



January 2014

# Eco-Schools News

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20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2014



Hello everyone and welcome to the January 2014 Newsletter. The Eco-Schools team hope that you had a really enjoyable and productive first term and a well earned Christmas break. We are delighted to be celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland in 2014.

We assessed 7 Green Flag applications during the first school term and have another 2 applications to be assessed in January. Congratulations to these schools on the fantastic achievement of their Green Flags.

Please follow the links or scroll down the Newsletter for more information on the following items.

### *Coming up this Term—Get Involved:*

- [Big Spring Clean 2014;](#)
- [Trócaire Poster Competition launching in January 2014;](#) and
- [Young Reporters for the Environment.](#)

### *Eco-Schools Project News:*

- [Every School should be an Eco-School—Mark H Durkan;](#)
- [Bright Sparks make Energy Savings during Eco-Schools World Days of Action Operation Energy Power Down Day;](#)
- [Energy Case Study—Victoria College Belfast;](#)
- [Local Children lead the way in Waste Reduction during EWWR;](#)
- [Bumper Harvest this Halloween for Local School in fifth year of 'Cash for Clobber' Competition;](#)
- [Wrigley's Litter Less Campaign;](#) and
- [Translink Travel Challenge.](#)

### *Other News:*

- Sign up for the Landscape Charter (see pg 5 below)
- Read about Eco-Schools in [Nektarina \(S\)Pace;](#)
- The [Big Schools' Birdwatch](#) with RSPB;
- [MARLISCO Marine Litter Video Competition;](#)
- [British Council Connecting Classroom opportunities](#)—deadline 31st January 2014:
- [Baglady Productions Latest News;](#)
- Take part in Northern Ireland Water's '[Stop Internal Flooding' competition;](#) and
- Find out about [Translink's 'Life's Better' Campaign](#) and how to become a 'Translink Ambassador'.

If you have any queries regarding Eco-Schools, please feel free to get in contact with us on 028 9073 6920 or email [joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org](mailto:joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org). Wishing you all a Happy New Year.

**Carmel Fyfe**  
Eco-Schools Manager

Eco-Schools is operated by TIDY Northern Ireland, sponsored by Airtricity and supported by the Department of the Environment. [www.eco-schoolsni.org](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org)



## Eco-Schools International

### Eco-Schools Programme

Our primary aim regarding the Eco-Schools scheme is to combine learning and action for the improvement of the environmental performance of Eco-Schools.

The programme is administered by TIDY Northern Ireland, an environmental charity in Northern Ireland, and is now also being implemented throughout the world with schools in Europe, Africa, North America, South America, Oceania and Asia.

Northern Ireland has 234 current Green Flag Schools (a further 92 schools have had Green Flags which are now lapsed). Locally we now have around 1100 schools registered which is about 92% of schools in Northern Ireland. This equates to around 290,000 pupils involved in the Programme. There are 58 countries and about 18 million students involved in the Eco-Schools Programme worldwide.

This is an opportunity to get involved with a community of schools intent on improving environmental performance.

### About FEE

The Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable development through environmental education (formal school education, training of staff and general awareness raising).

FEE is an international umbrella organisation with one national member organisation per country representing FEE on the national level and in charge of implementing FEE programmes nationally. FEE has members in over 68 countries worldwide.

FEE is mainly active through its five environmental education programmes: Blue Flag, Eco-Schools, Young Reporters on the Environment, Learning about Forests and Green Key.

[www.fee-international.org](http://www.fee-international.org)

### Eco-Schools International

The Eco-Schools Programme has a new international website that offers programme information, a range of methodologies and implementation procedures. It also lists the countries that operate the programme, as well as providing the latest international news concerning Eco-Schools.

Along with this information a newsletter is available on the website that illustrates the latest Eco-Schools news Worldwide. You can view and subscribe to this newsletter via the link <http://www.eco-schools.org>

### Eco-Schools NI Website

The Northern Ireland Eco-Schools website [www.eco-schoolsni.org](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org) is continuing to be a big success. Our website has been updated and now has a great new look. The website is also now available in Irish.

The website gives you information in relation to the process of and steps to achieve Green Flag status. You can obtain information regarding setting up an eco-committee, carrying out an environmental review, implementing your action plan, monitoring and evaluation and linking environmental initiatives to the curriculum.

Also included on the website are the contact details of our delivery partners who can help you to achieve your goals to obtain Green Flag status. There are teacher resources, competitions, newsletters, case studies and much more. If you have any content you wish to share on a particular topic, perhaps which we can add as a case study, or any other comments you want to make, please email [info@eco-schoolsni.org](mailto:info@eco-schoolsni.org).

## Green Flags Awarded



We are delighted to announce that the following schools received their Green Flags during the last term. All the schools should be very proud of this fantastic achievement. The schools are:

- Friends' School
- Oakgrove Integrated Primary School
- Randalstown Central Primary School
- Cooley Primary School
- Bushvalley Primary School
- St Mary's Primary School, BT79 7LT
- Knocknagor Primary School

We are continually amazed by the knowledge and enthusiasm of the pupils and staff at all our Green Flag Eco-Schools and would like to congratulate them again on their fantastic achievements.

## Deadline for Green Flags

The Eco-Schools team are very pleased to receive applications for Green Flag assessments at any time of year. **A deadline is set each year for Green Flag applications. This year there are 2 deadlines:**

- **10th January 2014 for assessments to be carried out before Easter break; and**
- **21st March 2014 for assessments to be carried out by 20th June 2014.**

*Please note that no assessments will be carried out in the week commencing 23rd June 2014. We would like to reassure schools that all applications will be assessed but unfortunately, due to the high volume of applications to be assessed during the summer term, we are unable to guarantee assessments before the end of June each year for applications received after the deadline date.*

## Recent School Awards



- Ardstraw Jubilee Primary School
- Barnish Primary School
- Cairncastle Primary School
- Devenish College
- Donaghmore Primary School
- Friends' School
- Holy Trinity College
- Lisnasharragh Primary School
- Loreto Grammar School
- Matt Talbot Nursery School
- Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School
- Seagoe Primary School
- St Francis' Primary School , Aghderg
- St John's Primary School, Coleraine
- St Joseph's Primary School, Killough
- St Malachy's Primary School, Bangor
- St Mary's Primary School, Ardglass
- St Mary's Primary School, Enniskillen
- St Mary's Primary School, Cookstown
- St Peter's Primary School, Newry
- St Ronan's Primary School, Newry
- St Teresa's Primary School, Armagh



- Ardstraw Jubilee Primary School
- Barrack Street Boys' Primary School
- Carrick Primary School
- Cliftonville Integrated Primary School
- Clounagh Junior High School
- Devenish College
- Friends' School
- Holy Cross Boys' Primary School
- Holy Trinity College
- Knocknagor Primary School
- Lisnasharragh Primary School
- Matt Talbot Nursery School
- Meadow Bridge Primary School
- Pond Park Primary School
- Roan St Patrick's Primary School
- St Canice's Primary School
- St Jarlath's Primary School
- St Malachy's Primary School, Bangor
- St Mary's Primary School, Cookstown
- St Patrick's Primary School, Ballynahinch

Congratulation to all these schools. It is fantastic that you are started on the Eco-Schools Awards and we look forward to hearing about your progress towards your next award.

The Bronze and Silver awards are self-assessed online and trust is placed on each school to complete this process. If your school meets the award criteria, log on to [http://www.eco-schoolsni.org/apply\\_for\\_award.aspx](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org/apply_for_award.aspx) to apply for your Bronze and/or Silver award.

## Connecting with a French School

A post-pirmary Eco-School in Sens in Burgundy, France that has studied water and waste would like to connect with an Eco-School in Ireland. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact [joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org](mailto:joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org).

## Northern Ireland Landscape Charter

THIS IS A CALL TO ACTION FOR ALL WHO CARE ABOUT THE PLACES WE ENJOY AND VALUE. SIGN UP AND SEND THIS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS TO DO THE SAME.

It is easy and takes two minutes.....

Look at Northern Ireland's new Landscape Charter on [http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/land-home/landscape\\_home.htm](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/land-home/landscape_home.htm)

Then sign up by simply emailing [nilandscapecharter@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:nilandscapecharter@doeni.gov.uk) with your name and occupation. You can email your name as an individual or on behalf of an organisation, voluntary or otherwise and even include a list of names of others who have given you their support.

If you wish you can also email the names of any places or landscapes anywhere in Northern Ireland that matter particularly to you, saying briefly why. What you say may even prompt those places or landscapes to be celebrated in the next version of the Charter to help them be valued even more.

Remember, the European Landscape Convention ( ELC) entered into force in the UK in March 2007. It is a requirement of member states to bring forward plans and policies in order to identify, protect and enhance **all landscapes** (not just designated or remarkable areas but degraded and everyday landscapes as well). As the draft and entirely voluntary NI Landscape Charter states "It is not simply about landscape as biodiversity or ecology. It's not only concerned with countryside or matters of heritage. It addresses the entire package, values and

memories, the experience we have of place." .....so you could equally mention your back yard or the places you take the dog for a walk as the Mountains of Mourne or the Giant's Causeway.

Names received will remain confidential and not put to any other use whatsoever. There is absolutely no fear of spamming, follow up emails or people being pestered.

## Games

Our website now contains exciting interactive games including:

- Rethink Waste Game: Sort it Out for teachers and pupils <http://rethinkwastegame.eco-schoolsni.org/>  
The object of the game is to sort unwanted items into the relevant reuse or recycling facilities. None of these items should be sent to landfill. Every time you correctly dispose of an item in a receptacle you score points but beware— you lose points for disposing of items incorrectly! See how high you can come on the leaderboard! This is a fun and competitive way to learn about the 3 Rs (Reduce-Reuse-Recycle)
- [Operation Energy Interactive Games](#); Do you have what it takes to help Doc Energy and Penny Monitor stop Sir Standby and his Evil Eyes in these 4 exciting interactive games?
- [Bin Run](#); this game is free for everyone but the competition is only open to schools in Belfast City Council area.

## Eco-School Resources

We have an excellent range of resources available on our website <http://www.eco-schoolsni.org/resources.aspx> . These include:

- Operation Energy– a fantastic range of free resources to help tackle the energy topic [www.operation-energy.com](http://www.operation-energy.com);
- The Rubbish Monster Books;
- Trocaire- The Go Green, Go Global perspective resource; and
- Rethink Waste – There is a range of curriculum based activities and lesson ideas which deal with the subject of paper and plastic waste reduction.

Our website is updated on a regular basis with any new resources so please keep this in mind when you are working on your topics.

### Attention teachers!

If you have any interesting stories about projects which you have undertaken regarding Eco-Schools we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Joanna McDonnell, Eco-Schools administrator at: [joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org](mailto:joanna.mcdonnell@eco-schoolsni.org)  
028 9073 6920

### Thank you for your financial support

The post of part-time Eco-Schools Admin Officer is funded by the Department of the Environment and the vast majority of Local Councils in Northern Ireland .

Joanna McDonnell is the Admin Officer. Office opening hours are 9.00-5.00 Monday to Friday.

We are also proudly working in partnership with **Airtricity**, our Principal Sponsor, Translink, our Transport Topic Sponsor, Cookstown Textile Recyclers, our Waste Topic Sponsor, Wrigley, our Litter Topic Sponsor and Trócaire, our Global Perspective Topic Sponsor.

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