

Energy Sparks Case Study

Scoreboard Champions: Holiday Switch off



Damers First School is a 3-form entry school of 468 pupils in Dorset which is part of the Wessex Multi-Academy Trust. The school joined Energy Sparks in Autumn 2022 to support pupils' knowledge and understanding about reducing the amount of energy used within the school.



Since working with Energy Sparks the school has cut their electricity consumption by 12%, and was the national winner of the Energy Sparks scoreboard in 2022/2023 achieving an impressive 1535 points from a wide range of pupil activities and adult actions.

The school has a strong environmental ethos, with teachers embedding sustainability in every subject at Damers First School, like a golden thread. All teachers access Energy Sparks and have used it in their Maths, Science and Literacy lessons.

Whole school involvement in holiday switch offs

A key element to the impact of the energy efficiency work at Damers is that both staff and pupils all across the school have been involved. As well as taking part in an **Energy Sparks Energy Audit**, the pupils have collaborated with the caretaker on conducting holiday switch-offs, making sure that nothing gets missed, not even the hot drink boilers in the staffroom.

Teachers and other school staff have also been included in these switch offs. Pupils shared the **Energy Sparks Summer Switch Off** check list with all staff. They spoke to their own classes plus other classes across the school to make sure that everything on the list (on the wall in every classroom) would be turned off on the last day of term. On the final day of term pupils go around the school confirming that everything is switched off, an end-of-term practice that has been embedded in the school over the past year.

Keep powering down, keep getting rewards

Money saved by powering down is returned to the children, for items like toys, PE equipment, money towards a school trip or workshops in school.

“ The Scoreboard has inspired more actions and activities to be taken by the children to reduce the school's energy consumption. ”

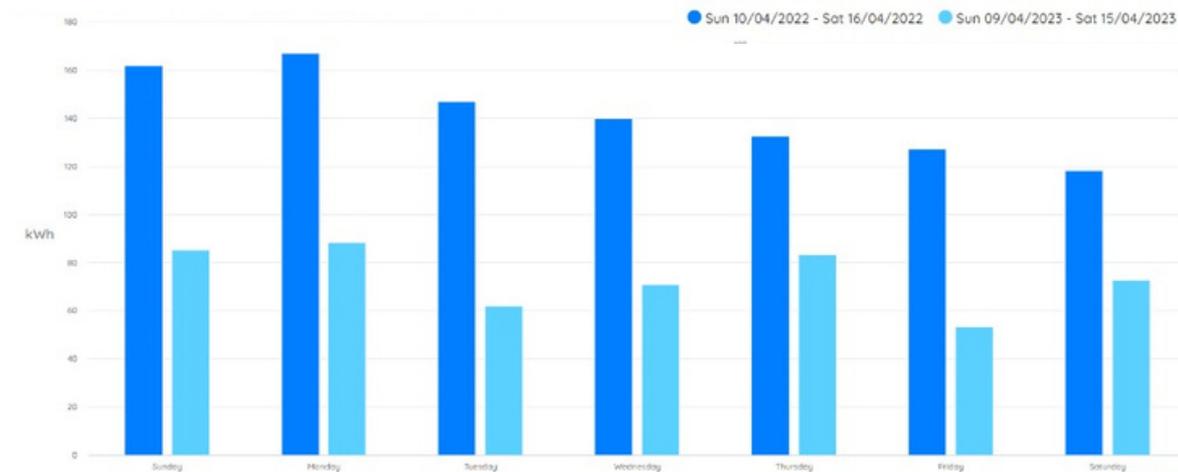
- Edd Moore, Class teacher & Eco Coordinator



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The pupil switch off campaign was particularly successful in the Easter holiday 2023, when the school cut its electricity use by 43% compared to Easter 2022. The chart below shows the decrease in electricity use between a week in the Easter holidays in 2023 compared to 2022.



Cutting energy waste in the school kitchen

The children have also worked closely with the kitchen staff. Following a conversation with the kitchen staff, freezers and fridges are now consolidated and turned off during the school holidays. Pupils also suggested:

- Turning off the hot plate trolley as soon as the food has been served
- Switching on appliances only when needed and turning them off straight away
- Monitoring appliance switch off every lunchtime
- The children made a list of appliances that could be turned off at the end of every day to save energy and the kitchen team agreed to run this as a trial.

Management, governance and the wider community

The energy work that the pupils have done is highly regarded by the Senior Leadership Team and school governors of the school.

The headteacher has followed through on their recommendations to replace non-LED bulbs and the governors and MAT trustees, following a presentation by the children, have included their energy efficiency ideas in the Wessex Multi Academy Trust sustainability strategy.

“It is great to see the children taking what they have learned in school and implementing this into their own homes.”

- Edd Moore, Class teacher & Eco Coordinator

Children also delivered a presentation to Poundbury Resident Association about the energy saving campaigns they have been doing in school. They spoke about Energy Sparks and how this worked giving them a demonstration of the data. Energy saving tips from the pupils will feature in the residents' association monthly newsletters, and with parents via school newsletters.

