

UNITED KINGDOM, LONDON



POPULATION
8.8 million
2021

Waste Education Program in Schools

The North London area covering 7 Authorities (London Borough of Barnet, London Borough of Camden, London Borough of Enfield, London Borough of Hackney, London Borough of Haringey, London Borough of Islington, London Borough of Waltham Forest) was generating around 2,242 tonnes of municipal solid waste (MSW) daily in 2018-2019, with expected increase in volumes for the coming years due to significant population increase.

The North London waste authorities adopted the North London Joint Waste Strategy for the year 2004-2020, setting a framework for the management of MSW, aiming to achieve a combined household re-use, recycling and composting rate of 50% by 2020 and a 35% reduction of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill in 2020, compared to 1995 levels. The Strategy included several actions to address the reduction and reuse of waste, among which a Waste Education Program in Schools.

In an effort to promote environmental awareness and sustainable practices, the North London Waste Authority partnered with the environmental charity ecoACTIVE to implement an educational program across schools in north London. This initiative was crafted with the aim of instigating behavioral changes among students, parents, and school staff, while also enhancing understanding of the waste hierarchy and waste prevention strategies applicable in both school and home environments. Through interactive school assemblies and hands-on practical workshops, specialized educators successfully engaged with 3,767 pupils, imparting valuable knowledge and practical skills. By tailoring the program to the unique needs of each school, ecoACTIVE ensured maximum relevance and impact in fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Such initiatives play a crucial role in equipping students with the knowledge and tools needed to make sustainable choices, not only within the school premises but also in their everyday lives outside of school. By nurturing a generation of environmentally-conscious individuals, these programs contribute to the broader goal of building a more sustainable and resilient community.



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IMPACTS TO ACHIEVE SDG 11.6.1

- The education program in North London likely had a positive impact on waste awareness, behavior change, community engagement, and the overall effort to build a more sustainable and resilient community as outlined in the North London Joint Waste Strategy.
- The program reached 14 primary and secondary schools in 7 North London Boroughs, with 3,767 pupils engaged overall.
- 560 staff members and 289 parents/carers engaged over the duration of the project.
- 87.5% of schools took action, with an average waste reduction of 41% achieved across schools.
- 47% increase in understanding of the waste hierarchy (67% in primary schools, 37% in secondary).
- 47% increase in number of staff feeling knowledgeable about waste management at their school.
- 41% increase in several staff feeling confident talking to pupils about actions to reduce, reuse, or recycle.
- 100% teachers satisfied.



INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

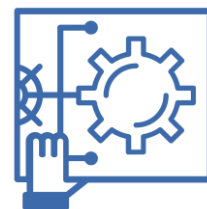


The North London Waste Authority devised a plan to instigate long-term behavioral changes among residents of north London, including students in schools, with the objective of reducing waste and promoting reuse and recycling. This initiative aimed to minimize the impact of waste disposal costs on taxpayers. Additionally, the Authority introduced the Education Hub, a comprehensive collection of both internal and external resources intended to foster waste prevention education within primary schools across north London. The Education Hub encompasses a variety of materials, such as videos, lesson guides, assembly plans, and handbooks, neatly categorized under six themes: the lifecycle of waste, food waste, clothing waste, plastic waste, composting, and proactive environmental initiatives. These resources are designed to sustain action beyond the conclusion of pilot projects.

PLANNING & MONITORING



The program has placed significant emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of its activities within schools, tracking various metrics such as the number of students, teachers, parents, and caregivers actively engaged. Furthermore, the program has closely assessed its impact on waste reduction within school environments following the completion of the program. Program developers have also conducted thorough monitoring of the level of knowledge acquired by participants and their confidence levels in implementing waste management and recycling practices, at school or at home. This meticulous monitoring framework not only ensures accountability and effectiveness but also provides valuable insights into the program's efficacy and areas for improvement.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The program provided an effective way of delivering waste prevention education to a diverse audience of people, offering opportunities to build skills, knowledge and understanding of waste issues, while inspiring pupils to take the message home to their families.

Pupils learned about ways to reduce and recycle waste, including food waste reduction; textiles reuse, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) reuse and recycling, as well as more about all of the local recycling services available in their boroughs. As part of the project pupils carried out waste audits of their school, to see how much rubbish was really being thrown away, introduced new recycling systems to their classmates and even delivered whole school assemblies to spread the word. There were also teacher-training sessions, providing teachers with information about waste minimisation and recycling, as well as suggestions of ways to include these topics in their existing curriculum or schemes of work.

The 14 participating schools entered into a competition to see who could reduce waste the most and best communicate their work to the school as a whole. Prizes of £500, £200 and £100 were awarded to the top three schools for them to use on further waste prevention measures.



STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The program engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, and caregivers. It was a collaborative effort between the public waste authority and an innovative environmental education charity to implement the waste education project in schools. By actively involving students in schools, the initiative aimed to disseminate positive and practical messages about waste reduction and recycling, with the expectation that these would be shared with parents and caregivers throughout north London.



Source: EcoActive



SOURCES

- EcoActive – <https://www.ecoactive.org.uk/waste-education>
- North London Waste Authority – <https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/news/winning-waste-prevention-programme-pupils-across-north-london> ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEz6-ePjLLY&ab_channel=NLWAgov
- North London Joint Waste Strategy – https://www.nlwa.gov.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/annual-monitoring-report-2018_19-final-v2.pdf
- London Datastore – <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/londons-population>
- <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/waste-litter-tickets-800050792457>



UN-HABITAT

P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
T: +254-20-76263120
E: unhabitat-info@un.org



Andre Dzikus,
Chief Urban Basic Services Section

accp@un.org
#AfricanCleanCities

