



SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2025

OUR MISSION

We are a community of learners determined to make the world – or our corner of it – a better, kinder place. We reflect our values in everything we do so that we make the most of opportunities and challenges in a spirit of enthusiastic inquiry.

OUR VISION

We help every student turn learning into action, creating opportunities for students to stretch themselves further and achieve more than they believe possible.

OUR VALUES

We Respect. We Motivate. We Achieve.

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DEAR ISZL COMMUNITY,

Welcome to our Sustainability Community Newsletter.

If you would like us to highlight something, please contact [Dr. Zoe Badcock](#).

NATURE AS INSPIRATION FOR WELLBEING

EcoSchools in Action: Primary School

The Grade 4 and 5 EcoSchools Action Group kicked off the year with an inspiring workshop on biodiversity — and the room was buzzing with creative action ideas!

Before taking action, the students decided it was important to understand where we are now. They are currently gathering baseline data about our school's biodiversity — both indoors and outdoors. This includes counting plants, identifying living species in our school grounds, and conducting surveys to learn more about our community's understanding of biodiversity.



The indoor plant survey even inspired some exciting maths learning in Early Years 2, where students practiced number writing, counted classroom plants, and sorted them by species before counting in groups.

Stay tuned! The results of the biodiversity survey and next steps will soon be featured on our new EcoSchools wall display in the lunchroom.

EcoSchools in Action: Middle School

Grade 6 and 7 students have commenced their inquiry into the concept of service during Community Engagement. Specifically, students are identifying where there are true needs, and this includes needs related to biodiversity. A small group of students during QUIPS have started to audit indoor spaces to explore what biodiversity means in an interior context while a larger cohort of G7 students in the Environments Service as Action group are looking beyond school walls.

EcoSchools in Action: High School

A group of around 20 High School Students meets every week for our EcoSchools Biodiversity theme. They have created the audit and met with the Fund for Excellence (FFE) team to investigate which projects might work best for funding applications. They are now moving into the action phase and starting to plan their interventions. These are likely to focus on the biodiversity initiatives supported by our audit data (read more below). One early success is the installation of a nature information board next to the school garden which will highlight the biodiversity visible on our High School campus.



At the High School, we had 125 responses to our community audit, representing students, staff, and parent voices.

93% of our community believe that nature has a positive impact on mental health.

- "I love to see nature in Switzerland! Makes me happy!"
- "Imagine relaxing under the tree and listening to the birds sing during lunch break, what a joy!"
- "Contact with nature biologically makes everyone feel better because it triggers the neurotransmitter serotonin which directly affects your mood and it is one of the 3 neurotransmitters connected to happiness."

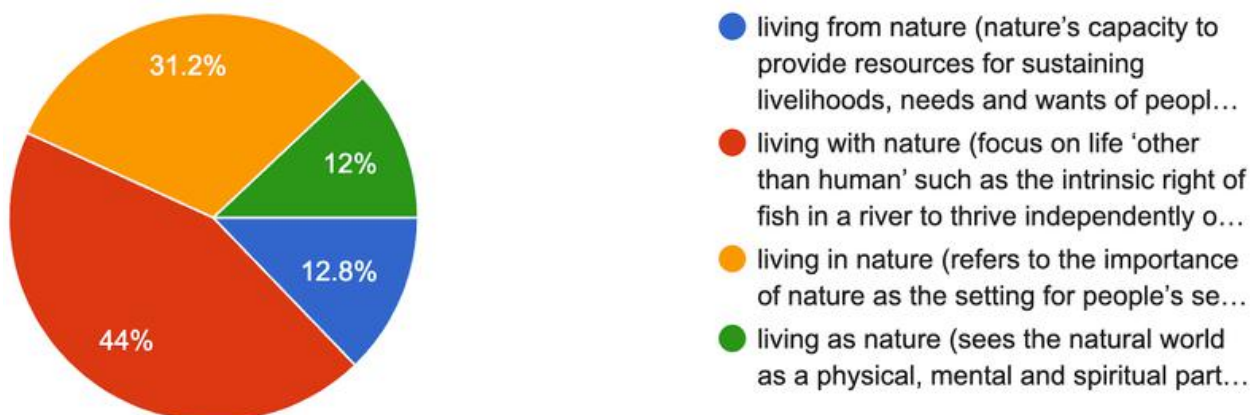
63% of our community support the idea of an outdoor gym which will help our community connect with nature on campus.

53% of our community are interested in an ISZL community garden.

Immediate biodiversity initiatives supported by our community include:

- Flower pots and displays of flowers
- Larger vegetable garden
- Creating birdhouses with Early Years
- Planting more trees
- Putting out bat boxes
- Pollinator-focused gardening

Interestingly, our community is deeply connected with nature and identifies along the following lines, as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).



REGENERATIVE LEARNING (NATURE POSITIVITY)

Our Early Years 2 classes have taken an important step in practising regenerative learning during their weekly forest lessons. After noticing that their previous site was showing signs of wear from frequent use — by both ISZL and other schools — the children and teachers decided to move to a new location, allowing the old site time to rest and regenerate.

At the new forest site, children are discovering an abundance of learning opportunities: building dens, creating mudslides, sharing stories, and meeting together. Each session begins with preparation the day prior, giving children a sense of responsibility and connection to the environment they are learning in.

Through these small but meaningful actions, our students are already developing an understanding of what it means to care for the world around them.



OPERATIONS

Waste Management

As part of the YFS Initiatives team, the Zero Waste Team — joined by an Eco-Schools student and supported by Zoe Badcock and Daniel Kilburn — successfully completed the first trial of a waste audit at ISZL's High School campus.

After four years at the school, student Michael D and the team noticed that, despite new bins, layouts, and signage, waste was still ending up in the wrong places. Curious to understand why, they launched a series of five waste audit trials to collect data on disposal habits, identify problem areas, and inform smarter bin placement.

Beyond measuring waste, the project explores how design, awareness, and behaviour shape everyday choices. Through campaigns, collaboration with Passion Foods on sustainable tableware, and redesigned outdoor bins, the team aims to make responsible waste disposal second nature at ISZL.

If successful, the audit will serve as a blueprint for other schools to create more sustainable, circular systems.



Buildings / Energy

Written by Tigris/Marc

Grade 10 students Marc and Tigris, together with Anyware Solutions, are exploring how to make classrooms smarter and more caring.

Anyware Solutions developed Anyware Sense™, a privacy-safe device that monitors temperature, light, noise, and humidity to better understand learning environments. Using the app and website, data is easy to access and analyse.

After testing three monitors across different classrooms, early results already highlight areas that can enhance wellbeing at ISZL's High School.

Thanks to a strong partnership with CEO Morten Bremild, ISZL will receive 16 monitors free of charge — supporting both the company's research and our school's commitment to innovation and student wellbeing.

This collaboration also gives students valuable real-world experience in teamwork, leadership, and sustainability in action.



Old Lighting in Triple Gym Replaced Over October Break

The Facilities team used the October break to, among many other things, work with our partner to replace the old lighting in the High School Triple Gym. With this change comes two very important aspects:

- Resulting in more than 50% reduced consumption of electricity (for the same number of hours switched on)
- Improvement of levels of light in all areas of the Triple Gym which considerably improves safety of students and staff being active in the space.

CONNECTIONS, COMMUNITY, AND COMMUNICATION

Sustainability Champion (Staff): Daniel Kilburn

Daniel joined ISZL in 2024 as High School Facilities Manager. With a background in graphic design and illustration, his career has taken him and his wife across New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, and Europe — experiences that honed his ability to adapt, solve problems, and find creative solutions.

Raised on a family farm in northwest England that valued conservation and self-sufficiency, Daniel brings a natural passion for sustainability to his role. A hands-on learner, he's known for testing new ideas, from building bee hotels to repairing equipment just to understand how it works.



Since joining ISZL, Daniel has been struck by the amount of waste, paper, and recycling produced, and he's committed to finding practical ways to reduce it. Working closely with Director of Operations Stefan Dittli, he's focused on small, cost-effective improvements that make a big difference.

Recent projects include optimising the Triple Gym's heating system — cutting thermostat levels by 40% — and replacing lights with LEDs to boost energy efficiency. He also supports phasing out single-use plastics and exploring returnable bottle systems. Having helped install the Gym's new photovoltaic panels, Daniel is excited to keep driving ISZL's sustainability journey forward.

Sustainability Champion (Student): Michael D written by Giulia

For Grade 12 student Michael D., sustainability is a calling.

“I’ve always felt driven to act when I see rubbish spoiling the environment.”

As a member of the Villars Institute, a global organisation developing young leaders in sustainability, Michael has turned passion into purpose. He’s a lifelong Villars Fellow, completed the Minerva Systems Leadership Course in 2024, and will serve as an official Rapporteur at the 2026 Villars Summit, joining leaders, CEOs, and changemakers from around the world.

Beyond ISZL, Michael has written for UNEP FI (United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative) and was the youngest rapporteur at the Building Bridges global finance summit. “I’ve published four official articles and co-authored a 30-page feasibility study on wetlands around the Zugersee,” he explains. “We’re now exploring a site near the Holzhausern golf course.”

At ISZL, Michael leads the Zero Waste Initiative, managing waste systems for International Day and coordinating a school-wide waste audit.

“We found that the biggest problems come from the all-waste bins, as well as the aluminium and PET bins. People are throwing tissues and even food into these bins, and a lot of recyclables end up in the all-waste. That must change.”



He also launched a homeroom recycling programme and organised the ISZL Climate Event to inspire wider student involvement.

Looking ahead, Michael hopes to study sustainability and economics and continue amplifying youth voices in global environmental movements. ISZL celebrates his leadership and the meaningful change he's already helping to create.

Sustainability Champion (Alumni): Annabel Väänänen (2018)

Annabel, Class of 2018, studied Economics at UCLA and credits her passion for sustainability to her years at ISZL and her family's values — her father runs an organic, biocircular vineyard in Bordeaux and her mother is an impact investor in London.

Her Extended Essay on grid renewables sparked a long-standing interest in sustainable energy. At UCLA, Annabel explored diverse fields, including solar finance and life-cycle analysis, which led her to Paris for an internship at Natixis Bank's Sustainable Finance Department. There, she gained experience in climate metrics, risk reporting, and developing sustainable investment funds.



In 2022, Annabel joined Flexstone Partners as a Sustainability Analyst, later going on to lead the Sustainability team. She worked with private equity clients across Europe — particularly in Switzerland — integrating sustainability into legal frameworks, due diligence, and communication strategies.

Now pursuing an MSc in Environmental Engineering at Imperial College London, Annabel is shifting toward the technical side of sustainability implementation. Active beyond her studies, she is a certified Climate Fresk facilitator and volunteered at the 2025 Change Now Summit in Paris. Passionate about sustainability education, she hopes to inspire the next generation — starting with primary and middle school students.