

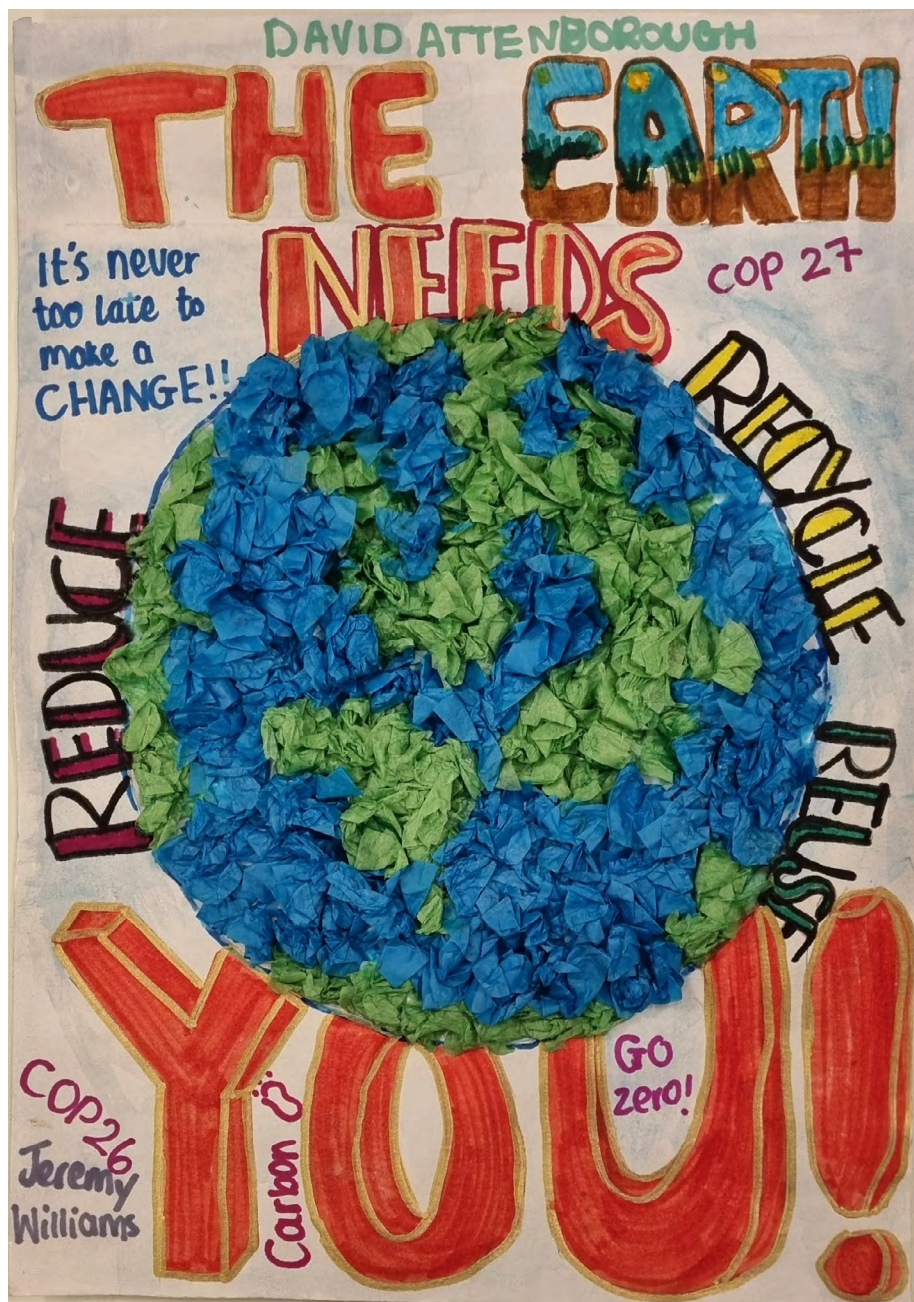


Vanguard Learning Trust Newsletter

Special edition, December 2024

Environmental sustainability week

Monday 11th to Friday 15th November 2024



Sophie, Year 8, Ruislip High School
Winner of the image and slogan competitions

Contents and overview of the week

The contents of this special edition of the newsletter summarise the activities and achievements of Vanguard Learning Trust's second environmental sustainability week, which took place from Monday 11th to Friday 15th November 2024. It includes details of how we marked the opening of the week; the figures from our 'how low can we go' challenge, including the points awarded to schools as part of the VLT cup; the activities that happened each day, both Trust-wide ones as well as those organised by the schools; the competition winners of our daily quizzes, slogan and image competitions, which are showcased in the newsletter; an evaluation of the week based on the overarching objectives; and an acknowledgement of the commitment of the staff working party with representatives from all the schools and the Trust's central team. We are again proud of our achievements, in particular the increase in participation as well as school-based activities.

'The information, organisation and delivery of the Trust's second environmental sustainability week were of an extremely high standard. Activities were varied, practical and interesting. I enjoyed the daily video presentations followed by quite challenging quizzes which were thought provoking and sometimes a little uncomfortable. It was good to see how each school organised its own activities as well as some healthy competition against the other schools. Well done to the staff working party for such an impressive week which will have a lasting impact on many of us.'

Pauline Nixon, Safeguarding-lead Trustee, Vanguard Learning Trust



Marking the opening of the week

To mark the opening of our second Trust-wide environmental sustainability week, a video was produced which involved taking drone footage of students from each school forming one letter to create the words GO ZERO. The image below is taken from the video, showing the slogan when all schools' letters are put together.

We would like to thank the staff involved in organising this, in particular Sally Brown, Vyners, Gurjeet Kohli, Vyners, Justin Barrett, central team, Richard Gould, Ruislip High, and Ceri Ohana, Ruislip High. All headteachers read out the Trust's pledge for the week ([click here](#)), which was incorporated into the video; a hardcopy has been signed by headteachers and a copy will shortly be displayed next to the one from our first Trust-wide environmental sustainability week in February 2023 ([click here](#)).

'Year 4 and Year 5 went outside to create the letter E and a drone then took a photo of us. The other schools made different letters which spelt out GO ZERO! It was fun! We then learned what 'go zero' meant during sustainability week.'

Olly, Year 4, Oak Farm Primary School



Vanguard Learning Trust

Opening ceremony pledge, environmental sustainability week, Monday 11th to Friday 15th November 2024

On behalf of the students, staff, families and governors, I pledge that our school community will commit to participating in Vanguard Learning Trust's second environmental sustainability week and working collectively to achieve its overarching aims which are:

- to understand the global commitment and response to climate change;
- to increase participation in the Trust-wide environmental sustainability week, in particular reusing items to reduce our carbon footprint; and
- to reduce our carbon footprint.

The global 'call for action' is needed now to secure our planet's future for ourselves and future generations. We need to change our behaviours and habits, in particular being responsible with the earth's limited resources.

As school communities, our primary role is to educate the next generation; we know this 'call for action' is a collective endeavour which we must work on together in order to make the changes required for our planet's sustainable future.

In the words of Chris Packham: *"We need a more environmentally sustainable future, where as a species we are less vulnerable. People are not only keen to see a new normal for us, but also a new normal for nature as well."*

Opening ceremony pledge



Drone footage of the schools spelling out GO ZERO

Monday 11th November 2024

A number of activities were launched on Monday, including the poster competitions for Field End, Hermitage, Ruislip High and Vyners. Several of the Trust's primary schools played the Emission Control board game where they competed to reduce carbon emissions through the different scenarios. Ryefield held their book swap where key stage 2 (KS2) students brought in books to exchange with other students. Oak Farm had its KS1 and KS2 assemblies to launch the week as well as Year 6 students participating in pond dipping and early years foundation stage students doing a litter pick. At Vyners, students began their upcycling activities; the first whole-school assembly about environmental sustainability week was held; and staff carried out a litter pick. Ruislip High's activities included a sixth-form litter pick; the launch of the 'name the rhino' competition; and the promotion of the staff car share scheme as well as the reuse auction.

'It was a really interesting week and enabled me to understand what state the world will be in one day. I now understand that small changes can make a huge difference.'

Alexander, Year 6, Ryefield Primary School



Students at Field End playing the Emission Control game



Vyners students' upcycling projects



Book swap event at Ryefiel



Sixth form students at Ruislip High leading assemblies



Oak Farm students pond dipping

Tuesday 12th November 2024

Tuesday was another day full of activities across the Trust. Field End held its whole-school assembly, where the video to mark the opening of the week was played, as well as its uniform and costume sale. Ryefield students played the Emission Control board game and carried out a litter pick in the local park. Students at Hermitage worked on their class pledge designs. Oak Farm students brought in books for the book swap and practised songs for their sustainability competition.

Ruislip High's staff car share and reuse auction initiatives continued and they also held form discussions on the 'how low can we go?' challenges. Students at Vyners continued with their upcycling projects and the staff carried out a litter pick.

'The uniform and costume sale was a well used pop-up provision. We decided to run the pre-loved uniform sale for the whole week as it was visited by many families on the first day. Over 40 pieces of uniform found new homes. It was a very active way to reuse, recycle and reduce and we will change how we run this in the future.'

Sandra Dickinson, Assistant Headteacher,
Field End Junior School



Students at Ryefield playing the Emission Control game



Uniform sale at Field End



Students at Vyners litter picking



Students in Years 1 and 3 at Hermitage with their class pledges



Wednesday 13th November 2024

On Wednesday, the central team staff held their book swap and shared items to reuse. Students at Ryefield did a seed-planting activity to help them understand the importance of nature and growing their own plants. Selected students from KS2 also did a litter pick in a local park. Students at Oak Farm performed their sustainability songs in their classes, as well as carrying out a litter-picking activity. Students at Field End completed a sustainable lesson focused on the 3Rs (reuse, recycle and reduce) and worked on their posters for the school competition. Hermitage students watched the video marking the opening of the week in their classes and Year 6 students upcycled coffee cups and pots to make pencil pots. At Vyners, three Year 11 prefects delivered whole-school assemblies about the meaning of sustainability and how we can change our ways to save the planet. In addition, Year 7 students created their sustainable upcycled bird feeders. Students at Ruislip High carried out their wild-bulb planting; did a community litter pick; held a mocktails and raffle event; and continued with the staff car share and reuse auction schemes.

'Swapping books and items is a simple way to give things a second life, reduce waste and share what we love with others. We all need to do our part when it comes to sustainability for future generations.'

Sue Brown, Finance Partner, Vanguard Learning Trust



The central team's book and item swap event



Students at Field End working on their posters



Students at Ruislip High litter picking



Hermitage students working on their upcycled pots



Ryefield students planting seeds

Thursday 14th November 2024

On the penultimate day, activities continued with Year 11 sustainability prefects at Vyners visiting tutorials, encouraging students to write to the London Mayor about the importance of sustainability. Year 8 students worked on their 'how low can we go' pledges and Year 7 students worked on their upcycling projects. At Hermitage, Year 3 students used recycled materials to design exo-skeletons; Year 6 students made pen pots using recycled materials; and the book swap took place where students could wear non-uniform for bringing in books to swap. At Oak Farm, the finals were held for the sustainable song competition and the school book swap was held. Field End students did junk modelling of endangered animals using the rubbish collected from around the school in one day. Students also carried out a community litter pick. At Ryefield students worked on their posters for the school and Trust-wide competitions.



Book swap event at Hermitage

'Firstly, we presented a sustainability assembly to all year groups in school about how and why we should protect our planet. Next, we went litter picking during lunch in order to help our community to become more environmentally friendly. Overall I found it fun.'

Hema, Year 11 sustainability prefect, Vyners



Oak Farm students in the sustainability song competition



Tutorial at Vyners led by sustainability prefects



Students at Field End litter picking

Friday 15th November 2024

On the final day, the week concluded at the schools with a range of activities. At Field End, every child was given a book to take home as part of the book swap. In addition, the Year 6 Eco Warriors played the Emission Control game with Years 3 and 4. Oak Farm carried out its book swap and announced the results of its litter challenge. Ryefield held a whole-school assembly and the winner of their poster competition was announced. Hermitage students finished their class pledges and displayed them on their doors.

'Our class made a pledge that is helping us save the pandas. We have started turning off the lights and we even remembered when we went on our school trip yesterday.'

Mabel, Year 3, Hermitage Primary School

At Vyners, the sustainability prefects went out into the local community to do some litter picking. Finally, Divleen, a Year 13 student, wrote a sustainability poem which perfectly encapsulates the message of our environmental sustainability week.

**In a world where waste can grow,
The six Rs guide us, this we know.
Refuse the things we do not need,
Reduce our waste, plant a green seed.**

**Reuse what's old, give it new life,
Recycle materials, cut through the strife.
Repair what's broken, don't throw it away.
With the six Rs we brighten our day,
With the six Rs we brighten our day.**

Divleen, Year 13, Vyners School

Sustainability poem by Divleen, Year 13, Vyners



Book swap event at Oak Farm



Year 3 class pledge at Hermitage



Field End eco warriors playing the Emission Control game

Competitions

The 'how low can we go' challenge? involved students, their families, staff, governors and trustees being encouraged to take part in daily challenges to reduce their carbon footprint ([click here](#)). The challenges focused on the five Rs: recycle, reuse, repurpose/repair, reduce and rethink. The challenges were categorised as daily tasks or weekly tasks; had different numbers of points awarded to them; and were split into tasks which could be carried out at school, at home and with family ([click here](#) for the list of challenges).

This activity supported two of the objectives for the environmental sustainability week:

- to increase participation in the Trust-wide environmental sustainability week in particular reusing items to reduce our carbon footprint; and
- to reduce our carbon footprint.

The schools' and central team's points were shared with the community throughout the week as part of the daily bulletin and the final overall scores are shown in Figures 1a and 1b.

Figure 1a: Total points per school and the central team

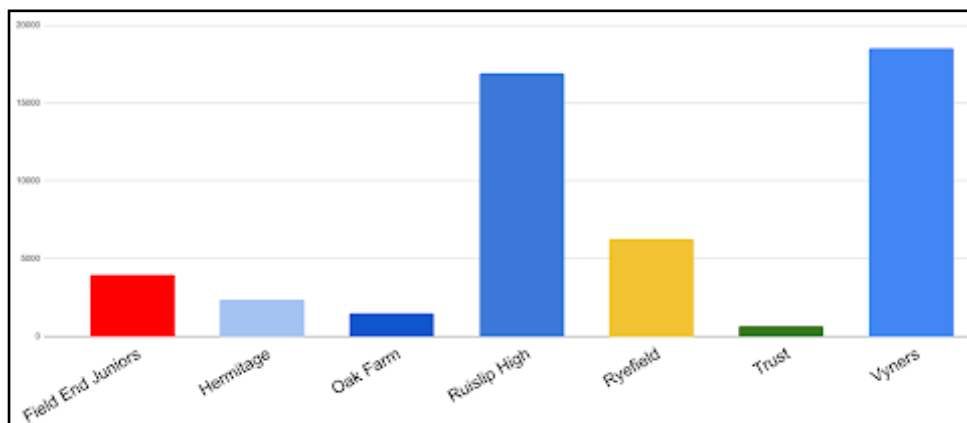


Figure 1b: School and central team averages per person

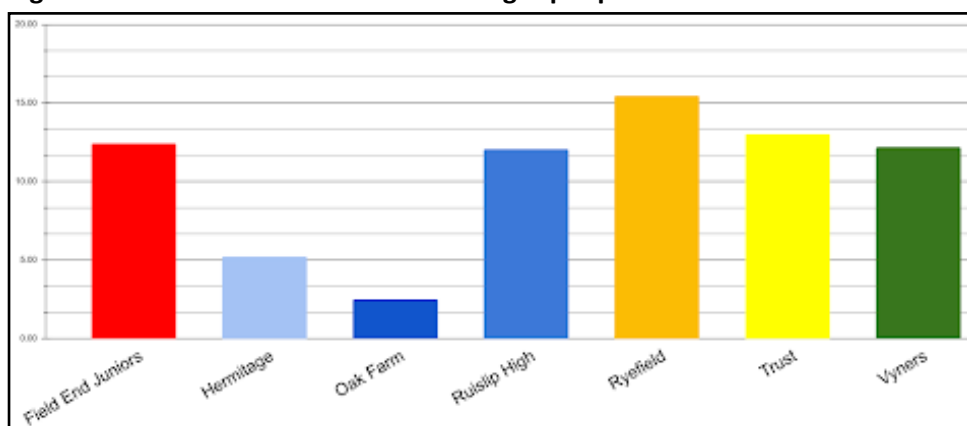


Figure 1a shows the total points awarded over the week with Vyners School having the highest score with 18,500 points followed by Ruislip High School with almost 17,000 points. Figure 1b shows the school and Trust averages per person with Ryefield Primary School having the highest mean with circa 15 points per person followed by the Trust's central team and Field End Junior with circa 13 and 12.4 points per person.

Competitions

In terms of our challenge, *how low can we go?*, the points have been converted into an estimated reduction in the community's carbon footprint. The estimation reflects that over the week the Trust-wide community saved approximately 150,879kg of CO₂! This is the equivalent of 2,100 trees; these savings show a considerable increase from our first week when we saved 14,500kg CO₂, equating to 667 trees.

In terms of the VLT cup, points have been awarded as follows for participation:

- Vyners School: 25 points for the highest proportion of students participating
- Ruislip High School: 10 points for the highest proportion of families participating
- Ruislip High School: 10 points for the highest proportion of staff and governors participating
- Ryefield School: 30 points for the highest average score
- Field End School: 15 points for the second highest average score
- Vyners School: 5 points for the third highest average score

Three Trust-wide competitions were held:

Daily quizzes

These involved participants watching a video, including the one by our keynote speaker, Jeremy Williams from Let's Go Zero, and answering a quiz with ten multiple choice questions. There were a number of students who got full marks on one or more of the quizzes; they will shortly be awarded a certificate and an environmentally sustainable prize. They are as follows:

- Winner: Penny and Olivia Vincent, Ryefield Primary School - 30 points
- Second place: Mason Joseph, Oak Farm - 15 points
- Third place: Myles Joseph, Ruislip High - 5 points
- School with highest participation: Ryefield - 25 points

Slogan competition

Students were encouraged to enter the slogan competition to capture in words our Trust's commitment to environmental sustainability. The winning slogan is on the front page by Sophia in Year 8 at Ruislip High School. There were no entries awarded second or third place.

Image competition

Students were encouraged to enter the image competition to capture visually our Trust's commitment to environmental sustainability. The winning image is on the front page by Sophia in Year 8 at Ruislip High School. Second place went to Huzefa in Year 6 at Ryefield and third place went to Angelo in Year 6 at Field End Junior School.

The second, third and commended entries can be seen on page 11.

There were also two images that were commended:

- Kiran, Year 6, Field End Junior School
- Mya'lee, Year 6, Ryefield Primary School

The VLT points for the slogan and image competitions are as follows:

- School with highest participation: Field End Junior School - 25 points
- Winner: Sophia, Ruislip High - 30 points
- Second: Huzefa, Ryefield - 15 points
- Third: Angelo, Field End - 5 points
- Commended: Kiran, Field End - 1 point
- Commended: Mya'lee, Ryefield 1 point

'I was delighted to see how seriously the students at Ruislip High School took our Trust-wide sustainability week. Their enthusiasm was rewarded with success in the various competitions and, more importantly, they wholeheartedly responded to our Trust-wide 'call for action' to sustain our planet's environmental future.'
Gareth Davies, Headteacher, Ruislip High School

Competitions



Second place: Huzefa, Year 6, Ryefield Primary School



Commended: Kiran, Year 6, Field End



Commended: Mya'lee, Year 6, Ryefield



Third place: Angelo, Year 6, Field End Junior School

Evaluation

The three objectives for the week were as follows:

- to understand the global commitment and response to climate change;
- to increase participation in the Trust-wide environmental sustainability week in particular reusing items to reduce our carbon footprint; and
- to reduce our carbon footprint.

As part of our evaluation for the week, feedback was gathered on the three objectives with the second and third ones being considered as overall met or strongly met. The evaluations of the week noted a number of strengths which included:

- the video to mark the opening of the week being well received by the community;
- the increase in participation in school-led and Trust-wide activities;
- community events raising the profile of the importance of reducing waste; and
- guest speaker's presentation linked to objectives including the context of schools.

Areas to consider for the next sustainability week include:

- a way to measure the decrease in energy use in terms of school premises;
- the timing of the week of the year not clashing with high-profile events, eg. Remembrance Day;
- opening activity ready for first day of the week; and
- videos more accessible to younger students.

In terms of the legacy of permanent changes in schools, some examples include:

- students being given responsibility for environmental sustainability by providing ongoing feedback on single-use plastics, energy use in school, etc.;
- school uniform sales being more available to families throughout the year;
- meat-free day as part of catering weekly provision; and
- litter picking being routine practice.

'I am delighted with the success of the week and the feedback from the schools and the central team about what went well and areas for improvement. We took onboard the suggestions from the first week in February 2023 and this was reflected in the modifications we made to the second week. The drone footage was a wonderful way to mark the opening of the week, which symbolically represented our commitment to the collective endeavour to reduce our carbon footprint. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the working party as well as those who helped with making the video. I am already looking forward to the next one!'

Dr Martina Lecky, Chief Executive Officer,
Vanguard Learning Trust





Vanguard Learning Trust

With thanks to the environmental sustainability working party:

Justin Barrett, Vanguard Learning Trust
Sally Brown, Vyners School
Sandra Dickinson, Field End Junior School
Joe Doyle, Hermitage Primary School
Richard Gould, Ruislip High School
Emma Jordan, Vanguard Learning Trust
Martina Lecky, Vanguard Learning Trust
Katie Stagg, Ryefield Primary School
Natalie Tembo, Oak Farm Primary School

In addition, thanks to Gurjeet Kohli, Vyners School, for taking the drone footage at each school for the opening ceremony activity, Ceri Ohana, Ruislip High School, for making the opening ceremony video, and Jeremy Williams from Go Zero for providing the keynote speech.

Supporting the week:



Our Trust schools and associate school:

