



ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

December 2016

In this issue:

- Eco-Leaders Training Opportunity
- Eco-Schools Teachers Conference
- Green Flag guidelines
- Topic of the Month: Healthy Living
- School News - Lismore Impress at Marine Event
- International News: YRE receive Royal audience in Morocco
- Other News:
 - Live Here Love Here Community Awards
 - ESDF Conference
 - RSPB resources
- Green Flags this month

Eco-Leaders Training Opportunity

Eco-Schools is offering this excellent CPD training opportunity to Post-Primary teachers involved with Eco-Schools delivery. The programme is designed and run by the QUB William Clinton Institute at Riddel Hall, Belfast.



The programme objectives are to:

- Develop the leadership skills of the participating teachers
- Develop the capacity of participating teachers to develop environmental leadership skills in their pupils
- Share and develop best practice in embedding the principles of the Eco-Schools programme, with particular emphasis on Step 5 (Curriculum Links) and Step 6 (Informing and Involving)
- Identify practical action steps that each participating teacher will commit to implementing in their schools

The programme will be delivered across 6 modules - 4 modules at Riddel Hall (dates shown below) and 2 modules in school with the Eco-Committee on dates to be arranged.

Full cost of the programme will be covered by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools and assistance for teacher cover given of £120 per teacher per day.

Module 1
Becoming an Eco-Leader
7th February 2017

Module 2 & 3
Sharing Best Practice
22nd & 23rd February 2017

Module 4
Developing Future Leaders
30th March 2017

Each participating school should send 2 members of staff, each of whom will be involved in the Eco-Schools Programme for further information, and to apply, contact: [Ruth Van Ry](#). Priority will be given to schools who can make all the programme dates. Places are limited.

Eco-Schools Teachers Conference 9th March 2017 Register now!!

We are delighted to invite teachers to our Teachers Conference hosted by Eco-Schools, with support from DAERA, at Stranmillis College on 9th March 2017, 10am - 3pm.



The conference will have an outdoor learning theme while also touching on many other sustainable education topics. Guest speakers include Judy Braus, NAAEE and Dr William Bird, Intelligent Health. Workshops will include: Jilly Duggan, Edible Gardens; RSPB, Wild Challenge; Dr Sue Christie, Madagascar resources; Ulster Wildlife, Wild Ideas; Trócaire, Global Perspective. There will also be exhibits from Ambassador Eco-Schools and a wide selection of Environmental Education delivery partners. Lunch will also be provided.

To register please contact [Cathy Gorman](#). Spaces will be limited so don't miss out!

Green Flag application guidelines 2016/17

We accept Green Flag applications at any time throughout the year however below are some deadlines for applications if you would like to be assessed before a certain time of the year:

- **Pre-Easter** assessment: **6th January 2017**
- **Summer** assessment (before 23rd June): **10th March 2017**

We will do our best to assess schools submitting after the suggested deadlines but may find this difficult, particularly in the summer term, which is very busy. So beat the rush and get your application in early.

Please note the preferred application method in 2016/17 is through the **School Zone online system**. Simply log into the Eco-Schools NI [web-site](#) and start your online application in your **School Zone**. You can save your sections and return to the form at your convenience. The application will tell you if each section is completed. Once you have approved all sections a submit button will appear to send it directly to us.



Start saving your data in the **Data Zone** now, even if you are not going to apply this year. This interactive area helps with your Monitoring and Evaluation step and has been designed to present your data in an interesting and useful format. From 2017/18 schools applying for Green Flag will have to fill in this area for their chosen topics so familiarise yourself with it now - we hope you will enjoy it.

Be sure you start using the School Zone for collecting your data and saving your Eco-Docs in your own resource area - Data Collection, Environmental Review, Action Plan and Eco-Code. These will automatically be submitted with your online Green Flag Application.

We will still accept paper applications but please ensure you are using the [new form](#) - older formats may not be accepted by us.

If you have forgotten your login please [contact us](#).

Translink Travel Challenge - get on board!

The Translink Travel Challenge is now open to all schools. The Challenge runs all year until **22nd May**, for any **2 weeks** that you choose. Encourage sustainable travel to school and record your results in the resources provided. Send your results to us for the chance to win super prizes!

This year pupils are also invited to enter a creative **#Smartmovers** project - with either a short written entry with photos or **new this year** a 30 second video clip using the phrase **'We're smart movers because...'**



A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast in June. All schools who send results and/or a #Smartmovers project will be entered into a prize draw for an Ulsterbus school trip to Dublin. This is not only a competition but a great project with lots of learning and monitoring resources provided. Visit www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools for more information on the prizes and excellent resources or email ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org.

Cash in with your Clobber

Schools across the country are taking part in the 'Cash for Clobber' competition run in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Eco-Schools and Cookstown Textile Recyclers. This great method of being environmentally friendly by recycling also raises some welcome funds for the schools taking part - **40 pence/kilogramme**.



Schools which collect the most textiles per pupil are in with the chance to win the annual 'Cash for Clobber' competition with fantastic **prizes of up to £1,500**. The closing date for the competition this year is 30th June 2017.

Cookstown Textile Recyclers are the only BSI certified clothing recycling company that Eco-Schools recommends. Clothing collected is redistributed to developing countries around the world or recycled into industrial fibers.

Schools who would like to get involved are asked to call the Cash for Clobber Team on **028 9447 9380** or visit www.cashforclobber.com or www.eco-schoolsni.org.

Topic of the Month: Healthy Living

It's the time of the year when many of us stay inside, eat too much and move too little. So let's all make a new year's resolution to make some healthy changes in January and put some actions into place in school too. The state of our health is related not only to our long-term physical well-being but also to emotional and social factors – our general happiness, confidence and outlook on life. There is also a clear relationship between health and educational attainment. Children today lack active play and are bombarded with high sugar snacks and drinks. Schools play an important role in educating young people about their health, both physical and mental, and laying the groundwork for lifelong good health choices.



The Healthy Living topic can look at a range of themes:

- **Good diet**
- **Physical activity**
- **Mental health and happiness**



If your school doesn't already have a healthy eating policy in place this is one area you could have a good impact on by providing a healthy break, snacks and lunches. Many Eco-Committees actually raise a little bit of money through healthy tuck shops (also think about [Fairtrade](#) products). The [NHS recommends 60 minutes a day](#) of physical activity for children of various levels. Lots of schools have taken up the [Daily Mile](#) initiative. Ditching the car for the journey to school can also help - check out the [Translink Travel Challenge](#) and [Sustrans](#) resources for ideas. 'Growing up' is a challenging time for pupils and school should provide a safe space from the hectic demands of the modern world - here are some ideas on mental health from [Young Minds](#). You could also try digital detox days and 're-naturing' your pupils with some outdoor activities. Here are some other useful resources:

- [Eco-Inspiration Healthy Living resource](#) (PDF 8MB)
- [Eco-Schools England Healthy Living resources](#)
- [Global Perspective on Health from the World's Largest Lesson resources](#)
- [Anti-Bullying resources from Bullying UK](#)
- [Useful healthy lunchbox tips from Parenting UK](#)



School News: Lismore Comprehensive impress at Marine Event in Dublin

Pupils from 17 schools gathered in Dun Laoghaire on Tuesday 6th December for the first annual [Green-Schools Global Citizenship Marine Environment](#) conference. 370 students and their teachers attended and exhibited their work on marine environment awareness at the conference, where they heard from a variety of speakers on topics including phytoplankton; overfishing; microbeads; and plastic islands.

Included in the day was a presentation by students from Lismore Comprehensive School, Craigavon, who have done extensive work on microbead awareness.



Daniel and Adam entertained and informed the participants at the event with a display and [presentation](#) on the environmental hazards of microbeads found in many everyday cosmetics. Congratulations to them for doing such a great job in conveying an important message. [Read more...](#)

Council News:

Eco-Schools Cluster Group Meetings

Many thanks to Belfast City Council and all the schools who attended the Going for Awards themed Cluster Group Meeting in Belfast on the 9th December.



Don't forget to recycle your Christmas tree this year.

Councils will accept your trees at their designated recycling points - contact your council for details. The trees will be ground down and made into compost.

Green Flag Assessor training at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre.

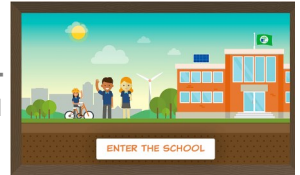
Eco-Schools are delighted to be offering Assessor training on the 17th January hosted by Lough Neagh Discovery Centre. The training will run from 10am- 2.30pm. To take part you will be expected to commit to two assessments a year and complete an Access NI check. Contact [Cathy Gorman](#) for more details.

Thank-you to the following Councils who support the Eco-Schools Programme:



International News:

Eco-Schools England create a great Interactive Eco-School resource on their website. Click on the school to enter and find lots of eco ideas!



YRE students attract Royal audience at COP22

This year's Climate Change Conference (COP22) took place in Marrakech, Morocco. YRE had a successful presentation at the COP 22, thanks to the great initiative shown by our Moroccan FEE/YRE member organisation, the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection.

One of the highlights was that two YRE students presented "[The Voice of Youth](#)", a recommendation of actions towards combating Climate Change, in front of Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa, Patricia Espinosa, UN-FCCC secretary Executive, Irina Bokova UNESCO General Director, and the minister of education of Morocco. [Read more...](#)



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful news:

Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland is operated by the environmental charity Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. Here is the latest news from other areas of our organisation:

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful are holding the first ever **Live Here Love Here Community Awards!**

This will be the first year of these exciting awards, designed to celebrate the work of groups and individuals who participate in Live Here Love Here and encourage pride in our communities through practical action such as green ups, clean ups and spruce ups.

If you think a group or an individual deserves an award for the work carried out on a Live Here Love Here project then we want to hear from you. This work could be anything from improving the quality of their local environment, reducing litter, developing environmental management and/or instilling civic pride within a community. Entry is free and easy, simply fill out a [nomination form](#) and send it in before **12 noon on 16th January 2017**.



Don't forget you can **pledge** your support to the **Live Here Love Here** campaign and receive updates about actions being taken in your community.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful release analysis of the annual spend on street cleaning:

"Northern Ireland's eleven Councils spent a total of £43,285,212 on cleaning our roads, streets and open spaces in 2015-16; a rise of over 8% on spending during the previous year. This expression of serious intent to clean up our streets and parks has however been somewhat blunted by a fall of almost 20% in the number of people actually caught and fined for littering."

[Read the full press release...](#)



Other News:

ESDF Conference 10th February at Seamus Heaney Home Place

The Education for Sustainable Development Forum will be holding a conference at the Seamus Heaney Home Place in Bellaghy on the 10th February. The conference "Digging" for Success - How to Measure and Communicate your Strengths" will be suggesting how to use data and quality standards to enhance funding opportunities and will feature speakers from QUB, environmental education and funding organisations. There will also be an opportunity to experience what the Home Place has to offer as an education destination. Teachers and members of the ESDF are welcome to attend.



For more information please contact [Iona Meyer](#) at the NIEL

After the conference members of the ESDF are requested to attend the annual AGM.



Outdoor Education Centres Face Closure

The Education Authority has commenced a public consultation on proposals for the future delivery of residential and outdoor education provision in Northern Ireland. The proposal includes the closure of **Bushmills, Ardnabannon, Killowen and Delamont Outdoor Centres**.

The consultation is open until 6th February 2017. Please take time to make your opinion heard on these proposals. We know many schools over the years have enjoyed and valued the resources at these centres. In a time when outdoor education is becoming increasingly important it would be a shame to lose these centres unnecessarily.

The EA proposal documents and the public survey regarding the proposed changes are [available here...](#)

The centres also each have their own campaigns running on their Facebook pages calling for your support.



Register now for RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch!

3 January – 17 February 2017

Registration is now open for the 2017 Big Schools' Birdwatch; a simple educational activity that gets you and your class/group closer to the birds visiting your area. It takes just an hour and works for all ages and abilities.

You can use the Birdwatch to work for you: as the centre-piece of cross-curricular studies, Eco-Schools awards, or as part of work to improve your school grounds. By taking part you'll also be providing the RSPB data on how well some of our most familiar birds are faring, as well as helping to give nature a home at your school.



When you register for Big Schools' Birdwatch they'll send you a free bird identification poster for your classroom - the perfect preparation for the big day. To register and find out more go to www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch



Innovation Lab seeking Year 13 design geniuses for bin competition

Eco-Schools are happy to lend support to the Innovation Lab's competition for Year 13 pupils, studying Technology and Design, which is asking for fresh ideas and designs for our household bins.

We've become familiar with the standard wheelie bin shape but is there a better way? If you think you have a great idea for the bin of the future and would like to work with the Innovation Lab team to make it a reality then contact Rebecca.Walsh@finance-ni.gov.uk for more information on how to take part.

Green Flags this month

Congratulations to all the schools who have achieved their Green Flag award in the last month. We are continually amazed at the knowledge and enthusiasm of all the pupils and staff at our Green Flag schools and they are to be congratulated on their fantastic achievement.

Congratulations this month go to:

- Waringstown Primary School, Craigavon.



Waringstown Primary School



Contact us at:

eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful
Bridge House, 2 Paulett Avenue
Belfast, BT5 4HD
Tel: 028 9073 6920



The Eco-Schools Programme is supported by DAERA

Don't stop here! Visit our Eco-Schools Northern Ireland [website](#) for more news, project ideas, programme guidance, case studies, delivery partner information, and much more.