

Year 6 – 7 Transition Case Study

Using Kids Against Plastic to help ease transition from the Primary to Secondary phases

Introducing Karen Norton

I am a parent, teaching assistant and safeguarding professional with a deep love of the ocean. My family spend as much time as possible in and on the water; so when a friend suggested I watch the documentary 'A *Plastic Ocean'* I jumped at the chance to immerse myself in what I imagined would be a cinematic feast. What I learnt from the film, however, sparked an ember that soon turned in to a raging fire. I wanted to take action and thought working with students would be a good place to start, as they can influence the future.

My son Oliver had recently started at secondary school and although there is a wide range of clubs at the school we became aware of the lack of any sort of eco club. Drawing on his knowledge of sustainability gained through activities at junior school, he asked if I would enquire about setting one up. As luck would have it, the Head of Science at Haydon also ran the Student Voice – which is a Junior Leadership Team – and shared Oliver's passion for sustainability. In collaboration with the Head of Science we quickly set up Haydon Eco School, which is running as a sub-group of the Student Voice.

> *"I cannot wait to get started on things" Mr Clarke (Head of Science at Haydon)– Dec 2017*

The birth of Haydon School Eco Club

I offered to run the club along with Mr Clarke as he, like all other teachers, was very short of time.

Our first assignment was to recruit two Year 7 students to present an assembly to each year group highlighting the negative impact of single use plastic on the environment and our health. Luckily Oliver and his friend Freya whose mum is also a volunteer at the school offered, spending time together independently researching the topic and designing a

PowerPoint presentation. This worked as a cross-curricular project as Freya is also part of the school's Ted Talks Club and she needed to produce a talk. She chose single use plastics and their impact.

They included photos and facts that were not only easy to understand but also relevant to individual children. For example, they calculated the number of single use plastic water bottles going to landfill from Haydon students each year – an estimated 360,000! By presenting information in this way the students can see directly the impact single use plastic has, but also how they can change things.



Haydon School Eco Club

Meanwhile, the older students started writing letters to local councillors asking for their support in going 'plastic free'. They met with the canteen manager and requested a reduction in the availability of single use plastic at lunchtime. They also started raising funds to install water refill points around the school.

At this point I was lucky enough to run into a friend from CBBC (Naomi Wilkinson) who is passionate about the environment and has seen the devastating effect of ocean plastic around the world first hand. She agreed to give up her time to introduce Oliver and Freya at their first assembly, which went down a storm with the students as she is a popular and familiar face.





The Year 7 children gasped at the shocking facts and figures, however there were a few statistical errors that needed double-checking. For example, the first group of students were told that if all the single use water bottles used by the school each year were laid end to end, they would reach three quarters of the way around the earth....This wasn't quite the case, the bottles would roughly reach from Bristol to West London! They amended their figures and passed on the correct information at the second assembly...Phew! This was a useful learning on the go experience for Oliver and Freya and taught them to be flexible.



Photoshoot after one of the assembly presentations

Going from strength to strength, and into a transition

Once the assemblies had taken place at the secondary school, the school advertised Oliver and Freya's success on social media – this helped to gain interest from staff at local primary schools, who then contacted us to enquire about the possibility of 'touring' the assembly around local feeder schools.

> **"We're getting everyone on board©)"** Mrs Verman (Teacher at Whiteheath Primary) - May 2018

It was then that we seized the opportunity to use the assembly as a tool to ease the transition from junior school to high (secondary) school. We have since secured two bookings and are currently altering the wording of the assembly to ensure it is accessible and meaningful to Key Stage 2 children.

Establishing a convenient date for the school visits was a challenge; the summer term is a busy period for primary schools and high schools alike. In retrospect it would have been better to have organised for the visits to have occurred during the spring term.

On a positive note though, due to the lighter evenings we are aware that both schools are now tagging on family litter picks around the school perimeters to the event – which is great news.



Oliver, Freya and Naomi arrange their litter haul for a photo

It was a long road, and a steep learning curve at times, but we were ready to kick off the 'tour': Oliver and Freya had been busy rehearsing their parts for the assembly, our CBBC friend has confirmed her attendance and the primary schools each began introducing their children to the topic in class.

> "I would like all year groups to have a lesson on recycling and saving our planet during this week" Mrs Blake (Head at Whiteheath) - May 2018





The assemblies were a huge success

Our aim is for all children involved in this activity, whether they are writing to councillors, delivering presentations, or learning more about the impact of plastic on the oceans, to feel that they are part of a wider community of learning. To understand that learning about a topic is not reduced to the set curriculum in any one year group. We would like to encourage primary school students of all abilities to see learning about the environment as something that runs seamlessly from their primary school to secondary, and for this to aid their individual transitions.

Easing the transition experience

The transition from KS2 to KS3, we realise, is potentially daunting, but if the Year 6 pupils see Year 7 students working independently and being excellent role models, we hope it may influence their attitude towards moving up in a positive and inclusive way, and make sure all Year 6 pupils will have friendly and familiar Year 7 faces to look out for in the playground and around school generally.

And the Year 7's will benefit too: their self-confidence and self-esteem will grow as they give presentations in front of others, as too will their personal and social skills as they work in this mentoring capacity.

We hope to foster a love for the environment amongst young people and encourage them to consider themselves environmentalists. We wish to encourage them to invest in their collective future, and carry on much of the excellent work that is happening in the moment, especially around the effect of single use plastic on the oceans and Planet Earth as a whole.



We also wish to foster a love of gaining knowledge about alternatives to single use plastics, and how to reduce their own use of convenience plastics, and to take this knowledge forward with them as they progress through their lives.

Karen Norton

May 2018

Note:

A copy of the PowerPoint file the KS3 pupils created for use in their assemblies is available in the Resource Bank. It's title is: *A Plastic Ocean Assembly for KS3*



KS3 Curriculum Relevance

Subject	Aims	Attainment Target
Geography	communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.	Pupils should be taught to: • understand how human and physical processes interact to influence, and change landscapes, environments and the climate; and how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems
English – spoken language	Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English	
English – reading and writing	The writing they do should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.	 Pupils should be taught to understand increasingly challenging texts through: learning new vocabulary, relating it explicitly to known vocabulary and understanding it with the help of context and dictionaries making inferences and referring to evidence in the text knowing the purpose, audience for and context of the writing and drawing on this knowledge to support comprehension checking their understanding to make sure that what they have read makes sense.
Maths	Pupils will become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, reason mathematically and solve problems by applying their mathematics to a variety of routine and non-routine problems	 select and use appropriate calculation strategies to solve increasingly complex problems use standard units of mass, length, time, money and other measures, including with decimal quantities construct and interpret



		appropriate tables, charts, and diagrams, including frequency tables, bar charts, pie charts, and pictograms for categorical data, and vertical line (or bar) charts for ungrouped and grouped numerical data
Science	 The national curriculum for science aims to ensure that all pupils: develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future. 	 Analysis and evaluation: apply mathematical concepts and calculate results present observations and data using appropriate methods, including tables and graphs properties of ceramics, polymers and composites (qualitative) Earth as a source of limited resources and the efficacy of recycling the production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the impact on climate.
Art and design	 The national curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils: produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques 	 Pupils should be taught to: use a range of techniques to record their observations in sketchbooks, journals and other media as a basis for exploring their ideas to use a range of techniques and media, including painting
Citizenship	 The national curriculum for citizenship aims to ensure that all pupils: develop an interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering as well as other forms of 	 Pupils should be taught about: the roles played by public institutions and voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities, including



	 responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions, to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs. 	opportunities to participate in school- based activities
Computing	The national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all pupils: • are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology.	 Pupils should be taught to: undertake creative projects that involve selecting, using, and combining multiple applications, preferably across a range of devices, to achieve challenging goals, including collecting and analysing data and meeting the needs of known users create, re-use, revise and re-purpose digital artefacts for a given audience, with attention to trustworthiness, design and usability u understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy; recognise inappropriate content, contact and conduct and know how to report concerns.