

How Our School is Cutting Its Carbon and How You Can Too!

We want to tell you about how we're working to cut our carbon footprint and help our planet! It's been amazing to see how small changes in our school can make a big difference to the environment. We hope our story, at East Acton Primary School, will inspire other schools to join the *Cut Your Carbon* campaign and become eco-warriors too!

What Does Cutting Carbon Mean?

You might be wondering, what does it really mean to "cut carbon"? Well, carbon emissions are gases like carbon dioxide (CO₂) that go into the air and trap heat, making the planet warmer. This is called climate change. Cutting carbon means using less energy, recycling more, and taking actions that reduce these harmful gases. It might sound challenging, but when we all do our part, we can help make the world a cleaner, healthier place!

Our Journey as Eco-Warriors

At East Acton Primary School, we started learning about climate change, in subjects such as PSHE, science and geography, and how important it is to look after our planet. We were surprised to find out how much energy we were using and how much rubbish we were throwing away. That's when we decided to join the *Cut Your Carbon* campaign and do everything we could to make our school more eco-friendly!

Here are some of the main strategies and activities that our Eco warriors, accompanied by school councillors and rights-respecting ambassadors, have employed running this "Cut Your Carbon" campaign:

- Eco-friendly harvest festival boxes designed for sending donated food to a local food bank
- Classes designing, making and selling eco-friendly products for our Christmas Enterprise Fair
- Reflective key chains sold around the school to raise awareness about road safety and being a road safety hero
- Advocating for change in child-led assemblies
- Participating in meetings alongside school councillors and rights-respecting ambassadors
- Creating posters to advocate for our children's right for a safe environment and how the community can support this

Here's what we've been doing through the campaign:

1. **No Power Hour:** We realized that we were leaving lights and computers on all the time! Now, we make sure to turn them off when we don't need them. We even tried to see who could save the most energy each week.
2. **Go plant-based for a day:** Meat production is responsible for around 14% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. By switching from a meat-based diet to a plant-based diet, for just one day, we can help to reduce emissions by nearly 3kg CO₂e.
3. **Substitute 4 baths for 4 showers and limit them to 4 minutes:** Cleaning and pumping water to our homes creates carbon emissions. So does generating energy to heat it. This means that shorter showers are good for our planet!
4. **Turn down the heating by 1° for a week:** Heating is the biggest source of carbon emissions in many homes. In completing this challenge, we hoped to prevent an additional 6kg CO₂e!
5. **Buy nothing new for 1 month:** The production of every item that we buy has a carbon footprint, so if we purchased 1kg less items during the month, we could save an average of 6kg CO₂e.

6. **Make 5 miles of travel 'active':** We wanted to help reduce the pollution from cars, so we have started walking, biking, or carpooling to school whenever we can. It's not only good for the planet, but it's great for our health too!

Why It Matters

By making these small changes at school, we are helping to cut down on carbon emissions and reduce waste. We have learned that every little thing we do makes a big difference. Even though we're just children, we know that we can help save the planet—one step at a time! Our school has already noticed less waste and littering, we've saved energy by turning off lights, we are using less paper for our lessons and we have instigated a new change in our lunch menu, which involves a meat-free day. We want other schools to join the *Cut Your Carbon* campaign and become eco-warriors just like us!

What's Next for Us?

We're not stopping here! We plan to keep finding new ways to cut our carbon and spread the word to others. We're going to host more eco-themed events and keep learning about ways to protect the environment. We're also excited to see other schools joining the campaign and making a difference. Becoming an Eco-Warrior doesn't have to be hard. It can start with small changes, and before you know it, you'll be making a huge impact on the planet. Join the *Cut Your Carbon* campaign, get your school involved, and let's work together to help the Earth!

Upholding Children's Rights through Action

By participating in the "Cut Your Carbon" campaign, we are not only reducing our environmental impact but also ensuring that we are protecting children's rights to a healthy and safe environment, coinciding with the articles stated in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is a crucial opportunity to instill in our children a sense of responsibility for the planet and to help them understand **that their actions matter**.



UNCRC Article 3

- The primary focus of the "Cut Your Carbon" campaign is to ensure that future generations receive a safe, healthy planet. It helps protect their health, safety, and access to resources for a better future.

UNCRC Article 6

- Climate change and environmental crises directly threaten children's survival and development. Extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and loss of biodiversity can impact children's future. The "Cut Your Carbon" campaign supports actions that reduce these risks, promoting a healthier and safer future for children.

UNCRC Article 12

- The campaign provides children with the opportunity to voice their concerns about climate change and take part in meaningful actions to reduce carbon emissions.

UNCRC Article 24

- Climate change and environmental degradation can severely affect children's health, including increased respiratory issues such as asthma. By participating in the "Cut Your Carbon" campaign, children and families can help reduce air pollution, improve water quality, and create a healthier environment for everyone.

UNCRC Article 27

- Reducing carbon emissions and addressing climate change can contribute to a sustainable environment, ensuring that children have access to the resources they need for their physical and mental development. A polluted or degraded environment can prevent children from reaching their full potential.

UNCRC Article 29

- The "Cut Your Carbon" campaign can be an educational opportunity for children to learn about sustainability, climate change, and their role in protecting the planet. This supports children's rights to an education that empowers them to make a positive difference in the world and develop as responsible global citizens.

Together, we can make a real difference, supporting our children's right to thrive in a world that values sustainability and care for the environment.