

How your eco-team can help you make small changes that really add up: advice from our 2026 Pupil Power Award winners

We are delighted to announce that the winner of our 2025/26 Pupil Power Award (£400) is Horsford Primary - Holt Road. In this interview, they share their insights and advice with other schools that are looking to replicate their success.

We have [written previously](#) about the smart approach that Horsford Primary - Holt Road (Diocese of Norwich) have taken to energy saving. Their Eco Team has been incredibly active on energy, with activities ranging from gathering data about room temperatures and using this to successfully advocate for changes to heating settings, to creating switch-off lists and much more beyond.



Above: After investigating classroom temperatures, Horsford's Eco Team worked with their headteacher to adjust heating timings.

We estimate that they have **cut their electricity use by 9%** and their **gas by a brilliant 27%** over the last year, saving almost **4 tonnes of CO2** and **£3,800**.

Here, they share the secrets to their success...

What motivated you to focus on energy saving this year?

Our focus on energy saving started with a simple idea – helping our pupils realise that the small things they do every day can add up to make a real difference. Responsibility is one of our school values, so this project gave our children a meaningful way to put that into practice by caring for the environment and looking after the resources we all share.

We wanted them to feel that they could make a positive impact, not just in school but beyond it too. By giving them the chance to lead projects, keep an eye on our energy use and share their ideas with others, they've grown in confidence and shown just how much children can achieve when they're given responsibility.

What will your energy-saving results and prize mean for your school and students?

The energy results are brilliant and it is great to know that we have not only been helping to look after the environment but we also saved the school money on energy bills.

We would like to use the award money to further develop our Eco Team's work and make their impact visible across the school.

We are hoping to invest in resources such as energy monitoring equipment and practical resources that will help children continue to learn about energy use and environmental responsibility. We would also like to use some of the money to enhance our outdoor areas, creating more opportunities for children to care for nature through planting, gardening and wildlife projects.

Most importantly, we want the children to have a say in how the money is used so they can continue to take ownership of their environmental journey and lead positive change within our school.

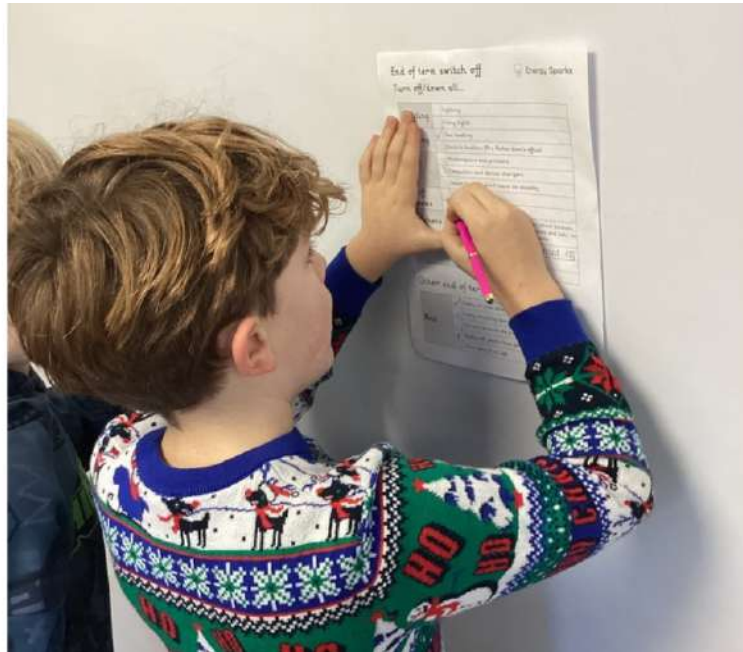
In the words of one of our students:

"I'm happy about getting the prize because we put in hard work to make these changes for our school happen. We can buy new equipment for Eco Team to help us to continue our hard work. The new year 2s and year 1s will be able to join and be part of Eco Team. This is important because we need a big team to make changes and for our school and at home, and for the planet."

Have you learned anything interesting through this experience?

One of the biggest things we've learnt is that small changes really can make a big difference. Looking at our energy data has made everyone more aware of how much energy can be wasted and how simple habits can have a lasting impact.

We were amazed by the savings we achieved just by making sure the school carried out regular 'big shutdowns' before weekends and holidays.



Above: An eco-team member runs through their end of term switch-off list.

The children have been at the heart of it all. They've taken real ownership of the project and are passionate about making a difference, not just for our school, but for their future too. That's something we'll continue to build on in the years ahead.

Were there any features of Energy Sparks that you found particularly helpful?

Being new to creating an Eco Team in school, we found all of the activities really helpful as a starting point, pulling one each week for the focus of our Eco Team meeting.

Do you have any words of advice or inspiration for other schools?

- Don't worry about trying to do everything at once – just get started.
- Give the children ownership and they'll surprise you with their enthusiasm, ideas and determination.

- Celebrate the little successes along the way, share the impact with your school community, and keep talking about why it matters.

We've found that it's the small, everyday actions, done consistently by everyone, that make the biggest difference.

What do you think your next steps might be?

We would like to re-establish our new Eco Team in September, bringing new children on board to help to continue the hard work we have begun. We would also like to deepen the engagement of the wider community.

Want to win next year? Read this...

Our Pupil Power Award goes to the school that provides the **most compelling evidence of pupil-led action** to achieve energy savings, and Horsford Primary - Holt Road exemplify this.

All year, they have shared lots of detail (and photos!) about what they have been doing. **So if you'd like to be considered for this award next year, [we highly recommend looking at their activity log](#)** to get an idea of the level of detail we are looking for.

Why? Because when schools share plenty of detail, they serve as inspiration and a source of great ideas for our wider network of schools.

You can also read [insights from two of this year's scoreboard champions here](#).

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Tanya Kirton, Lindsay Homans and Olivia Chapman for taking the time to share their insights, and offer our congratulations and thanks to everyone who was involved this year.