

## Why Conduct a Waste Audit?

### A School Focused Rationale

A waste audit is a practical, evidence-based tool for understanding how much waste your school generates and how effectively materials are being sorted into the appropriate waste streams. By examining real waste, staff and students gain a clear picture of what is being sent to landfill, what could have been recycled, recovered, or composted, and where simple habit or system changes can achieve major reductions. It provides clear, practical information that supports better waste management to reduce environmental impact and costs.

Waste audits also strongly support curriculum learning by giving students hands-on opportunities to collect data, analyse results, communicate findings, and take meaningful action. This aligns with key learning areas such as Science, Mathematics, Geography, Mathematics, English and the Sustainability cross curriculum priority studies helping students link classroom concepts with real-world environmental problem solving.

### **Conducting a Waste Audit Helps Your School to:**

**1. Establish a baseline for improvement**

A waste audit shows how much waste is generated and where it ends up so you can set meaningful, measurable goals.

**2. Identify avoidable waste and reduce costs**

It highlights what could be avoided, reused, composted, or recycled to reduce landfill and save money.

**3. Improve sorting and reduce contamination**

Audits reveal where sorting errors occur and point to simple improvements such as signage, bin placement, or system changes.

**4. Increase awareness and support behaviour change**

Seeing real waste makes its impacts tangible, builds responsibility, and strengthens a culture of sustainability across the school.

By conducting a waste audit, your school gains the insights needed to make informed decisions, improve waste systems, measurable progress over time and reduce costs.

This work aligns with **the NSW Department of Education's 'Our Commitment to Sustainability Framework', including the 2030 goals (updated in 2024)** which directly support school waste and food waste reduction:-led waste and food-waste reduction.

- Sustainability is embedded into school practices
- We eliminate resource waste
- Department staff confidently contribute to our sustainability practices
- We measure our social and environmental impact.

