

ISA Awards 2023 Case Study: Excellence in Sustainability



HOLME GRANGE SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 2024



History of the School

From its origins as a Grade II listed building designed by Norman Shaw in 1883, Holme Grange School has embarked on a remarkable journey of transformation, blossoming into a leading independent co-educational school for students aged 3-16. Nestled amidst 22 acres of picturesque woodland in Wokingham, Berkshire, the school's rich heritage seamlessly blends with contemporary advancements, fostering a dynamic environment for learning and growth.

Holme Grange's philosophy centres on nurturing the unique potential of each student within a warm and supportive family atmosphere. In 1975 the school embraced co-education, marking a significant milestone and subsequently, the school's facilities and curriculum have continuously evolved to cater to the diverse needs of its growing student body.

Today, Holme Grange boasts a state-of-the-art campus that artfully integrates historic structures like the Grade II listed main house with modern facilities like the eco-friendly carbon-neutral buildings, the Caudwell Hall theatre, and the Senior School Building, opened in 2020. This building houses a state-of-the-art library and a vibrant community room, providing students with additional spaces for learning, collaboration, and relaxation. A well-being hut was also built nearby, offering a dedicated haven for quiet reflection and emotional support.

Holme Grange's curriculum fosters intellectual curiosity across a wide range of subjects, while simultaneously prioritising student well-being and environmental awareness. The expansive grounds provide ample opportunities for outdoor learning and exploration, further enhanced by the additional outdoor classrooms built in 2019. For younger students, The Hive, offers a stimulating and nurturing surroundings complete with an outdoor treehouse. To cultivate a connection with nature and animals, the school also boasts a farm currently housing goats, ducks, geese, pigs, chickens, and peacocks.



Recognising the interconnectedness of our world, Holme Grange cultivates global citizens equipped to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. The school's diverse student body fosters cultural appreciation and understanding, preparing students to become responsible and active members of a global community. The school has an unwavering commitment to nurturing individual potential, fostering academic excellence and well-being, and preparing students for global citizenship positions.



Mrs Claire Robinson
Headteacher

<https://www.holmegrange.org>



Aims

- To foster environmental literacy and empower staff, students, and families to adopt sustainable practices through a tailored curriculum (Reception to Year 9), including programs like "Climate Bravery," and diverse learning opportunities that reconnect humans with nature.
- To achieve outstanding environmental performance by conducting audits, reviews, and consultations to identify and address key areas for improvement, ultimately aiming for carbon neutrality in line with IPCC recommendations.
- To mobilise the school community to embrace sustainability as part of the solution to global challenges. Inspire students to become "creative problem-solvers" and future leaders, actively participating in local, national, and international sustainability initiatives.
- To work with other schools, universities, organisations, and communities to share knowledge, best practices, and collaborate on impactful sustainability projects.
- To Equip students with a deeper knowledge and the skills to address environmental challenges. Engaging them in simulating real-world climate negotiations, potentially contributing to actual COP conferences.
- To maintain and develop the school-based plastic recycling plant, implement other practical sustainability projects, and encourage student participation in leadership roles.
- To continuously monitor and evaluate the impact of all sustainability efforts and adapt strategies for continuous improvement.



ACTIONS

- Appointed Sustainability Lead and team of UN Climate Change accredited teachers.
- Established a Sustainability Committee with staff, governors, and a parent representative.
- Included sustainability objectives in staff performance appraisals.
- Started working towards UN Climate Change Gold Award accreditation.
- Integrated environmental education programs across all age groups.
- Established "Eco Warriors" in the Prep School, "Eco Ambassadors" in Eaton Grange, and a whole-school Green Team.
- Recycle centres are managed and promoted by students.
- Engaged parents through committee participation, expert contributions, and communication.
- Started working with local community, organisations, and partner schools for shared initiatives and impact.



- Actively sought and utilised expertise from consultants and industry links.
- Connected research and activities to children's rights in the UN Agenda.
- Established monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress and effectiveness.
- Created a multi-step policy and strategy plan with supporting policies for each priority area.
- Integrated environmental considerations into the heart of school culture.

OUTCOMES

- Students, staff, and families have demonstrated an improved understanding of environmental issues and sustainable practices.
- Sustainability has become embedded in school language and vocabulary across the curriculum.
- There has been increased student engagement in outdoor learning and appreciation for the natural world.
- There has been an adoption of "greener" practices within the school and wider community.
- We have reduced consumption and increased awareness of sustainability choices.
- We have implemented a successful waste management and recycling strategy.
- We have been recognised as a leader in sustainability education and practice.
- We are able to inspire other schools and communities to take action towards sustainability.
- We have empowered students to equip them to address environmental challenges as future leaders.



NEXT STEPS

- To use the information and data gathered to identify the impact of the wide variety of initiatives in place.
- To deepen partnerships with the local community and partner schools, potentially organising joint projects or events.
- To widen the student experience to include a Sustainability Festival in the summer term 2024 and additional leadership opportunities.
- Develop an environmental curriculum at the GCSE level, building upon existing programs like "Climate Bravery."
- Partner with local businesses to source sustainable products or services for the school.
- Stay updated on the latest developments in sustainability practices and incorporate them into the school's strategy.

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