



Stewardship @ OLSG



Issue 1 – Summer 2024

The Bible teaches that the Earth is a gift from God and that we are called as Stewards to protect and preserve His creation. Taking care of the Earth involves living in harmony with nature, conserving resources, reducing waste and promoting sustainable practices. Here are some of the things we have been up to recently at Our Lady and St Gerard's that demonstrate our commitment to this responsibility.



Caring for the birds

You will have seen some of the beautiful bird's houses that were donated to us are now installed around our grounds. Whilst they are not yet inhabited, we are hopeful in time they will be.

Money raised from decorating wooden keyrings (organised by the Laudato Si' group) has paid for bird feeders and food. These are restocked by the group with Miss Owens. This has attracted a variety of birds into the Peace Garden on a daily basis.



Composting

We were very kindly gifted a compost bin from a local "Acts of Kindness" Facebook page. Now this is in situ, we have been able to put our fruit scraps, tea bags, leaves, cardboard and shredded waste in there as well as leaves, twigs and grass cuttings. This will then be used in on our plant beds to naturally help our fruits and vegetables to flourish. In time, we hope to obtain more in order to rotate the usage of the bins, giving the food waste and brown waste time to decompose. Thank you to Mr Kenny for his help with this.

Planting

Thanks to Miss Forrest and Mrs Swift's gardening club, plus some green fingered Year 6s, we now have vegetables and herbs growing in the Peace Garden. You can find out what we are growing by checking the chalk board located in the Peace Garden.

The wildflowers sown by Year 5 have also begun to blossom alongside those planted as part of the development of the area.

The eight fruit trees obtained by Miss Harvey due to a bid to 'I dig trees', are now bearing fruit! A further bid to 'Treescapes' has been successful, and we hope to line our perimeter with more trees and shrubs to attract wildlife.

We have already been awarded Level 1 and Level 2 RHS School Gardening Awards and are now aiming for Level 3!





Reusing and recycling in action!

A water butt has been connected to one of our drainpipes allowing us to harvest rainwater for use on our plants. However, as we have had less rain recently, the water butt has run dry! So we have also been recycling old plastic bottles into watering reservoirs! The irrigation kit is gravity fed - it lets the water flow out of the base using a tap system. Physics and biology working in harmony!

Laudato Si' visit

Recently some of our pupils were fortunate enough to spend the day with Miss Harvey at the Laudato Si' Centre in Salford. This was a joint trip with St Mary & St Benedict's. The children completed a variety of eco-friendly activities and brought back lots of ideas for our school.



Recycle here!

We are now an official Taylors of Harrogate & Terracycle recycling partner. This means we collect the following items which are sent back to Taylors to be recycled. We also receive points for doing this.

Accepted

- All brands:
- ✓ Coffee bean pouches
- ✓ Individual coffee bag sachets
- ✓ Ground coffee pouches
- ✓ Bulk bags of tea bags
- ✓ Loose leaf tea packs

Not accepted

- ✗ Individual coffee bags
- ✗ Coffee capsules
- ✗ Ground coffee
- ✗ Cardboard packaging
- ✗ Individual tea bags
- ✗ Individual tea bag sachets



Recycle all brands of flexible coffee and tea packaging here



Preloved uniform

Our PTFAs have taken donations in to create a preloved uniform bank. Thank you to those who have gifted their outgrown clothes to help others, it really is appreciated.

The date for is still to be confirmed for our pop up uniform shop - watch this space!

It has also been lovely to hear how many families support local charity shops, receive hand me downs from friends or family or use apps such as Vinted in order to buy Preloved rather than new. Reduce, reuse, recycle!



Solar energy



As part of their work on 'natural resources minerals and energy' in Geography, Year 5 were inspired by own solar panels installed last year. They wanted to find out more about solar energy in the local area. Using satellite images, they rated local rooftops on their suitability based on size and the direction they face. Pupils also collaborated to create a questionnaire to survey local attitudes to solar energy and asked members of the public in Lostock Hall centre.

They evaluated these findings and discovered that most people are in favour of solar energy but are put off by initial costs and maintenance. Based on their findings, their next steps included researching ways in which people (particularly elderly) can access funding for solar panels. The following link might assist with this:

<https://www.fmb.org.uk/homepicks/solar-panels/solar-panel-grants/#:~:text=Yes%2C%2Dyou%2Dmay%2Dbe%2Deligible,energy%2Dbills%2Dfor%2Dqualifying%2Dhomeowners.>

As the school solar panels will have been on our roof for a year, we are looking forward to the annual energy report and seeing how this affects our energy efficiency rating. Keep a look out for news on this soon!



As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family.

— Pope Francis —