

Reading Schools Eco Newsletter

Edition 2: June 2021

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

By making sustainable travel choices, schools can cut down on pollution and improve air quality. Active travel can also promote healthy lifestyles, benefitting both physical and mental wellbeing and make our school environments safer by cutting down on traffic.

So, how can you encourage your school to make more sustainable travel choices? Two excellent resources we'd like to share with you are: Modeshift STARS and WOW!

What is Modeshift STARS?

Modeshift STARS is a national awards scheme which recognises schools and Early Years settings that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. It is an online system which the school use to create a travel plan, record travel data and log and deliver activities in school. There are five different award levels to achieve: green, bronze, silver, gold and platinum!

For more information, visit: www.modeshiftstars.org



What is WOW?

WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. On average WOW schools see a 30% reduction in car journeys taken to the school gate and a 23% increase in walking rates! What's more, is that RBC's transport team are offering free access to WOW resources for the first 3 months!

For more information, visit:

www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-to-school

Take a look at the Geoffrey Field Junior School case study to see how they've implemented these resources across their school.

HELLO! This is a quarterly 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!

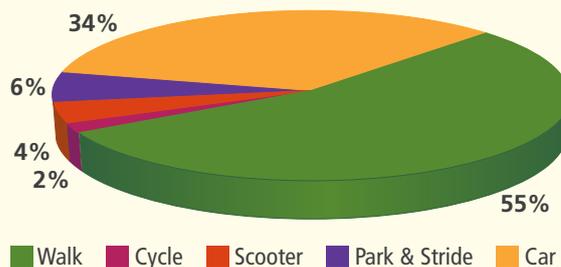


Geoffrey Field Junior School: Sustainable Travel Stars!

CASE STUDY

Children from Geoffrey Field Junior School have achieved both Green and Bronze awards for Modeshift STARS and are now working towards achieving the Silver award, having taken part in various active travel activities, such as: Bikeability; Living Streets' WOW (the year-round walk to school challenge); an anti-idling campaign; travelled using public transport for out-of-school activities; and participated in road safety awareness.

Geoffrey Field Junior School: How do children travel to school?



The results of the school's most recent staff and pupil travel survey show that an impressive 55% of children walk to school!

We asked Geoffrey Field Junior School's Headteacher about their experience with Modeshift STARS and WOW:

1. How did you find the process of Modeshift STARS?
"It was great to find out that a lot of what we were already doing, such as bikeability, could be counted as evidence for the award application. Lucy Prismall, from RBC Transport Planning, has been really helpful and met with the staff leading this work to look at the evidence we already had and what more we could be doing."
2. Would you recommend Modeshift STARS and WOW to other schools?
"The children loved the WOW challenge and it helped get everyone involved in our drive to get more children walking, cycling or scooting to school. We have seen a lot more children scooting and cycling to school as a result."
3. What advice would you give to other schools to encourage sustainable travel?
"Getting the children involved has been really important. Our Eco Council have played a key role in this and loved promoting ideas across the school."

What is happening elsewhere?

A huge well done to the following schools, who have also shown they are committed to travelling more sustainably!

Thameside Primary School
Actively working towards achieving the Green award and taking part in WOW

Park Lane Junior School
Actively working towards achieving the Green award and taking part in WOW

Alfred Sutton Primary School
Taking part in WOW

Wilson Primary School
Actively working towards achieving the Green award

The Heights Primary School
Actively working towards achieving the Platinum award and taking part in WOW

Coley Park Primary School
Taking part in WOW
St Anne's Catholic Primary School
Taking part in WOW

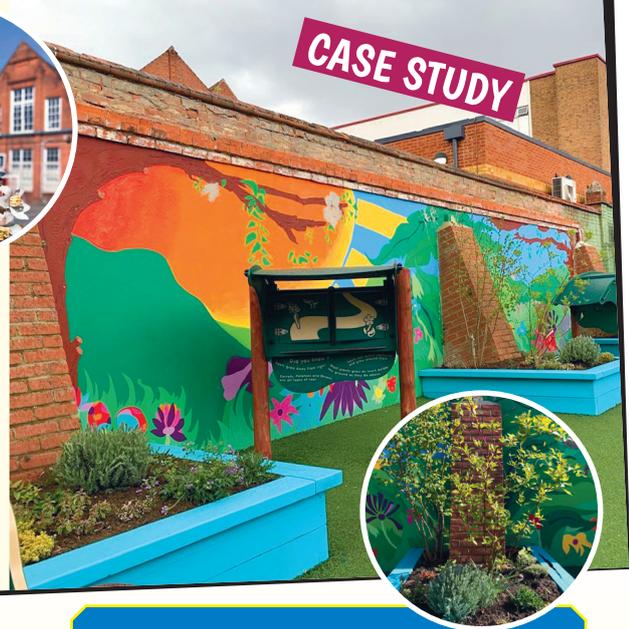
RCAN supports Redlands Primary School to “green” up the open space and increase outside learning

A group of parents have been fund-raising to green up the outdoor space at Redlands Primary School. They want to enable opportunities for outdoor learning, increase biodiversity around the school and enable the children to grow their own food.

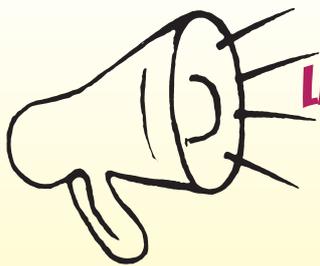
Tricia and Natalie from RCAN have been working to support the school with this and with further successful fund-raising, hope to be able to work towards new tree-planting projects and provide further teacher training opportunities with Nature Nurture.

For more information on the campaign to green up Redland’s playground, please take a look at the Go Fund Me page: www.gofundme.com/f/Redlands

Could we help your school? RCAN has volunteers that can give you initial free advice on options for your grounds and can point you in the direction of local Forest School and outdoor learning professionals. Get in touch if you’d like to green up your school too!



CASE STUDY



LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT

FREE Renewable Energy Kits for schools

Teach your class about the wonder of renewable energy, using solar and wind power, with these amazing kits. They are a fantastic for child-led activities to introduce the children to renewable energy and STEM technology from Early Years and Primary school, as well as Secondary school. All of the kits are child-friendly and easy to use.

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

Brighter Futures for Children have bought a range of renewable energy kits which we would like to loan to all Reading schools for FREE. These kits are available on loan to schools for up to half a term at a time. Please contact us to book.

Wind Turbine Kit

- Demonstrates how wind energy is used to produce electricity
- Use outdoors in the wind or indoors with a fan
- Power motor, buzzer and LED modules
- Measure the voltage on the voltmeter or connect the kit to a data logger
- Experiment with combinations of 2, 3 or 6 blades to discover the most efficient configuration
- Vary the blade angle to find out how this affects the energy output
- Change the gear ratios to simulate the gearbox on a real wind turbine
- Storage case provided
- Full-colour activities/instructions included

Solar Water Heater Kit

- Demonstrates how the sun’s energy is used to heat water
- Effective and rapid performance
- Measure heat rise with the digital thermometer (0-70°) or connect the kit to a data logger
- Experiment with different sun conditions to see how this affects the water heating capacity
- Aluminium solar clip fin with copper heating tube
- Full-colour activities/instructions included

EVENTS

‘For the Future - Act Now’ Exhibition

Children are being invited to be a part of an exciting art exhibition at the beautiful Minster in Reading Town Centre. The theme for the exhibition is ‘For the Future - Act Now’. Artwork can be drawings, paintings, colouring or mixed media work, showing what they want the government, industry, business, transport, energy providers, supermarkets, schools, or themselves to do to protect the world. Artwork should be A3 or smaller and should be submitted by 6th August (submission details TBC). Artwork will be displayed at the exhibition between Tuesday 31st August and Friday 3rd September (11am – 4pm each day).

For further details, please visit:

<https://futureactnow.wordpress.com>

or contact

educateclimate@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Wear it Wild

Could your school host a ‘Wear it Wild’ event? Invite your pupils to come to school in animal-themed non-uniform for the day, in exchange for a small donation and raise money for a wildlife charity! Find out more about how to get involved:

www.wwf.org.uk/wear-it-wild/schools

Solar Photovoltaic Kit

- Demonstrates how the sun’s energy is used to produce electricity
- Power motor, buzzer and LED modules
- Measure the voltage on the voltmeter or connect the kit to a data logger
- Experiment with different light conditions to see how this affects the power generated
- Storage case provided
- Full-colour activities/instructions included



Eco work at school can be approached in various ways. You might like to start via one of the six themes below:

Energy



Individual: Switch your laundry setting to 30°C. The Energy Saving Trust confirms that washing at 30°C rather than 40°C reduces your energy consumption by 57% per cycle.

School & Community: The LESS CO₂ sustainable schools programme is a free energy efficiency programme available to any UK school, offering workshops, mentoring and advice on energy reductions.
www.lessco2.org.uk

Purchasing, recycling and waste



Individual: Use the food waste bin in the staff room! Don't have one? Get one.

School: Do you have fish and chip Fridays? Swap ketchup sachets for bowls of sauce, reducing single-use plastic.

Community: Is your school a Terracycle hub? If not, look for ones in the local area or become one!
www.terracycle.com/en-GB/

Nature and Green Spaces



Individual & School: Sign up to Innocent's Big Grow to get free planting resources:
www.innocentbiggrow.com/

School: The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation are available for school visits:
www.davidshepherd.org/education/dswf-at-your-school/free-virtual-school-visits/

Community: Encourage pupils, staff and parents to use Ecosia – a non-profit that plants a tree for every online search.
www.ecosia.org/

Transport



School: Avanti Cycling offers the Bikeability training programme, which is all about gaining practical skills and understanding how to cycle on today's roads.
www.avanticycling.co.uk/bikeability/

School: Road safety training is available in schools in Reading. Further information is available from our training provider Louis Taylor.
www.louistaylorroadsafetyschools.co.uk/Shows.html

School & Community: Turn your school road into a "no drive zone" during school hours with School Streets:
www.schoolstreets.org.uk

Health & Wellbeing



Individual, School & Community: Climate-anxiety is proving to be a key challenge in today's in school environment; #HelloYellow resource supports anxiety though helping students take positive action
www.transform-our-world.org/top-resources/values-and-wellbeing/-helloyellow

Water



Individual & School: Do you collect rainwater for your school garden or plants?

Community: Thames Water Community Speakers are available to work with your school:
www.corporate.thameswater.co.uk/About-us/Community/Working-in-our-communities/Community-speaker-programme



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



Polli:Nation

Schools-based learning, pollinator identification and supporting making positive changes to pollinator habitat, Polli:Nation offers a range of resources to help schools and the community identify and protect pollinators, as well as make habitats and homes for them even in the smallest of spaces.

Find out more at www.polli-nation.co.uk



Eco Bricks

What is an Eco Brick?

An Ecobrick is a plastic bottle packed tight with used plastic to make a reusable building block.

Build with Ecobricks

Ecobricks can be used to build modules, furniture, gardens, food forest play parks, and more.

The website includes details on how to make Eco Bricks, how to build your own constructions with them, and where they can be donated too. This would make an excellent whole school project!

www.ecobricks.org

Transform Our World

A quality-rated resource hub to help teachers bring environmental action into the classroom, Transform Our World includes curriculum-linked planning and resources on themes including the Sustainable Development Goals, outdoor learning, local community and STEM

www.transform-our-world.org



CALENDAR

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

- 28th May - 13th June** The Great Big School Clean
- 8th June** World Ocean's Day
- 16th June** World Refill Day
- 17th June** National Clean Air Day
- All of July** Plastic Free Month

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:

educateclimate@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
www.readingcan.org.uk/schools