

# St Joseph's RC Primary School

## 2019 ECO Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers

As ECO ambassadors, we would like to take this opportunity to update you on our school's ECO achievements in 2019.

- We have achieved ECO school bronze and silver awards and are now working towards our Green Flag award.
- Northumbria in Bloom judges awarded us gold in our first year of the competition.
- We received highly commended in our Durham County Council ECO award application.
- We won many certificates, rosettes and 2 trophies at Beamish Museum Leek and Agricultural shows.
- Through the installation of water butts to collect rainwater for our plants, we estimate that we have saved 5,460 litres of mains water.
- Suitable kitchen and class waste is placed into our compost bin.
- The Woodland Trust donated over 200 hedgerow trees. So far, the children have planted 115 of these within our school grounds.
- We received awards in 2 of the Better Energy categories; totally scientific and totally clued up.
- Chris Duke the author of "Lucy's Blue Day" mental health book, visited our school and did a "Big Book" assembly.
- Some children helped to design a mental wellbeing journal. This has been shared with other schools at their request.
- We took part in the Great Big School Clean and continue to do regular litter picks.

- We took part in the Big Battery hunt, recycling over 1,000 batteries.
- We achieved platinum level in the Green Tree Awards. We were the second school in the area to achieve this level.
- In the Tanfield in Bloom school competitions, we were 1<sup>st</sup> in the "spud in a bucket" and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the "tallest sunflower".
- Durham County Council have allocated us a flower bed on Stanley Front Street. We have planted this out with primula for winter.
- In January 2019, children in the reception class took part in the RSPB Big School Birdwatch.

### Photo Gallery

Here are some photos of our ECO work.



#### Water

We save rainwater in our water butts. We use this to water our plants.

Each water butt holds 210 litres of rainwater.



#### Waste

We place compostable class and kitchen waste into our compost bin. We will use the compost in our garden area.

We weigh our compostable waste using scales.



Our worry dinosaur



**Healthy living** – we created a board showing the things we do to keep healthy, including eating the fresh produce we grow and exercising outdoors. This was displayed in our local GP’s surgery during Mental Health Week.

### Some of our plans for next year

- Reduce the amount of paper and ink we use by printing less and communicating by electronic means when we can.
- Participate in the John Muir Environmental awards.
- To support our partners, Durham County Council with climate change priorities, we will plant at least 100 trees at Oakey’s Park.
- At the request of our partners, the Rotary Club, we will plant a lime tree on Rotary Way.
- Grow and supply herbs for PACT House community kitchen.



**Litter** – we are working in partnership with the Durham County Council Neighbourhood Wardens to improve our local area. We also did a litter pick when we went to Tynemouth beach.

### Our ECO Code

We have an ECO mascot, **Rocky** the racoon. We have developed an ECO code for our school based on his name:

**R**edesign our outdoor area and **r**emove litter to encourage biodiversity.

**O**utdoor learning is good for our mental wellbeing.

**C**ook what we grow and compost what we can.

**K**eep windows and door closed when the heating is on to save energy.

**Y**ou have a part to play. **Y**our small steps can make a huge difference.



**Biodiversity** – we have created a sensory garden and built many habitats for wildlife. These include hedging, bird boxes, a bug hotel, a pond and a hedgehog house.

### Inspirational ECO quote of the year

“You are never too small to make a difference”.

Greta Thunberg (age 16).

We wish you a very Merry Christmas.

Please recycle and reuse what you can over the festive period.

St Joseph’s Primary Eco Committee.