

Barriers that schools encounter in undertaking climate action and how these can be addressed:

Having pushed for the teaching and practising of ecologically sustainable behaviour across the curriculum for the last 30 years of my teaching career the barriers I encountered were ignorance, apathy and lack of understanding of many involved in the 'education industry'.

There is a dire need to promote ecologically sustainable behaviour from the top down. It needs to somehow be mandated and enforced.

Passing on a safer world to future generations must be Education's raison d'être.

The Western Australian Education Department pushes the Sustainable Schools Initiative Project. A Project Manager is appointed by the Department. Remarkable work is being done in a number of schools, mainly primary schools. However, all schools must be involved. This can only happen if it is mandated and then pushed across the curriculum by Principals/educators in authority.

What more can be done to support schools to respond to climate change?

Every school must appoint a Sustainability Co-ordinator to ensure that sustainability initiatives are adopted, adapted and continued. In my experience I have found that where sustainability initiatives were once promoted and practised in a school these initiatives often die out when the driving force of the initiatives is not replaced by an equally dedicated person.

Every school must display and promote their sustainability/climate action initiatives. For example:

Renewable energy use

Recycling

Native gardens

Finance and resources must be directed towards promoting, supporting and continuing these sustainability practices.

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I refer you to: About the Initiative - Sustainable Schools WA - The Department of Education
(det.wa.edu.au)