



## Student-Led Environmental Conference Took place on Saturday 16 March 2024

Written by Kellett Student **Lorelei (Y11)**

The Student Environmental Conference felt like something I had been preparing for throughout my school life. From working with TASS to our school's "Fish Club", the conference seemed perfect for me to get involved in.

The "Student-led" aspect was what struck me most about the event—especially during the planning stages—as we were sometimes thrown into situations outside of our comfort zones, entrusted with responsibilities we had not undertaken before.

The conference was also a really valuable lesson to learn about its imperfections: how events like these will never be perfect—will always have cracks and flaws—but how the important thing is to find a way to improve. And despite the areas of improvement, I found that the conference really exceeded my expectations and was worth all the effort in the end. I'd like to thank all the people who made it run as smoothly as possible: our teachers who started the process in the first place, those who contacted the organisations for the exhibition and those who led workshops themselves, those who welcomed the various schools to Kellett, those who ran our Zoom calls, those who helped organise and take part in the hike and beach clean-up, our food caterers who made the vegetarian meals possible, those who turned up enthusiastically to the event or to our many meetings, and of course the media team who allowed our conference to run simultaneously online—my thanks simply could not suffice with the enormous magnitude of effort, often behind-the-scenes, that has gone into making the event possible. You are all cogs in a beautiful machine, like the interconnected web of Mother Nature.

Each individual's part in organising the conference all came together like pieces of a puzzle; this reflects the way consistent, thoughtful edits to one's daily life can be combined with others' to have a cumulative effect on our carbon footprints over time. If we repeat the same kind of dedication we showed to our environmental conference, but now continue to apply it to making systems change in our school and amongst our staff and students, we can ensure that the symposium has a lasting impact on the Kellett community. All it takes is channelling the motivation we already have into further commitment to sustainability.

While practising my presentation about the Eco-Schools Committee for the conference, Mr Kerr mentioned that we would be submitting our application for the Green Flag Award shortly after the conference, and I was glad to hear that my efforts were coming to a tangible conclusion. Yet as my peer Austin pointed out, we are not yet done. We will never be done because if we stop, the Earth stops too—if we stop advocating for sustainable practices in our school, we are letting the very things we worked so hard to prevent start up again. And so, as Mr Kerr helped me visualise, our school cannot stop once we achieve the Green Flag—we need to regularly renew the reward. The issue of the climate crisis is an ongoing battle, and so after one successful symposium or one Green Flag Award, we must continue to hold onto that motivation we already

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have and always find room for improvement, because our planet is on the line. The spirit of the symposium has never truly ended—so let's keep going, and let's not give up!

Online programme

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAF9rhciXbQ/hT0Jelh1z6ulCWpN6QScKQ/view?utm\\_content=DAF9rhciXbQ&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=editor](https://www.canva.com/design/DAF9rhciXbQ/hT0Jelh1z6ulCWpN6QScKQ/view?utm_content=DAF9rhciXbQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor)

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