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A framework for developing whole-school approaches to EfS

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This framework has been developed by a team of researchers who worked on a project funded by the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative: Investigating the Impact of Whole-school Approaches to Education for Sustainability on Student Learning. If you have any feedback or questions about the framework, please contact the research director, Dr Chris Eames (email c.eames@waikato.ac.nz).

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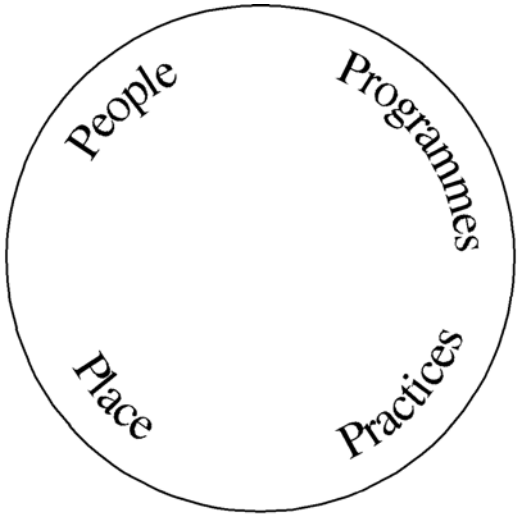

This framework is intended to be introduced by a trained facilitator and has an accompanying teacher guide. The framework proposes 25 aspects of a whole-school approach which schools might need to take into account; for example, “working collaboratively”. The framework divides these aspects into four sections: people (ten aspects), programmes (six), practices (six) and place (three). These divisions are somewhat arbitrary and it is important that all sections and aspects within them are seen as a whole, as shown below. Each aspect has five indicators which fall under a set of five headings, namely, “absent”, “preparatory”, “emerging”, “developing”, and “well developed”.

The framework is designed to show what whole-school approaches to education for sustainability might look like, and to help develop these approaches in schools. It is a formative tool for discussion, not a summative tool for comparison with other schools or against fixed criteria. The trained facilitator can help interpret the framework and align it with best practice in sustainability for your school.

PEOPLE					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Working collaboratively across all groups involved in the school **WS 1**	No collaborative working relationships between all groups involved in the school	Awareness of the importance of collaborative working relationships	Collaborative working relationships exist between some groups involved in the school	Collaborative working relationships exist between most groups involved in the school	Collaborative working relationships exist between all groups involved in the school
Reflecting the cultural diversity of the school and its community **WS 2**	No attention given to the cultural diversity of the school and its community	Awareness of the need to consider cultural diversity of the school and its community	Some tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity in the school and its community	Acceptance, knowledge and display of cultural diversity in the school and its community	Widespread knowledge, respect and celebration of cultural diversity in the school and its community
Acknowledging New Zealand's bicultural foundations **WS 3**	No acknowledgement of the Treaty of Waitangi, or other aspects of New Zealand's bicultural foundations	Awareness of the Treaty and New Zealand's bicultural foundations	Some understanding, and acceptance of New Zealand's bicultural foundations	Understanding, acceptance and some practices that recognise New Zealand's bicultural foundations	Widespread and embedded practices that recognise New Zealand's bicultural foundations
Having community relationships for learning **WS 4**	No relationships for learning with the school community	Awareness that community relationships are desirable for learning	Some community relationships for learning exist involving some school community members	Many community relationships for learning exist, and there is the potential for all school community members to be involved	Multiple, enduring community relationships for learning on a variety of levels exist, with school support, and there is the potential for all school community members to be involved
Engaging in participatory key decision-making **WS 5**	No consultation with the whole school community over key decisions	Awareness that consultation with the whole school community over key decisions is desirable	Some consultation between students, staff and other members of the school community in key decision-making	Considerable consultation between students, staff and school community over key decisions	Key decision-making occurs through consultation within the whole school community

PEOPLE					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Being involved in action for sustainability **WS 6**	No action being taken for sustainability	Awareness that actions for sustainability are desirable	Some actions are being taken in a piecemeal fashion in the school	Coordinated actions are being taken by some school community members that are consistent with a whole school plan/agreement/vision	Coordinated actions are being taken consistent with a whole school plan/agreement/vision that allows all school community members to take part
Having support from school leaders for EfS in the school **WS 7**	No support from school leaders for EfS in the school.	School leaders are aware that they need to support EfS in the school	Some school leaders provide effective support that enables some aspects of EfS in the school but not all	All school leaders provide effective support that enables some aspects of EfS in the school.	All school leaders provide effective support that enables all aspects of EfS in the schools
Involving staff in professional development in EfS **WS 8**	No professional development related to EfS occurring for staff	Awareness that professional development in EfS for staff is necessary	School-based professional development in EfS for all staff occurs occasionally on a voluntary basis	Substantial school-based professional development in EfS occurs for all staff	Staff function as a community of learners in their professional development for EfS
Recognising the school as part of a local, national and global community in EfS **WS 9**	No whole school approach to local, national or global environmental/sustainability issues	Awareness that the whole school needs to recognise local, national and global environmental/ sustainability issues	There is occasional whole school recognition of local, national and global environmental issues	There is frequent whole school recognition of the interconnectedness of local, national and global environmental issues	All members of the school have the capacity to think globally and act locally for the environment as appropriate to their development
Celebrating whole school achievements in EfS **WS 10**	No appropriate celebration of EfS achievements	Awareness that EfS achievements should be appropriately celebrated	Achievements in EfS are appropriately celebrated by those involved and school management	Achievements in EfS are appropriately celebrated by the whole school	Sincere, appropriate and regular celebration of achievements in EfS by the whole school and its community

PROGRAMMES					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Having a whole school plan for EfS **WS 11**	No whole school plan for EfS exists	Awareness that a documented whole school plan is needed	A minimal whole school plan for EfS exists in some documented form	A whole school plan for EfS exists comprising some operational intentions	A comprehensive whole school plan exists involving EfS in all aspects of school life
Developing coherence between learning areas and EfS delivery **WS 12**	No coherence or connections between learning areas and EfS delivery	Awareness that coherence and connections between learning areas and EfS delivery is desirable	There is some coherence and connections between learning areas and EfS delivery	There are several school-wide connections being made between learning areas, giving some coherence to EfS delivery	There are effective connections being made between learning areas and EfS delivery school-wide, leading to coherent transitions and pathways for further learning.
Using effective pedagogies in EfS to develop students' action competence in sustainability **WS 13**	No use of effective pedagogies in EfS to develop students' action competence in sustainability	Awareness that use of effective pedagogies to develop students' action competence in sustainability is desirable in EfS	Effective pedagogies are being used to develop students' action competence in sustainability in some EfS in the school	Effective pedagogies are being used to develop students' action competence in sustainability in most EfS in the school	All EfS in the school utilises effective pedagogies to develop students' action competence in sustainability
Facilitating learning experiences in EfS within and outside the classroom in a variety of settings **WS 14**	Learning experiences in EfS are not being facilitated in a variety of settings, such as within, and outside the classroom.	Awareness that it is desirable to have learning experiences in EfS happening both within and outside the classroom.	Some learning experiences in EfS are being facilitated within and outside the classroom	There are many learning experiences in EfS being facilitated within the classroom, and some outside the classroom	Learning experiences in EfS are encouraged and happening in a variety of settings in the classroom, and in and beyond the school grounds.
Fostering co-curricular opportunities in EfS **WS 15**	No fostering of co-curricular opportunities in EfS	Awareness that fostering of co-curricular EfS opportunities is desirable	At least one co-curricular EfS opportunity is offered to all students	A range of co-curricular EfS opportunities is offered to all students	Many students engage productively in a range of co-curricular EfS opportunities

PROGRAMMES					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Carrying out assessment that recognises student development of action competence in sustainability **WS 16**	There is no assessment in EfS that recognises student development of action competence in sustainability	Awareness that recognition in EfS of student development of action competence in sustainability is important	Some assessment in EfS within a learning area (e.g. maths) that examines student development of action competence in sustainability	Substantial assessment in EfS within a learning area or areas (e.g. maths) occurs and/or some EfS stand-alone assessment that recognises student development of action competence in sustainability occurs	Embedded practice of EfS assessment occurs within learning areas and some EfS stand-alone assessment that recognises student development of action competence in sustainability occurs
PRACTICES					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Utilising budgeting and purchasing procedures based on sustainability principles **WS 17**	School budgeting and purchasing procedures do not consider principles of sustainability	Awareness that budgeting and purchasing procedures should consider principles of sustainability	School-wide budgeting and purchasing occasionally considers principles of sustainability	Sustainability principles guide many aspects of school budgeting and purchasing	Sustainability principles guide all school budgeting and purchasing
Having organisational support structures available for EfS **WS 18**	No evidence of organisational structures in place to support whole school EfS	Awareness that organisational structures are needed to support whole school EfS	Organisational structures in place that support EfS in some areas of the school	Organisational structures in place that support EfS in many areas of the school	Comprehensive organisational structures that provide support for whole school EfS programmes in all areas of the school
Practising sustainable resource management **WS 19**	No evidence of sustainable management of resources e.g. energy efficiency water conservation waste management	Awareness of the need to manage resources sustainably	Some resources are being managed as sustainably as possible	Most resources are being managed as sustainably as possible	All resources are managed as sustainably as possible

PRACTICES					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Ensuring school practices reinforce EfS whole school programme and goals **WS 20**	School practices at odds with school's EfS programmes and goals	Awareness that the messages that students get from the school practices should match school's EfS programmes and goals	Attempts are being made to better align the schools' practices with the school's EfS programmes and goals	There is substantial resonance between the school's practices and the school's EfS programmes and goals	The school's practices completely reinforce the school's EfS programmes and goals
Orientating new staff and students to sustainability in the school **WS 21**	New staff and students are not being orientated to sustainability in the school	Awareness that new staff and students should be orientated to sustainability in the school	New staff and students are minimally orientated to sustainability in the school	New staff and students are clearly orientated to sustainability in the school	New staff and students are actively supported to understand and play a role in sustainability in the school
Monitoring, evaluating and reflecting **WS 22**	The school does not monitor, evaluate or reflect on its EfS programme or sustainability principles	Awareness that monitoring, evaluating and reflection on EFS and sustainability is desirable	School is irregularly monitoring, evaluating and reflecting on some aspects of their EFS programme and sustainable practices	The school is regularly monitoring, evaluating and reflecting on most EFS and sustainability aspects and beginning to use the results to inform future actions	Monitoring, evaluating and reflecting on the schools EFS programme and sustainability practice is thorough and ongoing and used to inform future action
PLACE					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Using a variety of natural environments in the school grounds for formal and informal learning **WS 23**	The school does not use a variety of natural environments in the school grounds for formal and informal learning	Awareness that using a variety of natural environments in the school grounds for formal and informal learning is important	The school has one or two natural environments in the school grounds that it uses for formal and informal learning	The school has several natural environments in the school grounds that it uses for formal and informal learning	The school has a wide range of natural environments in the school grounds that it uses for formal and informal learning

PLACE					
Aspect	**Absent**	**Preparatory**	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Well Developed**
Having a variety of natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems **WS 24**	The school does not have a variety of natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems	Awareness that a variety of natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems is important	The school has one or two natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems	The school has several natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems	The school has a wide range of natural environments in the school grounds that sustain people and ecosystems
Developing new and existing school buildings that benefit the environment and student learning **WS 25**	The school buildings do not reflect environmental or sustainable principles	Awareness that the buildings should incorporate environmental and sustainable principles that benefit the environment and student learning	The development of a few buildings that incorporate environmental and sustainable features, and the opportunities for these buildings to benefit student learning are being explored	The development of a number of buildings that incorporate environmental and sustainable features and some of these ideas are being incorporated into student learning	The development of all school buildings is based on sound ecological and sustainable principles that are integrated with students' learning