

MAYOR OF LONDON

Year 6 pupils

Osmani Primary School
Vallance Road
London E1 5AD

Our ref: MGLA200519-2903

Date: 18 JUL 2019

Dear Year 6 pupils,

Thank you very much for writing to me to share your concerns about plastic and how it's polluting our oceans and affecting important creatures like whales and seabirds. I'm very pleased to see young people like you taking the time to write and tell me what's important to you. I'm encouraged that you share my passion to improve London's environment and that of the wider world by reducing the impact of single-use plastics.

I like your idea, Sahar, of cutting down plastic used in supermarkets and to make sure single-use plastics are reduced even more. Some countries like America have different legislation which allows cities like New York, as you mention, Abu, to ban plastic items. However, in the UK, bans and country-wide changes in legislation would need to be made by central government as they would affect the whole country, not just London. I've been asking the Government to cut single-use plastic, but I'm also doing all I can with the powers I have here in London.

Last year, I published the London Environment Strategy which sets out my long-term plan to help improve London's environment. This plan includes increasing recycling and reducing the amount of waste in London. I really want us to reduce single-use plastics, which will help improve and keep our streets, parks and open spaces cleaner.

To help Londoners use less single-use plastic bottles, I've launched London Refill, which is a water refill scheme where businesses can sign up and offer free tap water refills to the public. We now have 2,500 refill stations across the city. I've also announced my plans to install a network of water fountains across London. I've already worked with London Zoo to install 20 water fountains across the city. Over the last 12 months, these fountains have dispensed the equivalent of more than 155,000 half litre plastic bottles. I'm now working in partnership with Thames Water to install over 100 more drinking fountains. Together, these schemes will help Londoners use reusable bottles instead of buying single-use plastic bottles, which can end up as litter in our canals, rivers and oceans, which as you rightly say, Sufyaan, can take hundreds of years to degrade.

You will be pleased to know that the Government has recently announced new control measures on plastic straws, cotton bud stems and drink stirrers, with a complete ban on plastic drink stirrers by April 2020. I responded to the Government with my support for measures to control plastics like straws, but I also highlighted my disappointment that the Government didn't take the opportunity to take this further and reduce even more single-use plastic items.

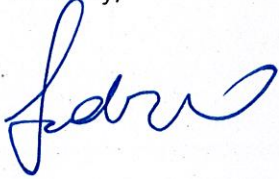
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I've enjoyed reading your letters and I'm impressed with your knowledge and passion for the environment. I would recommend that you send your letters to your local Member of Parliament to represent your views to central government.

I wish you every success in finding a way to help your local environment and the best of luck for your future.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London