



## **The Global Compact**

### **Communication in Progress**

**2009**

#### **Statement of continued support**

Ruyton Girls' School continues to support The Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact. The attached report will demonstrate that this support extends not only to the way we operate and conduct our business, but that we are committed to developing an understanding by our students of the principles and the responsibility that we all have as global citizens to live and work according to these principles.

As an educational institution, Ruyton aspires to give each student an opportunity to learn and grow so that she achieves educational excellence and personal fulfillment. One of our aspirations for students, on which our Strategic Directions are based, is that as citizens they are enterprising, creative and have a commitment to community service, sustainability and a global society.

To achieve this aspiration we have committed to ensuring that our students understand The Ten Principles of the Global Compact and know how to take action within their personal lives to uphold the principles.

As a business we have committed to examining our operations so that they comply to the best of our ability with The Ten Principles and demonstrate to our stakeholders our commitment to the UN Global Compact.

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November 2009

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## **Brief description of nature of business**

Ruyton is a not for profit company committed to providing excellence in education of girls from Kindergarten to year 12.

Ruyton recognizes that education at school goes beyond learning and includes development of values, attitudes, opinions, and behaviours which stem both from explicit teaching and also from implicit modeling by teacher leaders.

The commitment to the UN Global Compact has resulted, over the last two years, in the establishment of Students for Sustainability committee to enable the students to be leaders in the achievement of the sustainability goals set for the School.

As well as a rigorous and extensive academic programme, the School encourages girls to participate in sporting competitions and cultural activities which include music, drama, art and debating. Further details are available from the web site [www.ruyton.vic.edu.au](http://www.ruyton.vic.edu.au)

## **Human Rights Issues**

**Principle 1: Business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.**

**Principle 2: Business should ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.**

To achieve our aim to have students be committed and proactive global citizens our Strategic Directions include a priority strategy to raise their understanding of global responsibilities and rights, and current issues in society.

Our goal to educate students to uphold the values of UN Global Compact relating to Human Rights is achieved through the curriculum issues discussed in class and the learning partnerships established by teachers. The impact of the programmes is reflected in comments from students.

### **Examples:**

The study of the classic novel, *'To Kill a Mockingbird,'* is linked to a Human Rights Project which is designed to alert students to the issues of Human Rights in our world and thus provide a global perspective to their learning. The methodology for the Project focuses on providing opportunities for students to be resourceful, independent and collaborative learners, while teachers take on the role of mentor and guide. The use of technology is an integral part of the Project for research and publication of their writing. Accessing the excellent web sites designed by the United Nations, Amnesty International and the BBC, students locate and research a selected issue which then becomes the focus of their speech for the Year 9 Orator of the Year. The students write reports on their chosen social issues such as world poverty, homeless youth and racial discrimination. In this study of world problems, students are highly engaged as independent, resourceful and collaborative learners.

One of the highlights of the year was the simulation activity, *'Justicecountry'*, which was offered to Year 11 girls who expressed a particular interest in social justice and leadership. Girls understand that social justice is an integral part of the School's philosophy and the implications of this.



# PHILOSOPHY

Providing a caring, positive and safe environment, we nurture the intellectual, physical and social qualities essential for growth and value a commitment to integrity and a sense of personal spirituality.

Ruyton School provides a supportive environment enabling both students and staff to demonstrate that:

as individuals, they are confident, resourceful, resilient people whose actions are guided by a code of shared values;

as learners, they demonstrate intellectual curiosity, versatility and an ability to learn independently and collaboratively;

as members of the community, they practise tolerance and compassion, with an appreciation of the value of diversity and respect for differences as well as a willingness to support the needs of others;

as leaders, they are positive role models who act with self assurance, initiative and an awareness of the value of service;

as citizens, they are enterprising and creative, have a commitment to community service, are ready to accept the challenges of a global society and to contribute meaningfully to its future direction.

**as members of the community, they practice compassion .. a willingness to support the needs of others;**



At the same time as our educational programmes incorporate activities to develop values and understandings relating to tolerance, understanding and human rights, so will our business operations be audited to ensure that, wherever feasible, we purchase products which are produced by businesses which also endorse these principles.

As an organization which operates under the Department of Human Services (Victoria) we comply with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

## Labour and Workplace Issues

- Principle 3: Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.**
- Principle 4: Business should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.**
- Principle 5: Business should support the effective abolition of child labour.**
- Principle 6: Business should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.**

Ruyton operates with a collective agreement between management and staff. Negotiations have been completed and the new agreement will operate when ratified by the Workplace Authority. The new agreement includes improved recognition of the needs of women in the workplace through an increase in maternity leave payments and access to more flexible arrangements.

Within our agreements, commitment is made to staff safety, health and welfare, ongoing professional learning and staff review and development. Australian law prohibits forced or compulsory labour and child labour. Where possible, and where information is available, Ruyton ensures that its business relationships are with organizations which also endorse these principles.

Reports to all stakeholders regarding staff professional learning are made in the school activities annual report presented to the school community at the end of each year.

Ruyton has a policy on discrimination demonstrating its commitment to antidiscrimination and providing structures for employees to register complaints and disputes arising between employees relating to discrimination. This year has seen the development of a new policy relating to the manner in which staff communicate via the electronic system. (Staff Guidelines for Electronic Communication). These guidelines were to ensure no harassment or discrimination occurred because of the manner in which staff comment was made via email and other electronic means.

The policies are on the Ruyton Intranet and made available to all staff and students.

Ruyton reports annually on its antidiscrimination policies, with particular reference relating to sex based discrimination, to the EOWA (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency).

## **Environmental Issues**

- Principle 7: Business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.**
- Principle 8: Business should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.**
- Principle 9: Business should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.**

### ***Ruyton Sustainability Vision***

*Our vision is to engage students, staff and the school community in our quest to develop a school environment which models and promotes sustainability. We will do this by:*

- modelling exemplary practices in minimising consumption of energy, water and the generation of litter and disposal of waste as landfill*
- promoting the broadening of understanding and awareness of the need to live sustainably while enriching the biodiversity of our surroundings*
- inspiring and empowering students to act in ways that create a future which is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.*

### ***Policy for Sustainability at Ruyton***

*Introductory statement of commitment*

*'Sustainability' promotes the global view of maintaining a planet which will support healthy people, systems and the environment and encompasses the three elements of environmental, social and economic sustainability.*

*Sustainability stewardship is everyone's responsibility. For the school to become more sustainable by reducing our impact would, by itself, make a considerable difference. A much greater effect is achieved if we influence each child to make a positive contribution to sustainability throughout the whole of their life. This will require the inclusion of sustainability both within the curriculum and as a part of everyday practice to develop understanding and to empower students to take action. To achieve our sustainability goals will involve the entire school community.*

### **Report for Sustainability**

Ruyton's commitment to becoming a more sustainable community began several years ago and this is the fourth year that a report on our achievements and performance has been included in the annual Speech Night Report. Each year, new initiatives are undertaken, but more importantly, each new and existing sustainability-related activity has progressively become institutionalised as part of "the way things are done" at our school.

Climate change and its potential solutions continue to occupy a substantial space in political and social debates. Given the increasing magnitude and complexity of the issue, there exists a risk that members of the community, including young people, will disengage and become desensitised to the debate. There exists also the risk that they may lose sight of their own capacity to make a difference and their ability to commit themselves to act positively to reduce their environmental impact. For this reason, many of the new activities introduced in 2009 have focused on promoting actions that students can identify making a difference, including participation in awareness raising and activism campaigns both within and outside the school. Details of the events are included in the Key Achievements summary below.

Student leadership of Sustainability within the school remains a keystone of our approach, and this year has seen the first year for the role of School Sustainability Captain. She is to be commended on her inspired leadership of Students for Sustainability and her enthusiastic promotion of environmental issues to the whole school.

As 2009 draws to a close, the School is excited to announce that we have recently reached a deal with our main electricity supplier to purchase Government Accredited Green Power for the main electricity account for the school. The actual percentage of Green Power will vary depending on consumption, but we are hoping that it will be close to 100%. This action shows the school's ongoing commitment to our environmental future. Based on previous year figures, this action will reduce our production of Greenhouse Gases (CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent) by around 500 tonnes per year.

## **Key Achievements in 2009**

### **Community engagement and sustainable travel**

- Launch of Link-A-Lift online carpooling system. Ruyton partnered with the Department of Transport to become the first and only school in Victoria to operate the internet-based system. The programme was launched by Jennifer Huppert, local member of the Legislative Council, with representatives of the City of Boroondara and Department of Transport in attendance. The Junior School Marketing team created an imaginative logo and developed a promotional bookmark that was distributed to all students.
- The first activities of the Ruyton parents group, FOREST – Friends of Ruyton for Environmental Sustainability and TravelSmart – took place, providing a formal opportunity for Ruyton parents to be involved in sustainability-related activities at Ruyton. FOREST supported the Climate Change Human Sign along the St Kilda foreshore and National Tree Day, including the distribution of free native seeds to all Junior School girls.
- Ruyton received formal accreditation for transition to the ResourceSmart Schools (RSS) 5 Star Certification system, which places schools along side state and local governments, venues and businesses across Victoria in their sustainability achievements.
- Ruyton was selected as one of twenty Victorian schools offered a free place to undertake the ResourceSmart Schools "Energy" module in 2010. Our involvement will include a formal energy audit of the school.
- Regular TravelSmart Walk to School days in both the Junior and Senior Schools and the continued operation of the Walking School Bus (WSB) on three regular routes. These programmes are supported by the wonderful efforts of the volunteer co-ordinator, drivers and conductors.
- Numerous expert speakers from outside the school spoke to Senior School Assemblies, including a World Environment Day presentation by Ellen Sandell from the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, and an International Women's Day presentation from VCE Achiever of the Year and environmental activist, Linh Do.

- Ruyton appointed Ms Linh Do as Patron of Sustainability. She will work with students as a facilitator, assisting girls to develop their networking and leadership skills and connections to external activities.
- More than 30 students, staff and parents planted over 1100 native plants as part of National Tree Day.

### **Student leadership and activism**

- The continued operation of our co-mingled recycling scheme. The scheme is operated by the members of Students for Sustainability, who have also explained the logistics of "Recycling at Ruyton" to their peers during Assembly presentations. Empty printing cartridges and other computer consumables continue to be collected by the ICT Help Desk, and recycled through the Close the Loop Program.
- The worm farms programme in the Junior School continued to convert lunch waste into food for the Preps' Vegetable Garden and a worm farm has been introduced in the Senior School.
- Celebrations of Green Days, No Heater Day, Earth Hour and World Environment Day have all become a feature of the school calendar. On each of these occasions, the Students for Sustainability or the Green Team promoted activities to engage the broader school community. Activities included: measuring and reporting back on energy savings made on No Heater Day; a Sustainability Quiz and Enviro-Pledge poster on World Environment Day; collecting signatures for the "Don't Palm Us Off" anti-Palm Oil campaign and promoting mobile phone recycling on Green Day; and promoting the Youth Decide national climate change vote. For Ruyton's Earth Hour, the whole school turned out our lights, in support of the symbolic global action that takes place each year. With each of these activities, the girls provided environmental leadership and encouraged the engagement of their peers with activism that had a positive impact beyond the environs of the school.
- Students for Sustainability launched an anti-water bottle campaign, publicising the damaging environmental impacts of single-use plastic water bottles and encouraging their reduced use within the senior school.
- The inauguration of a "Rubbish Free Lunch" Competition in Year 7, with students from each form competing to produce the least amount of rubbish from their daily lunches.

### **Curriculum**

- Sustainability themes continue to be included across the curriculum. In addition to subjects such as Geography, where the theme is substantially environmentally-focused, other cross-curricular sustainability themes include: Energy and reducing our ecological footprint as a key theme in Year 8 Science; Year 9 and Unit 4 French students studying environmental problems and what can be done about them; students in the Economics and the Environment elective completing a school "lighting audit" and developing a report with recommendations on which areas of the school could be "delamped" to reduce energy consumption; the use of recycled materials for Art projects.

At Year 7 the girls explored how the protecting of the rain forests helps to protect the endangered Orangutans.

### **Infrastructure and facilities**

- There have been numerous sustainability-related improvements to School facilities and infrastructure, including installation of further water tanks and re-upholstering of the seating in Royce Theatre using Eco-Wool. Of particular note is the installation of a new printing, photocopying and scanning system. The machines were chosen with consideration of their suitability for using recycled paper, plant-based toner and the recycling options for the end of machine life. The new machines enhance scanning capabilities and allow for duplex printing for all staff. It is anticipated this will reduce paper use into the future.

- Sustainable design will be a feature of the Junior School redevelopment, including installation of a large water tank, use of natural light, sustainable heating and cooling options and a dedicated location for a vegetable garden.

### **Measuring our Resource use**

An important responsibility in becoming a more sustainable school is a commitment to measure our impact on the environment and take steps to reduce the negative impact. When Ruyton commenced the Sustainable Schools process at the beginning of 2007, a State of the School Report was completed. The Report provided a snapshot of the school and recorded data on resource use, waste disposal and travel modes, along with an audit of curriculum and an overview of our existing environmental operations and practices at the time.

In 2008, Ruyton joined the SETS (Schools Environment Tracking System) program, an online reporting program for all schools involved in the ResourceSmart Schools Program. The school's resource use data is entered into the program, which provides annual reports on resource consumption. In each successive year, information is provided on the performance of the school in specific areas of resource use, compared to the previous year.

## **Environmental Performance**

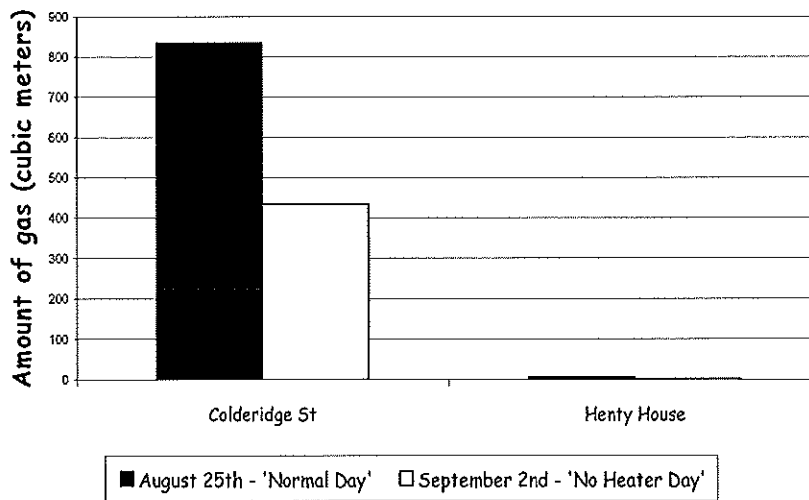
### **Electricity and Gas Usage**

An important change to the school's resource use profile since 2008 has been the commencement of operation of the Aquatic Centre. As would be expected, adding a large new facility to the school resulted in an overall increase in our use of electricity, gas and water. It is a policy of the Board to review annually the performance of the Aquatic Centre, considering resource-saving features that could be implemented as advances in technology become available. In addition, the school's enrolment has also expanded substantially over the years of our involvement in the Sustainable Schools and ResourceSmart Schools programmes.

It is worth noting the following figures:

- **Electricity:** For the first nine months of 2009, to the end of September, there was an increase in the amount of electricity used by approximately 14%, compared to the corresponding nine month period in 2008. Fortunately, our electricity billing arrangements have allowed us to isolate the area of increase, and identify the increase as stemming solely from the Aquatic Centre. Once the usage of electricity for the Aquatic Centre is removed, there was a decrease of 1.7% in use of electricity across the rest of the school.
- **Gas:** Changes to the accounting arrangements for our gas supply has made it difficult to compare the whole-school gas usage for the first nine months of 2009 with the same period in 2008. However, for the gas used throughout the school, but excluding the gas used to heat the Aquatic Centre, there was a 1% decrease in the amount of gas used.

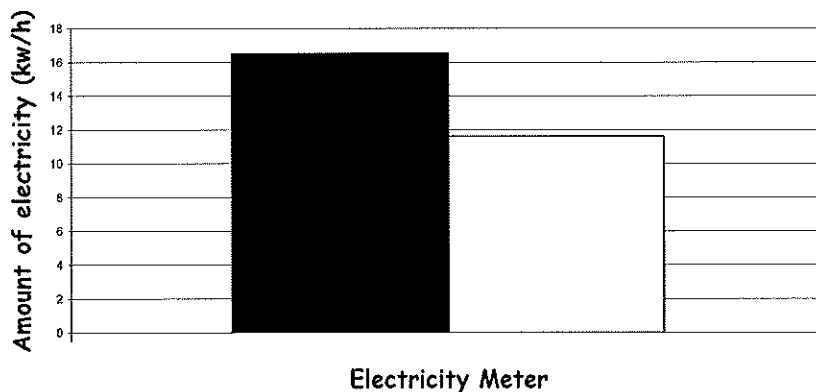
### The Amount of Gas Used on a 'Normal Day' and 'No Heater Day'



Energy use comparisons between a normal school day and No Heater Day, as compiled by Year 7 and SFS members.

The students who collected this data presented the information to their peers at a Senior School Assembly to encourage everyone in the school to reconsider their heater and air conditioner usage.

### The Amount of Electricity Used on a 'Normal Day' and 'No Heater Day'



### Water Usage

For the first nine months of 2009, compared to the corresponding nine months of 2008, the school's water usage has increased by 17%. The Aquatic Centre accounts for approximately 30% of the school's water usage, and all of the increase in the school's water usage is accounted for by pool usage. Once water usage for the Aquatic Centre is removed, the school's water usage has remained steady over the period measured.

In response to the urgent need to conserve water, the school has installed further water tanks this year and, as outlined above, a water tank is planned for the Junior School redevelopment. The school is currently investigating the options for the installation of a reverse osmosis system which allows waste water from the pool to be re-used in other areas.

### Waste

- For the first nine months of 2009, to the end of September, there was a decrease of 3.6% in the amount of school waste sent to landfill, compared to the corresponding nine month period in 2008.
- In addition, the school diverted more than 24 cubic metres of waste from landfill through the recycling of paper waste.



- The co-mingled recycling system has diverted a minimum of 240L of recyclables from landfill each week of term for the school year, which has reduced our waste by approximately 9 cubic metres for the year.

This data supports the anecdotal evidence that the promotion of Rubbish Free lunch days and Five Star lunches in the Junior School and Year 7, along with increased paper and cardboard recycling and the continued operation of the co-mingled recycling system, have had a positive impact on the waste produced by the school.

### **Transport**

Regular Walk to School Days and Walking School Bus routes have resulted in an increased tendency to walk in the Junior School and increased promotion of the use of public transport in the Senior School. The Walking School Bus programme was extended to three routes in 2008. The introduction of the Link-A-Lift online carpooling programme will allow all interested families to search for other School families living in their area who may be looking to share a lift to or from School. It is hoped the programme will have positive knock-on effects for activities such as before- or after-school sport or early morning orchestra practice.

### **Paper Usage**

The schools paper usage increased by 11% during the first nine months of 2009, compared to the corresponding period in 2008. The school used almost 300 more reams of paper in 2009 than during the same period in 2008, and there remains room for improvement. With this in mind, the school continues to work on addressing our usage of paper. The introduction of duplex printing and improved scanning facilities for all staff is anticipated to reduce paper use into the future.

## **Corruption Issues**

**Principle 10: Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.**

Ruyton abhors all forms of extortion and bribery and will not negotiate arrangements where attempts are made to gain advantage through such means.

A statement outlining what constitutes ethical behaviour at Ruyton has been placed on the Ruyton Intranet. This document incorporates guidelines for behaviour which demonstrates our commitment to

- respect
- compassion
- responsibility
- integrity
- tolerance
- service
- honesty
- fairness

The Ruyton Codes of Ethical Conduct underpin our relationships, communications, decision-making and actions as a community of students, staff and parents.

**Carolyn Anderson**  
**November 2009**