

Cultivating a Sustainable Mindset

Qatar Academy Doha

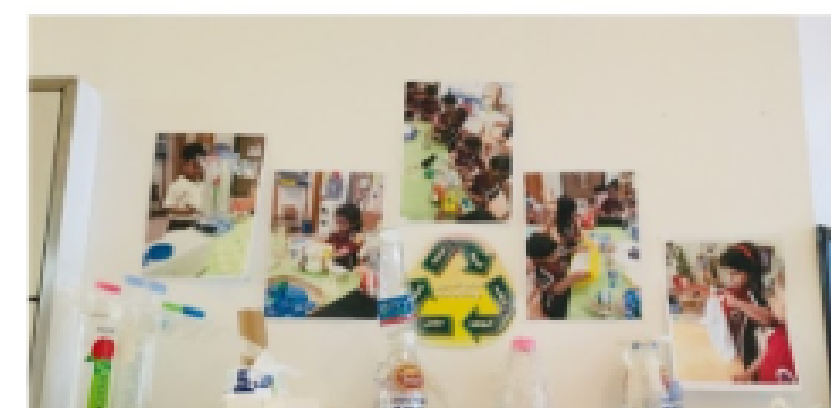
A member of Qatar Foundation



QAD'S JOURNEY:

Empowering change-makers by cultivating a sustainability mindset.

Qatar Academy Doha (QAD) is one of the Middle East's premier educational institutions of 1700 students and the seed that started Qatar Foundation Schools. QAD is an IB PYP/MYP/DP World School whose mission encourages academic excellence and responsible local and global citizens. As an inquiry-based school, we learn and lead through active engagement of our passions, our questions, and our principles. As we begin our journey of making a difference for the better, we understand our sustainable responsibilities more deeply. We choose what engagements and initiatives will have the most impact and we commit and uphold them. This results in modeling and living an authentic sustainable life in everything we do, challenging all who engage with us and supporting who we reach out to.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
—Margaret Mead

COLLABORATION

We work together to develop a culture and awareness around sustainability



CRITICAL THINKING

We are a reflective learning community that questions pre-established norms.



CREATIVE THINKING

Our students innovate by thinking "outside of the box" to make something new



"At school, we work together to help the environment. It's what we do"
- Jude Grade 5 QAD Student

"Our students are connecting to the world in real and meaningful ways. Their actions locally pave the way for impact globally as our community fosters an understanding of the importance of sustainability."
- Steve Thompson Sr. School Principal

"We are rethinking how we teach our students, we model and share our challenge and choices that help foster a sustainable mindset."
- Lori Grade 4 Teacher

"I like going out at recess and playing in our garden. I give the plants water and sing to them."
- Lailah KG QAD Student

COMMUNICATION

We reach out to the community to encourage more sustainable practices.



RISK-TAKING

We teach and model for our students to try something new and rethink their habits to be more sustainable.



LEADERSHIP

We restructured our student leadership program, now with 90 students holding environmental leadership positions.



"Coffebean has stopped wrapping in single-use plastic and is now giving a discount of 2QR if people in the community bring their own mug. This has now spread to all CoffeeBeans on Education City. After a few emails, we have made an actionable impactful change for our community."
- Sana Alavi PYP Coordinator

"Our teacher wants us to be thinkers and try new things. Do you know the little kids at school make their own cleaner out of vinegar? I want to learn how to."
- Hudson Grade 4 QAD Student

"I am so excited to be a part of Activist in Action, we have been working for months and plan to ban plastic bags in Qatar. We are going to do it."
- Khalid Grade 5 QAD Student



"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make." —Jane Goodall



KG Garden to Table Project

- Children planted, observed, harvested, and cooked fruits and vegetables. These young students now have a connection and awareness of the effort and time it takes food to grow .



Organic Cleaner Initiative

- Students in Pre-School are reusing the orange peel waste from the cafeteria to create a non-toxic, environmentally friendly cleaner.



Botanical Garden Project

- The children are responsible for the growth and nurturing of their plants. We experiment, explore and knowledge build. Outdoor learning is a natural part of what we do.



Class-Based Composting Project

- Project-based learning to enhance understanding of reduction of food waste. Now we have over 6 gardens with active composting bins.



Tree Planting Community Project

- Over 100 QAD students participated in planting 500 trees. QAD partnered with QF Sustainability for this community event.



Activist in Action Leadership Team

- Over 50 Grade 5 students have built a national campaign to ban single-use plastic bags in Qatar. @agencyinaction



As risk-takers and in true collaborative form, it would have been very easy to choose 'one initiative fits all' to drive a sustainable program that would have a whole-school impact. But no! We chose to allow every area of our school community, every age, every stakeholder and every grade level to make sustainability their own. Exploring different avenues by taking on different initiatives to see which raise awareness, passion and 'take-up' from the school, the student and the parental community is where we are right now, on our sustainability continuum. Each adventure is monitored and reviewed with the aim of making long term changes and a difference to the environment and therefore people's lives. Each initiative reaches out to the economic and business community for the same reasons, encouraging the idea of having a bigger impact that has longevity. This is why we continue to support numerous initiatives. It has highlighted that creative thinking and communication has taken place, as groups have had to articulate the present issues and plan solutions by their actions. Students' passions have been invested in, not only in their academic programmes but in the way in which they think about sustainability. This has enabled them to think critically as problem-solvers and lead the way forward with their ideas. The articles captured here demonstrate where we are on a continuum of impactful change, as we plan our next steps.



"We showed that we are united and that we, young people, are unstoppable."
— Greta Thunberg



QF Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf

- Students on the Eco team have spread awareness about single-use plastic. After continued follow-up, Coffee Bean has agreed to offer a 2QR discount, at our school location for reusable mugs and are sourcing sustainable straws and cutlery



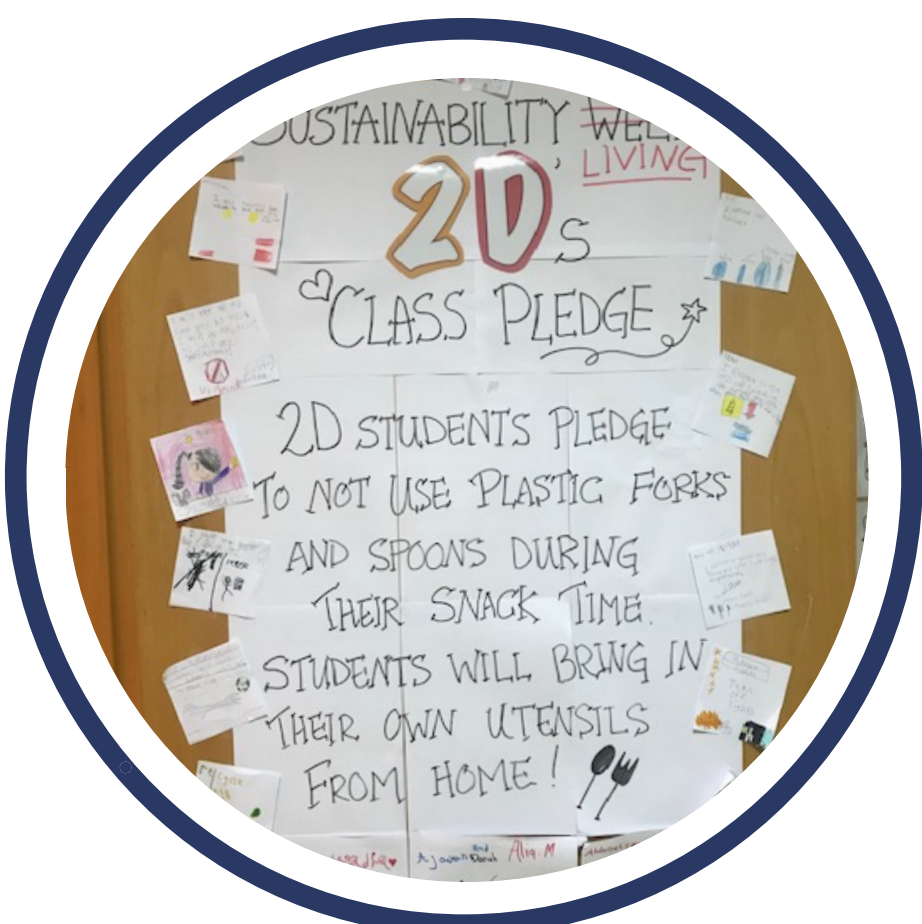
Refuse Single-Use Plastic

- As a school, we have chosen to model REFUSING to support sustainability. We no longer stock plastic water bottles, plastic cups have been replaced with paper, no plastic cling wrap is used on school-provided snacks and finally, we no longer purchase straws.



Fashion Free Month

- In line with our ethos of shifting mindsets, our staff members made a pledge to not buy new clothing for the month of September. The fashion industry is the second-largest polluter after oil.



Annual Class-Based Eco Pledges

- Each homeroom has posted outside their classrooms an environmental pledge. Pledges included: paper, energy, plastic and waste reduction. Teachers continue to revisit this pledge throughout the year.



Student Council Petitions Food Services

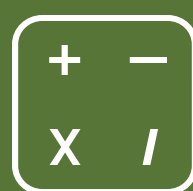
- Student Council was nominated for the QF award based on their effort and impact they had on the reduction of plastic used by the cafeteria. This resulted in changes for all QF schools and in QAD proudly boasts a 95% reduction in single-use plastic by Food Services.



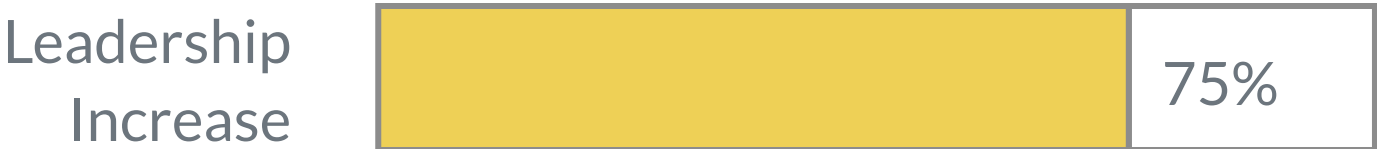
Scarf Swap

- Our Eco-Warrior team challenged our staff to a scarf swap instead of buying new. This modeling of rethinking consumer habits for our students demonstrates our staff commitment to lead by example.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP



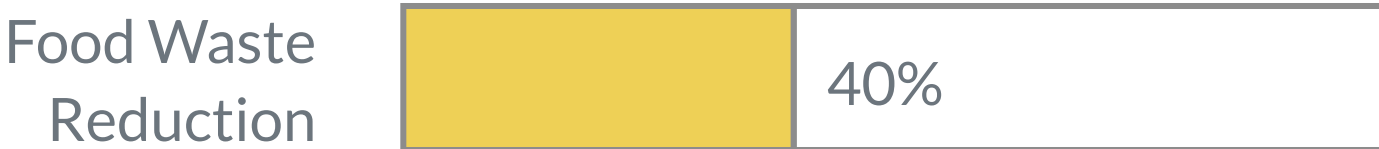
Through restructuring, prioritizing and empowering students - QAD has 75% of students in environmental leadership roles



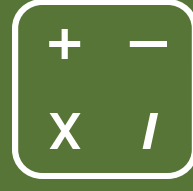
FOOD WASTAGE



Grade 2's inquiry on food waste has informed our school practices. Their inquiry showed that increased awareness can reduce food wastage by 40%



ELECTRONIC REPORTING



QAD has reduced printing by 100% 2160 pieces of paper and 720 envelopes, and 10% less ink usage.



DIRECT CURRICULUM FOCUS



33% of each of the student's year in Grade 4-5 goes towards inquiring into sustainability knowledge and taking action.



DIGITAL PORTOFOLIOS



By using online digital portfolios, Seesaw, we have successfully reduced paper usage by 70% school-wide



PLASTIC USE



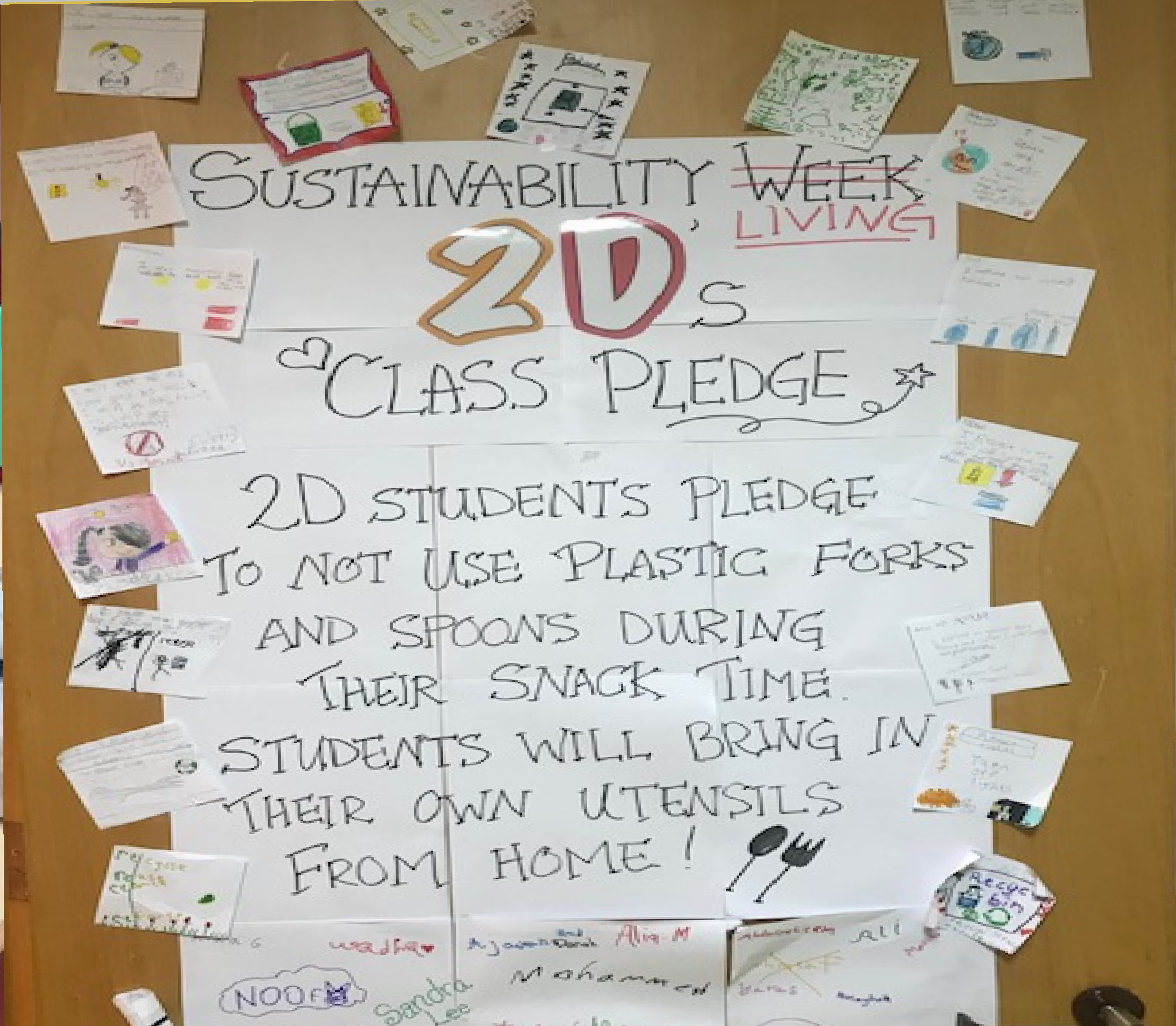
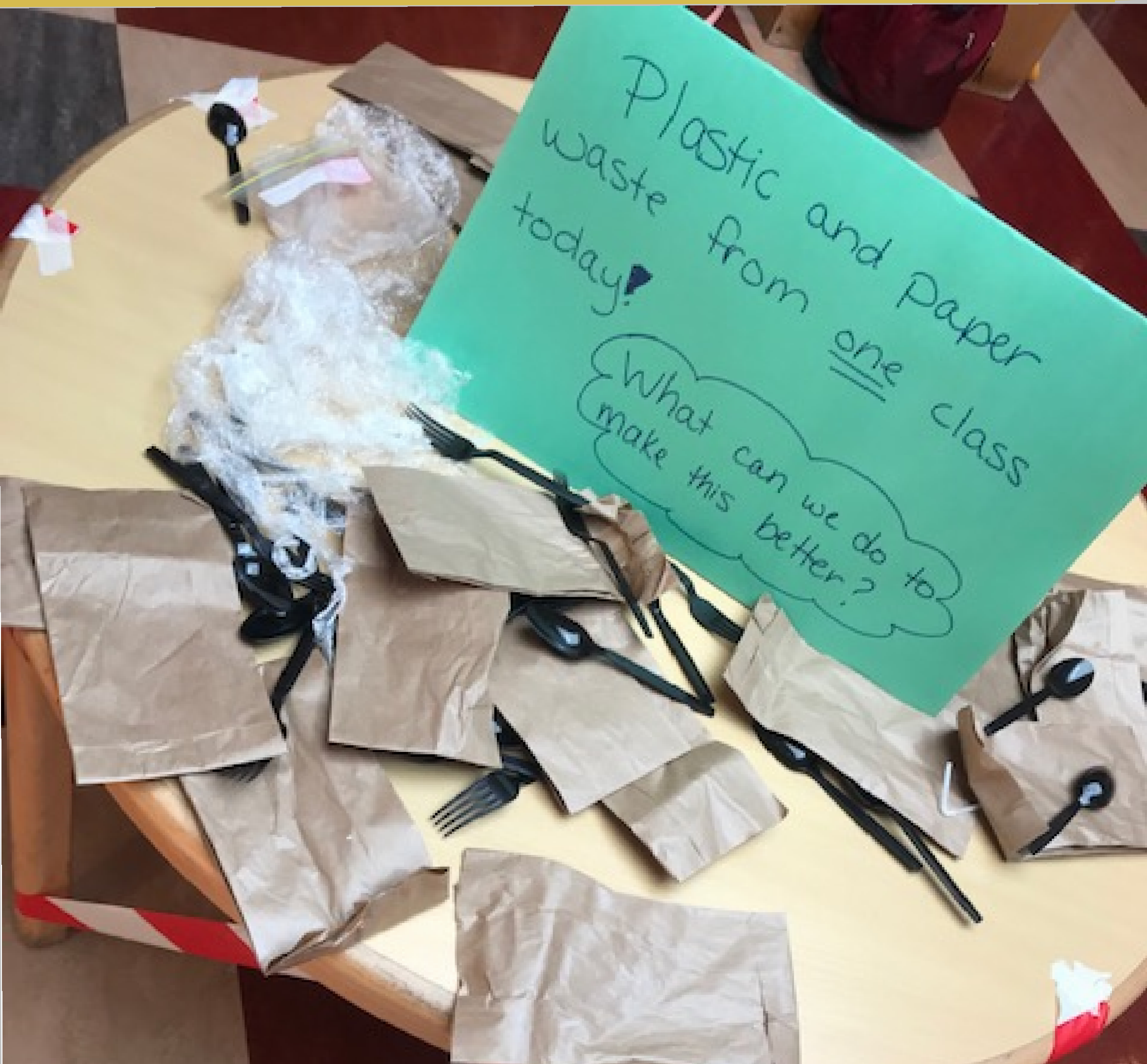
As a school, we have reduced single-use plastic in our cafeteria by reducing the use of plastic cups, plates, and cutlery by 90%



SMALL changes have SHIFTED and PROMOTED our SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE.



Combining these individual changes together shows how sustainability is a whole school community effort. This has challenged our previous thinking and allowed us to be open-minded to change, grow and cultivate future habits.



Woven into the Direct Curriculum

In line with IB's philosophy of real-life education, we explicitly teach sustainability in Grades 1-5. These units are then revisited by the grades throughout the year. We are building knowledge and activating change-makers to support sustainable habits and problem-solving.

GRADE TWO



Choices in our Environment

Central Idea: Personal choices impact our environment.

Lines of Inquiry: How current behaviors are harming the environment, The benefits of refusing, reducing, reusing, and recycling, Our responsibility towards the environment.

Key Concepts: Function, Causation, Responsibility

Related Concepts: Sustainability, Choice, Interdependence, Behavior

Learner Profile Focus: Balanced and Caring

Approaches to Learning: Thinking, Self-Management, Communication

GRADE FOUR



Sustainability

Central Idea: Human choice impacts earth's sustainability

Lines of Inquiry: The earth's finite resources and their uses, The impact of the use of finite resources on the environment, Solutions that lead to a sustainability action plan.

Key Concepts: Change, Causation, Responsibility

Related Concepts: Conservation, Consumption, Sustainability

Learner Profile: Principled, Reflective, Caring

Approaches to Learning: Self-Management, Thinking, Communication, Research

GRADE ONE



Living Things/Environments

Central Idea: Living things rely on the interconnectedness of their environment

Lines of Inquiry: Features of environments, The interconnectedness of living things in an environment, Our role in caring for the environments.

Key Concepts: Form, Connection, Responsibility

Related Concepts: Caring, Environment, Interconnectedness

Learner Profile Focus: Caring, Reflective, Inquirers

Approaches to Learning: Research, Thinking

GRADE THREE



Natural Resources

Central idea: The earth has natural resources that are unevenly distributed and overused

Lines of Inquiry: The distribution of natural resources (water, fertile soil and clean air), How we use these resources and the implications of overuse, Our responsibility for protecting these resources

Key concepts: Responsibility, Reflection

Related concepts: Distribution, Conservation

Learner Profile Focus: Knowledgeable, Inquirer, Communicators, Principled

Approaches to Learning: Communication and Self-Management

GRADE FIVE



Ecosystems

Central Idea: Sharing ecosystems requires finding solutions to conflicts

Lines of Inquiry: Ecosystem components local and global balance within ecosystem, Strategies used to maintain balance within ecosystem

Key Concepts: Causation, Form, Responsibility

Related Concepts: Balance, Biome, Ecosystem, Rights

Learner Profile: Communicator, Reflective, Caring

Approaches to Learning: Communication, Social, Thinking, Self-Management

CULMINATING IN OUR GRADE 5 EXHIBITION

Exhibition is based on the 17 United Nations Sustainable Developmental Goals (UNSDGs)

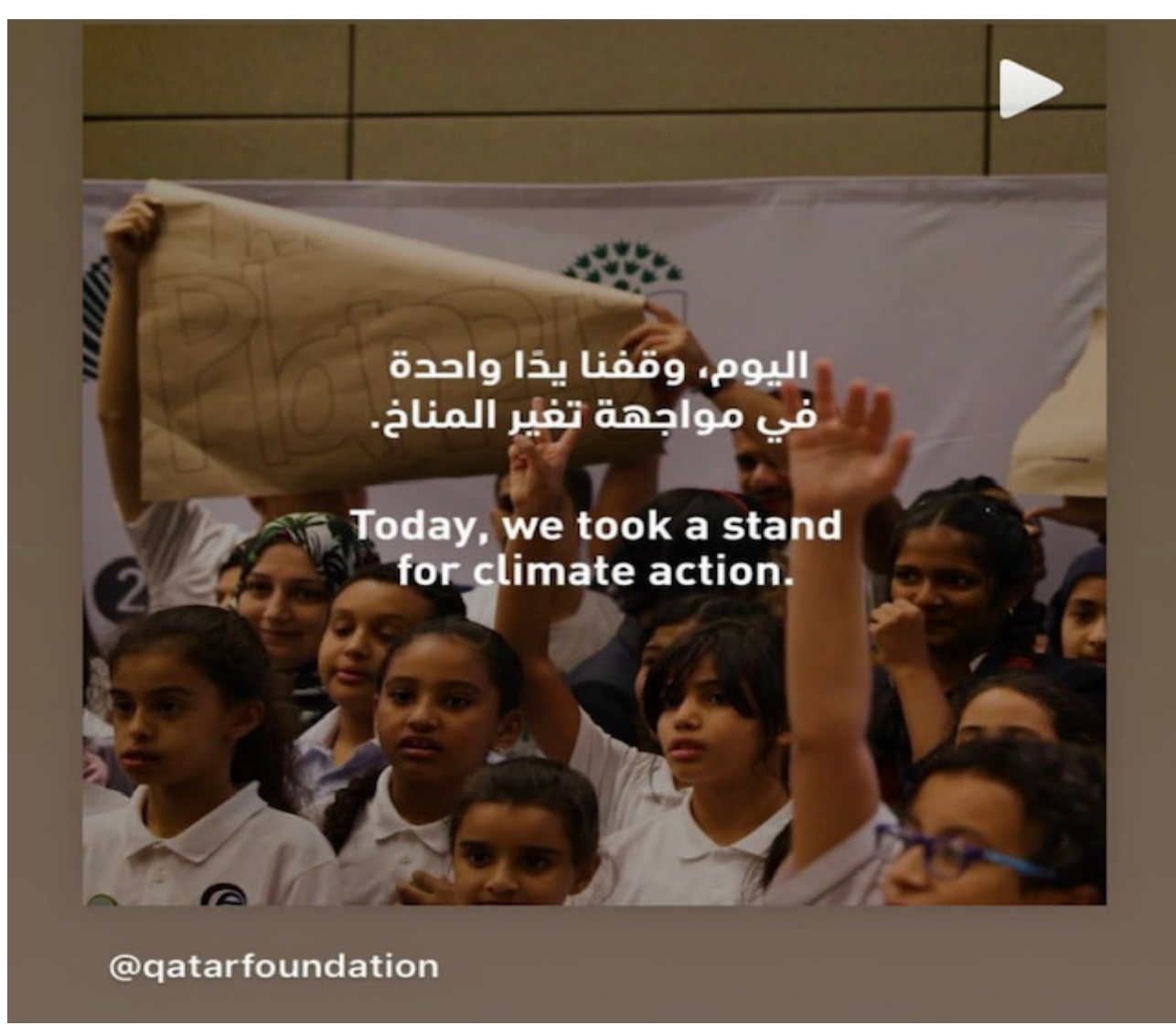
Central Idea: Discovering our passions and identifying significant issues, can inspire us to take meaningful action.

Lines of Inquiry: Discovering our passions, Identifying significant issues, Ways of improving the lives of others or the environment, Sustainable action to bring about change



Qatar Academy Doha School knows we play a defining role in nurturing children's mindset and supporting the development of healthy, sustainable habits. Our approach has been simple; we model, inquire, foster knowledge, and support our students to find their passion and lead by example. It is our hope that through our dynamic approach to sustainability our students will find multiple pathways to develop their awareness and confidence in order to be the change-makers our world needs. Through collaboration with staff, students, parents, and the larger community we look to the future with excitement knowing our approach will continue to transform our school, our students, our planet!





“We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects.” — Herman Melville

The Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) provide an ethos through the lens of the Learner Profile that encourages our learning community to "think global and act local". Our students have embraced this ethos through several community-based projects. Highlights include the planting of over 500 trees on Education City and a beach clean up near Al Ruwais. These experiences have led to the planning of future events involving forestation and the removal of plastics and waste from our local environment. Equally as impressive, our students contributed to the "Eco-Schools Congress" in 2019-2020 and are now in the process of planning fundraising initiatives. This year we plan to foster a mentorship program where Sr. School students will work with Elementary School students to further create and develop ideas as they relate to environmental sustainability. All of these experiences are intended to foster sustainable mindsets in our youth while positively impacting our local environment with the aspiration that it leads to a global impact.



“Though they are presented as individual goals, they actually represent a total, completely intertwined lattice of action that is relevant for every human being everywhere.”

-David Nabarro, Under-Secretary General, Special Advisor on 2030 Agenda



Upcoming Projects for 2020-2021

- Community partnership to design and install a QAD 'Greenwall' and 'Sustainable Learning Lab' in the Primary School.
- Partnership with VCU to collaborate on a sustainable art installation using plastic bags students collected from home.
- Explore and take part in QF Farm to Table initiative
- Continue to activate and empower student leadership groups to connect to authentic inquiries and local opportunities.
- Continue to support students quest for the EcoSchools 'Green Flag' award

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