



A message from Mrs Powell , our Active Citizens Lead:

Active Citizens are an integral part of academy life. I feel incredibly passionate about it because it affects all of us and I feel it's important to inspire the younger generation to have a voice and make changes towards that which affects them.

As part of developing our Active Citizen groups I am always keen to hear from parents / carers who would be willing to share their knowledge and expertise with the children or who would simply like to be more involved with our different team and attend meetings.

Vision

At Darlinghurst all children are active in their learning and encouraged to be active citizens within the academy and the wider world. We know that we can make a difference! Our active citizen groups make a positive contribution to academy life and the world around us. We are proud of our roles and responsibilities and take community action. This demonstrates our sense of belonging.

Eco Committee

Our aim is to promote eco-awareness across the school, making a difference to our ' carbon footprint'.

Peer Mentors

Our aim is to help others to manage their feelings and friendships. We help them to find ways to resolve problems and use mediation. We are "Playground Buddies" and Mentors. We encourage kindness and daily happiness. Have you filled someone's bucket today?

Junior Leadership Team

Our aim is to be reliable role models for the rest of the school. We encourage positive behaviour and thrive to achieve high expectations.

Junior Governors

Our aim is to give every pupil a voice and ensure their views and opinions are heard.

Sports Committee

Our aim to be a voice for the children of Darlinghurst and to encourage the children of Darlinghurst stay active and healthy through positive play and exercise. Working closely with the PE team to ensure that the children's ideas and suggestions are heard and implemented when appropriate.

Play Squad

Our aim is to make the playground safe, fun and enjoyable for all.

Reading Ambassadors

Our aim is to promote a love of reading and ensure our library is well looked after.

Design

Eco Committee

Caring for our environment is a huge part of daily life in our school, especially as it promotes our core value of belonging. Our Eco Committee, which consists of pupils from Years 1-6 work hard to promote

eco-awareness across the school working towards retaining our Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction judgement which we have achieved for the last 3 years. We follow the Eco-schools programme, which covers 10 key areas in which we can protect our environment:

- Energy
- Litter
- Waste
- Water
- Transport
- Global citizenship
- Healthy Living
- School grounds
- Biodiversity
- Marine

We feel that in the current world we live in, teaching our children about environmental issues and how best to care for the environment is crucial if we are to tackle the problems we face locally, nationally and globally. We want our children to be Active Citizens, educating and working with the local community and sharing their ideas for a future, healthier and caring planet.

At the start of each year, the Eco-team conduct an Environmental Review of the school against the 10 areas to see what we're doing well and what areas we need to improve on. From this, we draw up an Action Plan focusing on the team's ideas for what we need to do to be more eco-friendly, with a focus on the three key areas we have chosen. The Eco-team meet weekly and discuss and implement their ideas.

Peer Mentors

The Peer Mentors undergo an interview and those who are selected have further training in order to help them best support children in terms of their social skills development which supports improved emotional health and wellbeing.

Junior Leadership Team

Our Junior Leadership Team consist of two Head Prefects and additional Prefects who carry out duties within the school such as setting up for assemblies and events, collecting and analysing house point data and representing our school at key events. The two Head Prefects are voted upon by children across the school and each candidate has the opportunity to create a video with why they should be chosen and their plans for the school, as well as campaign posters.

Junior Governors

This is our children's school and they have a say. Having a voice and being heard are key areas of British Values which we, at Darlington Academy, actively promote through our Junior Governor Team. The Junior Governors are a group of children from Key Stage 1 and 2 who work together to make the school a better place. Much like Parliament, they are democratically elected by their peers and play a vital role in listening to and representing the views of all children at the school. By meeting, sharing ideas and completing activities throughout the year, the Junior Governor Team fulfil their role as active citizens, listening to suggestions from other pupils about ways in which to improve the school. They then provide this vital feedback to the teaching staff and the Principal. Our children, make a difference!

Sports Committee

The Sports Committee have been working hard making sure the children's voice is heard. With the PE team, they looked through the pupil suggestion box and are planning to put some of the children's ideas

into action this academic year. They have also met with Kirsty Fitzgibbon our SGO (School Games Organiser) to give her their thoughts on all things sport and PE and get her advice on how to be even better committee members. They are currently planning an event with the PE team to celebrate the start of the Paris Olympic games in the summer term so watch this space!

Play Squad

The role of the play leaders are to keep a safe and happy environment out at lunchtimes with fun and engaging games and activities. The games that the children play are mostly equipment based that can get a large amount of children involved.

Reading Ambassadors

Our reading ambassadors have been working hard to keep our library clean and tidy. They have helped organise and categorise books and enjoy reading to children. They love reading and help promote a love of reading in our school.

Difference

Our active citizens are able to gain new skills and abilities as they grow within their roles. They know their actions make a difference within the school and wider community. The play leaders have made a real impact to the playtime experience through leading and implementing games. Peer mentors offer support to younger children, giving them the confidence to become resilient and manage their emotions. The Sports Committee have shared their voice and made changes to PE lessons and the curriculum, for example, including the popular 'dodgeball' as a learnt game. The Eco Committee have been able to make many connections with other eco groups and shown a care for the world we live in through their ideas. The Junior Governors have regularly visited Admiral Court to help show a sense of belonging and have ensured all pupil's voices are heard by representing their class. The Junior Leadership support the day to day running of the school, share their views with governors and attend events such as Open Evening and the Art Exhibition.

"One of the most important tasks as a Junior Governor is to represent the children in my class to make sure that their voices are heard. Mrs Nicholls values our concerns and ideas and thinks about how we can put our thoughts into action". Proud member of the Junior Leadership Team

"As a member of the Sports Committee I listen to children's suggestions for sports, health and fitness. I encourage children to stay active and healthy through play and exercise. The PE team help us to bring our ideas alive. They are encouraging and really passionate about PE and health related fitness."
Proud member of the Sports Committee

"When I was a Play Squad member I led games at lunchtime. I undertook training to be a play leader, learning how to lead games and encourage others to join in. It has been nice to see everyone playing happily together." Proud member of the Play Squad

"We are proud to have been chosen for the Junior Leadership Team as good role models for the rest of the school. We encourage positive behaviour and thrive to achieve high expectations." Prefect

"I am proud to have been elected as Head Prefect for Darlington Academy. I am proud to be part of a caring school with really kind teachers. I would love all of the other children who attend Darlington to have a brilliant time here too!" Head Prefect

"As a member of the Eco Committee, I feel a huge sense of belonging as we make a difference locally and for making the world a better place. Being on the team has empowered me to make a difference

to our school and community." Proud Member of the Eco Committee

'Achieving Excellence Together'

Reflections

Eco Committee

Caring for our environment is a huge part of daily life in our school, especially as it promotes our core value of belonging. Our Eco Committee, which consists of pupils from Years 1-6 work hard to promote eco-awareness across the school working towards our renewal of the Green Flag Award. We follow the Eco-schools programme, which covers 10 key areas in which we can protect our environment. This year we focused on waste, transport and marine. We litter pick our school grounds, the nearby streets throughout the year. This year, we joined forces with Litter-less Leigh to litter pick Two Tree Island as part of the Great British Spring Clean. We have worked hard at planting trees, creating our own wildflower garden and improving our allotment area in partnership with the help of our school community, Trustlinks, Veolia, South East Essex Organic Gardeners and Hadleigh Community Allotment. We have continued to recycle paper, plastic bottles, plastic food wrappers, pens, ink cartridges and batteries and have taught the other children how best to do this. We have successfully managed to raise £80 through their hard work. We have also implemented some PreLoved sales of uniform, books and toys, raising money for the school and Greenpeace. The Eco Committee have also been monitoring and working hard to reduce air pollution outside our school, monitoring levels using 'pollution catchers' and promoting events such as Walk to School Week and Clean Air Day and creating information for parents. In addition we have take part in other national events such as 'Cut Your Carbon' month and 'the Great Big Plastic Count' to ensure we are having an impact at home and in school for being more sustainable.

This year, we continued leading the Essex Schools Young Eco Protectors, a schools' sustainability network group working alongside Belfairs Academy, Westcliff High School for Girls, Fairways, Porters Grange and other local schools to share ideas and work on projects together including a 'Green Week'. This is part of the UK Schools Sustainability Network (<https://www.transform-our-world.org/ukssn>) We also worked closely with UCL, helping them with their research for how Eco-schools can best monitor their projects, offering feedback on their ideas.

We applied for and received the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award with Distinction! We received the following feedback from Eco-Schools England:

"Your Tea and Talk inviting discussion with parents is a wonderful example of supporting a collaborative and community-minded ethos, which sets an open and reflective tone for your work."

"It's clear that you have embedded environmental issues into your provision with great enthusiasm and these issues are being used to enrich learning in your school. We love how your curriculum is engaging your pupils in important global issues, such as Fair Trade, but it's also very refreshing to see environmental issues explored in the more creative and expressive context of art and creative writing as vehicles for delivering a powerful environmental message. You have worked with a multitude of diverse individuals and organisations, relying on their expertise and passion to enrich and inform your Eco-Schools journey."

It has been an absolute pleasure to read through your application. You are a wonderful ambassador for the Eco-Schools programme, and we are delighted to award you an Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction – congratulations! As always THANK YOU very much for your hard work. We look forward to working with Darlington Academy again next academic year to help you expand on your eco-actions and successes of this year."

Sports Committee

- Appointed new Sports committee for each year group in KS2.
- Student PE survey completed by all children in KS2, data put into a document.
- Results of survey analysed and acted upon where appropriate.
- New badges delivered to make committee members more visible.

- Some members have joined the local schools Eco Sports Council to represent the academy in the wider community.

Next Steps

- Deliver the suggestion box to each year group and introduce ourselves to make sure we are more visible.
- To plan and deliver a whole school sports event to celebrate the start of the summer Olympics in Paris 2024
- To commit to plan and lead sporting activities at lunchtime in the summer term to compliment the Playleaders provision.

Play Leaders

- Appointed new Playleaders for the new school year
- CPD for the children led by Mr Blewett to help guide the childrens thinking with specific games and activities
- Wet lunch rota launched so that all play leaders are designated into a classroom to help with conduct of children
- New equipment purchased to update the play leading cupboard and through discussion of what is needed outside to keep the children engaged.

Next Steps

- Use of year 5 in the playground after Easter, deploying them into the KS1 playground to gain understanding of role
- Continue to update play leading cupboard with fresh and new equipment for the summer months
- Deploy play leaders as referees on the field at lunchtimes

Peer Mentors

The Peer Mentors received training this year to arm them with the skills needed to support others. They have been incredibly helpful in supporting the work our pastoral team does at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Junior Governors

The Junior Governors meet monthly to discuss the progress of projects, arising events and other matters. The Junior Governors have been monitoring their progress on projects through their display board. The board is updated weekly and allows the whole school community to see what is going on. Students are encouraged to talk to their class Junior Governor if they have any ideas or views they would like to share. This academic year, the Junior Governors played a part in adapting our lunch menu. The Junior Governors collated data from their classes about their thoughts on the current lunch menu and discussed this data and feedback to the catering staff. As a result of this pupil feedback, the lunch menu was updated.

This year, the Junior Governors have completed 'two stars and a wish' with their classes. These ideas were then discussed in our Junior Governor meeting and refined further before prioritising ones to send to Mrs Hahn. One idea they were keen to pursue was more library time and, as a result, the library is now open every lunch time. They were also animated about the prospect of having more ways to recycle and it has been outlined paper and plastic as well as food are a big focus for this academic year. As a result of the pupil voice feedback, Year 6 Comic Book Club has now evolved into a KS2 Creative Writing Club, with the original Comic Book Club members welcoming the adaptation as the peers can now share their work more widely with others. Also, Art Club has also evolved and expanded to now host artist workshops, with their first artist visitor, Naomi Clarke, attending the academy Art Club in March. The focus for the summer term has been on 'healthy snacks' and getting feedback from their peers on what healthy snack choices could be. A wide variety of results were shared in our News and Views.

This academic year, the Junior Governors have continued to strengthen Darlington's relationship with their local care home, Admiral Court. In September, our Junior Governors went to a trip to see an art gallery held by Admiral Court. They also shared their 'Remembrance with the Queen' piece of art created by art club with them, talking about remembrance and have a sing along. For Christmas, the children created beautiful individual pieces that contributed towards a large strip of bunting, working like elves in Santa's workshop. For Easter, they delivered cards to the residents. We were also lucky enough to host Trustlinks gardening charity in a fruit tree planting event with learners, families and residents of Admiral Court all taking part in the wonderful day during February half term.

Active Citizens Gallery



