

Go Green Schools: Project findings

Project Coordinators:

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Structure

Background

The opportunity of the Net Zero Innovation Programme (NZIP)

Go Green Schools – Partnership working, methodologies

Key findings from project

How is the work continuing?

Overall learnings from participating in NZIP

Background and our challenge

Our challenge - Reaching 'beyond the choir' for environmental behaviour change

Schools seen as organisations with variety of people to engage

Some existing projects for schools - CAREless Pollution campaign, Nature recovery site signage

Unaware of what schools doing on environmental action and challenges they face in doing more

LGA Net Zero Innovation Programme

- Bringing together academics and LAs to tackle LA challenges
- Broad range of challenges – focussed on local solutions
- £18,000 allocated for project spend
- Helped build closer relationship with local university
- Dedicated time to work on project, along with sessions on partnership working and mentoring
- <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub/net-zero-innovation-programme>

Our solution - The project

Tranche 1 – Trialling ‘whole school’ approach to increase environmental awareness and action in a school

Tranche 2 – Understanding environmental actions being taken by schools, along with the challenges faced in doing so

Working together during the project

Regular catch-ups on project activities

Split workload to our strengths

Be understanding of timelines, length of different processes

Colleague sounding board helpful for project review and to see opportunities for project development

Tranche 1

- Audit of environmental activities at school
- Summer 2021: 2 whole school 'green days' to introduce project to staff and students
- Programme of Autumn 2021/Spring 2022 activities across whole school
- Worked collaboratively with Together We Grow CIC



Outcome/Impacts of Tranche 1

- **More staff on board with project – ‘Actions drive beliefs’**
 - *‘Allowed us to think differently about our core offer ...to build outdoor environmental studies into our curriculum’ – School headteacher*
 - *‘I do feel that staff attitudes have changed, and they have really got on board with all the activities’– Class teacher/Eco lead*
- **Pupils enjoyed the activities!**
 - *‘They [pupils] have been very keen to talk about the new experience and they were very proud to be part of improving the school grounds’ – Class teacher/Eco lead*
- **School got further funding to continue with outdoor learning**
- **School exploring more opportunities for environmental action**
 - *‘We are seeking out support... in terms of our current SLA’s with providers such as gas and electricity, recycling and further emissions savings measures’ – School headteacher*



Tranche 2

- Interviews with 5 primary school headteachers and green leads

Key findings:

- **Headteacher/SLT have to be on board for co-ordinated approach** – See opportunities beyond environment – Wellbeing, cost savings etc.
- **Eco Schools framework commended** – Useful starting checklist of actions
- **Outdoor education/Forest Schools a good starting point** – wellbeing and curriculum
- **Lack of staff time** – Focussed on curriculum, difficult to link environment with Ofsted
- **Staff lack expertise to deliver environmental education** – not in teacher training

Going forward - Impacts

- **Dedicated online eco resource hub** for schools on Council website
- **Green Days/Green Weeks** to occur every year
- **Creating Essex branch of UK Schools Sustainability Network** – Enabling local and national sharing of resources, experiences etc
- **Continued collaboration with University** – Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy, Single use plastic reduction in city centre



**Colchester Borough Council
and the University of Essex
tackle climate change together**

Date
Tue 12 Apr 22

Key learnings

- **Partnership working and building relationships with stakeholders takes time** but is worth it – Dedicate more time than you think to it!
- **A whole school approach to change is required** to get as many people on board as possible and reduce burden on individual staff – but takes time!
- **Actions drive beliefs** – Introducing actions into the school helped to change minds about value of environmental activities
- **Universities and Councils can do impactful collaborative action**

Further information

- [LGA Go Green Schools case study](#)
- [UK Schools Sustainability Network](#)
- [Council's 'Support for Schools' webpages](#)

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