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Surrey schools fly their green flags

6 October 2023



Surrey County Council has been confirmed with the highest number of schools awarded with a **Green Flag** of any local authority in England, with its **88 Eco-Schools**, all of which have a Green Flag status – the highest accreditation in the scheme.

Eco-Schools is the largest education programme in the world which helps sustainability become an integral part of school life. Eco-Schools is pupil lead, supports the enrichment of the curriculum and helps unite young people and the wider school community to care more about protecting the environment and making positive changes.

Various projects have been set up across Surrey's schools and have had a positive impact on the environment. Activities that have taken place include:

- Building new ponds to increase biodiversity.
- Creating allotments to grow vegetables.
- Planting trees to encourage more wildlife and improve air quality.
- Running switch off campaigns to save energy.
- Making signs for bins to make sure people use the correct bins, to help increase recycling.
- Building a greenhouse out of plastic bottles to grow plants.
- Following national campaigns such as Walk to School Week.

The projects have engaged over 50,000 pupils and are already reaping benefits which include:

- Saving a total of 648,330kwh of electricity
- Diverting 111,645 tonnes of waste from landfill
- Creating 8,322 (m2) of natural habitat
- 7,400 pupils participating in walking and cycling initiatives.

Marisa Heath, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Environment said: "*This project is so important and very close to my heart because we know informing and educating the young generation will pay dividends in the future to protect our environment. I am so proud that Surrey's schools are getting behind the green agenda and are encouraging so many young people to play their part to help tackle climate change. We know it's a joint effort and if everyone plays their part, we really can have a positive impact.*

"*It's an amazing achievement to be recognised as the highest performing county and hope this also inspires other Surrey schools to find out more and get involved*."

Adam Flint, Eco-Schools England Manager from Eco-Schools said: "*In academic year '22/23, schools in Surrey County Council achieved more Eco-Schools Green Flags than any other county council in the country. When it comes to enabling young people and schools staff to make positive impacts on our planet, the region is exemplary. The Council has supported their schools in various, showing a great commitment to the future of their pupils and placing faith in them to lead action on climate change and work for a better future for everyone. It's a phenomenal achievement*."

More information about Eco-Schools in Surrey, including how to sign up can be found on **here.**

Sign up to the Greener Matters newsletter to keep up to date on progress towards the target of making Surrey net zero by 2050 and find out what you can do to help.

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