

A message from Mrs Powell , our Eco-Schools Co-ordinator:

Eco-schools was something I set up at Darlinghurst over 4 years ago. I feel incredibly passionate about because it effects all of us and I feel it's important to inspire the younger generation to look after the planet. As a UN Accredited Climate Change Teacher and a Litter Hero Ambassador for Keep Britain Tidy, I am keen to raise awareness of this important issue and make our school more eco-friendly. As part of developing Eco-schools I am always keen to hear from parents / carers who are involved in the industry in any way and would be willing to share their knowledge and expertise with the children or who would simply like to be more involved with our team and attend meetings.

Vision

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-team, 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:

- 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.

Plan 2020-2022

We have been focusing on the five areas of energy, litter, biodiversity, school grounds and waste as part of our Green Flag renewal application but as a school we work towards the other areas across our curriculum.

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 five key areas we have chosen. The Eco-team meet weekly and discuss and implement their ideas.

Energy

- Have Eco Monitors in each class ensure lights and electrical equipment are switched off when not in use
- Continue to use Solar Panels and Biomass for our electricity and heating and monitor this
- Sign up to the Schools Zero Carbon by 2030 initiative
- Learn about Climate Change through our Focus Topic from years 1-6
- Take part in the National Youth Climate Summit in November 2020

Litter

- Take part in the Great British Spring Clean and the Eco team plan what we can do as a school

- Take part in litter picks inside and outside of the school.

Biodiversity

- We plan to plant more trees, bushes and wildflowers to encourage more wildlife into our school grounds
- Make sure we continue to promote how learning about biodiversity is a key part of our Science Curriculum
- Children to create bug hotels and bird feeders for use at home and in school.

School grounds

- Children continue to have Outdoor Learning as a key part of their enrichment curriculum, taught by a specialist teacher
- Take part in National events such as Outdoor Learning Day
- Review our current provision and plan for more natural areas to support the teaching and learning of Science
- Create an allotment area with provision to grow vegetables for selling to local community

Waste

- Use Eco Monitors to continue monitoring the correct use of recycling bins
- Encourage recycling in the dining hall
- Continue recycling crisp packets, pens and batteries
- Reduce food waste

Achievements 2020-21

Autumn

As part of their Science topic, Year 4 looked at the impact of littering and waste, exploring newspaper articles. They wrote letters to the council asking for how they would solve these issues.

Year 6 learnt about how orang-utans are endangered because of the palm oil industry and deforestation and what they could do to help, as part of the National Youth Climate Summit in November.



The Eco-club were involved in a few national events this half term. Firstly there was the National Youth Climate Summit run by Transform Your World in November whereby the children watched lessons and learnt tips about how we as a school could become more environmentally friendly. They also attended a meeting led by Keep Britain Tidy about littering, waste and plastic pollution and shared their ideas and questions on how these problems could be solved at a national level. They planted some wildflower seeds in the school grounds to make them more bee and insect friendly.

Spring

In the Spring term, we celebrated Eco Week virtually. Each year group focused on a different topic and Mrs Powell encouraged children to complete tasks at home from making bug hotels, creating posters about climate change to litter picking.

The Year 6 keyworker bubble went on a litter pick outside the school and collected 4 sacks of rubbish from the Brook and Manchester Drive with litter picking equipment kindly donated to us by Vacuum Southend.

Years 1 to 6 also learnt about Climate Change through this term's focus topic.

Children in Year 5 created a rap about what we could do to solve the problem and Year 6 wrote a newspaper report on the effects of climate change on animals.



Summer

In the summer term, the school celebrated World Earth Day through learning about deforestation in Year 2, recycling in Reception and electronic waste in Year 6. The school took part in Walking to School Week which encouraged children to think about staying healthy but also about the impact of pollution. The winning classes got to have extra PE for trying hard to walk to school everyday. Darlingtonhurst took part in Keep Britain Tidy's Great Big School Clean Up, with a competition for the cleanest classroom. We also signed up to and started recycling printer ink cartridges with 'The Ink Bin' in order to raise money for our school. We have plans to develop our Outdoor Space including a natural woodland area and allotment area during Summer 2, ready for September.



Eco-Schools Gallery



