



Energy Sparks

Newsletter 5 – 29 November 2017

Energy Sparks Competition – revised timescale

We originally planned to award prizes to Energy Sparks participants at the end of Term 2 in December. However many of our schools have set up new Eco-teams to lead Energy Sparks and are only just starting to record activities. We are therefore extending the competition element of Energy Sparks so that prizes will be awarded at the end of Term 4 before the Easter break. This timescale will focus you on achieving the greatest energy saving impacts across the winter period when energy consumption on heating is at its highest. Prizes will be awarded for the highest points scored for Energy Sparks activities combined with good activity reporting skills to share your best practice with other schools.

More Energy Sparks Activities to try at your school

Pupils investigate how the school's hot water is heated

http://www.energysparks.uk/activity_types/60

Do you know how and when hot water is heated at your school? There are several possible options:

1. Point of use water heaters attached to each hot tap in your toilets, classrooms and kitchens. These supply small amounts of hot water on demand.
2. Electric immersion heaters either centrally or in each toilet, classroom or kitchen.
3. Gas or oil boilers heating hot water stored in a hot water tank

Talk to your caretaker, site manager or business manager to find out how water is heated in your school. Look at the Energy Sparks graphs to see if you can spot if water is being heated out of school hours, at night, at the weekend and during the school holidays.

How to save energy when heating water?

1. Ask your caretaker to help you find the time switches for your electric immersion heaters. Make sure these are only set to run from 8am to 3pm. If your storage tanks are large you might find you can turn off the immersion heater at 2pm or earlier and still have enough hot water left for the rest of the school day.
2. Check your hot water is switched off at the weekend and during school holidays. You may need to change from 24 hour timers to 7 day timers to achieve this reliably, but it can be an easy way to save lots of energy.
3. Adjust gas and oil boiler controls so that hot water is only heated Monday to Friday in term time.
4. If your heating system boilers also provide hot water in the summer, ensure that the minimum number of boilers operate for hot water provision and that all heating system pumps are switched off and valves closed.
5. Tanks and their distribution pipework should be well insulated to avoid heat loss.
6. Wasting hot water penalises a school twice: once for the energy used to heat the water and again for the actual water used. Fit taps which turn off automatically and deal with dripping taps and leaks promptly.
7. Consider providing cleaning staff with point-of-use water heaters for use during holidays.

The school introduces a policy on classroom temperature

http://www.energysparks.uk/activity_types/35

Hopefully your Energy teams have been monitoring classroom temperatures, and you now have a good picture of how temperatures vary across the school. Remember you are aiming for a classroom temperature of 18°C and a temperature of 15°C for areas with high levels of activity such as school halls. You may also have started adjusting individual radiator thermostats to reduce temperatures, but find that some staff like to move thermostats back up again! You could try introducing a whole school policy on classroom temperatures, so that everyone understands why you are reducing temperatures to save energy.

Things to consider when writing a school policy on classroom temperature:

1. Why do you want to save energy at your school? Think about cost and environmental savings.
2. What is your optimum school temperature, and the temperature thermostats will be set to?
3. Who will have ongoing responsibility for measuring classroom temperatures? Don't forget to measure temperatures in libraries, offices and small group teaching rooms.
4. Who will have responsibility for adjusting thermostats or boiler settings? You could create signs to fix next to individual thermostats reminding staff about your school's temperature policy.
5. How will you record comfort levels?
6. How will you encourage pupils and staff to put on a jumper if they are used to hotter classrooms?
7. How will you monitor classroom temperatures and thermostats long term to check they don't creep up again?
8. Remember to use the Energy Sparks charts to see the impact reduced classroom temperatures have on the school's energy use.
9. How will the policy and your ongoing performance be communicated to everyone in the school?

The Energy Sparks team are able to advise on school heating and boiler control to improve energy efficiency and comfort levels. Please let us know if you would like a visit to your school to help you better programme your heating system.

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