



EVALOC
EVALUATING LOW CARBON COMMUNITIES

EASTERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL:

E C O P L A Y

COMMUNITY EVENT SUMMARY C3 - I

MARCH 2012



TYPE OF LEARNING: Show and Tell

EVENT AUDIENCE: Local primary school children, parents and carers

DURATION OF EVENT: 1 hour

KEY AIMS: To spread messages about energy saving, recycling and climate change to adults in the community.

COST¹: Medium Cost (£198 including script, CD, online and public performance license, costumes, scenery, materials)

TIME²: Intensive (Rehearsals need to be carried out over several months)

KEY TASKS: Selection & adaptation of script, selection of music, rehearsals, costume, scenery, invitations to parents and other administrative tasks.

ATTENDANCE & FEEDBACK FORMS

The show was attended by around 25 people, mainly family of the children. The feedback forms indicated that both children and adult audiences absorbed the messages of the play.

Number of feedback forms completed: **21**

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

The play was performed in the School Hall by Year 3 children plus a number of older children who were 'eco warriors'. The play was about a group of penguins in Antarctica who are sad because the ice is melting. They go to the North Pole to find more ice but find it is also melting there. The Polar Bears explain that the humans are making the planet too hot. They then travel to UK, the US, Brazil and Australia and in each country sing a song to persuade people to stop driving so much, stop using so much energy, stop sending so much waste to landfill sites and stop chopping down the rain forest. Each time the people listen to the penguins and change their behaviours the planet cools down a little more until all the ice returns to Antarctica.

Children also visited Newcastle Centre for Life as part of their preparation for the play which is an award-winning science centre full of exhibitions, activities and events, including some relating to climate change. This provided an additional learning experience for the children.

LEARNING

The school play offered an entertaining, effective and motivating way of getting messages about climate change across to people. It reached and engaged parents/carers who might not otherwise have attended an event about energy or climate change. The involvement of children in the play also meant that parents/carers were engaged on an emotional level. The play also contained practical ideas for action.

Most people said they felt more motivated, and able to make changes to energy use as a result of seeing the play, and intended to reduce their energy use.

A possible risk of the play was that people might be put off by being preached at or the feeling that their children are being 'used' to get a message across that they may not agree with. The humour in the play appeared to have helped reduce this risk, as well as the deputy head teacher's upbeat, upfront and inclusive comment to the audience at the end of the play: 'Wasn't that a brilliant way to get the message across?!

It was subsequently suggested that the play might be staged in Middlesbrough town centre or at another local primary school, and another of the EVALOC LCCs explored the possibility of holding an eco play at the local primary school.

¹Cost key- Low Cost (less than £50); Medium Cost (between £50-£500); High Cost (£500 or more).

²Time key - Light (Less than 1 person day); Moderate (several days organisation over a number of weeks); Intensive (Several weeks over a year).



EVALOC
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ST. THOMAS MORE PRIMARY SCHOOL:

E C O P R O D U C T I O N

COMMUNITY EVENT SUMMARY C3-3

FEBRUARY 2014



TYPE OF LEARNING: Show and Tell

EVENT AUDIENCE: Local school children, parents and carers

DURATION OF EVENT: 1 hour

KEY AIMS: To increase knowledge, understanding and awareness of environmental issues, as well as diffuse and encourage sustainable principles.

COST¹: Medium Cost (£198 including script, CD, online and public performance license, costumes, scenery, materials)

TIME²: Intensive

KEY TASKS: Selection & adaptation of script, selection of music, rehearsals, costume, scenery, invitations to parents and other administrative tasks.

ATTENDANCE & FEEDBACK FORMS

The show was attended by around 20 parents, 30 children from Easterside Primary School and 15 staff attended.

Number of feedback forms completed: **32**

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

The objectives of the eco performance were to:

- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of what it means to be environmentally friendly.
- Raise awareness of 'the role we all have to play in protecting the planet and reducing our carbon footprint'.
- Encourage others to reflect on their behaviour and the personal contribution they make to help achieve the 10 principles of sustainable living.

The production was performed in the school hall. It followed the format of a television talk show to explore how everyday people can disregard and neglect their environment. Unusually, the production talked explicitly about climate change and appealed to the audience almost exclusively on moral and altruistic grounds. The overall key message was that we only have one planet, that it is beautiful and precious, that we must look after it, that we all have a role to play, and that small actions can make a difference. The show 'host' challenged the 'guests' to reflect and change their behaviours in order to protect and look after Planet Earth.

LEARNING

The feedback forms indicate that the event was very successful in getting over its messages both in raising the audience's understanding of how to be environmentally friendly and also how individual action can make a difference.

The majority of respondents said that as a result of seeing the performance they felt more motivated to save energy in their home, that the production had increased their ability to save energy at home, and they intended to take action to reduce energy use in their homes. Of those who explained why they felt more motivated to reduce energy use, 37% mentioned the process of change (e.g. because 'they now knew what to do' or 'they now know it is helpful [to take action]', 'everyone and every little counts', 'it made me think') and 37% mentioned pro-environmental reasons (e.g. 'because there is only one planet/world', 'they want to help save the planet' or they 'didn't want to leave a ruined one', or to save or conserve energy).

The performance also reached parents who would not necessarily otherwise attend an event on climate change, the environment or energy issues, and engaged the children more deeply in the issues. The most useful things respondents learned included energy saving actions, climate change and the planet, the process of change and about the nature of community. While 46% said they learnt this through watching the play, 73% of respondents said their learning had occurred either through talking to people about the play or through the experience of helping put the play on.

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Academic partners:

**Environmental Change Institute,
University of Oxford and Low Carbon
Building Group, Oxford Brookes
University.**

Community partners:

**Awel Aman Tawe, Sustainable Blacon Ltd,
Middlesbrough Environment City, Hook
Norton Low Carbon, Kirklees Council and
Low Carbon West Oxford**

For further information on EVALOC

please contact Rajat Gupta

Email: rgupta@brookes.ac.uk

Tel: 01865 484049

www.evaloc.org.uk

The EVALOC project seeks to assess, explain and communicate the changes in energy use due to community activities within six selected case study projects under the Department of Energy and Climate Change's (DECC) Low Carbon Communities Challenge (LCCC) initiative, a government-supported initiative to transform the way communities use and produce energy, and build new ways of supporting more sustainable living.



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