

## **ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR SCHOOL**

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

In school we have an Eco-group led by Mrs Thomson (Y5 CT) and they help me to co-ordinate various events throughout the year around caring for our environment. This has included inviting the National Marine Authority into school to talk to the whole school about the problems associated with plastics in the ocean – we have a display in the corridor reminding children to try to cut down on their plastic usage and to recycle as much as possible. We recently purchased re-useable water bottles for the whole school so that they don't use the 'throw away' water bottles. We also have recycling bins in school and compost bins in our school garden too.

We have worked with the RSPB and have installed nest boxes and bird feeders in our school garden. We have also created a 'hedgehog hotel' and various 'insect hotels' in our school garden, where plants have been chosen specifically to attract a variety of birds and insects.

We have regular litter picks around the local area. We have worked with the Woodland Trust and planted trees, as well as visited various woodlands in both the local area and further afield e.g. Breamish Valley in Northumberland.

Years 4 and 5, have taken part in various workshops with The Sill, the UK's National Landscape Discovery Centre in the Northumberland National Park, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of our landscape in understanding who we are as a nation and to place emphasis of the importance of caring for the environment.

We also use the Y6 residential visit to the Lake District to promote environmental education including sustainable travel – whilst in the Lake District the child walk or canoe in order to reach their designated activities such as climbing or gorge walking. We also work with Marcus from Cycling Generation to promote sustainable travel, particularly cycling, and have taken part in both Cycle and Walk to school weeks.

We have a workshop booked in for later this term with Northumbrian Water, which is all about saving water and using it in a sustainable way.

Of course, as a Catholic school we teach a lot about stewardship and the children are all aware of Pope Francis' encyclical '*Laudato Si*' as we link this to all of our environmental work.

Our Eco-group are very keen to take on more though and as a school we are committed to caring for the environment at both a local, national and global level. So if there are any initiatives we could add to or join in with the Benedict Partnership we would be more than happy.

**Head-teacher: Mrs Christina McDermott**

**3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019**