



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

AUDIT SECTIONS

Air

1. What is the standard window-floor ratio (WFR)?

The minimum window-floor ratio that schools must maintain is 5 per cent. Anything above this ensures better ventilation and lighting in classrooms.

2. How can we improve the window-floor ratio of our school?

Normally for improving WFR, we need to make some infrastructural changes such as enlarging the window size. But this may not always be possible. Simple measures such as opening the skylight during daytime or making windows that are permanently closed openable can allow better ventilation. This also provides a bonus or an additional benefit – better natural lighting that cuts down the use of artificial lighting.

3. There is no equipment to measure the air quality in and around the school. What can we do?

To know the air quality in real time, you can visit the CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) website https://app.cpcbccr.com/AQI_India/. You may also check Sameer mobile app by CPCB. If real-time monitoring is not available in your area, you can also organize project work with students that involves building in-house air sensors to know the presence of different gases in the air.

4. Why is it better for schools to use vehicles on contract instead of using their own?

It is good to hire vehicles from contractors to reduce the traffic burden on the road. Also, vehicles like buses owned by the schools may not be used upto the maximum potential – they remain idle during school hours. On the contrary, the operator-owned vehicles could be used by various other agencies when not transporting students and staff, ensuring maximum usage. Operator-owned vehicles also reduce the need for parking space within the premises.

5. Are CNG school buses better than bicycles as they are able to transport more students in one vehicle and do not pollute much?

It is always best to use a combination of transportation modes rather than using one in place of another. Students who live near to the school can use bicycles, equipped with



proper safety gears, if the bicycle tracks are safe to use. Additionally, students who live far from the school can use CNG run buses, rickshaws, or shared cars.

Energy

6. We have solar panels installed in our school. Please suggest some ways of utilising the structure to the best.

If you use electricity from solar panels, you have less dependence on the electricity from the grid, which in our country is predominantly fossil based. Based on the requirements and the capacity of the solar panels, you may derive benefits in lighting, heating, other electricity requirements and even environmental education!

Solar energy can be used to run smart classrooms with equipment like projector and digital whiteboards. You can also take this as an opportunity to educate students about the cleaner sources of energy as diesel generators and other more polluting ways are phased out by solar.

Please note that solar panels require regular cleaning and maintenance for maintaining their efficiency.

Land

7. Do we have to count the number of species of plants or the total number of plants?

For the questions on biodiversity, the species of plants and animals need to be counted and not the number of plants of each species. For instance, three neem trees, two mango trees and three banyan trees would count as three species of plants.

8. Why are the species counted instead of the number of plants on the campus?

Different plant species not only ensure a school rich in flora but also fauna. Different species of plants are home to different birds, animals, and insects. To ensure diverse biodiversity in a school, it is essential to have multiple native species of plants and animals. Biodiversity is important to support the ecosystem, where every species is interdependent and has a role to play.

9. Our school has a huge land area. Are there any special plants that we can grow in the school to purify the air naturally?

The land can be used to plant as many native plant species as possible. The trees act as a carbon sink for the area and help absorb the harmful pollutants in the air, thereby making it cleaner. Ensure that herbs, shrubs and trees of different native species are planted.



Water

10. How can we start practising wastewater treatment in our school?

Decentralised wastewater treatment is cost effective and sustainable. At school level, the wastewater can be easily recycled with little retrofitting. White wastewater (from hand wash) can be reused in gardening. Grey wastewater (from the kitchen) may require simple treatment like filter, grease trapping and, in some cases (if high in organic content), bacterial treatment. Black wastewater from toilets needs to be treated differently.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.cseindia.org/decentralised-wastewater-treatment-and-reuse-5431>

<https://www.cseindia.org/decentralised-sustainable-wastewater-treatment-technologies--3798>.

You may also participate in the trainings organised by CSE on wastewater treatment, as and when announced on the [website](#).

11. How can we install rainwater harvesting (RWH) in our school?

The first basic step is to direct the collected rainwater towards a storage tank or recharge structure. Depending on the rainwater harvesting potential (<https://www.greenschoolsprogramme.org/knowledge-bank/water/formulae-to-remember/>), the volume of the storage tank can be estimated. If recharging the ground, a simple understanding of the soil type and RWH potential comes handy.

For further information, please visit -

<https://www.greenschoolsprogramme.org/knowledge-bank/water/>

<https://www.cseindia.org/rainwater-harvesting-1272>. You may also participate in the trainings organised by CSE on rainwater harvesting, as and when announced on the [website](#).

12. Can directing the rainwater directly into dry well lead to recharging of groundwater level?

Yes, the dry wells and dysfunctional borewells can be used for recharging groundwater. There should be a filter unit before the water enters the recharge structure to prevent passage of contaminants in the aquifers.



13. We have rainwater harvesting installed in our school. Please suggest some ways of utilising the structure to the best.

It is good if your school has such a system in place. If rainwater is stored, it can take care of the horticultural water requirements of the school among other things. If rainwater percolates into the ground, it helps to increase the groundwater table if low in the area.

Please note that RWH structures require regular cleaning and maintenance to ensure efficiency.

14. Our school has a massive green cover that consumes a lot of water. So, even after conserving water and practising rainwater harvesting, per capita water consumption in our school is still very high. How can we lower it even further?

Xerophytic plants that require less water can be planted. Also, you may recycle the wastewater and use it for gardening purposes. In case your school is located in a water stressed area with a low groundwater table, you may encourage the community to recharge groundwater. You may get the pipes and taps checked for any leakages to prevent wastage of water.

Waste

15. What are some of the ways to dispose of different types of school waste?

The first step to efficient disposal of waste is segregation. Different types of waste—wet, paper, plastic, sanitary, e-waste—should be collected separately. Wet waste can be used to make organic compost in the school. Paper and plastic waste should either be recycled or given to scrap collectors/*kabadiwala*. For sanitary, biomedical, and e-waste, hospitals and authorised dealers can be contacted respectively.

16. How can we recycle our paper waste without any expensive recycling machine?

Paper waste can be given to local scrap collectors for its efficient recycling. Furthermore, waste paper can also be used in school events instead of plastic banners as well as in conducting art and craft activities with students.

17. What is the relationship between wet waste and compost?

Schools can easily recycle the wet waste generated on campus by putting it in an underground pit or using other methods of composting (vermicomposting, box



composting, etc.). With a little care in adding water and occasionally turning the waste, organic compost is made, which can be used as a natural fertiliser to maintain the green cover of the school.

18. In our school, biodegradable waste is found in the dining area only. Horticulture waste is used for making compost, so only recyclable waste is there in the classroom. If we do not put both blue and green dustbins in the classroom, do we lose audit points?

There is a column in this task of the Waste section for mentioning the number of dry waste bins only. In cases such as yours, no points are deducted.

AUDIT RELATED

19. How can we download the digital certificates and audit reports?

Digital certificates for the GSP Audit participants and the reports (Response and Performance) can be downloaded from the school's dashboard. The school's dashboard can be accessed from the GSP website by clicking on 'Download reports and certificates' (the tab is at the top right side of this page). Enter the username and password used to complete and submit the audit.

If you cannot download the reports, please send an email to support@greenschoolsprogramme.org. Do not forget to mention your school name and address!

20. Our GSP trophy mentions 2019-2022. What does this mean?

The years mean that the green rating of the school is valid for the next three years.

21. If we have been declared a green school this year, do we have to participate in the audit for the next three years?

GSP Audit is a continuous monitoring process to lead a school towards resource-efficiency. It is most fruitful if a school undertakes the audit year-on-year and improves based on the recommendations given by the GSP team.

22. How are you planning to conduct the GSP Audit this year?

Like everyone, we too hope that everything gets back on track soon. The GSP team is planning to conduct the audit differently in case the normalcy is not restored. We will keep you informed.

23. We could not attend the GSP Climate Change Award Ceremony 2019 to collect our green certificate. When will we receive the hard copy of the certificate?



The certificates had been couriered from our office in early March. However, due to the countrywide lockdown and suspension of courier services, the certificates may take some time to reach. Please let us know if you do not receive your school's audit certificate as the lockdown is lifted in your area.

24. How can we give information related to our environment to young students who cannot understand academic terms?

It is essential to take the concepts spirally upward as the grade level progresses. Any phenomena should be explained to young students in the simplest terms by using multiple real-life examples. For instance, to gauge the air quality, young students can be asked to notice the colour of the sky—black, hazy, clear—over a period of time and record their observations. These observations can then be discussed to talk about air pollution.

25. Audit work is done by students. What is their role in different types of constructions done by the management?

The students can voice their concerns to the school administration based on the GSP Audit experience and the feedback in the performance report.