

ECO NEWSLETTER

October 2014

No 1

Welcome to our first Eco Newsletter of 2014-2015

We also welcome our new parents and hope that the information and a quick re-cap of our activities below will help you learn what we do at our school and how you can help.

We have a strong ECO ethos at our school and aim to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle wherever possible. To reinforce this we have decided to use the symbol (as the background of this page) on everything that we produce. You will find a list of our activities at the end of this newsletter.

As part of our ECO work we also take great interest in our grounds. During 2011, for the first time, we entered Horley in Bloom and were awarded 2nd place. In spring of 2012 we entered a new competition, Horley in Spring and were awarded 2nd place. We have since entered Horley in Bloom in summer of 2012, 2013 and 2014; Horley in spring again in 2013 and 2014. All competitions rewarded us with 2nd place. In the summer of 2013 we also entered another new competition ~ South and South East in Bloom's 'Blooming Schools' and were surprised and happy to receive their Silver Award. We entered again this summer, 2014, and were awarded Silver Gilt.

As the gardeners among you know it takes a great deal of work to keep up the gardens and even more to move them ahead. If you have any spare time, however little, that you would like to give to help in our gardens please contact Mrs Dodd in the office. All help is always welcome and we encourage parents, grandparents and helpers to come into our school grounds. We had some great help last term from parents working in our new Woodland Walk area. We hope to have this completed by the coming summer providing a nice shady area with lots of natural plants.

During this summer we grew lots of herbs which were used in our school kitchen, by staff and parents too. We aim to do the same again. We have lots of strawberry plants that we are hoping will provide our children with some lovely snack time treats next summer.

Our biggest achievement during 2013-2014 was gaining our ECO Schools Green Flag status. Part of the Green Flag requirement is that all members of the school community are aware of our ECO CODE ~ you will have seen this around the school. It is to be sung to the tune of 'twinkle, twinkle little star' ~ ask your child to tell you about it ☺

At Charlwood Village Infant School we aim to
REDUCE, RE-USE AND RECYCLE
as much as possible.

We *reduce* our waste by using the **compost bins** where applicable including adding shredded paper from the school office to the bins to aerate them. We *reduce* our waste to the general waste bin by *re-using* waste paper within school both as scrap paper for the staff and for scribble paper for the children - once any waste paper has been *re-used* it is then shredded and used in the compost bins or goes into the **big blue bin** for *recycling*.

By making use of our big blue bin we have managed to reduce our general recycling bins to just ONE!

We also have a **recycled waste collection** for items that cannot go in the big blue bin such as envelopes, bottles and plastic drink containers etc. The milk cartons from staff use and from the children's milk are *recycled* into our recycled waste collection and the lids into our **Bottle Top Collection Bin**.

We also arrange collections once or twice a year for unwanted clothing, bedding, curtains etc. for distributing to developing countries via 'Phil the Bag'. This not only gives re-use to unwanted clothes but prevents it going to landfill as items not suitable for redistribution are shredded for mattress filling and other uses.

Please see the list at the end of this newsletter for our Recycling activities.

ECO ACTION TEAM

As some of you are aware we have regular meetings of our Eco Team. We consider the whole school community, parents, staff and children as part of our Eco Team. This means that everybody will receive agendas for our meetings and copies of the children's minutes. We would like everybody to feel that they can attend as many meetings as they would like and to make this easier we will have them at different times. Meetings will be kept very short with just one or two items on the agenda as they will be led by the children. Please keep a watch on the notice boards and an eye on your email.

You will have noticed that there is a suggestion box on the noticeboard in the Link. This can also be used for any suggestions for our Eco Team. Please complete the slip available next to the box and place it in the box. It would be helpful to know who you are so that we can contact you regarding your idea but you also have the choice to remain anonymous. All ideas and suggestions are welcome.

If any of you are thinning your cottage garden and border plants or have plants that you no longer need we will be happy to give them a good and loving home. With the trees removed we now need to extend our cottage garden area so any plants that would fit in there will be very welcome.

A reminder of what we do in our school

Recycling:

In the playground, at the beginning of the parking bays, you will find our 'recycling area'.

Big Blue Bin - please feed this with your paper waste, including newspapers, magazines, catalogues, brochures, telephone directories, cardboard and yellow pages. We are asked **not to include** plastics, glass, metals and envelopes.

Milk Bottle Tops clear bin - Please place in here clean **Milk tops ONLY**. Other lids result in a lot of time being wasted at school in sorting them out before we can arrange collection. Whilst we are very grateful for all top donations PLEASE TAKE EXTRA CARE TO ONLY PUT IN MILK BOTTLE TOPS. Please also avoid putting **bags** containing lids inside the bin itself. Taking care of this will be an item on our Eco Team helpers list.

Composting - We recycle all our fruit and veg waste from snack time into our compost bins around the school and into our wormery which is based in the environmental area garden. Our kitchen also makes use of our composting areas.

Printer cartridges - In the front lobby by the office you can drop your used printer cartridges into the green bin.

Shoe Recycling

Our latest addition is for your unwanted shoes. Sadly most shoes are thrown away and are left to rot in landfill sites. Placing your shoes in our bin will enable them to be sent to developing countries for people less fortunate than ourselves. Please let your friends, neighbours and family know that they can use our bin.

PLUS

Textiles - Via our 'Phil' the Bag collections. We are waiting to hear about a collection for this term. If you have unwanted summer clothes or any other textiles please hold on to them and we will let you know as soon as possible when to bring them into school. Any funds raised from this collection go to our Eco activities and growing.

If you have other ideas or suggestions please let us know.

As we try to include the local community and help them where possible the above recycling bins at the front of the school are also accessible to local residents during school hours, when the gates are unlocked.

NEW FOR 2014-2015

Many of you know that every autumn term we take part in SwitchOff Fortnight when the children are encouraged to be as energy efficient as possible and look for lights, computers etc. that should be turned off when not in use or unnecessary and to try and do the same at home.

This year November has become ENERGY MONTH. We will be doing the same as SwitchOff Fortnight but for longer and with higher impact.

We have just become part of the Ashden Less CO2 cluster of schools that will be actively trying to lower our energy use in school. This is a three year campaign of measuring our energy use and finding ways of lowering it.

During ENERGY MONTH part of our Less CO2 work will be:

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Wednesday 12th November 2014

We will be talking with the children and asking for their ideas on how they think we can save energy on this day.

Please keep watch for other energy and ECO activities that will take place in school.

If you are interested in our work on any of the areas above and would like to help please contact us.

