



### 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 developina 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 knowledae 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 do 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 four 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
- Carry out weekly Energy Checks for each class and the winning classes are awarded certificates and celebrated in our virtual celebration assembly.

### 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.
- Monitor what is most commonly littered
- Create and display banners inside and outside of school to discourage littering

### 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
- We plan to plant more trees, bushes and wildflowers to encourage more wildlife into our school grounds

### 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 ink cartridges
- Reduce food waste
- Plan to fundraise for equipment by having a second hand toy sale.
- Promote reusing and reducing waste across the school.

## Achievements 2021-22

### **Autumn**

At the start of the term, we further developed our outdoor area by planting trees and wildflower seeds ready for the spring. The children have been watering and caring for these areas. We took part in the Children's Parliament whereby two of our Eco Committee got to debate and share their ideas on COP26 and Climate Change. Across the school, we learnt about COP26, climate change and the children made pledges about what they would do to reduce their carbon footprint.



The Eco Committee have been busy sorting and counting crisp packets, carrying out energy checks and planning our next steps. We were successful with an application for a grant to buy more equipment for our gardening project as well as further enhance our outside space for wildlife.

Eco club re-started in September and have been doing lots of amazing things such as creating seed bombs, making decorations out of plastic bottle tops and making eco bricks. The highlight of the term was being filmed by BBC Look East which showcased our amazing Eco Committee and what we do as a school.

## Spring

In the Spring term, we celebrated Eco Week. We had different visitors talk to our children via teams including Organically Epic and Essex County Council. In EYFS and KS1, children sorted rubbish and learnt about recycling.

Our Eco team have been really busy this term, putting items of our Eco-schools action plan into place. We started work on our allotments, holding a gardening day to get the area ready for planting. We also planned a beach clean for the Great Big School Clean and had a cleanest classroom competition. We also planted more tree saplings and wildflower seeds in our school grounds. We are looking forward to submitting our green flag application in the Summer term.



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 wildflower seeds we had planted flourished and were teeming with a variety of beautiful wildflowers and buzzing bees. The Eco Club enjoyed identifying the different types and also going on a minibeast hunt as part of the Wildlife Trust's '30 Days Wild'. In addition, they made posters about car idling and air pollution to inform parents and carers as part of Clean Air Day in June. The Gardening Club worked hard on the school allotment, planting potatoes, beans and onions. It is really taking shape now!

The Eco Committee and Sports Committee held a Secondhand Sale of Sports Equipment, raising nearly £40 to fund future projects.

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

"We love how active your Eco-Committee was in communicating their Eco-Schools activity school-wide. Assemblies, news bulletins, your notice board and social media. This is really strong informing and involving and shows how valued and embedded the Eco-Schools programme is in your school."

"Everyone involved in Eco-Schools at your school should take immense pride from the parental quote provided. It's a great demonstration that you are going the extra mile to enable young people's passion for environmentalism and by doing so you are also enriching their school life! Congratulations to everyone for the great work you have managed to do, especially throughout the pandemic and lockdown. You should all be very proud of your amazing work and the great application you have submitted. You are most definitely a worthy Eco-Schools with Distinction Green Flag Award winner!"



# Eco-Schools Gallery

