

June 2023

Renewal of Eco-school status

Dear parents and carers,

We continue to fly the flag of distinction. This high level status has been awarded for two consecutive years as a model of excellence. I am so proud of our community and the contributions made to ensuring that we support sustainability. Not only do we fly the flag, but it is an honest reflection of the passion and commitment shown by all, our leading advocate, Mrs Powell and supported by Miss Ludford. I know the work carried out here impacts wider than our school community and supports the local area and other schools in Southend and Essex.

Our re-application was extremely successful and the following was noted by the Eco-Schools:

We are very pleased to tell you that Mrs Powell and the Eco-Committee at Darlinghurst Academy have been successful in meeting the requirements for the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award.

It's brilliant that young people were given the responsibility for recording Eco-Committee minutes. This will allow them to take ownership over the Eco-Schools programme and develop their listening, communication and teamwork skills. 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 great to read that completing the Environmental Review prompted thorough reappraisal of your existing initiatives as well as celebrating your progress and achievements. What really stood out here is how you invited input into your Review from various school stakeholders, such as catering staff and your Caretaker – this further demonstrates your cooperative mind-set and will help to engage others in your Eco-Schools work. It was great to see how you carefully considered findings from your Environmental Review and factored them into the creation of your Action Plan. We love how you have struck a balance between capitalising on the momentum of existing initiatives to thoroughly address your waste issue and rolling your sleeves up to tackle your lowest scoring areas. Terrific 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.

The success and positive impact of your pre-loved fundraiser was no doubt attributable to your wide-scale inclusivity and cooperation and is a great example of what we can achieve collectively. Everyone involved should take immense pride in the parent quote provided, which is testament to how you have gone above and beyond to give your young people a platform to tackle issues that they are passionate about;

'It has made them more environmentally aware. They turn the lights off and recycle things. They use less water. They have achieved great things from the team. We were all proud when they made it to Parliament'.

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 Darlinghurst Academy again next academic year to help you expand on your eco-actions and successes of this year.

Mrs Powell and I shared the great news with the Eco – Committee on Tuesday. They were proud that their efforts and achievements were recognised and highly praised.

In response Mrs Powell would like to share, 'I am so pleased that our hard work has been recognised and commended. The children have worked hard, giving up their lunchtimes and spare time to complete the actions that they planned at the start of the year. It has been an incredible journey seeing the impact of their determination and drive to help make our school more eco-friendly'

The children would also like to say 'I feel very proud, excited and accomplished' – Tara, Year 4

'It means a lot because we've worked really hard to get it. It was a memorable moment.' – Isla, Year 4

'I take pride in knowing our school has a green flag and knowing the hard work that took place in getting it and making our school more eco-friendly' – Finley, Year 6

'I'm really happy because it means that our school is really eco-friendly and we've made sure we've done all the things we need to, to help the planet' – Thomas, Year 6

We continue to teach Environmental Science and Climate change as part of our curriculum, including outdoor learning and geography utilising the grounds and local areas. Over the summer, projects will be carried out to create an outdoor village using the beach huts and to support our connected curriculum with Miss Arnold. Mrs Powell is looking ahead with actions on how to work towards the Eco-schools themes we haven't tackled such as reducing our water use and working further with the local community (global citizenship). We'd also like to continue to promote biodiversity in our school grounds and continue to reduce waste.

I look forward to seeing the academy continue their active approach to sustainability and thank everyone for their contributions.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Nicholls