educational approach. By managing resources efficiently, minimising waste, and embracing eco-friendly practices, we strive to create an environment that sets an example for our community and encourages everyone to adopt sustainable lifestyles. Our goal is to inspire students, staff, and families to think critically about their environmental impact and take meaningful action to preserve the Earth for future generations.

In our commitment to sustainability, we also honour and draw upon the deep cultural knowledge of the First Nations peoples and their profound relationship with the land. The wisdom passed down through generations offers us valuable insights into living in harmony with nature, respecting the land, and understanding the interconnectedness of all life. By acknowledging this knowledge, we aim to foster a more inclusive and respectful relationship with the natural world.

We believe that fostering a positive attitude toward sustainability is essential for the holistic development of our students. Encouraging them to appreciate the beauty and fragility of the environment helps to instil a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the Earth. This mindset not only contributes to the well-being of our local community but also equips our students with the values and skills needed to face the environmental challenges of the future. By cultivating a sustainable school culture, we are helping to reduce our collective ecological footprint and ensure that future generations inherit a planet that is healthier, more balanced,

and more resilient.

Aims

- To educate our students, their parents and the wider community in responsible energy usage, water efficiency, waste management and environmental awareness.
- To protect the environment through a proactive approach to conservation and environmental issues.
- To practise and promote resource efficiency and practise effective waste minimisation.
- To reduce resource costs and carbon footprint.
- To promote the value of living sustainably and using natural materials wherever possible.
- To support staff in purchasing products that maximise energy and water efficiency and minimise waste, pollution and habitat loss.
- To establish a green purchasing culture.
- To eliminate any unnecessary purchasing.
- To make purchasing decisions based on the 'waste hierarchy' and circular economy principles.

Waste hierarchy

Avoid: Identify ways of carrying out a function or task without using materials that generate waste e.g. send information electronically instead of on paper.

Reduce: Use less in the first place to avoid waste e.g. purchase in bulk to reduce packaging and print double-sided copies of documents rather than single-sided.

Reuse: Use the same item more than once and extend the life of products and equipment before replacing them. Aim to re-use or repair existing products. Ensure new purchases are durable, have a long service life and are easy to maintain and upgrade.

Recycle: Purchase products that contain recycled materials or those that have or can be re-manufactured or recycled.

Implementation

Where possible, and in line with the above waste hierarchy, our school will purchase products that:

- maximise energy and water efficiency and minimise waste, pollution and habitat loss
- are environmentally preferred products when they perform satisfactorily and are available at a reasonable price

- consider the impact on the environment when purchasing electronic products, being careful to purchase from sustainable and ethical companies that can be recycled and/or repurposed
- are paper and wood products obtained from post-consumer recycled, forest stewardship council (FSC) certified, salvaged or renewable sources
- are produced locally in preference to those that have high kilometres associated with their manufacturing and transportation
- have a high star energy rating and efficiency features, or the best available within budget considering the lifetime of the product
- use renewable energy (if available) not originating from fossil fuels
- conserve water or use water in an efficient way
- will not release toxins that can affect human health and pollute or degrade water, soil or air at any stage of their life cycle.

Links and documents related to this policy

- RedGum Green Events Policy
- RedGum Green Sustainability Policy
- ResourceSmart School Memorandum of Understanding
- School Environmental Management Plan
- ResourceSmart Schools Online: my.resourcesmartschools.vic.gov.au
- Sustainability Victoria: https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/our-work/resourcesmart-schools

Document Control

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Owner/Approver:	Nerrida Johnson
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Version History

Version	Effective Date	Description of changes from previous version	Authors
0.1	12/03/2025	Initial version	K Murphy
0.2	13/03/2025	Reformatted	H Ashwell
0.3	24/03/2024	Addition of electronic products into Implementation	H Ashwell
1.0	24/03/2024	Board approved	
1.1	January 2026	New name and logo	H Ashwell