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**Explaining the Steps to Ecological Dialogue: Level 3**

Please note that the steps are not necessarily completed in this order as you may form your steering committee first. (Step 2) Secondly this is not yet rated as a 2,3 or 4 start achievement.

**Step One:** The school organises a staff Spirituality day located in a natural setting. It contains elements which enable staff to reflect upon their connectivity to nature, such as a reflective walk with discussion points along the way. Input before and after makes links to Laudato Si quotes such as, what does it mean to ‘till and to keep’ the earth? enabling broad discussion and responses about modern economics and capitalism versus an indigenous view of sustainability.

The day concludes with a liturgy that brings all elements of the day together would complete Step 1: Formation of the Heart (a) and (b).

Laudato Si’ is embedded within the school’s mission and linked to its Charism so student education is informed through all year levels.

**Step 2** Form a steering committee and select a key contact person/ chair / coordinator and other executive members necessary to run a small committee.A student led committee (with staff mentors) and with cross representation from all year levels for engagement and reporting back is a higher quality result.

**Step 3** Undertake an environmental audit of what your school has achieved to date in caring for our common home. *e.g. Carry out a SEMP (School Environmental Management Program)*

Make an action plan *e.g. target one theme for the year based on data and community support for action. Multiple themes each year can be undertaken for schools with existing actions in place or alternatively separate action plans for student, staff and admin around the same theme. E.g. The theme of Waste*

**Step 4** Consult, involve and communicate with stakeholdersthrough things such as newsletters, assemblies and on a dedicated notice board. *e.g. Inclusive practices in the design phase will bring everyone along with you. What problem are you trying to solve and how can you solve it? What measures indicate success.*

**Step 5** Manage around issues and promote good practices by ensuring all decision makers are keep informed and consulted.

**Step 6** Choose an easy goal first and communicate its success, affirming positive behaviour. *e.g. conduct an audit after first intervention to measure change. Report this and build momentum for more change.*

**Step 7** Implement the plan step by step using good communication for updates. *e.g. mark progress with announcements, graphs etc*

**Step 8:** The school organises its own sharing event or may participate in an interschool summit.

**Sample School Case Study**

At St James’, a group of students belonging to the Earthcare committee are working towards improving behaviours and practices which protect the environment. At the start of the year they conducted a waste audit and, with the staff Environmental committee, have been driving waste associated actions in the school.

The following plans were included in the School’s Environmental Management Plan and associated actions have become part of school practice:

* purchase worm farms for Kindergarten
* increase the number of worm farms throughout the school
* conduct ‘No Waste’ lunch days once a week
* conduct Clean up Australia day challenge (we reduced lunch waste by 30% in one week)
* look at additional ways to increase the amounts of recycling
* introduce a ‘Cartridge Rescue’ recycling bin for printer/toner ink collection
* purchase compost bins and introduce composting and take shredded paper to a local pet shop
* do another waste audit in August to determine the effect of school actions.

The group approached the P&F Association which agreed to fund the purchase of needed items such as worm farm and compost bins. The team has observed that there is still some litter in the playground which may be associated with canteen purchases.

As a result of the team’s planning, it has been observed that practices within the school are changing and that students have benefitted from the authentic learning opportunities offered by the associated activities. Because the student team drives the actions and documents planning in the management plan, improved practices should continue within the school.

The staff undertook a spirituality day located in a bush setting to understand local indigenous culture and history including caring for country. The day also had elements of Laudato Si’ dotted through activities to bring theology and moral obligation into discussion.

The school celebrated their environmental achievements on the feast of St Francis’ with a school liturgy.