



Sustainable Schools (2018-2019)



Our Approach to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) it is a vision of education that empowers people to take responsibility for creating a sustainable future. Solihull's ESD strategy is to support learning organisations particularly schools and to recognise the importance of embedding ESD. The ESD strategy and Sustainable Schools projects fit under the Solihull Green Prospectus key theme of 'Communication, Education and Engagement'. The ESD Network group was established by the Sustainable Development Team and is led by the ESD officer and includes staff from a wide variety of teams. Through partnership and sharing of information the group aims to promote understanding of ESD, raise awareness and co-ordinate an improved level of support to schools.

Council Led Activity

Solihull schools celebrate green awards success



Solihull schools gathered at Sans Souci Training Centre on Friday 19 October to celebrate their success in the Ashden Less CO2 programme and the Solihull Greener Schools Awards.

Over the last 3 years there has been a concerted effort by many schools to cut their energy use and bills and shrink their carbon footprint, supported by the Ashden Less CO2 programme. Schools that demonstrated good practice in the programme were celebrated at the event and shared their ideas with the other attendees.

25 Schools were represented at the event, with six schools achieving the highest level possible. These were: St. Patrick's CE Primary, Monkspath Primary, Chapelfields Junior, Oak Cottage Primary, Fordbridge Community, and Castle Bromwich Junior. Schools were supported by corporate partners including Birmingham Airport, JLR, Birmingham Business Park, Npower and Fieldfisher

The Mayor of Solihull, Cllr Flo Nash, and representatives from the corporate partners presented all the schools who took part in the Greener Schools Awards with a certificate. The schools that reached the highest level were each given a plaque to recognise their achievement.

The leaf-shaped plaques were handmade by Community Gardening Service (CGS) project workers using recycled wood. The plaques were made at the Saxon Way site in Chelmsley Wood. CGS is a scheme that helps residents with learning disabilities and mental health problems.

For more information on the awards, including award packs and application

and to see presentations from the event go to Solgrid ESD webpages <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/education/support-services/education-for-sustainable-development/>



Global Goals conference to celebrate the Global Learning Programme

The Mayor of Solihull, Councillor Flo Nash, joined five local schools in attending the Global Goals event on 15 June.

The event was part of the Global Learning Programme initiative, funded by central government.

Staff and pupils from Chapelfields Junior School, Monkspath School, St Patrick's School, St Alphege Infants and Merstone Special School attended the event in the Council Chamber.

This event raised awareness of Global Goals, the 17 officially recognised United Nation objectives to work towards a more sustainable, cleaner and fairer world.

Schools gave presentations on various Global Goals such as Gender, Equality and Life Under Water. Pupils paraded costumes they had created to represent the different Global Goals.

For more information on the Global Goals go to <https://www.globalgoals.org/>



Fairtrade Tea Trail

As part of Fairtrade Fortnight in March 2019, tea themed artwork created by local school children was displayed in shops and businesses across Solihull and Chelmsley Wood to form Fairtrade art trails. Alice in Wonderland Mad Hatter tea party was a popular theme for art work.

The trail is a great opportunity for local children and families to gain understanding of Fairtrade and engage in a fun activity.

Using a Fairtrade Trail sheet, children could search for clues, track down the artwork and finally crack a code, learning about the importance of Fairtrade.



Pupils were invited to meet the Mayor at tea parties that took place at Paramo Lounge in Solihull Town Centre and at Lily's Tea Room in Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre.

For more information on Fairtrade go to <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/fairtrade>



Solihull Habitats Improvement Programme engaging schools

Babbs Mill Wetland - Yorkswood Primary School

The Sustainability Engagement Officer delivered an assembly at Yorkswood School to inform the pupils of water quality improvements being made to the River Cole.

An area was planted with wetland plant species to include common reed. These wetland plants act as natural filters, cleaning the grey water as it flows through. This slows down the rate of water flow as it passes through the vegetation limiting pollution to the River Cole.

In simple terms it was explained to the children how these plants provide food and shelter to freshwater invertebrates, fish and birds whilst oxygenating the water and filtering pollutants.

Bills Wood Woodland—Hazel Oak Special School, Woodlands Infant and Lighthall Secondary School.

Assemblies explained how the woodland is being managed at Bills Wood, which involves selective thinning of trees. The pupils at a number of local schools were able to understand how removing trees allows light to reach the woodland floor which encourages plants such as bluebells to grow which in turn supports pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies.



Site visits were also offered to schools to see the work taking place where the Ecologist and Forestry contractors gave demonstrations on the different machinery used and talked about the different types of trees and their uses.

Oaks and Shires— Alcott Wood

The annual event led by the CLAUDE Team took place in Alcott woodland in November 2018 with local schools including St Anne's Catholic Primary, Fordbridge Community, Coleshill Heath School and Merstone School taking part in activities during the week.

The activities helped the children to gain understanding of woodland management and how woodlands are kept safe and healthy. Children watched the horse pull logs, searched for various natural materials found in the woods, they looked for mini beast habitats and played games to learn about woodland animals and discussed what trees are used for.

The Rangers, Love Solihull team and Sustainability Engagement Officer delivered activities throughout the week.



Activity led by other organisations

Model Climate Change Conference

Six schools from across Solihull came together to discuss climate change at the Model Climate Conference on 30 November in the Civic Suite.

The Mayor of Solihull, Councillor Stuart Davis, welcomed the participants to the Council Chamber and Councillor Ian Courts, Solihull Council's then Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Managed Growth, opened the session.

CTC Kingshurst Academy, Grace Academy, John Henry Newman Catholic College, Lode Heath School, Park Hall Academy and St Peter's Catholic School pupils all took part in the conference, which was organised with the InterClimate Network. The charity runs conferences across the UK and worked with Solihull Council's Sustainability team to hold the event in Solihull.



The conference gave students the experience of how it feels to negotiate in a UN Climate Conference. The pupils received background papers and a country that they would represent at the conference. Each team represented a different country

Following the debates and negotiations in the Council Chambers, pupils from each of the schools were tasked with coming up with a series of pledges that they will have to persuade their school to sign up to. Council Officers from various teams including SWITCH, CLAUDE, and Love Solihull produced displays and spoke to pupils on pledges linked to their area of work.

Ashden Programme—4th year

Solihull Council is celebrating going into the fourth round of the Ashden LESS CO2 programme, which encourages local schools to transform their community into sustainable, carbon-free places to live.

This school year will mark the fourth year of the Council's involvement in the programme which has seen a great improvement in reducing Solihull's carbon footprint. The programme is supported through a joint approach between the Council's Property Services, Asset Management and Sustainability teams.

The programme focuses on three core areas: changing behaviours to instil energy awareness; professional audits of school buildings to see where energy can be saved; and integrating sustainability across the curriculum.

Every school that takes part in the next round of the scheme receives a free energy survey with a report that outlines the best type of energy projects that the school could install for little or no cost. They also receive one to one advice on steps to reduce energy and resources to help.

For more information go to <http://www.lessco2.org.uk/>



Monkspath Earn Award at International Water Explorer Awards

Monkspath Junior and Infant School received the Sustainable Development Goals Award at the International Water Explorer awards which took place in London's Canary Wharf on 23rd October 2019.



Water Explorer is a school and youth group based environmental education project that aims to highlight the importance of water conservation on a global level. Water Explorer is delivered by UK charity Global Action Plan (GAP).

Monkspath Junior and Infant School competed against 475 other teams in the UK to be crowned the UK's top National team in September, earning them a place at the International Awards last month where they met with the top teams from each of the 11 Water Explorer countries.

Monkspath Junior and Infant School completed various water saving activities throughout the year, including connecting to Water Explorer teams in South Africa and Malta. They also attended a Sustainable Development Goals conference where they spoke to the Mayor and other local schools about their important Water Explorer work.

Solutions for the Planet -West Midlands Regional Final

Solutions for the Planet hold two regional finals in the West Midlands, and the first of these took place at Aston University on May 15th 2019.

There were 10 teams from the West Midlands with 4 from Solihull— Alderbrook School, Arden Academy, John Henry Newman Catholic College, CTC Kingshurst Academy.

The team that came in third place was Turbo Turbine, from Alderbrook school. This team wanted to tackle the problem of CO2 pollution from factories, and were inspired by experiments done in their science class at school to focus on how to capture the gas from the chimney. Their idea was to separate the gas and use it to generate energy using a turbine, and sell the carbonic acid off to fizzy drinks companies.

In second place was Green Hive Trust from Arden Academy. They wanted people to encourage bees to their gardens using their creation of a clear box containing the flowers that bees like. They had brought a super prototype and had even already found a sponsor to support them and supply their team shirts.

Judges awarded first place to PPU (Pollen Protection Unit), from CTC Kingshurst Academy, this school was at the National final in London. The entry focused on bees, they looked at how to continue to pollinate if bee populations continue to decline, the judges were impressed with the thought they had put into their drone design. They were also impressed with the passion which they had for the issues that both bees and farmers face.



China Art Competition

Through Solihull's Chinese 'sister' city Changzhou, local Solihull schools were invited to take part in the regional Jiangsu International Painting Contest, 2018 – highlighting the relationship between schools and young people between all the twin city and towns across the world that are linked to the area.

With the theme 'Dreams of the Future' and a shared focus on sustainability between the two areas, children between 4 and 12 were invited to take part and were judged in Jiangsu at the end of the year.

Pupils from Burman Infant School entered and won second and third prizes, as well as excellence certificates.

Certificates were presented to the children during an assembly and parents were invited. Children also received colourful hard back books with competition paintings from all over the world. The book also includes their own paintings.



Practical Action training session

In March a training session was held at the Civic Suite for teachers in Solihull who support Sustainability and Life Ready activities in Primary schools.

The session delivered by Practical Action highlighted their popular hands-on STEM challenges which fit the science curriculum. Teachers had the chance to take part in a challenge and received a teacher pack full of free engaging STEM/science materials to inspire pupils and help give them an awareness and understanding of global issues. Activities included Ditch the Dirt, Stop the Spread, and the Floating Garden Challenge.



There were 15 teachers that attended and all the teachers responded positively in their discussions, enjoyed the hands-on element and Practical Action had some great responses in the session evaluation sheets.

Birmingham Airport Single Use Plastic project with Castle Bromwich Junior School

Birmingham Airport sponsors Solihull Greener Schools Award and have been working with local schools. The Airport worked with Castle Bromwich Junior School to support their agenda to reduce single-use plastics. Members of the Airport sustainability team visited Castle Bromwich Junior School and carried out an informative session on plastic reduction along with other environmental aspects.

Castle Bromwich Junior School's Environment Champions were invited into the Airport for a tour where they were shown various ways that the Airport are tackling single use plastic waste and how the Airport operates. One of the main challenges that the Airport currently faces is the vast amount of single use plastic bags used in the security areas of the Airport. They set the children at Castle Bromwich Junior School a task to think of ways that the Airport could further reduce plastic waste.

