



making physics matter



How to...

primary science ambassadors

Aim

Engaging and training primary pupils to share their love of science!

Introduction

Primary science ambassador schemes are popular across the Ogden partnership network. They usually involve children going through an application process in order to take on the role of a school science ambassador. In many schools, a team of science ambassadors is established to support the teaching and learning of science in lessons and whole school enrichment activities. Such schemes are a great way to channel scientific curiosity, engaging young scientists and building their knowledge and confidence while giving them the opportunity to develop leadership skills. In turn, the science ambassadors can share their knowledge and enthusiasm with their peers: a virtuous circle of science!



Three key objectives for a science ambassador scheme:

- Empower your ambassadors to share their enthusiasm of science
- Engage students (and staff) throughout the school in extra-curricular science activities
- Raise the profile of science across the school and home community

Science ambassadors should be:

- Enthusiastic about science
- Willing to develop their communication skills
- Keen to share their passion with others



Planning your scheme

You first need to decide how many science ambassadors you will have, perhaps it will be one or two from each class. Ambassador schemes are often only open to pupils in Key Stage 2, but many Ogden primary partnership schools have appointed younger ambassadors with effective results.

You might consider running your science ambassador scheme as a collaborative project with other schools in your partnership/locality. Ambassadors might work independently in their own schools but come together with science ambassadors from other schools for training and special events.

Launching your scheme

The scheme can be launched in a whole school assembly, explaining to all the children what the role of science ambassador involves, how they should apply and the opportunities it will bring. Applicants will need to demonstrate why they think they are suitable for the role – they could write a letter or make a video explaining why they love science and would make a great ambassador! Maybe they could talk about who their favourite scientist is and why? Some schools have even hold interviews for applicants.

Selecting your ambassadors

Enlist the help of other members of your school community in making difficult selection decisions, you could even involve members of the senior leadership team or your science governor. Some schools have involved the whole school in the decision making process by challenging enthusiastic applicants to give presentations in assembly and then holding class elections. Once your programme is up and running, maybe the outgoing ambassadors can be involved in recruiting their replacements!

Celebrate the appointment of your new science ambassadors in an assembly and present each ambassador with a certificate and a badge that they can proudly display on their school uniform each day. Some schools have provided science ambassadors with their own lab coat that can be worn when they are actively engaged in their science ambassador duties.



What do you want your ambassadors to do?

Your ambassadors will have an enthusiasm for science that needs to be nurtured and encouraged. It is important to note that they do not have to be 'good' at science though. They should be given a voice in the planning for school science, bringing their creative ideas to the table and helping to establish a whole school vision for science.

There are no hard and fast rules about what their role should be and in fact it can be quite effective for science ambassadors to have a say in the responsibilities and duties they will take on. Perhaps they will help to run a lunchtime science club or help the teachers set up for science lessons? Maybe they could support some EYFS or Key Stage 1 science activities. Enthusiastic science ambassadors may plan and run some science themed fund-raising at whole school community events to raise money for science resources or enrichment activities.

Maybe your science ambassadors could take part in some science assemblies during National Science Week or talk to parents at open evenings and challenge them to try some hands-on activities? They may like to run competitions for younger students, produce a termly noticeboard or newsletter or help with sorting and organising the science equipment. Any activities that develop their science confidence and communication skills are ideal for the programme; they can share their enthusiasm and knowledge across the school showcasing science and helping to spread the love!



Our ambassadors are part of a committee that meets once a fortnight to discuss science matters and opportunities in school. We talk about the things the ambassadors would like to see happen at school as well as any science that has been in the news. Our ambassadors work with younger pupils, supporting science in other year groups. They audit our science resources and keep our Phiz Lab in order! They also produce a science newsletter with fun facts and games.

Laura Marshall
Our Lady & Saint Kenelm Primary School



Training your ambassadors

New science ambassadors will need training to prepare for their roles. The content of this training will depend on the responsibilities they are given. If you want your ambassadors to help set up for lessons and look after resources, they will need training in relevant health and safety issues as well as the maintenance and storage of science equipment. If your ambassadors will be supporting science activities with younger pupils or leading science shows at events, they need training sessions on classroom support and science communication, as well as the health and safety aspects.

If you are training your ambassadors to become effective science communicators a good place to start is to teach them some 'wow' science demonstrations to impress their peers. This is a great way to build enthusiasm across the school and to enhance the ambassadors' knowledge, confidence and communications skills. There are lots of awesome activities that are easy to learn and capture the imagination of the audience and the young scientist! **The Marvin and Milo series** from the IOP is an excellent bank of resources which gives students ideas using limited resources as well as some of the background science information. Training for these kinds of activities can be taught in house, if expertise and time allows, or by external organisations. Once the programme is in place, can your outgoing ambassadors train their replacements to create a sustainable model?

Consider linking your ambassador scheme to the **CREST Star** and **Superstar** awards, which would provide a framework of activities and a certificate for the ambassadors to achieve. This is a great way to formally recognise their achievements.

Celebrate your science ambassadors

Why not celebrate your science ambassadors with a special event, trip or activity to inspire and thank them? If your school is part of a wider network, you can bring all the ambassadors together once a year to talk about their achievements and share ideas; include an inspiring science presentation or special activity to build their science capital and encourage them to take science further.



Our ambassador's programme is engaging girls in science and increasing the extra-curricular science activities we can offer across our Ogden partnership. The programme is encouraging girls to get involved and enthused by science, raising their science capital and their self-confidence. In return, they are sharing their enthusiasm and expertise with pupils across the partnership as they deliver science clubs, lunchtime lessons and community events. Being a science ambassador makes a huge difference to their confidence and their awareness of opportunities in STEM.

Glenys Newby
Durham Ferryhill & Chilton Partnership



I have really enjoyed being a science ambassador. I loved doing the science clubs, training, the opening of the Phiz Lab, the Rolls Royce and Netpark visits and learning all the science facts. I hope next year's science ambassadors love it as much as we did!

Meeting an astronaut was amazing too! I enjoyed meeting Dr Jenny and Dr Lorraine and all the scientists. Our science club at school was super fun. We have made rockets, slime, oobleck and electronics...It's all been amazing...

Leah
Science Ambassador

