

# AMBASSADOR SCHOOL CASE STUDY



## St.Ita's Primary School

Number of pupils	Age range	Joined Eco-Schools	Number of Green Flags	Date of last Green Flag
700	Nursery – P7	2007	Six	30.05.24

We are very proud of our environmental work in St. Ita's. Our staff and pupils share a common goal to continuously reflect upon our practice and highlight areas for improvement.

Our teaching and learning framework enables us to deliver high quality environmental lessons that explore current issues such as single use plastic, global warming and renewable energy through our diverse topics.

Our Eco Committee consists of twelve members from P4- 7. Our committee meets at least once a month and is responsible for driving environmental change in our school.

Over the years, we have engaged with multiple Eco School's topics such as 'Waste', 'Biodiversity' and 'Energy.' Our big focus in the past few years has been on enhancing our 'Outdoor Learning' and 'Biodiversity' provision. We have worked in partnership with our PTFA and our gardener Ms Smart to achieve this. We have been very fortunate to receive donations of bulbs and plants from community partners in the past to help maintain our beautiful school grounds.

## Topic Actions:

### Outdoor Learning

We are very proud of our beautiful school grounds in St. Ita's. In 2022/23 our PTFA applied for the 'Live Here. Love Here' grant. This enabled us to purchase signage, seating and equipment for underused outdoor areas. As a result, we were able to develop a 'Wildflower, Minibeast and Bird' zone for outdoor learning.

We began work on developing our Woodland Walk in January 2024. The Eco Committee surveyed the Woodland walk and planted bulbs donated by a local garden centre at the beginning of the path.

The Eco Committee also created a specialised 'nature trail' for all year groups to enjoy during outdoor learning lessons.



### Biodiversity

In St. Ita's we believe that Outdoor learning and Biodiversity go hand in hand. We are extremely lucky to have the expertise and knowledge of our gardener Ms Smart. Our biodiversity surveys show a year on year maintaining of a rich range of biodiversity in our Wildflower meadow. We have no doubt that this is due to our in-depth class gardening programme and excellent maintenance of our school grounds. For our



current action plan, we hope to enrich the biodiversity of our newly designated outdoor areas.

## Sharing Good Practice

St. Ita's was awarded 'Eco School of the Year' 2021- 22 for Lisburn and Castlereagh.

In January 2024, The Ireland Funds visited St. Ita's to witness some of our ongoing Eco work and chat with our Eco Committee on the importance of pupil voice.

In April 2023, Mrs Cleland was asked to pilot the 'Climate Calm' programme. Mrs Cleland successfully completed training and was classified as 'Carbon Literate.' She successfully delivered lessons to a P7 class. The class were classed as 'Carbon certified' because of their evidence submission.



Evidence 2			
Climate Action Theme	Number of pupils keen to take action in this area	Example 1 (please provide an example of the climate actions discussed by pupils)	Example 2 (please provide an example of the climate actions discussed by pupils)
Transport		Encourage people to use public transport, educate my friends!	"If you live near somewhere big and walk instead of driving."
Food		"I will grow my own fruit and veg, my own, I will grow my own."	"I will make my food."
Energy		"I will turn off lights when I go to bed."	"I will turn off my phone when I go to bed."
Waste		"I will see what my mum is doing with her rubbish."	"I will see what my mum is doing with her rubbish."
Biodiversity		"I will plant flowers."	
Other			

## Monitoring and Evaluation

In St. Ita's we complete an environmental review and use this to inform our action planning. As we have covered most of the topics of the last number of years, we often revisit topics and highlight areas we can further improve on. We understand that this is a continuous process.

We make use of the data zone as best as possible to measure impact for our topics eg. yearly biodiversity surveys. We also use our own informal methods to monitor actions eg. energy saving checklists

## Contact

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For more information on this Eco-Schools Ambassador School, see details below.

St. Ita's Primary School

Eco-Coordinator: Kathleen Cleland

Years involved in the Eco-Schools Programme: 18 years (2007 -Bronze awarded)

Address: 4 Alderwood Hill, Belfast

Phone: 90 798 811

Website: [www.stitas.co.uk](http://www.stitas.co.uk)

Email Address: (TBC – new staff member covering to June 2025)