GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

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Green Schools

Engagement Report

FEBRUARY 2025

BENTLEIGH

BENTLEIGH EAST

BRIGHTON EAST

CARNEGIE

CAULFIELD

ELSTERNWICK

GARDENVALE

GLEN HUNTLY

MCKINNON

MURRUMBEENA

ORMOND

ST KILDA EAST

Executive summary

The Green Schools engagement asked for feedback from school staff, early learning staff, and students about how Council could team up with schools and early learning centres to drive climate solutions and support children and young people. The survey ran for 33 days from 20 November to 22 December 2025.

The feedback will be used to help Council continue conversations with schools and educational centres around Glen Eira, about climate and environmental related activities. This will help ensure Council can provide more targeted support and offerings to schools and early learning centres in the future.

Who we heard from

Council received 21 submissions – 11 from staff, seven from students, and three from children. The 11 staff responses were survey submissions from teachers and educators at schools and childcare services covering all ages of children and young people in Glen Eira. The seven student responses ranged from ages 10-17 across six schools. We also received three children's activity sheets.

Each primary cohort – school staff, school students, and early learning staff – were provided with different questions through the online survey. This helped to ask appropriate and relevant questions and resulted in three different sections under the one survey.

What we heard

The quantitative questions asked about the actions being taken and issues being addressed by educational institutions, and the qualitative questions asked for further details and ideas about how Council can work with the institutions. All respondents either supported the development of Council initiatives around sustainability and young people, or left no comment.

Respondents who provided free text feedback provided a range of suggestions about the types of programs that could be implemented. The following key areas were identified by school staff, students, and early learning staff in free text feedback:

Waste management and recycling:

- 71% of school staff
- 86% of students
- 50% of early learning staff

Education resourcing and staffing:

- 86% of school staff
- 14% of students
- 25% of early learning staff

Gardens, planting and nature activities:

- 14% of school staff
- 43% of students
- 75% of early learning staff

Sustainable transport:

- 29% of school staff
- 29% of students
- 0% of early learning staff

School areas of focus

School staff identified the following key positives in their quantitative responses:

- The most common issues being addressed by schools are sustainability education and circular economy.
- The most common sustainability actions that schools take are supporting their students to lead environmental issues, and encouraging sustainable transport to and from school.

School staff identified the following underrepresented areas:

- Climate adaptation is the least common issue being addressed, followed by saving water, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and protecting biodiversity.
- It is rare for schools to be planning a reduction of their environmental footprint or auditing their energy, water and waste.

Early learning areas of focus

The following key areas were identified by early learning staff in quantitative responses.

- Sustainability education and saving water are the most common types of issues that are the centres are active around. Climate adaptation is the least common type of issue.
- Encouraging sustainable behaviours and nature activities/nature-based play are the most common actions the early learning centres are taking.
- Many climate actions are identified as being an area of interest for further activity, including the following:
    - Reducing water use
    - Planning to reduce environmental footprint
    - Improving biodiversity on campus
    - Auditing energy use, water use, and/or waste
    - Encouraging sustainable transport
    - Installing solar panels and/or battery storage.

Student awareness

The survey responses show that 86 per cent of students are aware of environmental activities, programs or groups in their school.

Engagement report

Background

Council is looking for input to inform its work and offerings to schools and early learning centres on sustainability, climate change, energy efficiency, circular economy and biodiversity. This input will ensure Council's work and offerings are useful, fit-for-purpose, and empowering for young audiences.

Communication activities

A range of targeted and broad communications were undertaken to reach the community.

Communication activities	Reach
Glen Eira News Article in November edition	Delivered to approx. 64,500 residences
Have Your Say engagement page Live with the survey available	Views: 277 Visitors: 246
Social media post on Facebook (organic) Promoting the engagement opportunity for community members to have their say. 27 November 2024 (Sustainability) 2 December 2024	Reach: 2,561 Impressions: 1,288 Interactions (reactions, comments, shares): 8 Link clicks: 3
Social media post on Instagram (organic) Promoting the engagement opportunity for community members to have their say. Date/dates	Reach: 608 Impressions: 740 Interactions (likes, comments, shares, saves): 15
Sustainability e-newsletter December edition	Recipients: 3940 Opened: 2081 Link clicks: 3
Community engagement e-newsletter November and December editions	Recipients: 4483 Opened: 2580 Link clicks: 42 Click throughs to engagement:
Email promotion Sent to schools and early learning centres throughout Glen Eira.	Email addresses: 97
Poster	10 posters

Shared at Council facilities, including Glen Eira Town Hall, Glen Eira Libraries, Moorleigh Village. Used at pop-ups.	
Postcard Shared at Council facilities and pop-ups.	500 postcards
Bookmarks Distributed through Council libraries in children's book reservations	400 bookmarks
Digital screens Screen on display at Service Centre at Glen Eira Town Hall	
Website – news item	Page views: 29 Link clicks: 0

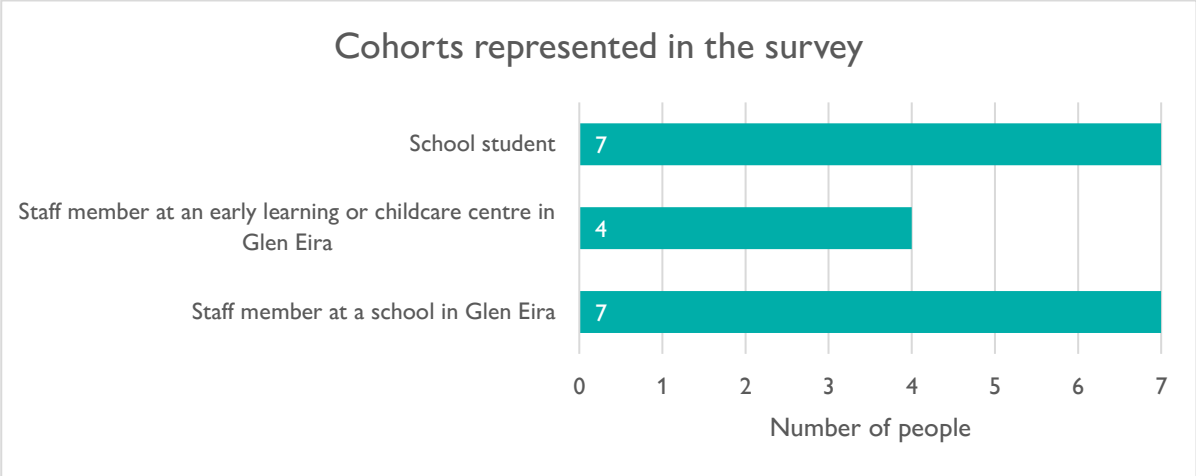
Engagement activities

Engagement activities	Number who participated
Have Your Say online community survey	18 submissions
Pop-up engagement sessions • GESAC, 29 November • Ripponlea Primary School Carnival, 30 November • Duncan McKinnon Reserve, 7 December	Trailer pop-ups: 3 Children's activity sheets: 3

Have your say online community survey responses

The online community survey targeted school staff, early learning staff, and school students. Each cohort was provided with a separate set of questions.

Eighteen responses were received in total. Seven responses were received from school staff, four responses were received from early learning staff, and seven responses were received from school students.

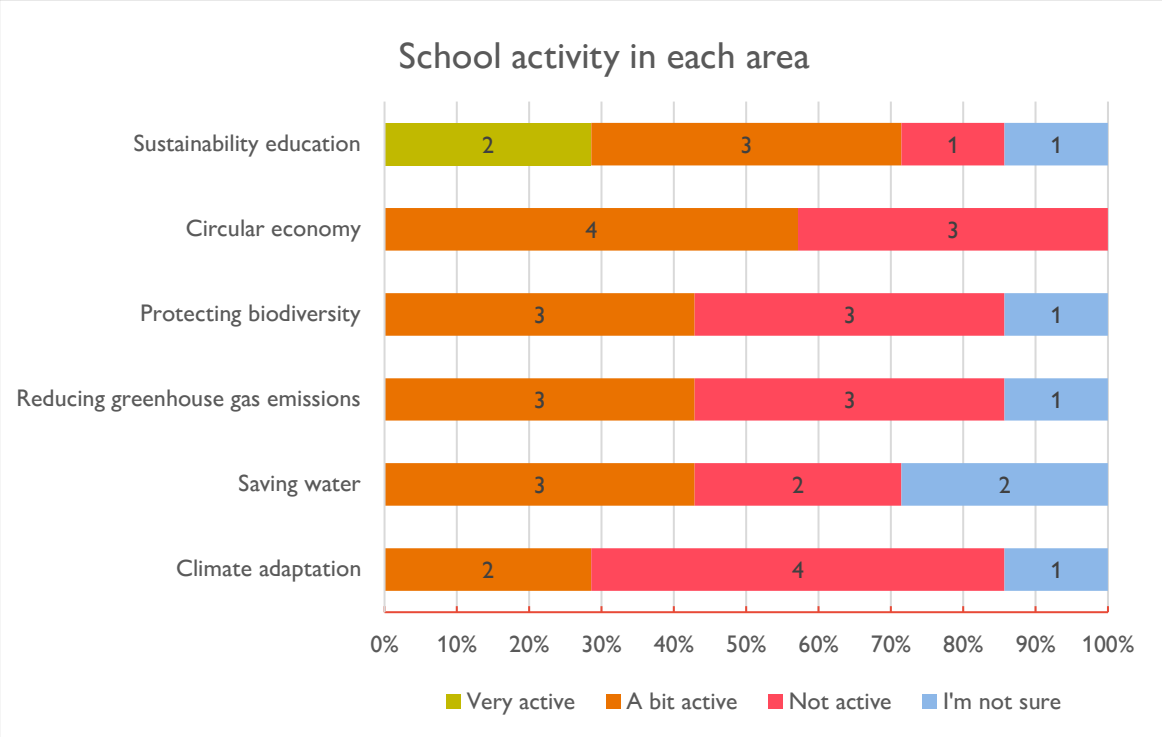


School staff survey responses

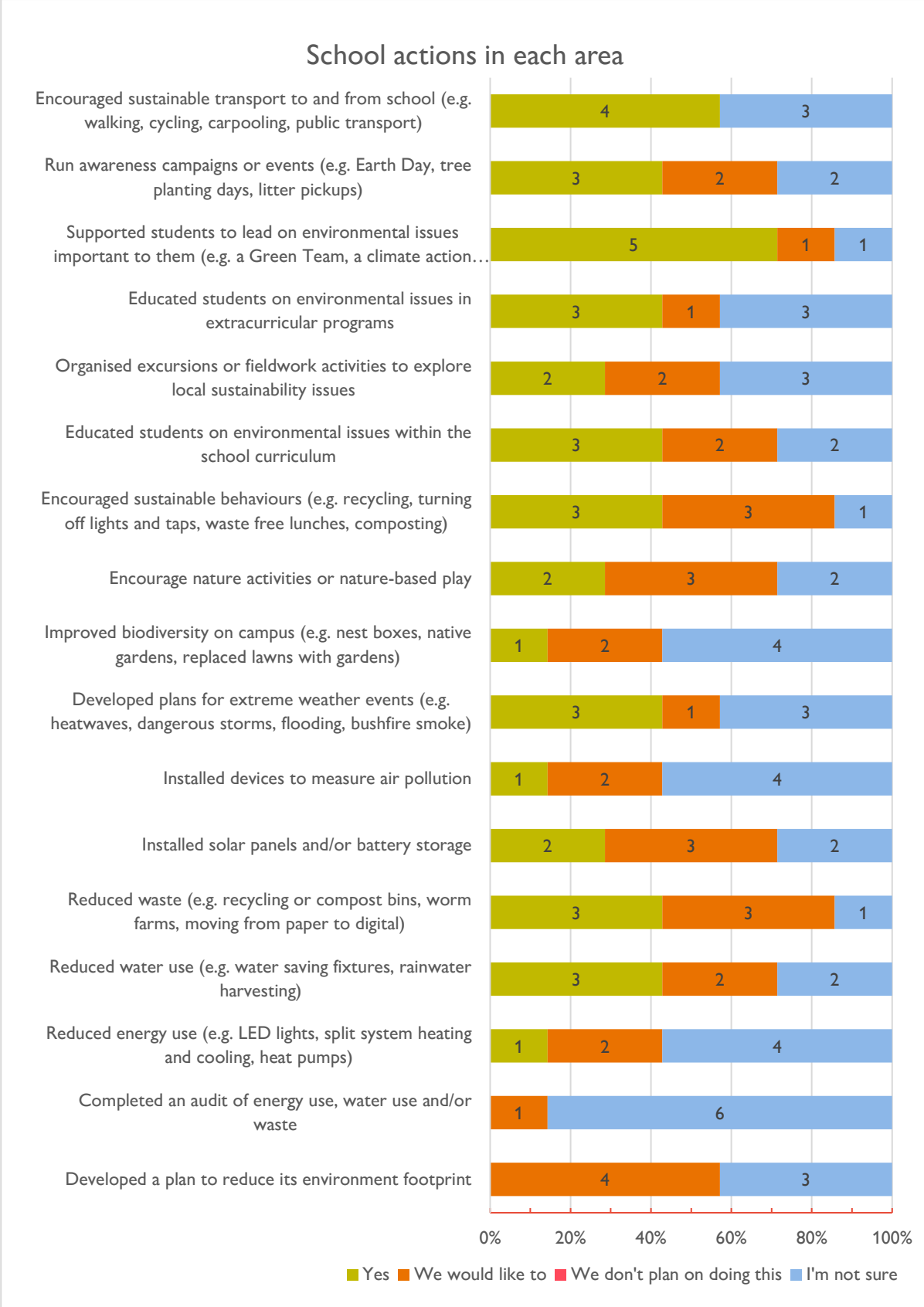
Seven responses were from people who identified as "a staff member at a school in Glen Eira". Five questions were asked of these participants in the survey.

Question one: How would you rate your school's activity on the following issues?

This was a required question in a matrix format. It received seven responses.



Question two: Has your school taken any of the following actions?
This was a required question in a matrix format. It received seven responses.



Question three: Can you provide more details about what your school does to encourage sustainability in any of the above areas?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It received six responses.

Respondent comments
Compost bins and classroom front gardens where compost goes. Yellow bins are NOT sorted out properly as kids (and adults) don't sort out everything. Kids stay inside when too wet or too hot and water game is possible in the courtyard.
We have the Glen Eira kitchen caddies but they are not always used.
Small sustainability student group. Ride to school day. Redemption of cans/bottles/cartons. Outdoor & Environmental Studies and other areas of the curriculum cover sustainability and climate change.
- In the staff room, staff are using coffee plunger rather than pods - Exams use so much paper and come with hundreds of plain cardboard sheets which have no purpose. Exam supervisors take it on themselves to take cardboard sheets to kindergartens
We have started collecting 10c containers, albeit poorly managed. Some staff in certain subjects do place more emphasis on these issues e.g. outdoor education subjects
We have a kitchen garden program, we also teach about sustainability and climate change and our responsibility through the inquiry unit 'sharing the planet' which each year level does through different lenses

Question four: How can Council help you and your school with sustainability activities like these?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It received six responses.

Respondent comments
Have some professionals talk to children and adults about - good thing about using public transport and walking, cycling to school - what goes in which bins - why it is important to reduce the amount of packaging and plastic that is used at home atmnd at school. - importance of saving energy and water Provide grants to help install shade above sandpits and playgrounds in the courtyard.
It would be great for educational resources to be made showing the direct impact of putting food scraps in the caddies. I understand the challenges of an excursion to the facility but that would be great! It would also be helpful to gain a better understanding of the recycling system. What happens to products that have different materials like paper and plastic in envelopes? How is cross-contamination managed?

Lastly, I think a visual always helps and perhaps some type of recording system / leaderboard for schools to see the amount of food diverted from landfill?
Advice around reducing waste and recycling at such a large school with nearly 3000 students. Assist in taking actions to promote biodiversity on campus. Educational talks with students. Connect with schools in the area who are leading in this space. Other...
I would like to see a better waste system set up at the school to minimise waste, with red, yellow and green bins set up and an education campaign for staff and students about how to use these three bins. Maybe Council can advise on a good contractor which would help McKinnon to implement such a system at a reasonable cost.
Schools are very busy places and teachers have limited time (and resources) to best facilitate and drive these very important programs. Having external support, guidance, infrastructure, resources, etc would be a great help to our school.
- how we are sustainable in the council area - action students can take - hands on work shops and presentations

Question five: Is your school involved in any external environmental or sustainability programs? (e.g. ResourceSmart Schools, School Water Efficiency Program, etc)?

This was a required question in an open text format. There was one affirmative response.

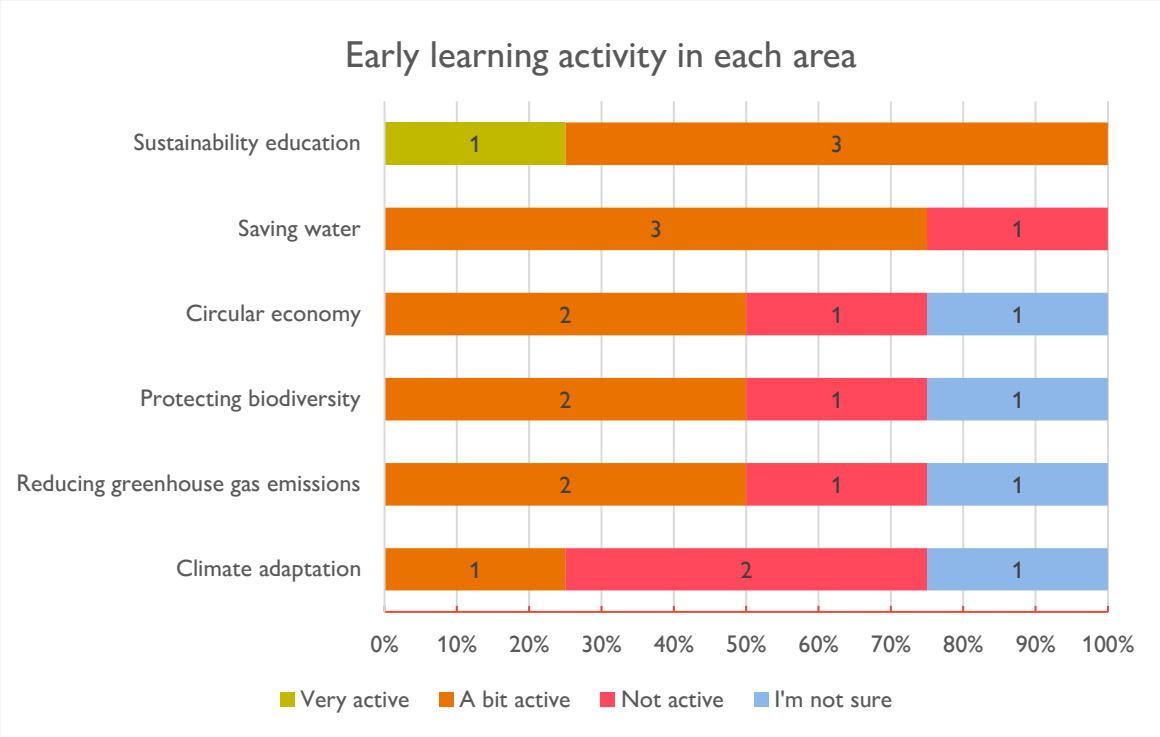
Respondent comments
We have previously registered as a resource smart school.

Early learning or childcare centre staff survey responses

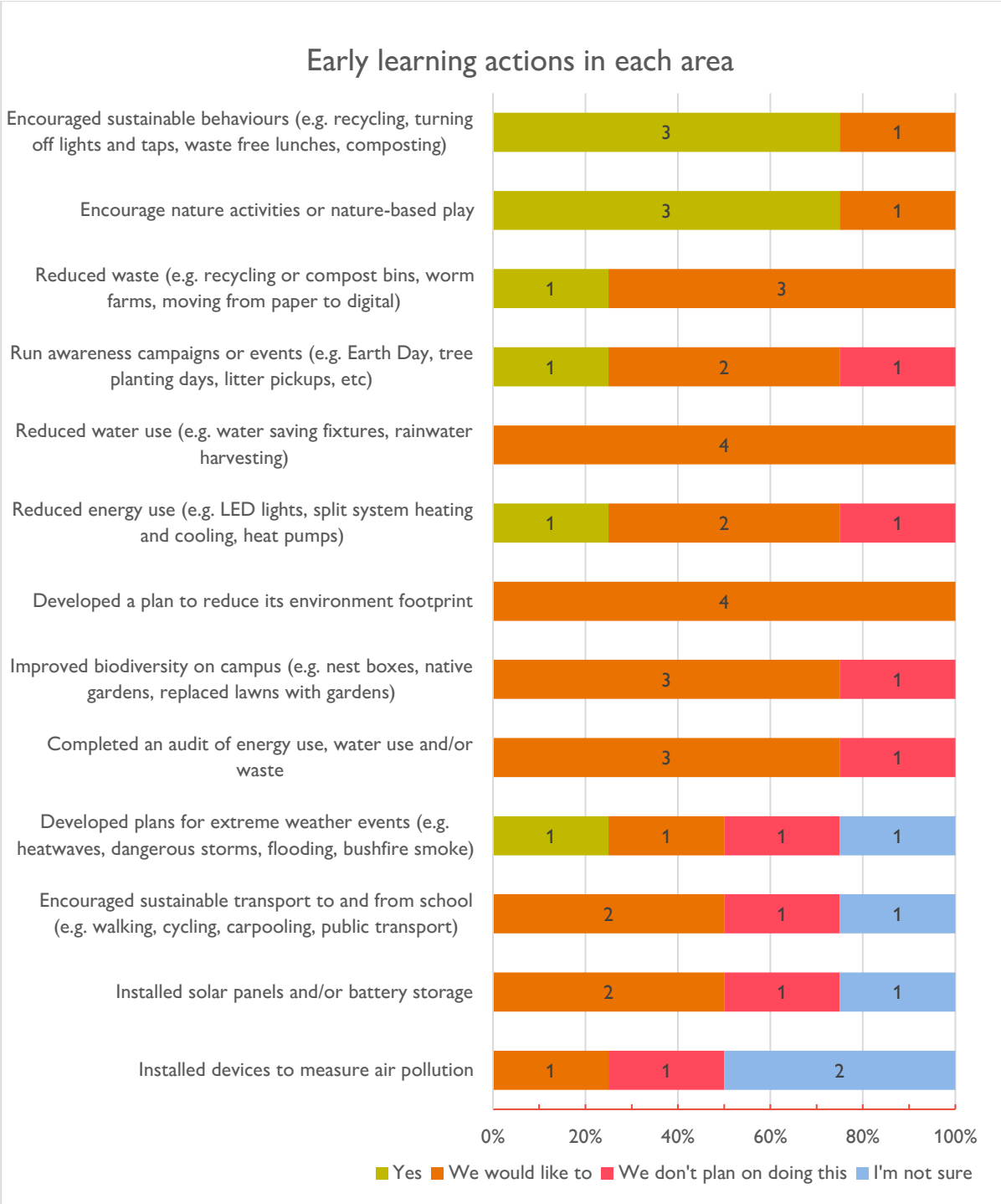
Four responses were from people who identified as "a staff member at an early learning or childcare centre". Four questions were asked of these participants in the survey.

Question one: How would you rate your centre's activity on the following issues?

This was a required question in a matrix format. It received four responses.



Question two: Has your centre taken any of the following actions?
This was a required question in a matrix format. It received four responses.



Question three: Can you provide more details about what your centre does to encourage sustainability in any of the above areas?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It received three responses.

Respondent comments
We have done compost bin and gardening but it's not consistent and we need more guidance to help us. We haven't done any recycling and food waste segregation. We did Cleaning Day, however it's not been consistent too.
Encouraged sustainable behaviours Encourage nature activities or nature-based play
Education on recycling, water waste, energy saving is in active place, but could be extended. Children spend time in nearby parks, exploring nature. We celebrate events like recycling week, earth day etc.

Question four: How can Council help you and your school with sustainability activities like these?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It received four responses.

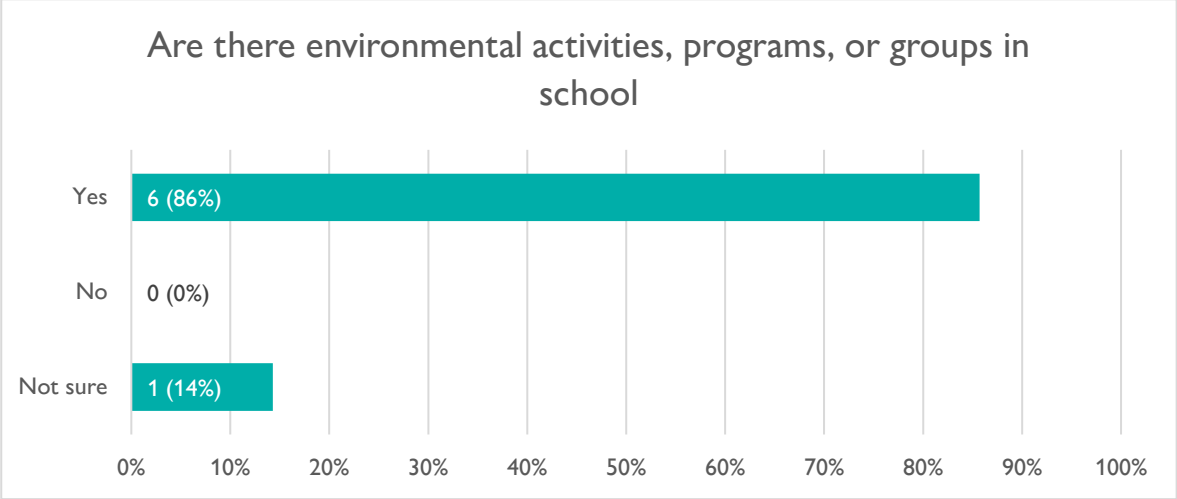
Respondent comments
Recycling, sustainability projects i.e compost, green gardens. Connecting us with the relevant community that are into sustainability. Audit in our centre on how we could improve.
We would love some resources and ideas of how to get more involved with sustainable practices.
More programs and plans to extend the learning.
Access and fund green energy, assist with energy and water waste audits, assist with water saving fixtures. Assist with biodiverse outdoor spaces

Student survey responses

Seven responses were from people who identified as school students between the age of 10 and 17. Three questions were asked of these participants in the survey.

Question one: Are there any activities, programs or groups in your school that focus on the environment?

This was a required question in a multiple choice format. It received seven responses.



Question two: What does your school do for the environment?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It was only asked to those who said "Yes" to the previous question. It received four responses.

Respondent comments
We participated in the recycle regatta, we have a 10c refund collection, we have a veggie patch and compost our food tech scraps there. We have a wetlands as well.
Gardening of three areas - Progressive garden, indigenous garden and Italian garden. Growing of herbs and vegetables to be used in ingredients for the tuck shop. Green waste collection from leftover lunches. Recycle of paper, cardboard and plastics. Naked lunches - no plastic wrappers allowed. Already have solar panels.
FOGO caddies, recycling, tree day, walk to school days, sustainability teams, Resource Smart School, second hand uniforms
Gardening Club Recycling

Question three: How could school could take better care of the environment?

This was an optional question in an open text format. It received seven responses.

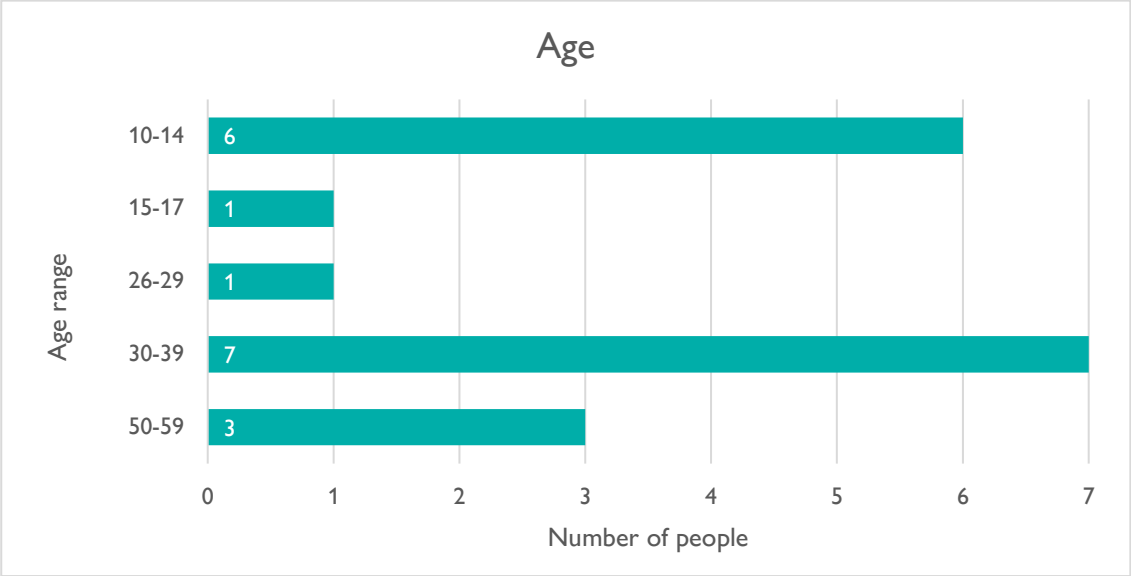
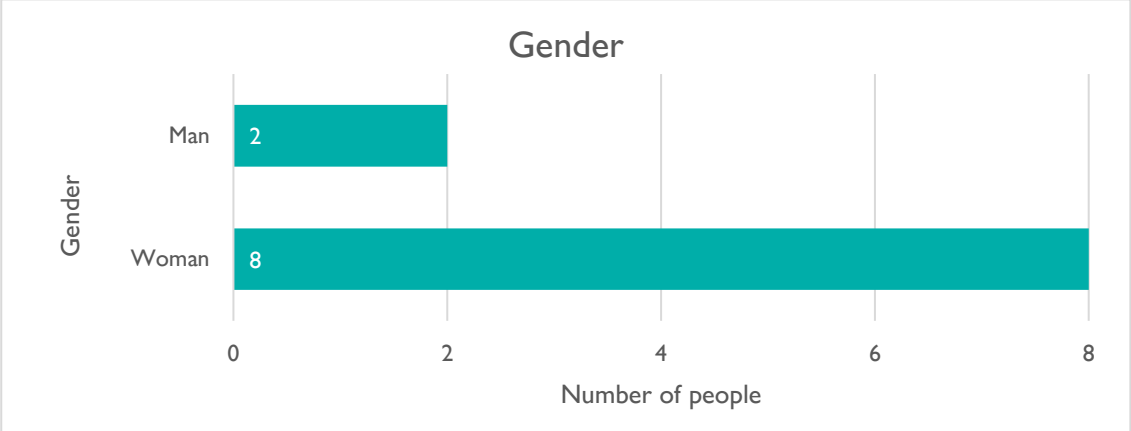
Respondent comments

Have to do something once a week
by adding more compost bins
By having more support to buy equipment that helps us take better care such as compost bins.
less concrete, more trees. Clean up the wetlands, take care of surrounding neighborhoods. Have people come in to talk about the environment.
Better way of heating the classrooms rather than ducted also for cooling via ducts. Repurpose waste for heating and cooling from other sources besides gas or electricity.
Reduce electricity, water, better recycling
Advocate and support the conversion of the Brewer Road bike lane into a physically separated bike lane. This would mean that it would be safer for students to use and mean that less students would be driven to school. The bike lane always has parked cars in it and it's not safe for students to use.

Demographic profile

All survey participants were asked about their age in a required question (18 responses). Participants over the age of 18 were also asked about their gender in an optional question (10 responses).

Question: What is your age?
This was a required question. It received 18 responses.



Question: What is your gender?
This was an optional question for people over the age of 18. It received 10 responses.