



GREEN SCHOOLS PROJECT IMPACT REPORT

2022/2023



GREEN
SCHOOLS
PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, I came up with an idea that I hoped could transform the way that schools respond to the climate and nature crisis - Zero Carbon Schools. After a disrupted pilot with 4 schools in Waltham Forest which I planned and delivered myself, we gained funding which enabled the team to grow and we worked with 44 schools in 2021-22, which then almost doubled to 84 schools around the country signing up in 2022-23.

The growth in our programme demonstrates our understanding of why it is needed and how we can best support schools. [90% of teachers agree that climate change education should be compulsory in schools](#), but [75% feel that they have not had adequate training to do so](#). [70% of young people feel 'eco-anxiety' about the climate](#), but only [4% feel they know 'a lot' about climate change](#).

We address this through Zero Carbon Schools, a comprehensive package of resources, training, and support, designed by teachers, to help schools

measure and reduce their carbon footprint. Over 26 sessions, pupils learn about the climate crisis and respond by planning and leading projects to reduce their schools' emissions. Adaptable for ages 8 – 13 (years 4 - 8), the programme is cross-curricular with links to science, maths, geography, and English, and includes outdoor sessions that improve pupil wellbeing and nature connection.

Two teacher training sessions are included to help all staff incorporate climate and nature education into lessons. The school is also encouraged to run a community event to showcase the pupils' work and inspire climate action in the wider community.

At Green Schools Project, we believe in the power of schools, teachers, and pupils. Together, we can put climate education and action at the heart of school life so that children and young people can become catalysts for change, now and in the future.

HENRY GREENWOOD
Founder & Managing Director



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

84

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WHO STARTED ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS

91%

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN SCHOOLS COMPARED TO 2021-22

77%

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WHO COMPLETED THE FULL YEAR PROGRAMME

20

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WHO BENEFITTED FROM EXTRA GREEN SCHOOLS PROJECT STAFF DELIVERY TIME THROUGH OUR PREMIUM OR IN-PERSON DELIVERY OFFERS

77%

PROPORTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

23%

PROPORTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.500

NUMBER OF PUPILS WHO DIRECTLY TOOK PART IN ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS SESSIONS

21.000

NUMBER OF PUPILS WHO INDIRECTLY BENEFITTED FROM THEIR SCHOOL TAKING PART IN ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS

96%

OF TEACHERS WOULD RECOMMEND ZERO CARBON SCHOOLS TO OTHER SCHOOLS

92%

OF PUPILS TAKING PART WOULD RECOMMEND THE PROGRAMME TO OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE

THEORY OF CHANGE

We developed an updated Theory of Change in 2022-23 which helps us to understand and articulate how to achieve the change we want to see. This impact report focuses on its three sections: Planting the Seed, Roots and Shoots, and Branching Out. We have taken a few outcomes from this Theory of Change and some from a more detailed version to give a snapshot of what we achieved this year.

CLIMATE EDUCATION AND ACTION ARE AT THE HEART OF SCHOOL LIFE & PUPILS ARE CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

SCHOOLS EMBED CLIMATE & NATURE EDUCATION INTO LESSONS & TAKE ACTION TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION TAKES PLACE AROUND THE SCHOOL

PUPILS INFLUENCE OTHERS TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOUR

MORE SCHOOLS INCORPORATE CLIMATE & NATURE EDUCATION

Pupil projects

Community events

Local partnerships

Zero Carbon Schools network

BRANCHING OUT

PUPILS FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THE ROLE THEY CAN PLAY IN TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

PUPILS ACCESS CLIMATE & NATURE EDUCATION

PUPILS HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS TO RESPOND TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

SCHOOLS WORK WITH PUPILS & STAFF TO REDUCE THEIR CARBON EMISSIONS

Pupil projects

Carbon calculator

Lesson plans

Teacher training

School support

Zero Carbon Schools network

ROOTS AND SHOOTS

SCHOOLS PRIORITISE CLIMATE & NATURE EDUCATION

TEACHERS FEEL CONFIDENT DELIVERING CLIMATE & NATURE EDUCATION

SCHOOL STAFF ARE MOTIVATED TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY

Advocacy & engagement

Online resources

Zero Carbon Schools network

Teacher training

Carbon calculator

GREEN SCHOOLS PROJECT

Key: Activities OUTCOMES

PLANTING THE SEED

At Green Schools Project, alongside many other organisations in the sector, we understand the need for high quality climate education and action in schools. Many teachers, senior leaders, academy trusts, and people in local government do as well, however there is a long way to go. We recognise that we need to 'plant the seed' in places where awareness is yet to, or is just starting to emerge. In 2022-23 we dedicated more time to this area, resulting in greater numbers finding the support and resources needed to take the next steps in their sustainability journey.

"This conference was both enlightening and inspiring. The breadth of information and knowledge was exceptional and I came away with thoughts buzzing around what I want to implement in my setting and how I will use the resources to pass the information on to both colleagues and students. Just brilliant!"

ATTENDEE OF A PRESENTATION WE DELIVERED ON SUSTAINABILITY

Intended outcome	Key findings and actions
School decision makers better understand the need for and benefits of climate and nature education, and understand the support available.	We delivered 6 online taster sessions delivered to school leaders, academy trusts, and local authorities. We spoke on panels, delivered workshops, and had a stand in the marketplace at 6 conferences Green Schools Project was featured in a piece on ITV London news .
More school leaders and teachers want to improve their school's sustainability.	Our mailing list increased from 1,604 teachers, school leaders, and supporters, to 2,225. An increase of almost 40%. Many of our sign ups for Zero Carbon Schools come through this mailing list contributing to the increase in programme sign ups.
Teachers have easy and accessible ways to bring climate and nature education into the classroom and see that young people want to take action.	We provided free, high-quality content to schools via our website, social media, and newsletter. Our eco-team support resources have been downloaded 1827 times. We delivered 12 workshops to young people, allowing them to explore taking actions to tackle climate change.

ROOTS & SHOOTS

This part of our Theory of Change represents the main body of our work. We support schools at any stage in their climate education and sustainability journey to take the next, or occasionally first, step. We do this through Zero Carbon Schools.

Zero Carbon Schools is designed by former teachers to be in-depth and inclusive. Most eco-projects in schools are extra-curricular, meaning only a small number of (usually) already engaged pupils take part. In contrast, most primary schools running Zero Carbon Schools hold the sessions within curriculum time, meaning that a whole class, or year group, takes part over a full academic year. This means that all pupils learn more about climate change and are able to take action, developing essential skills, building confidence, and alleviating eco-anxiety along the way.

“So the Zero Carbon Schools Programme is where a team of adults and children from different schools come together and they try to make their school community more sustainable and hopefully try to reduce the school’s carbon footprint.”

YEAR 5 PUPIL. ROTHERHITHE SCHOOL

“Zero Carbon Schools is a fun, engaging, and truly rich learning opportunity that will engage your school community with the climate crisis, and so importantly give those involved the sense that they can do something about it.”

SEN TEACHER. BEACON HIGH SCHOOL

“Doing Zero Carbon Schools makes me feel like I’m changing and I’m having an impact because you need that mindset. If no one has that mindset, then no one’s going to change. If everyone has that mindset then they will change.”

YEAR 7 PUPIL. BEACON HIGH (FOCUS GROUP)

Intended outcome	Key findings and actions
More pupils have the knowledge, skills, and motivation to take action on the climate crisis	<p>72% of pupils who completed our knowledge quiz at the start and end of the programme (n=325) improved their score.</p> <p>95% of school staff who completed our end of year survey (n=22) strongly agreed or agreed that the programme had developed their pupils’ teamwork and communication skills. 82% strongly agreed or agreed it had developed pupil leadership and problem solving.</p>
More schools work with pupils and staff to reduce their carbon emissions	<p>67 of the 84 schools that started Zero Carbon Schools provided full or partial information from which we calculated an estimate of their carbon footprint. This guided pupil projects to reduce emissions, promoted action amongst staff and parents, and helped schools to take targeted actions.</p> <p>13 schools providing carbon footprint data had previously provided data. This showed a total reduction in carbon emissions of 347 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, an average of 26.7 tonnes reduced per school, a 6.3% reduction.</p> <p>An average of 2.6 more actions (chosen from a list provided in a survey) were taken by schools to reduce their carbon footprint by the end of the programme.</p> <p>An average of 1.2 more actions (chosen from a list provided in a survey) were taken by each pupil to help reduce their school’s carbon footprint by the end of the programme.</p>
Teachers feel more confident talking about the climate crisis and have practical ideas of how to incorporate climate and nature in lessons.	<p>Two teacher training sessions were provided to schools as part of Zero Carbon Schools. Green Schools Project staff delivered the sessions in 20 schools as part of the premium or in person delivery offer. For other schools we provided a powerpoint and notes for a school coordinator to deliver the session to their school staff.</p> <p>In the end of year feedback survey (n=22) 59% of teachers said that they delivered the teacher training sessions in their schools. Teachers who attended the second teacher training session (n=111) said they understood more about how to bring climate and nature into their lessons (89% scored either 4 or 5 out of 5). 87% said they would include climate and nature more in their lessons where possible.</p>

“They’ve definitely got a better understanding and a deeper knowledge of what climate change is and how it affects every part of their life, from the pen that they were holding in their hand to the car that they were driving to school that day. And I think it gave them extra independence and freedom to do something about it.”

YEAR 6 TEACHER (INTERVIEW)



BRANCHING OUT

Community action can have a big effect on tackling the climate crisis and can help to influence the actions of governments and global corporations who hold the key to averting its worst effects. Schools live at the heart of every community so in this aspect of our theory of change we are supporting and encouraging them to become community learning hubs that will help drive the transition to a sustainable society.

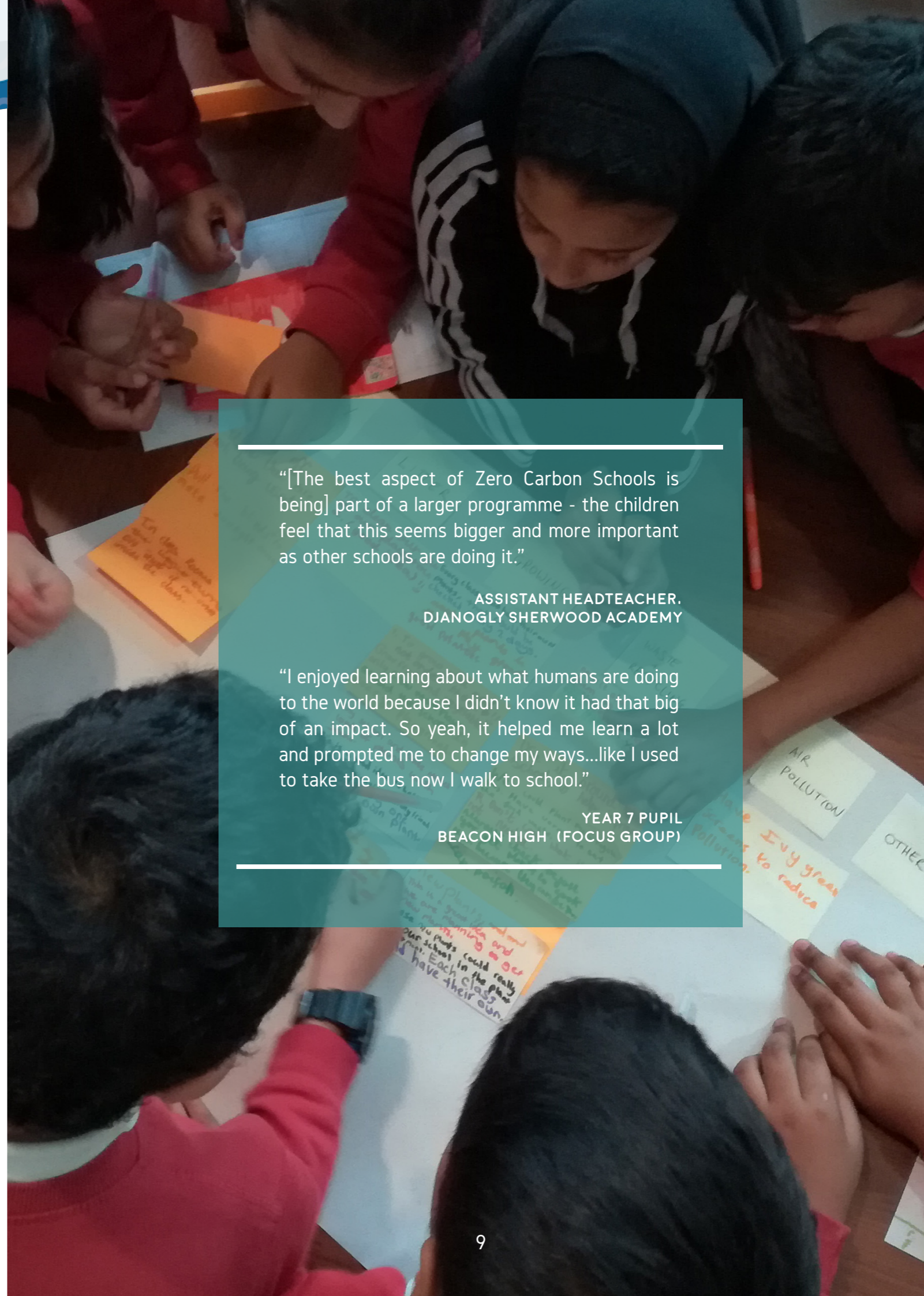
“This program is a fabulous way to get others on board the zero carbon train and a route to impact whole societies, hence the reason for signing up for a second year to do it better!”

LEAD LEARNING ASSISTANT, BUSHEY MEADS SECONDARY SCHOOL

Intended outcome	Key findings and actions
Young people talk about what they've learned and encourage their families and communities to make changes	<p>Pupil focus groups, staff interviews, and feedback surveys show many examples of pupils talking to their families and influencing other people in school as well as the wider community to make changes.</p> <p>As part of Zero Carbon Schools, pupils wrote to local politicians and wrote pieces for school newsletters, and teachers shared work on social media.</p>
Community climate action takes place in schools	<p>62% of staff who completed our end of year feedback survey (n=22) said they had run a community event or engaged the wider school community as part of the programme.</p> <p>This included holding swap shops, selling repurposed items, community gardening, pupil stalls at summer fairs, assemblies to share their learning with parents, and partnerships with local environmental organisations who attended community events.</p>

“The children ran a book swap with the whole school. Parents are involved because their children got a new book without any money being exchanged. We have parents who will bring in lots of books whereas the children whose parents find it difficult to afford them, they will bring in what they can so it's that community feel. And the children want to continue this every term.”

YEAR 4/5 TEACHER (INTERVIEW)



“[The best aspect of Zero Carbon Schools is being] part of a larger programme - the children feel that this seems bigger and more important as other schools are doing it.”

**ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER,
DJANOGLY SHERWOOD ACADEMY**

“I enjoyed learning about what humans are doing to the world because I didn't know it had that big of an impact. So yeah, it helped me learn a lot and prompted me to change my ways...like I used to take the bus now I walk to school.”

**YEAR 7 PUPIL
BEACON HIGH (FOCUS GROUP)**

CONCLUSION AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

In just the second full year of Zero Carbon Schools, a lot has been achieved...

In three years, we have grown from a one person organisation to a fantastic team of 5 and plan to recruit a sixth member to the team in 2023-2024.

The increase in the number of schools on the programme was led by our Programme Manager, Beth, and the growth in our team has enabled us to dramatically improve our monitoring and evaluation process, led by our impact manager, Zenobia. This also enables our education manager, Georgia, to continuously update and improve our programme resources. Underpinning all this was the work done to develop our Theory of Change, and to raise funding led by our Development Manager, Sian.

In 2023-24 we aim to develop our Planting the Seed work by continuing our taster sessions while developing some standalone teacher training sessions for schools not yet ready for a year long programme. We also plan to do more outreach and develop more partnerships with councils and academy trusts. Finally, we plan to develop an ambassador scheme that will help to showcase our work to a wider audience.

We plan to continue to grow Zero Carbon Schools to reach 150 schools in 2023-24. We recognise that it is not just quantity that is important, but quality of engagement, and we intend to improve programme

engagement and retention rates, and begin to monitor carbon reductions over multiple years. We also plan to develop and test resources that are more suited to secondary schools and the specific challenges that they face.

Finally, in the Branching Out section, we recognise that asking all schools to run a community 'event' can be a big ask and is not the only way to engage the community. So we will revise our support documents to include a more diverse menu of community involvement ideas that schools can take and will provide more examples from schools that are already doing this well.

"AN INSPIRATIONAL, SUPPORTIVE, AND EASY TO FOLLOW PROGRAMME THAT WILL ENCOURAGE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN A CHILD APPROPRIATE WAY."

Environmental Science Lead,
Liberty Woodland School

OUR SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS 2022-23

A MASSIVE THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS

BADUR FOUNDATION
GILCHRIST EDUCATIONAL TRUST
GLOBAL ACTION PLAN
GROSVENOR
LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
MARGATE RISE UP RESIDENCY
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
QBE FOUNDATION
RICARDO
SCHOOLS CLIMATE ASSEMBLY
SOLAR FOR SCHOOLS
STOKEY ENERGY
THE NATIONAL COLLEGE
WATES

SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS JOINED THIS ACADEMIC YEAR

AVIVA COMMUNITY FUND
DERWENT LONDON
EMR METAL RECYCLING
ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDERS NETWORK
HACKNEY COUNCIL
HEART ACADEMIES TRUST
MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
NEWHAM COUNCIL
POSTCODE SOCIETY TRUST
SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS
VAN NESTE FOUNDATION
VEGWARE COMMUNITY FUND

We achieved a lot on a total budget of £126,000 for the year. Of that amount, 76% was from grants, 14% from corporates, and 10% from sales and earned income.

This year we are looking to expand our work with Local Authorities, Academy Trusts and corporate partners in particular.

If you are interested in supporting us, please get in touch with our Development Lead, Tom - tom@greenschoolsproject.org.uk



GREEN SCHOOLS PROJECT

January 2024