

The 3 Peas Newsletter

(Pupils Protecting the Planet)

Dec 2018



In November the school applied for it's Green Flag award. We had a visit from a local Green Flag Inspector. The children enjoyed showing her around the school and telling her about all the things we have done over the last year to make the school even more eco-friendly. We now have achieved Green Flag status. This term we continued to work on the 3 topics of Litter, Healthy Living and Waste. Next term we will choose at least 2 new topics to focus on.

Litter

All the pupils and staff have continued to make sure our school grounds stay litter free by picking up any litter that has blown into the school grounds. Several children have carried out litter picks outside of school. Grace and Daniel have both picked up litter near where they live. A lot of the rubbish that Grace and her family picked up were takeaway containers.

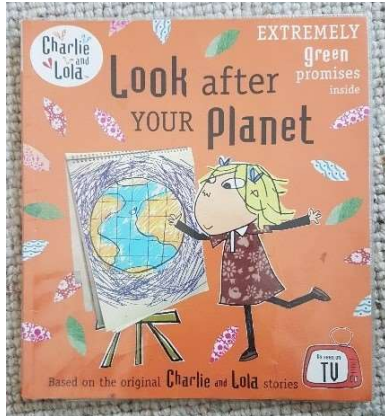




Beach Clean

Molly and Charlie took part in a Beach Clean in Burnham on Sea during the half term holiday. They found pieces of foam, plastic and glass on the beach. The most worrying thing they found were 3 pieces of fishing tackle/netting. This can be hazardous to sea creatures and birds because they can get tangled up in the netting and die or become badly injured. Molly and Charlie brought into school one of the large fishing lines they had found on the beach to show the eco club just how strong the plastic was. It soon became obvious that the line was very strong, and it was easy to see how a creature could get entangled.

Waste



Recycling

Pupils in Mrs Harding's class have had fun this term reading the book "Look after your Planet" and learning more about things they can recycle.

All pupils are now remembering to use the compost bin at school for their food waste like banana skins, orange peel and apple cores.

Pupils are also using the large green boxes to recycle paper instead of depositing in the main school bins.

Supermarket Waste

Members of eco club have been looking at what supermarkets have been doing to reduce their waste. One change that many supermarkets have pledged to carry out over the next year is to stop using black plastic packaging for their products. Black plastic has been widely used for food trays but is generally sent to landfill in the UK because the pigment that produces the dark colour means the material cannot be sorted by the machines on standard recycling sorting lines.

Many supermarkets have started selling wonky fruit and vegetables that sadly had previously been wasted just because they didn't look perfect. Some supermarkets now allow customers to bring their own containers to the fish mongers or meat counters so that packaging is not wasted, some have stopped selling single use plastic bags and others offer free drinks to shoppers who bring their own drinking containers. The eco club were pleased to hear that supermarkets have made some changes and pledge to make more but hope consumers will put pressure on them to make even more changes quickly.

Reducing Waste

Tallulah and her family visited an independent supermarket in Bristol. Here they were able to buy produce in paper bags rather than plastic bags. The shop sells pulses, nuts, dried fruits, grains and other products loose so that consumers can choose the exact amount of each food they would like to buy. Letting consumers shop in this way is great because it cuts down on plastic waste and reduces food waste because consumers buy only what they need.



Healthy Living



Cross Country Club

On Mondays, after school, some of the pupils have participated in Cross Country Club. It's been a great way to help stay fit and to enjoy the beautiful countryside near our school. Several of these pupils have also participated in cross country events on Saturdays with other local schools.

Sugar in Cereals

This term eco-club learnt about food labelling. We looked at the traffic light food labelling system, that many companies have adopted on their food packaging. This system can help the consumer quickly identify if the food is high in sugar, salt, calories and fat. We decided to focus on breakfast cereals' packaging. Pupils throughout the school bought in cereal packets so that we could analyse the packaging. We noticed that most, but not all the cereal boxes used the traffic light system. We also noticed that several of the cereals had high sugar content. The packaging tended to boldly state the healthy aspects of the cereals, such as "high in fibre" and "low in fat" but not the unhealthy ones like "high in sugar".

The eco club created a table to compare the sugar content of different cereals. Cereals varied from less than 1% sugar to a shocking 30% sugar. We wanted to compare the amount of sugar per portion size. Most packets had a suggested portion size on them. These varied from 30 grams to 45 grams. We picked a high sugar cereal and a low sugar cereal to compare.

Pupils and staff were asked to pour themselves a bowl of cereal, this was then weighed. We noticed that everyone poured themselves a larger bowl of the high sugar cereal than the recommended portion size, whereas for the low sugar, most people poured a bigger bowl, but some poured the exact recommended portion size and some under the recommended portion size.

During an assembly in November the Eco Club presented a fun sketch to the school about our findings. They demonstrated that some cereal choices are healthier than others and that portion control is important. Pupils were shown how much added sugar a day was the maximum recommended to be consumed by someone their age. Most pupils were surprised at how much sugar was in some cereals.



Senior pupils used the results from our portion size experiment to calculate the percentage of recommended maximum daily sugar pupils and staff had poured in their portions of cereals. The results were shocking and showed that apart from one pupil everyone had poured portions that contained over 65% of their recommended daily sugar intake and many had exceeded their daily allowance in their portion of sugary cereal.

This sugar investigation helped pupils appreciate why their parents only bought certain lower sugar cereals at home or only allowed sugary cereals in small portions or very occasionally.