

## The Eco-Centre

### 1. Purpose of the Eco-Centre:

- Provide a space for explicit teaching of the principles investigated throughout the program
- Allow for the display and storage of resources to enrich the learning process
- House live specimens such as lizards, frogs, birds, small mammals, fish and insects for in depth study and familiarisation
- Provide a designated space for cooking produce from the edible gardens
- To demonstrate the principles of sustainable building design (north facing, slab construction, plantation timber frame and cladding, insulation, natural light and cross ventilation)
- Demonstrate how previously discarded furniture and equipment can be reinvented to become useful and beautiful items for use (reuse principle).

### 2. Building the Eco-Centre:

- Had to find low budget sustainable building design in kit form for easy assembly
- Purchased "Eco-Barn" from Timberbuilt Pty Ltd (former students of The Patch School)
- Excavated site in January 2007
- Poured slab in February 2007
- Erected frame in April 2007 (just like a giant meccano set)
- Stud frame construction continued through to end of 2007 (largely undertaken by Tony Gainger, Rhodo-Glen Nursery, and Brendan Fitzpatrick, teacher at The Patch)
- External cladding completed 2008, internal cladding completed 2009
- Services, appliances and windows installed 2008
- Certificate of occupation supplied January 2009

### 3. Funding the Eco-Centre:

- School Council designated fete profits for 2006 to be used for funding part of the new teaching facility - \$13,000 (paid for slab and frame)
- Chocolate drive in 2006 provided further \$7,000 (paid for roof)
- Donation of \$2,000 from Rayner Open Garden paid for excavation
- Windows, cladding, insulation and appliances paid from global budget (approx. \$10,000)
- All furniture and fittings donated
- Labour provided in kind
- Overall, the cost of constructing the Eco-Centre was approximately \$35,000, fully covered from fundraising and global budget 2006-09

### 4. Status of the Eco-Centre:

- Fully owned by The Patch Primary School (DEET cannot dictate how we use the building)
- Designated as centre for environmental education
- Provides an excellent space for instruction, school visits, professional development for teachers and to display teaching materials.
- Used by all students at The Patch every week for environmental education (and loved by all)