

# SCHOOL STORIES



## Coogee Public School

### Could you introduce us to your school?

We are Coogee Public School located in Sydney, NSW. We opened in 1976 and currently have about 620 students.

### Describe your school garden.

The organic garden at Coogee Public School has been around since 2009.

### How does the garden fit into school life?

Organic produce grown in the garden is supplied to the canteen, which uses the ingredients for meals and snacks sold to students. Certified organic ingredients are also purchased from a wholesaler to ensure that, wherever possible, the food provided to students is organic.

One of the most important things to the school has been demonstrating to kids who live in urban areas that our location does not restrict us in growing our own produce. Matching what we grow in the garden with the canteen is a really nice connection. and keeps everything happening in the school.



### Describe a problem that you have had to face or tackle.

The choice to supply healthy and organic meals to students was made by parents. When the school changed the menu, we threw the old menu out and produced a new one, based on foods in the garden and those we could source. We also got rid of foil and packaging and started serving food in a compostable container. Although it might seem like a challenge, if you have people who want to do these things, it's easy!

### Do you have an interesting fact or story to share?

The celebrity chef, and Australian Organic Schools' ambassador, Pete Evans and the Australian Organic Schools film crew came to our school to film a video called *Egg-Mazing Discoveries*. Pete's kitchen helpers, who were the stars of the show, were a group of students who are involved along with their parents in the upkeep and maintenance of the school garden.

### How has the Australian Organic Schools program benefited your school?

Cooking with a professional chef helped to reinforce the connection between what you plant, when you plant it and healthy eating. Kids really made the connection between the growth cycle and what ended up on their plate on that day.