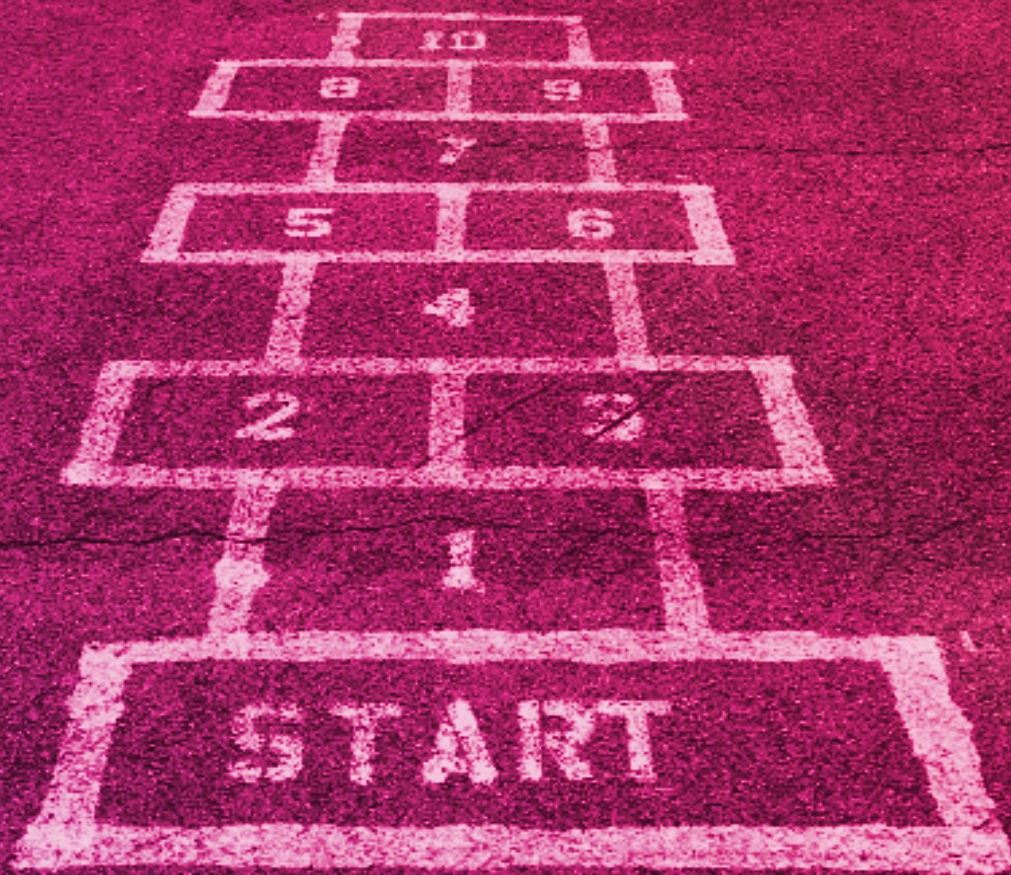


Schools' Good Life Charter

Case studies



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Ark Burlington Danes
Academy



FULHAM
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Connecting with nature


Ark Burlington Danes Academy

Students at Ark Burlington Danes Academy chose empty, unused patches in their playground as areas to focus on for their project. Realising that nature connectedness was at an all-time low at their school, these students pledged to work together to make better use of the space they had on site.

The students were passionate about creating a nature garden, to give many benefits to their school community, and to boost student wellbeing by providing a calm space. The garden also helped to strengthen student understanding and connectedness to the natural world and helped reduce consumption in the school by growing their own fruit and vegetables to be used in the canteen.

The group got stuck in straight away, sketching a plan for the garden's structure, marking out the areas for each part of the garden, looking through all the tools and equipment and researching the correct type of plants and vegetables to plant.





"We now have a fully working nature garden, growing vegetables and flowers. Our biggest success is the creation of the nature garden. Linked to that is the student engagement in that. The students have really enjoyed it and they LOVE watering!"

Olivia Petri, MFL Teacher,
Ark Burlington Danes Academy



The students were excited that local community organisation Groundwork offered to support the project and visited the school every week to support the students with building flower beds and bringing their ideas to life.

After a few months, the unused space was unrecognisable. Beds were teeming with flowers and fresh vegetables and the site team are not mowing the grass so there is a wild meadow growing! Students also made a water feature with some lights.

Every week, the students are really excited to spend time in the garden. They have been able to harvest tomatoes and potatoes and were able to take them home to their families, and they have really started to enjoy watering and weeding the garden.

The students plan to continue to develop the use of this area to aid intervention sessions for students in need.

“We have been able to support a school design their nature garden, with a build day for some of the bigger and strenuous elements of the garden with a team of corporate volunteers scheduled for this March. The students are also completing a 15 session gardening programme with one of our Community Gardeners - learning about food growing and gardening to biodiversity.”

- Lauren Ashley-Boyall
Community Programme Manager (West)
Groundwork London

Fixing and repairing

Fulham Cross Academy



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Year 7 and 8 students at Fulham Cross Academy identified a problem at their school and volunteered to be part of the solution. Fellow students were throwing clothes, shoes and bikes away much more than they needed to, so this Good Life Group aimed to shift their peers' perception around consumption, reduce the pressures to buy new stuff and influence a culture of re-using, fixing and repairing at their school.

Through the Schools' Good Life Charter programme, this group had workshops where they learned about why young people face such pressure to consume, and how advertisers can influence this through tactics like limitless scrolling and surveillance advertising. They also worked with local community organisation Team Repair, to learn about repairing techniques and methods that they might be able to use in their school to repair equipment like microscopes. The students loved working with community experts and the session nurtured impressive collaboration skills between the students, who were working towards a common goal.

"What I'm most proud about is that we can make others happy because we can help them with their things. And yeah, just to see the joy or smile on their face after we fix something for them, they might have been upset about or anything, or they might have not had the money at the time to be able to do that. And just to think we could do that for free for them is amazing."

- Student, Fulham Cross Academy



All of this inspired them, and they decided to work together to transform an un-used school supplies cupboard into an amazing fix and repair shop for their school. As a school community, Fulham Cross Academy now has a space where students can bring broken items and get these fixed. Students have been coming to the repair shop to get items fixed like school shoes and bike inner tubes which has been an incredible success.

Members of the Good Life Group will also be taking part in mechanic workshops which will begin in the Autumn term, focusing on cycle bike repair and maintenance, to further help their school community in reducing consumption and creating a culture of fix and repair. They will start with 10 broken bikes, repair these and donate them to students who need them most.

"The young people have been impacted on all different levels. Their interest in learning new things – repairing, interest in the environment, being active, actually seeing their ideas coming to life."

- Nathan Cardwell,
Climate Change Leader,
Fulham Cross Academy



Getting active for a good cause

Ark Burlington Danes Academy



Students in the Good Life Group at Ark Burlington Danes Academy identified single-use plastics in the canteen as a huge issue in their school. Hundreds of plastic bottles were being purchased every day across the school and then thrown away, without being recycled, as well as plastic packaging. This Good Life Group wanted to do something about it.

The students knew that their peers weren't going to stop buying their favourite flavoured water in a plastic bottle unless there was an alternative. They identified that education was key and wanted their peers to learn how damaging this waste is and promote the use of their reusable bottles, as well as recycling single use bottles.

This group set themselves a goal of providing every student in Key Stage 3 (417 students!) with a reusable bottle.





The group quickly realised that they would need funding to get the bottles and came up with the idea of organising fundraising football tournaments for Year 7 – 9 students. They charged a small joining fee and sold refreshments on the day to raise money.

The Good Life Group organised everything from the fee amount to the format and all promotional materials and assemblies through regular meet-ups – an impressive feat showing great creativity, autonomy and determination. They were delighted that their local Queens Park Rangers Community Trust offered to come along to run the day and referee with some of their student coaches.

"This programme has given me an opportunity to work with the young people ... we've given them a tournament that they've actually created and we've just come to support. It's been great to see some of the ideas that they've come up with ... it's just been a joy working with them."

- Eric Salvo, Secondary School Officer,
QPR in the Community Trust

The tournaments were a tremendous success with over £345 raised! The money meant that the Good Life Group could meet their goal and provide a reusable bottle to every student in Key Stage Three – even the yet-to-join year 7s!

The bottles were given to students during an assembly where the group explained how they had run the project and why reusing these bottles is so important. The grateful recipients of the water bottles were excited to start using them and to come together to reduce plastic waste at school.

“It’s been fantastic seeing them [the bottles] around the school and students taking pride in having them and using them.”

- Olivia Petri, MFL Teacher,
Ark Burlington Danes
Academy



Meat-less Mondays

Hammersmith Academy

Young people at Hammersmith Academy came together as part of a Good Life Group to work towards reducing meat consumption in their school. Although there was always a vegetarian lunch option available in the canteen, this was rarely chosen by students, resulting in excessive meat consumption across the school week. The students wanted to change this, by shifting the lunch options on a Monday to be mostly meat-free and educating fellow students on this issue.



Students recognised that they would need some help in making this change. The first step of implementing this action was to meet with their headteacher and try to persuade him that this plan should go ahead. This was done in a 'Dragon's Den' Style Session where the students pitched their idea to try to gain support from the school leadership team.



"Students leading on the charter projects are feeling heard and represented. They are empowered. They are developing a better understanding of how to instigate change through democratic practices. This has been a significant learning point for these students."

- Patrick O'Brien,
Head of Geography,
Hammersmith Academy

Ahead of their pitch, the students thoroughly researched appealing meat-free options and the benefits both for the school and for students consuming the products. They discovered that meat free options can taste even better than meat-filled options and they harm the environment a lot less.

The students did an excellent job campaigning, and it was decided that Hammersmith Academy would go ahead with implementing a meat-less Mondays initiative at their school. The Good Life Group have now kicked off consultations with the school chef, the food suppliers and the headteacher, where the students have led on getting everyone on board and working towards the same goal.

The group are planning to learn more from local community kitchen Nourish Hub about the benefits of meat-free options in the new academic year.

"I have learnt that not everything will be perfect, and you need to step out of your comfort zone to progress after a roadblock in your plans"

- Student, Hammersmith Academy

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