



Our Sustainable Building

We are very pleased to tell everyone that after ten years of fundraising and lobbying government at a local and state level, our preschool renovations were completed in February 2010. The preschool is unique - a green building, designed following sustainable and environmentally friendly practices by Pidcock - Architecture + Sustainability who have many years experience in the field of green building.

The Point Preschool now boasts an enlarged classroom, covered verandah with views to the George's River, new office, bathroom/shower with disabled access, children's locker room and staff/parent meeting room. The amount of storage space has been doubled and the existing kitchen and children's toilets have been refurbished. The new look classroom has been transformed into a spacious, comforting and exciting learning space.

The preschool is built from natural materials and non-toxic finishes where possible. It has been designed to incorporate passive solar heating and natural ventilation. The installation of 3 water tanks allows us to harvest rain water to flush our toilets and water our garden. The building also features double glazing, eaves, solar hot water, whirly bird roof ventilators, ceiling fans, high level louvers to extract hot air, large sliding glass doors, bush fire safe fly screens, energy saving lights and energy efficient appliances. Environmentally friendly finishes include Interface carpet tiles, natural marmoleum flooring, super reflective roof paint, water saving taps and toilets, plantation timber and outdoor clothes line. The existing preschool fabric was re-used to avoid waste. The timber floor was re-sanded and re-oiled, the internal and external existing walls and roof were repainted to look like new and our old energy hungry air conditioner has been removed as it is no longer needed with the improved ventilation.

The construction of 2 new paths, with easy access for prams and wheelchairs, to the entry of the preschool was completed in mid 2010. More projects were completed in 2011 including the installation of solar panels and western sun shade and security shutters to our verandah. And 2012 will see the installation of gas heating to our building and internal sun shade blinds to our office and staff room.

Our ongoing commitment to our environment has resulted in energy and water cost savings through the reduction of energy and water use. We purchase 100% green energy and are generating less greenhouse gas emissions which is very important to us and have made The Point Preschool a sustainable place to play and learn.

The beautiful outdoor environment is our outdoor classroom where the children spend many hours day after day connecting with the natural world. The playground boasts natural shade provided by established trees, a local indigenous bush tucker garden, vegetable patches, mini orchard, native gardens, frog ponds, worm farms, large sandpits with sandstone features, fairy garden. Our magnificent, old, large angophora houses our habitat boxes providing homes for our brush tail possums and nesting lorikeets. There is also an outdoor amphitheatre and large art work depicting the local Dharawal creation serpent and goanna totem of Oyster Bay. Our outdoor environment is a natural living landscape filled with an abundance of natural discovery spaces.

Our sustainable building and nature playground is a very strong, visible message to our ongoing commitment to protect and nurture the environment and each other.

We wish to thank all the families, staff and management of the preschool for their wonderful ongoing support in seeing our renovation dream become a reality. A very big thank you also to Sutherland Shire Council, Barry Collier MP and the NSW State Labour Government for the grants.

Without these grants we could not have completed our renovation.

Our Commitment to Education for Sustainability

The Point Preschool has a very strong commitment to the environment and education for sustainability. The aim of education for sustainability is to promote a sense of responsibility, respect, empowerment, active participation, enquiry and social change to make a positive difference. Not just now but also for future generations.

Within our curriculum education for sustainability focuses on our shared Aboriginal history of connections with the land and reconciliation; biodiversity - nature connections, gardens and animals; environmental health - eliminating chemicals and pesticides; slow food – growing our own food, respecting the natural rhythms of seasons and food traditions; resources – responsible use of water and energy, waste minimization, fair trade and the sharing of resources; and living in peace with each other and nature.

Early childhood is a great time to involve children in education for sustainability and develop lifelong practices to ensure the respect and protection of each other and our planet. We believe a sense of wonder, belonging to and love of the natural environment, living things and animals is critical for young children to develop lifelong respectful, positive and proactive attitudes towards protecting our environment, caring for all living creatures and creating a sustainable environment.

At our place the children are actively involved in sustainable practices every day. Education for sustainability has strengthened our relationships with the children, families and community. It has also given The Point Preschool a reputation of being a leader in early childhood education for sustainability and the recipient of awards and contributed to our proud achievements.

We hope your family will become as involved in caring for our planet as your children.