

Reading Schools Eco Newsletter

Edition 4: December 2021

SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS!

Glow away glitter!

Glitter. The sparkling dust that makes everything feel Christmassy. Yet the problem is that studies have shown that microplastics, including glitter, do not biodegrade. When these tiny particles of plastic are washed down the drain and reach the ocean, they can be consumed by fish, seabirds and other marine life, causing them harm. These tiny plastic pieces end up in the food chain, and inevitably, our diets.

Did you know that the glitter you used as a child is still floating around out there?

Why don't you ditch controversial plastic glitter in favour of a more eco-friendly biodegradable alternative? Pupils from Logan primary school, in East Ayrshire, Scotland, are now using plant-based Craft Bioglitter, which degrades in around four weeks, in all its art and craft lessons. Bioglitter is made from cellulose, a plant derived material. This is the most eco-friendly craft glitter available and gives you all the gorgeous sparkle with none of the pollution issues. The glitter is 92% plastic free, marine and waste water biodegradable with its proven high biodegradation performance. Extracted from mainly eucalyptus trees sourced from responsibly managed and certified plantations. It is based on plant material rather than plastic and will naturally degrade in the environment over time. Though not fully plastic free yet, it is a giant step in the right direction. It is even stored in a recyclable plastic dispenser!

Find out more about Bio Glitter here: <https://www.bioglitter.com/>

It is also available on the TTS website as a pack of six pots for £32.96 excluding VAT.

HELLO!

This is a termly newsletter produced by Brighter Futures for Children in collaboration with Reading Climate Change Partnership. Its aim is to support your work on environmental education and climate change in your school.

If there is anything of interest to you in this newsletter, then please contact: educateclimate@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

We are here to support all Reading schools to establish themselves as sustainable hubs within the community. We look forward to hearing from you!



How to make Christmas eco-friendly!

Hannah Golding at All Saints Junior School

❖ Reduce: Christmas Cards

Last year, we worked across the school to reduce waste with our Christmas cards. The Eco Council worked out approximately how many Christmas cards are given out each year and they were shocked! Especially considering how so many cards cannot be recycled due to glitter and shiny materials. Our Eco Warriors wrote to families to introduce a new initiative: the children would make one Christmas card in class using easily recycled materials; the children would write Christmas greetings to ALL of their class mates inside. These cards then formed class advent calendar: each day a card was opened, read out and enjoyed by all. By the end of term, the Eco Council ensured that these cards were either recycled, or sent home for a child to keep as a memory of Christmas 2020.



❖ Reuse: Wrapping:

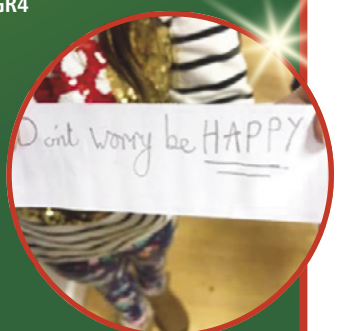
As part of an Eco Day, set to raise awareness on how to be more sustainable around Christmas time, the Eco Council wrote to our families asking for donations of old fabric (curtains, blankets, clothing etc), ribbons and bows to be repurposed and upcycled. The old fabric was cut to a range of sizes and the plain fabrics were decorated using fabric pens. The council then held a wrapping sale in the school hall for families and children to buy supplies for wrapping their presents. We led demonstrations for children and families on how to use the 'Furoshiki' wrapping method, so the fabric donated by families and decorated and designed by the children could be used instead of wrapping paper! Some families also donated eco-friendly stocking fillers for us to sell at our stalls too!

www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTrip8N9GR4



❖ Recycle: Christmas Crackers:

Also as part of our Christmas Eco Day, the Eco Council led workshops with each class across the school to help every child make their very own sustainable Christmas cracker for the school's Christmas lunch. We did this using repurposed cardboard, recycled tissue paper, cracker snaps and twine. A special surprise was included in each cracker: a hyacinth bulb (very kindly sourced for us by one of our families), instructions on how to grow these bee-friendly flowers, and a kind, positive message.



SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS!

Additional resources to support –
RE3 Recycling Top Tips for Christmas:

1. As the end of festive period is approaching, don't recycle Christmas cards straight away! Cut them down and turn front page into a beautiful gift tags that can be used next year!

2. Before recycling your wrapping paper do a SCRUNCH TEST! If you can scrunch the paper and it doesn't spring back, your wrapping paper passed the test and you can recycle it!

3. Send Personalised Christmas eCards for Charity. Charity christmas eGreetings can be better than traditional Christmas cards. Just take a look at the brilliant charity christmas card designs including animated options:
www.dontsendmeacard.com/ecards/christmas.html

4. Almost every material in electricals can be reused, so please remember anything with a plug or battery can be recycled! Bring it all to our Recycling Centres and if they are still in reusable condition leave at the Reuse Area!



TRAINING AND CPD

Available online, anytime.

STEM Climate Change Workshops

www.stem.org.uk/climate-change-workshops

RISC Climate Curriculum Course

www.risc.org.uk/education/training

UKSSN Climate Education & School Sustainability Training Video

www.transform-our-world.org/cpd

FREE Renewable Energy Kits for schools

Don't forget that Brighter Futures for Children have FREE renewable energy kits available for schools to hire! These kits are available on loan to schools for up to half a term at a time. All of the kits come with instructions, training, lesson plans and risk assessments available here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1-wEJf1P6tqCdVnH_4fcThHkIERAnU-wm

"Thank you so much for letting us use them, the children really enjoyed seeing how they worked! Might even consider getting some for the school now."
– Churchend Primary Academy

"We absolutely loved the renewable energy kits! The children in class are extremely environmentally aware and love finding out how things work. The quality of the kits was quite unbelievable and it was so easy to assemble and use. The children gained such a valuable learning experience that they won't forget in a hurry. Thank you so much for providing such a high-quality resource and for letting us use them!"

– The Heights Primary School

Solar Water Heater Kit

This kit demonstrates how the sun's energy is used to heat water.

Solar Photovoltaic Kit

This kit demonstrates how the sun's energy is used to produce electricity.

Wind Turbine Kit

This kit demonstrates how wind energy is used to produce electricity.



Eco education at school and at home can be approached in various ways. Using our six themes, below you will find a selection of apps that serve as learning platforms for you and your students.

Water

WATER1DER

Water1der is a free groundwater awareness trivia app from the Groundwater Foundation.

Test your groundwater knowledge and learn more about this vital resource by working through the various categories and quizzes.



Energy

SOLAR FOR SCHOOLS UK

More than a classroom resource! The solar panel design tool allows students to design a solar panel system and turn it into a reality. Animations, illustrations, videos, quizzes and more all keep the learning experience engaging.



Nature and Green Spaces

MINECRAFT: GLOBAL BUILD CHALLENGE 2021: PEACE WITH NATURE

Explore how we can achieve sustainable lifestyles. Apply knowledge and understanding by building a sustainable place to live that represents new and innovative thinking on sustainable lifestyles.



<https://edu-next.minecraft.net/en-us/lessons/global-build-challenge-2021-peace-with-nature>

Transport

My Footprint App by WWF-UK

Take everyday challenges on food, energy, nature and travel and help stop climate change; small, simple actions that can have a real effect on cutting your carbon footprint.



Health and Wellbeing

Insight Timer: Eco Anxiety and Meditation

This 10-day program is created in collaboration with the not-for-profit search engine Ecosia. Recognise the causes of eco-anxiety and the different forms it takes. Then, come into a space for a grounding visualisation where you'll be asked to set an intention as you go through this 10-day challenge



<https://insighttimer.com/insighttimerearth/guided-meditations/day-1-eco-challenge-understanding-eco-anxiety>

Purchasing, Recycling and Waste

RECYCLE HERO

Recycle Hero is a fun and interactive app that teaches children about recycling and saving our planet through six exciting games.



Eco-Schools www.eco-schools.org.uk

We encourage all Reading schools to sign up to Eco Schools, an international award scheme that empowers pupils, raises environmental awareness and improves your school environment.

Already an Eco School?

Get in touch and we can link you to local teachers who have achieved Green Flag status and are very happy to support you through the journey in the simplest, easiest way, with minimal effort!

You can also join this very useful Facebook group for further advice and support:

www.facebook.com/groups/ecoschoolsenglandecocoordinators

THIS MONTH'S TOP TIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS

Instead of laminating everything, use clear page covers.

Wait a minute... Did we just suggest that teachers stop using the laminator? It's a pretty bold move, but if you want to have a more sustainable classroom, it's the way to go. Take inspiration from Katie and her EarthClassroom Instagram account. She strives to go 100 percent unlaminated in her classroom, but she recognizes that supplies need to be durable. So she uses (and reuses) clear sheets like this all year.

www.instagram.com/earthclassroom



Organise a school uniform swap!

New year, new wardrobe? Save money and the environment by donating or swapping school jumpers that have been grown out of.

Instead of tossing your dried-up markers, recycle them.

Terracycle and the Crayola Recycling Program offer options for your old pens to find new life.



UN Accredited Climate Change Teacher

We encourage all Eco Co-ordinators to complete the UN Accredited Climate Change course.

Find out more here:
<https://unccelearn.org/educate>
or get in touch for more information and support!



AimHi Live are providing a new course (starting September 2021) especially for teachers, to support them when bringing climate change into the classroom.

Find out more here:
www.aimhi.co/climate-course-for-teachers



RISC has an education team who work with teachers and schools to promote Global Citizenship in the curriculum.

Find out more about what's on offer here:
www.risc.org.uk/education/training

Calendar

Here are some key environmental dates for your diaries, to inspire work you do with your classes and Eco Councils this half term!

1st Nov	World Vegan Day
3rd-12th Nov	Transform Our World Youth Summit
4th Nov	Outdoor Classroom Day
5th Dec	World Soil Day
2nd Feb	World Wetlands Day
27th Feb	World Polar Bear Day
21st Feb-6th Mar	Fairtrade Fortnight
3rd Mar	World Wildlife Day
18th Mar	World Recycling Day

Reading Climate Action for Schools Website

www.readingcan.org.uk/schools

Find out more about what you can do in Reading to promote sustainable choices at your school. Access our suite of planning and resources and be inspired by our tips to lead a carbon neutral lifestyle.



Reading Schools Climate Action Network Join us!

We have set up the Reading Schools Climate Action Network (RSCAN) to support and link up primary and secondary school staff who are working with the challenges of environmental education. This gives all school staff concerned about climate change and sustainability the opportunity to meet others interested in similar issues and share ideas. We would like to offer shared practice, areas for collaboration, access to training and shared resources.

Get in touch if you are interested in joining us!
educateclimate@brighterfuturesforchildren.org



Contact us:

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www.readingcan.org.uk/schools