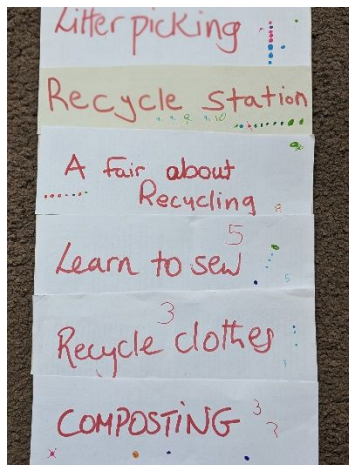


### Stanley Grove Primary School

Stanley Grove Primary joined the More haste less waste programme in March 2023. At the initial session the pupils voted on what actions they would like to take to reduce waste. They voted on thirteen different options with their top priorities being:



Acting on their choices the first action was to litter pick the school grounds and in just 30 minutes the team managed to collect 5.5kg of rubbish.

However, it was clear that organising a recycling station and a school fair as a focus for the various issues they had chosen was going to take more time and several sessions were dedicated to organising an event. The pupils discussed what they wanted to collect at the fair and the various activities.

One of the issues that arose in the discussions was the problem of disposable vapes being littered in the school grounds and the local area. Having undertaken some research and shared it with the group on the health and environmental implications of vaping the subject of disposable vapes became a topic of interest. Contact was made with a local vape shop and the school decided to organise for the team to visit the shop. Consequently, a series of questions were devised.



The discussion at the shop ranged over why people vape, the impact of vaping on health, the issue of lithium batteries exploding in recycling centres and how they are left to litter and pollute the environment. It was also fairly evident that very few vapes were recycled by the shop and the pupils wanted to encourage vapers to recycle more. In an effort to make a difference the shop was invited to come along to the fair to pick up any vapes the school managed to collect.

In the meantime, as the fair developed, MEEN invited Stitched Up to run a Sewing and mending session with a Year 5 class.



Having established the skill of patching old clothes in one session MEEN asked if the same group would like another session to explore how to upcycle clothes and turn old items into something new. Fortunately, the class was keen especially as the offer aimed to encourage more pupils to support the sewing corner at the fast approaching fair. MEEN was very fortunate to have a volunteer with excellent sewing skills who agreed to support these sessions and sewing corner.



Having sourced items from a second-hand clothes shop which were considered un-sellable the pupils had the freedom to chop clothes up and refashion them. Consequently, a ruined wedding dress was cut up to be made into a skirt, holey jeans were turned into shorts, whilst the remainder of the legs were sewn into denim bags.

The plans for the fair were came together when the eco lead called on members of staff to support the event. About eight members of the school staff joined the pupils at the after-school club to



volunteer their help in running the stalls with everyone being allocated jobs. The team organised for there to be a waste-free food and drink stall, a planting stall, a sewing stall, a stall to drop off old electricals and vapes, two games, one focused on recycling, the other helping people think about repairing, reusing and repurposing, the opportunity to make anti-littering posters and a family litter pick for the area around school supported by Keep Manchester Tidy.

The pupils were also going to give a speech to make sure that any visitors at the fair understood why the school had organised the fair and the team were keen to practice their delivery.



On the day the eco team did an excellent job of delivering their speech. Below is the text they wrote and it shows just how much they had learnt and how much they care.

**Welcome to our fair celebrating Eco Heroes for Families:** Today we are collecting old vapes, batteries and electrical waste for recycling or reuse. We are also mending clothes and planting seeds in reused pots. We also have a family litter picking session.

**We would like to talk to you about vapes:** We are collecting vapes because you can find old vapes thrown on the ground in the park, the alley ways and our school grounds. The problems are that children might pick them up, taste them or play with them and vapes can have bad effects on children if they use them. Vapes contain the drug nicotine and if kids get addicted their health suffers and they can be a bit cranky with their parents. Vapes are also made of plastic and if they are dropped on the ground the plastic breaks down in the soil which also creates problems in the environment.

**Vapes also have batteries in them and if they leak acids and metals they damage and poison the land.**

In the UK we bin 3 million vapes every week! That's a lot of toxic rubbish especially when they can be recycled. By the way you can recycle vapes at Vape City. And did you know that batteries are dangerous and can explode? They also contain lithium which is a precious metal. Please if your household has a vape user recycle the old vapes and any batteries.

**Vapes are electricals but we need to recycle all old electricals – anything with a plug, battery or cable can be recycled.** Did you know the total number of old cables hoarded in UK homes could circle the earth 5 times? Let's recycle electrical and tech waste – if you haven't already brought items in then bring in your old electronic toys,

calculators, electric toothbrushes, phones and laptops this week. We will try to sort it, reuse some of it and recycle the rest because we are Eco Heroes for Families!

Don't forget to get your old clothes fixed up in sewing corner and to plant up a pot. And if you have time, please help us clean the streets around our school by joining our litter pick!

The school celebrated the great success of their fair on their website:

## Eco Fair-June 2023

On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July, Stanley Grove hosted their first ever Eco Fair! The after school event was hosted by our Eco group, the wonderful Miss Jones, plus our fantastic partners at Manchester Environmental Education Network (MEEN) and Keep Britain Tidy.



The children and their families enjoyed the various stalls and activities at the event, including Sewing and Mending corner, planting with recycled compost, electronics recycling, plus a timed recycling sorting game which promoted some healthy competition between the children!

Our highly knowledgeable Eco Ambassadors, spoke with confidence and passion to the fair, and shared all they have been learning in their after school club. We hope this is the first of many similar events at Stanley Grove!

Just over 10kgs of old vapes were picked up by Vape City to be recycled; with 6kg of old electrical items being collected; whilst sewing skills were honed. Meanwhile free compost from SUEZ made out of old food waste was provided for planting vegetable and flower seeds to take home whilst members of the community had plenty of opportunities to learn about waste reduction and recycling.

In a feedback session the pupils were proud of what they had achieved with the fair, but when asked if they had organised it the answer was both a yes, a no with the clarification that 'we planned it but the staff organised it'. However, such capacity building meant that the event was able to deliver much more than they had originally imagined possible.

Following the school fair the Eco team were then invited to be a part of MEEN's intergenerational workshop at the Youth Sustainability Conference. The workshop, based on the 'More haste less waste' project, involved three other contributors: St Peter's High, Plymouth Grove Primary and Dr Maggie Fostier and team from the University of Manchester whose action in their laboratories have prevented 37,000 items of single use plastic from being binned.

The Stanley Grove presentation was very well received, particularly as it focused on the relatively new phenomena of vaping. The team handled numerous questions from the floor with many pupils from other schools, including the high schools, asking questions about the recycling of vapes, the dangers of old batteries and environmental contamination.

The team also set up a sewing stall at the conference which enabled pupils from other schools to test out their sewing skills. The pupils also enjoyed the afternoon banner-making workshop with pupils not just from their school, but also from others pushing to stop vaping.



In their feedback they clearly enjoyed being able to share their knowledge and activities with other people. It gave them considerable confidence with one of the quieter pupils stating that the best part of the project was 'showing my voice to everyone'.

Alongside these activities the team were also making practical changes in school by setting up a composting scheme. The collection began with the fruit waste from early years and the nursery, but in their feedback, they expressed an interest in rolling the programme out to any other classes with fresh food waste.





Before the end of the Summer term, the team had two more tasks to undertake. Firstly they were to produce a poster for Vape City encouraging vapers to recycle their old vapes. So reusing some of the leftover materials from the banner-making at the conference the team made a very bright and instructive poster.



The second task was to plant a celebratory plum tree in the school grounds which brought the team a lot of joy even in the rain! They also made it very plain that they would like to keep up the work in the next academic year.

