

We are passionate about our Planet

Written by the Eco Alert team (Y2-Y6 children)

We are passionate about our planet. Every little helps and it is so important that we are educating people about the environment. Even though we are 11 years and younger, we can make a difference.

Our plan in school as part of our Eco team is to get everyone to realize that they can do little things to help. Our plan is simple:

- We want everyone to fall in love with nature,
- We want everyone to understand the environmental problems; and
- We want everyone to do something, however small, to help – ‘Every little helps’.

Over the past three years, we have won Eco awards for our positive contribution to the environment. Find out about some of our actions below:

Ch-Angels project

Phoebe and Matilda designed a project named Ch-Angels:

1. They asked each class to make an environmental pledge.
2. Once each class had made their pledge, they received a recycled angel (made out of recycled tins). This was to serve as a reminder about their pledge.
3. Each class wrote to a local organisation to get them involved too.
4. The village held an environment fair, the children ran a stall getting everyone involved in making their pledges.

Here are some of the pledges:

- ⦿ Turn off the lights when I leave a room
- ⦿ Turn off the water when we are brushing our teeth
- ⦿ Walk or scoot to school instead of going in the car
- ⦿ Have shorter showers
- ⦿ Create less food waste
- ⦿ Eat vegetarian once a week
- ⦿ Have a single use plastic free lunch box contents



Climate Club



How much CO₂ do we produce?

- Can you drink a can of coke in 3 minutes?
- Can you drink 2 cans of coke in 6 minutes?
- Or 20 cans in an hour?? - your car can!



Climate Club news: this year saw the launch of a new club – Climate Club – which aims to teach pupils more about the facts and consequences of climate change. It is vital in such an important topic that we learn to tell the facts from the fiction, and this club helps to achieve just that. It is led by Dr Chris Jones from the Met Office who has nearly 30 years' experience as a climate researcher.

Initially attended by 10 students from Year 6 then Year 5, Climate Club has looked at what we mean by climate and how we can see that it is changing. We've looked at different reasons for climate change – both natural and human-caused – over different time periods to understand how we know what is causing our climate to change *now*.

One activity was to research the climate of lots of different countries. We created a Google spread sheet so that everyone could look up facts for their chosen country and collect the data in one place – it was fascinating to watch the sheet come to life with all the facts and figures. Shelby said, "I like making things which will help other people learn"

From these facts we made some Top Trumps cards – which country has the hottest or coldest temperature? How big is it and how much CO₂ (the main greenhouse gas changing our climate) does it produce? This is a great and fun way to learn all about the world's different countries and their role in climate change. Maeva said, "I've enjoyed making the Top Trumps and also drawing Polar Bears!"



There is no Planet B song (words written by Year 3 children, melody written by Mr Godfrey)

After learning about some of the climate issues, we wrote and composed a song to help raise awareness. We did this by creating a word cloud about the issues and what we wanted to do about it. We were pleased with our catchy chorus – once heard, it whirrs around your head all day!

Our world is struggling with pollution
In our lives, we've got to take a stand
We've got to do what we can to find solutions
It's not too late to lend a helping hand

Please protect our planet, there is no planet b,
It isn't up to someone else, it's up to you and me *clap clap*

Less waste, means less plastic in the ocean
Less waste means we won't cut down many trees
It's our job to make sure creatures are protected
It's not their fault we use more than we need

Please protect our planet, there is no planet b,
It isn't up to someone else, it's up to you and me *clap clap*

Today, you could pick up some litter
Re-use, instead of throwing away
It's not too late to pitch in and make a difference
Every small thing we do can make a change

Please protect our planet, there is no planet b,
It isn't up to someone else, it's up to you and me *clap clap*

Planting 200 trees



Our Eco Team joined forces with Exminster's Green Spaces, Peter Chandler, to plant 200 saplings. The woodland trust kindly supplied the saplings for the school to plant on Milbury Reach, a community green space. The newly planted bank will create a hedge on the bunds, it will provide a home and corridor for wildlife, at the same time assist in the control of rain water runoff for years to come. The Eco team thoroughly enjoyed planting the saplings and the accompanying plaque, hand crafted by Peter. "The Eco Team are a passionate group of representatives from across the school that want to raise awareness of environmental issues, want everyone to fall in love with nature and are avid about spreading the message that every little action can help. Our young people are the voice of the future and they will be the ones watching these trees grow for years to come. Looking after our environment is such an important aspect of education for our children as they are our future voice and leaders," Sarah Whalley, headteacher.

Gift bags: our Year 4 children entered a competition to grow 5 pounds, a young enterprise award. With this, they designed and implemented an eco- friendly project where they designed, made and sold gift bag out of donated materials. Not only did they recycle lots of unwanted material, they also made money and donated this to the Woodland Trust charity to plant more trees. They were very proud to win a prize in the competition but they were even prouder that they were supporting the environment, getting people to be more eco-friendly and produced rainbow ribbon bags for each of our new reception parents as a memory of their first day at school.

Recycled scarecrow jellyfish: Our allotment group and Year 5 children sculpted these jellyfish scarecrows out of recycled plastics – plastics bags, yoghurt pots, bottles, and containers – anything they could find in their recycling bins. They entered them into the Devon County Show. They have done a great job at keeping the birds away from the seeds as we were growing them.

Recycling projects: we have launched many recycling projects. One has been organised by Harry in Year 6 to recycle inhalers and spacers. This has been very successful as many people were unaware these could be recycled. We have also been a community drop off point for old batteries and have filled 3 large containers of these already this year. One army base heard we were doing this and dropped off 2 huge bags of batteries from their equipment. As well as these we also are a drop off point for tooth brushes, crisp packets and baby food pouches.

Trees for cards: Matilda and Phoebe wrote an email to school asking if they could get everyone involved in an exchange at Christmas time – exchanging cards for trees. They asked that people donated money towards the National Forest rather than sending out cards. Matilda and Phoebe were delighted their scheme raised £114. They chose 8 native trees: 2 oaks, 2 limes, 2 wild cherries, 1 hazel and 1 birch. The trees will be planted in the National Forest as part of a 200 square miles woodland regeneration project which has been running for the past 25 years.

The Bees' Knees project: The aim of this project was to Raise awareness of the importance of bees, Communities to *bee* more bee-aware. We held 3 assemblies to teach our community about:

- what conservation is
- Facts about bees – why they are the bees' knees!
- How they can help to save the bees

We also wrote an article for our local village magazine to ask the wider community to get involved. We have also got in touch with the local parish council and they are also involved in our project and promoting it in the community.

The Eco team produced an Information Sheet to send to local schools as well as the letter to get them involved. We also sent them some seeds to sow that would attract the bees. We made bee bookmarks to interest and get the children involved – using recycled paper. They are now using these in their books to remind them about the bees every day.

Impact of the project - We have got over 4000 children interested in bees through letters, assemblies and seeds (15 different schools). We have got our communities planting flowers and herbs to attract the bees. We are now a Bee Friendly community.

Foster a tree: We have been working with our parish council who adopted 200 saplings. 20 of our families have fostered a tree until next Autumn to support our local Green Spaces group. They are watering it and looking after it then will help with the planting of the trees in our village. These were then collected in a year later and planted in a community space with the help of the children.

Conservation Bat Buddy: In the autumn term, we learnt about bats. We found out lots of information about them and talked to our classes about them and led an assembly about bats. We were involved in a bat walk on residential and learnt and experienced echolocation. Our torch light show attracted the bats and they put on an amazing flying display for us. We made bat bookmarks and taught our classes how to do these. We made insect hotels, named 'Buggingham Palace' as an attraction for bat food. We contacted bat experts to find out more information.

Development of nature school: over the past couple of years we have allotted an area of school that is now based as our Nature School. The area has evolved over time and now our reception children use this on a weekly basis, whatever the weather, to enjoy some outdoor learning, discovering nature, linking it to a book each week and enjoying practical, social activities in this space. Learning ranges from building fires, making bird feeders out of recycled products, naming leaves, collecting tiny items, using the tools, creating collages, storytelling. Every week it is different.