Primary schools encouraged to take action on the environment with Better Planet Schools

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Sureserve Group PLC has announced an exciting new three year partnership with environmental education charity the Young People's Trust for the Environment (YPTE). Sureserve will be supporting 'Better Planet Schools', YPTE's new online environmental education platform for primary schools in the UK.

Better Planet Schools provides access to lesson plans, worksheets and activities to engage the children and enable them to take the lead in making changes to benefit the environment. The concept has already been thoroughly tested, with pilot schools' energy performance monitored as they completed work on energy and energy saving. On average, the 14 primary schools saved 12% of their annual energy usage, through child-led behaviour change alone.

With the average school energy bill climbing to over £60,000 per year, being able to save even 10% of a school's energy use each year through child-led actions will have a real impact on reducing not only energy bills, but also greenhouse gas emissions

But Better Planet Schools isn't just about saving energy. Participating schools choose three 'modules' to study each academic year, with each module representing a term of learning and activities. They cover topics like reducing plastic and waste and increasing recycling; increasing nature and biodiversity in school grounds; tackling fast fashion; studying air pollution and improving air quality; food and farming; endangered species; and how climate change is affecting flooding and the nature-based solutions that are being developed. And each module provides plenty of actions that children can take to make a difference, both now and throughout their lives.

YPTE has serious ambitions for Better Planet Schools and it hopes to involve all 20,000+ primary schools in the UK in the scheme before 2030.

Sureserve Group will be a corporate sponsor of Better Planet Schools, providing prizes that can be won by schools that complete modules. Prizes will include three free energy surveys per year, which provide school governing bodies with valuable information about how they can improve their school's energy performance.

YPTE's Director, Peter Littlewood said "We've seen amazing impacts from Better Planet Schools already, but we know it can do so much more if we can get enough schools involved. And the actions the children take at school cascade down via the children to their homes too!"

The Sureserve Group's CEO, Peter Smith said "Our exciting partnership with Better Planet Schools is one part of our wider investment in learning and development leading to positive environmental change. Today's young people will be at the forefront of the UK's commitments to reach net zero by 2050, so it's important we support them to appreciate the impact and influence they have now and in the future."

And teachers agree:

"The initiative has been absolutely brilliant for our school. It has allowed us to access wonderful lesson plans and activities that have helped inspire all of our pupils to think about their energy use.", said Nicola Murray-Morris, teacher at Chalkwell Hall Junior School in Southend.

Heycroft Junior School, Southend's headteacher, Andrew Palmer said, "*The project has really got the children talking about environmental issues. They are much better informed, have access to brilliant research and materials that allow them to understand the facts properly."*

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