

## Appendix B. Mill Strand Teacher Interview

Interview with Deirdre Doherty, Teacher and Mill Strand Eco-School Coordinator.

- **What has surprised you about this program or practice?**

That people usually care about “their” environment, immediately effecting themselves and their loved ones. Now there are more people who think on a bigger scale, who think about the bigger picture. There are many organizations that are linked by their marine work (or their marine hobbies) to the environment. There is still a long way to go. These local organizations have been so supportive of our school and the work that we do.

- **What did you learn along the way that sticks with you?**

Integrated Education aims to provide children with a caring and enhanced educational experience; empowering them as individuals is a priority for staff. With this in mind, Mill Strand has embraced the way we can effect positive change by using our unique marine environment to provide pupils with opportunities to make a difference. What we have learnt along the way is that as we became involved with the whole school community and engaged with local organizations and expertise, this began to be embedded in practice. We now have a bank of support to assist us in our educational programs.

- **What were one or two of the most important outcomes?**

The most important outcomes for Mill Strand are:

1. Becoming an Ambassador Eco-School, this has been such a privilege and great recognition for the work the pupils carry out at Mill Strand.
2. Sharing our Eco-Schools work with local cluster schools, external organizations, and universities while providing training, resources and support for teachers, academics and pupils. We have a passion for sharing our experiences with others for the benefit of pupils in other schools.

- **If this program or practice is ongoing, why is it important? What do you hope it will accomplish over time?**

Education has a huge part to play and can make a difference over time. By ceasing the use of plastic drinking straws at Mill Strand we are making a noticeable difference, one that can be measured and shared with others. We believe this program can be rolled out nationally to other schools, with help and support. We are enthusiastic and passionate that we can make a difference.

Our oceans are in danger, the recent ‘Blue Planet II’ episodes on the BBC have helped to educate and raise awareness to a wider audience on the dangers facing marine life and indeed the food chain. We need to drive home the point that we need to stop the flow of plastic into the ocean to protect marine life. By taking part in regular beach cleans we are educating children while protecting our environment for future generations.