

## Key Elements for Sustainability

<b>Key Element</b>	<b>Why this element is important</b>	<b>Consequence if missing</b>
<b>Introduction to sustainability</b>	Provides a vision, unity and understanding of the issues and a broad plan for the future. Without this introduction, there will be no common purpose or vision	<b>Lack of common purpose</b>
<b>Collect baseline data</b>	Provides key information against which future change can be measured. Without this data there is no reference point	<b>Inability to track progress</b>
<b>Make a whole school commitment</b>	A commitment from all sectors of the school to become more sustainable is crucial for whole school cultural change. Without this commitment, change will occur in only isolated pockets in the school	<b>Inertia and resistance</b>
<b>Form a committee</b>	A committee, with representatives drawn from teachers, parents, students and specialist advisors, will give ownership to all sectors in the school and a structure to ensure that the workload is spread over the group. Without a committee, dedicated teachers will burn out and there will be a lack of ownership by the rest of the school	<b>Passionate teachers burn out</b>
<b>Conduct an assessment/audit</b>	Assessments and audits give a reasonably accurate picture of just how resources are being used in a school and how waste and litter is being generated. Without this information, a school will not be able to plan and act with any certainty	<b>Poor planning</b>
<b>Set goals and targets</b>	By setting goals and targets, a school will focus on achieving measurable outcomes. Without these goals and targets, there is a lack of clear direction	<b>Lack of direction</b>
<b>Develop a policy</b>	A policy embeds a program in a school. Endorsement of a policy by the school council gives the program long term approval. Without a policy, there is no guarantee of this approval	<b>Change is shortlived</b>
<b>Develop action plans</b>	Action plans are a structured way to achieve outcomes within a given time frame. Without action plans, there is little order	<b>Disorganisation</b>
<b>Develop curriculum plans</b>	Curriculum plans identify where sustainability is being covered in the school's curriculum. Curriculum plans also give relevance to the operational activities of a school. Without a curriculum plan, there is not a coordinated approach to learning for sustainability	<b>Irrelevance to school's mission</b>
<b>Implement actions and curriculum plans</b>	Implementation is an essential step, without which nothing can be achieved. Lack of action can be very discouraging to staff and students	<b>Failure</b>
<b>Monitor and evaluate the program</b>	Monitoring and evaluation assists a school to measure their progress and continuously improve their program. Without this step, a program may not improve	<b>Stagnation</b>
<b>Build community links</b>	Community links enrich a school's program bringing valuable resources, expertise and support; and linking the program to other community initiatives. Without these links, a school will operate in a vacuum	<b>Isolation</b>

*(from Gould League and CERES Nov-04)*