

St. John's Eco-Committee

Intent

At St. John's Primary School, we want all members of our school community to be aware of environmental issues affecting their community, our country and our world. In raising this awareness, we want to work with all members of our school community in encouraging them to be global, law-abiding citizens. In doing so, knowing that we all have a responsibility to look after God's creation and a voice to affect change.

Our Eco-Committee help to give children a voice and develop their confidence in being agents of change. We instil democracy by voting in our Eco-Committee representatives who are encouraged to write speeches outlining why they are interested in being voted onto the Eco-Committee and what ideas they would bring to this group that would ultimately improve our environment, the surrounding community and contribute to raising awareness of global issues. Our Eco-Committee really promote the importance of respect for God's creation and how precious this beautiful world is.

Implementation

Eco-Schools is challenging all young people in England to take action on their carbon footprint. With the help of our Eco-Committee at school we are focusing on three main areas that we feel if all our school, families and friends participate in, it will help to raise awareness, change behaviours, and Cut Your Carbon - a greenhouse gas responsible for driving climate change!

Have no food-waste

Prepare only what is needed, eat everything edible on your plate, and ensure any leftovers are saved for another time or used to create a new meal. Growing, processing, and transporting food releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and even more gases are released if this food is binned and sent to landfill. **We are following this in our dining hall and in our kitchen along with ensuring that we drink all our water or milk as well.**

Donate something you no longer need.

Manufacturing new items releases carbon into the atmosphere. For example, producing a book releases about 1kg CO₂, a t-shirt 7kg, and an iPhone, a whopping 60kg! Passing on things you no longer need is a great way to prevent emissions, so, swap a book with a friend, donate clothing that doesn't fit to charity, or pass on an unused device to a relative. **We have a clothes and shoe bank at school, please use this. People donate books for our Library and Classrooms and old school uniform that no longer fits for the spare uniform shop. Every year we are support the Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal and the Eco-Committee organise this. Please use any of your toys that are in good condition, clothes, cuddly toys and jewellery that can make up these boxes.**

Label all your school uniform including your P.E. kit and coat.

As part of our drive in making our school more sustainable, we are really focusing on eliminating our lost property box for school uniform throughout the school. Therefore, we would really appreciate if all parents can ensure that all items of their child's school uniform are clearly labelled. We run a spare uniform shops throughout the year so please support this by donating any uniform that no longer fits your child or purchasing spare uniform for the year ahead. Please also ensure that your child has a tie as this is part of the uniform. **Our Eco-Committee play an active role in monitoring this very closely and in doing so ensuring that all pupils have their uniform labelled. We always offer to label pupils' clothing in an attempt to reduce our lost property, ultimately reducing our carbon foot print.**

Pupil voice

Members of the Eco-Committee are involved in meeting with the Governors every half-term to discuss a variety of different aspects of school life e.g. how our school values and vision statement support the work of the Eco-Committee, how our curriculum is instilling in pupils the awareness of global issues and ultimately our responsibility to play our part in looking after our world.

The Eco-Committee will sometimes be involved in going on special projects like litter picks in our local community to raise the school's profile on looking after our environment and also to develop links within the community; last year members of the Eco-Committee met with our catering team to discuss how they are supporting our reducing food waste and packaging waste campaign in both the dining hall and the kitchen. This has resulted in a significant reduction in waste in our kitchen and dining hall.

Impact

At St. John's, we want our children to:

- Be confident speakers but also good listeners.
- Be aware of environmental issues affecting their community.
- Be global, law-abiding citizens.
- Understand the difference between right and wrong.
- Know that everyone should have a voice to affect change.

To date the Eco-Committee have achieved major successes in both raising the awareness of the important role that we all have to play in looking after our world and how through our actions we can bring about major changes. Our pupils are encouraged to be the educators of change within our community and this is very evident through what they have achieved to date:

- Sponsoring two children in Uganda since 2012 through funding their education and training so that they now are self-sufficient, has been an extremely rewarding project for pupils, staff and parents. Throughout this time, we have requested old football kits, books, clothes etc so that all members of our community see the impact that this makes on other people's lives.

- In March 2023 members of the Eco- Committee participated in the ETSP debating competition supporting the motion of ULEZ (ultra-low emission zone) being a good idea and our team won the overall competition, taking home a trophy for the year.
- Funding a member of staff to support The Bridge of Hope charity in Uganda was a great experience for the children as together we planned a variety of different fundraising activities, creating a great community spirit throughout the school. This is an inspiration to pupils and parents to become more involved in charity work.
- Through completing our fundraising of £1,400 for the Protected Spring in Uganda, this raised the awareness of how precious clean water is and that we must ensure that we don't waste it.
- All pupil and staff only have reusable water bottles.
- Significant reduction in the use of single use plastics.
- Pupils and staff encouraged to reuse, recycle or create their own costumes from reusable resources for all dressing up days throughout the school.
- Significant reduction in the amount of waste at lunchtime, all pupils offered seconds and any food that is leftover is either kept for the next day, offered to after school clubs or staff.
- Heating system controlled through a computer system that significantly reduces energy costs and all outside doors fitted with closing system so that less heat is escaping.
- Excellent response to parents contributing to the clothes and shoe bank at the school, collected at least six times in the year.
- Spare uniform shop run twice every half-term, all parents encouraged to donate uniform to this or purchase at a small cost.
- All uniform labelled by either home or school to reduce the significant amount of lost property not being claimed.
- Any water left over from lunch time used to water plants around the school, highlighting the importance of reducing water waste linked to the protected spring that the school has funded in Uganda.
- Every year the school supports the Christmas Shoe Box appeal, encouraging parents and children to donate their old toys, games etc so that we are encouraging reusing and giving to those less fortunate than them.