

## 10.12.Green Schools Grants

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<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	1. Green School Grants [ <b>10.12.1</b> - 2 pages]
<b>CSP LINK</b>	<p><b>Outcome 1 – A healthy environment with thriving ecosystems and strong climate resilience</b></p> <p>E1. Restore and protect diverse ecosystems  E3. Build climate resilience  E4. Reduce wastes and conserve our limited natural resources  E5. Maintain healthy and clean waterways and public spaces</p> <p><b>Outcome 6 – A vibrant LGA where culture and creativity is enjoyed by all</b></p> <p>C1. Respect and acknowledge First Nations culture and history</p> <p><b>Outcome 8 – An effective, accountable and sustainable Council that serves the community</b></p> <p>G6. Commit to efficiency and value for money in service delivery</p>

### PURPOSE:

This report seeks Council endorsement for the funding recommendations of the *Green Schools Grants* program for the 2025/2026 period.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- North Sydney Council provides access to financial support to North Sydney-based preschools, childcare centres, primary, and high schools seeking to implement environmental initiatives on plastic waste, energy, water, climate change, biodiversity.
- The provision of grants is a mechanism to achieve the objectives identified in Council's *Environment Strategy* and its *Community Strategic Plan*, with applications assessed against these objectives and plans.
- The *Green Schools Grants* program was advertised through Council communication channels in conjunction with the Creative and Small Grants programs.
- The program has a budget allocation of \$15,000 to support sustainable school's projects.
- Nine applications were received. This report seeks endorsement for the allocation of funding for seven grant projects to the total value of \$15,000.
- All successful grant recipients will be required to sign a funding agreement, achieve defined performance outcomes, and complete an acquittal process.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**1. THAT** Council endorse the recommended funding allocations for the 2025/26 Green Schools Grants program as per Attachment 1 to this report.

## Background

North Sydney Council's Grants and Subsidies Program support residents, not-for-profit organisations, community initiatives, artists, and schools to undertake initiatives and projects that build the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of North Sydney.

The *Green Schools Grants* program was advertised in conjunction with the Creative and Small Grant programs. In 2024/25, Council awarded seven local North Sydney schools and preschools with *Green Schools Grants* for sustainability initiatives aimed at increasing food production, reducing uniform waste, establishing native gardens, and increasing wildlife diversity and habitats.

## Report

The *Green Schools Grants* program supports North Sydney-based preschools, childcare centres, and school communities with up to \$3,000 funding to implement environmental initiatives. These projects can focus on plastic waste, energy, water, climate change, and biodiversity related issues.

## Green Schools Grant Program

The assessment criteria for the *Green School Grants* program include:

- evidence of the need for the project or program and proposed outcomes
- capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver the project or program
- the integrity of the proposed budget, project plan, partnerships, contributions and connection to the school and / or local community
- evidence the program objectives are aligned with Council's *Environment Strategy* and its *Community Strategic Plan 2025 – 2035*.

The *Community Strategic Plan 2025 – 2035* includes eight strategic outcomes; this grant is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:

- (a) Maintain and improve Council's bushland areas to ensure that at least 80% are in good conditions by 2030 from a 2023 baseline of 75%
- (b) Maintain the number of locally native fauna and flora species found in North Sydney at or above the 2023 baseline of 567 species
- (c) Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions by 65% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline of 973,984 tCO<sub>2</sub>e
- (e) Reduce annual residential waste generation per capita by 10% by 2030 from the 2023 baseline of 315kg/person across all waste streams
- (f) Reduce North Sydney's potable water consumption by 10% by 2034/35, from the 2015/16 baseline of 7,325,333 kL.

Council received nine applications for the *Green Schools Grants* Program 25/26, with seven recommended for funding to the total value of \$15,000. The grant application recommendations are outlined in Attachment 1 to this report.

An assessment panel reviewed the applications. Applications that are not recommended have either not scored as highly against the assessment criteria, as the recommended applications or have incomplete or insufficient information. Council's Grants staff will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

All grants are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits, and development consents are obtained by the applicant. All successful grant recipients are required to sign a funding agreement, achieve defined performance outcomes, and complete an acquittal process.

### **Benefits of the Grant Program**

- Funded projects are aligned with Council's long-term strategic vision, increasing the overall return on investment.
- High community engagement and educational value as childcare centres and schools are key platforms for fostering lifelong sustainable behaviours.
- Long-term environmental and financial benefits, early investment in education, and community-led sustainability reduces long-term costs related to environmental degradation, resource consumption, and waste.

### **Consultation requirements**

Not applicable

### **Financial/Resource Implications**

The \$15,000 allocated to *Green Schools Grants* funding is allocated in the 2025/26 operational budget. The maximum grant funding is up to \$3,000 per application with seven applications recommended for funding.

The grants and sponsorships contract management process will involve key staff across Council. Identified staff will set contract conditions and performance measures for each approved project, and review project acquittals, which will include both narrative and financial reports.

### **Legislation**

Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides that a Council may, in accordance with a resolution of Council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

## Green School Grant Program - 2025/26

### Recommended Funding

Organisation Name	Project Name	Project Description	\$ Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Cammeray Public School	Frog Hollow	A project that aims to enhance Frog Hollow by creating a dedicated frog habitat & outdoor learning space. The project supports biodiversity & hands-on environmental education.	\$3,000	\$3,000
Cammeraygal High School	Roof Top Garden and Wellbeing Space	A project to provide a green learning space for hands-on curriculum activities & student wellbeing. It supports sustainability, food production, & private outdoor areas for wellbeing support.	\$3,000	\$3,000
McMahons Point Community Preschool & Early Learning Centre	Development of a native sensory garden	A project to expand its rejuvenated garden into a native sensory & bush tucker space, promoting hands-on learning & cultural awareness. With support from IndigiGrow & parent volunteers, children will engage in planting, tasting, & caring for native plants.	\$2,000	\$2,000
Neutral Bay Preschool	Becoming Global Citizens	A project to enhance biodiversity & cultural learning by planting native shrubs & creating an edible garden with Aboriginal community input. The project will also add habitat features & educational tools to deepen children's connection with nature & Caring for Country	\$3,000	\$2,000
Lavander Bay Preschool	Becoming Global Citizens: Cultivating a Biodiverse Playground	This project aims to enhance playground biodiversity by planting native species & creating wildlife habitats, supported by an Aboriginal-owned organisation. The project will provide hands-on learning about Caring for Country, sustainability, & local ecology.	\$3,000	\$2,000
St Aloysius' College Junior School	The Bush Tucker Garden	This project will create a bush tucker garden to raise awareness of Indigenous culture & sustainability, while strengthening ties with Redfern Jarjum, a school for Indigenous students. It will serve as a shared cultural & educational resource aligned with the new HSIE syllabus on Caring for Country.	\$2,500	\$1,000
Redlands	Plastic Recycling Station	This project aims to establish a small-scale recycling station using the Zephyr Bros Education Kit, enabling students to turn school plastic waste into new products. It supports hands-on STEM learning & promotes circular economy principles in Technology and Design subjects.	\$3,000	\$2,000

Total Amount Recommended \$15,000

**Not Recommended for Funding**

Organisation Name	Project Name	Project Description	\$ Amount Requested	\$ Amount Recommended	Rationale
Gowrie, Shirley Road Preschool	Greening Our Neighbourhood - one plant at a time	This project will create a plant & seed library to share knowledge of native plants, strengthen community connections, & promote habitat restoration. Children will develop propagation skills, make sustainable seed pots & seed bombs, & engage in hands-on environmental learning.	\$1,722	\$0	Approach requires further development
St John's Child Care Centre	Coal Loader Little Eco-Explorers	This project will take preschool children on monthly excursions to the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability, fostering hands-on learning about biodiversity & sustainable living. It aims to build early environmental awareness & strengthen community connections through shared nature experiences.	\$2,000	\$0	Lower priority