

Case Study

Envision School Team



School: St Mary Magdalene's Academy
Region: London
Age range: 16 - 17 years old
Issue: Recycling



What issue did they tackle and why?

The team's project aimed to make their school greener by encouraging recycling as they felt frustrated by the negative attitudes of some of their peers towards green living. They began investigating the systems set up in the school already, and by talking to teachers and surveying classrooms.

What did they decide to do?

The team decided to work with the primary school attached to their Academy, as they felt that working with the children would lead to the most long lasting change in attitudes.

To find out more about designing engaging activities for younger pupils, the students organised a meeting with the deputy head of the primary school and went to a primary school assembly.

They also planned and led a creative assemblies and workshops for students in Year 5; collecting recycled materials to use and negotiating a budget from the school for more resources. The Year 5s produced great posters with messages encouraging recycling which were displayed around the whole Academy. Inspired by their successes, the team are now planning to work with the council to improve recycling collections at the school.



What is the Envision Schools Programme?

Envision works with teams of young people based in schools and colleges. Starting with the question, "What do you want to change?" teams are supported to investigate issues relevant to their lives as local and global citizens. Led by their own ideas and supported by staff and trained volunteers, teams plan and implement a project to tackle whatever issue they are passionate about - learning to be young leaders and gaining vital employability skills along the way.

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Achievements

Encouraged positive attitudes towards the environment

By leading fun activities designed to encourage recycling, the team helped younger children to learn about the issue and design materials to promote recycling to the whole school. Researching the school's environmental systems and discussing them with staff raised the profile of the issue amongst the teachers.

Planned and ran an assembly for the whole primary school, as well as a workshop for 30 students.

The team prepared a very successful, fun presentation for the whole primary school, which engaged children ranging from 4 to 11 years old. They organised resources for their workshop and independently facilitated the activities, helping the children to work in teams to produce posters.

Skills and Knowledge Gained

Influencing and informing through educational workshops

By thinking about who to work with to most effectively encourage recycling in their school, and how to develop appropriate, effective resources, the team learned how to influence and inform people to encourage sustainable living.

Planning and budget management

The team developed their ability to plan well and manage a budget when preparing the resources for their workshop.

Knowledge of sustainability issues

Researching recycling in their school and the services which the local council provide improved their knowledge of sustainable living.

Testimonials

'Working with the team, it was great to see how much presenting to the whole primary school and running a workshop with 30 younger children boosted their confidence and helped them fulfil their aim to make the school a more sustainable place.'

Zoë Fishel, Envision Coordinator

'We learnt things are achievable. We can do anything if we get organised!',
Christelle, 17, young person in the St Mary Magdalene Envision team.

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