



ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

February 2016

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Eco-Schools Green Flag application **11th March** deadline.

If you are hoping to apply for your Green Flag this year, and want to be assessed by the end of June please note we must receive your Green Flag application by **11th March 2016**.

Remember you can continue to submit applications at any time of the year but due to high volume after 11th March we may not be able to arrange your assessment until next school year.

You can post or email your application to eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org. We are always happy to answer any queries you have 02890 736920.



Eco-Schools put their best foot forward for Translink Travel Challenge.

Eco-Schools are delighted to be working with Translink for the sixth year to challenge more pupils to travel sustainably to school. The Travel Challenge invites young people to stretch their legs, use pedal power, hop on a bus or train and leave the car at home for at least two weeks.

These active and sustainable travel modes are not only good for the environment but also help families save money, improve mental and physical health and reduce congestion around school gates.



Cranmore Integrated Primary, Belfast, are on board for the Travel Challenge

Last year, 1200 pupils took part across NI swapping nearly 6000 car journeys for more sustainable modes – and covering an estimated 17,500 kilometres. In fact, if every pupil in Northern Ireland took part in the Challenge an estimated 4.8 million kilometers could be travelled sustainably.

The Translink Travel Challenge is now open to all schools. The Challenge is running in the spring and summer terms until **23rd 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!

Doing a great Transport project in your school? Why not enter the #Smartmovers Project category for a chance to win a prize too.

Translink Travel Challenge Prizes	
Most Eco-Journeys Post- Primary	£150 <i>and</i> bus or rail journey for 1 class
Most Improved Class Primary	£150 <i>and</i> bus or rail journey for 1 class
Best #Smartmovers Project Primary and Post Primary	£150 <i>and</i> bus or rail journey for 1 class
Best Pupil All Schools	£50 book token <i>and</i> family travel ticket for the winning pupil

A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast in **June 2016**. All schools who send results 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 or email ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org.

Waste gives Belfast pupils food for thought with the Wheelie Big Challenge.



Lisnasharragh Primary pupils investigate food waste.

Schools across Belfast are tackling the important topic of food waste with the exciting Wheelie Big Challenge run by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools and supported by Belfast City Council. With alarming figures like, 7 million tonnes of food being thrown away from UK homes every year, pupils are investigating what can be done in school and at home to reduce waste.

In this second year of the challenge, a character called Wheelie again encourages everyone to take a closer look at what they throw in the bin. Pupils will learn tips on how to reduce food waste and compost or recycle any food scraps. They are then invited to enter their actions and improvements into a competition with the grand final taking place in Belfast City Hall on the 10th June. Schools could win up to £500 in Primary and Post-Primary award categories.

George Lyttle, Recycling Officer at Belfast City Council said: "We are pleased to be working with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful again on this competition, building on the success of the past

few years. This competition gives schools the opportunity to win great prizes while helping to protect the environment and reduce waste disposal costs. With research showing that around a third of food is wasted, we hope this competition will encourage pupils and their families to think about the food they waste at home and in school and do something about it."

Last year's Primary winner Lisnasharragh Primary School made a big push to recycle and reuse more paper and plastic and set up a special recycling point in the school where classes can share reusable resources for classroom activities. They managed to improve their recycling rate by 23%. This year they are excited to focus on food by composting scraps and encouraging pupils and parents to waste less food.

Schools in Belfast City Council can register their interest in the competition by emailing cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org more information is available on our Eco-Schools website [competitions](#) section.

Hedgehog Campaign - Sightings wanted, dead or alive.

Mark H Durkan, Minister for the Environment, as part of NIEL's new Species Champions initiative, is asking all schools to help their native hedgehogs. In the 1950's it was estimated there were 36.5 million hedgehogs in Britain. It seems likely that there are now fewer than 1 million hedgehogs left.



Hedgehogs will be starting to wake up over the next month as the weather gets warmer. As they start to move around you may be lucky enough to see one in your garden or school grounds. Sadly the most common sightings are of dead hedgehogs at the side of the road. Any sightings of hedgehogs would be useful to CEDaR (Centre for Environmental Data and Recording) even dead hedgehogs provide a good indicator of how the population is doing in that area. To find out how to register your hedgehog sighting go to the [CEDaR website](#) and help record our prickly pals. Fingers crossed it's a live sighting you get to record.

If you have seen any hedgehogs in your school grounds or have top tips you would like to share please contact ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org and have a look at our Hedgehog Campaign on our [website](#).

School News:

Millstrand Primary clean up the coast.

Millstrand Primary School, Portrush, have been part of the [Live Here Love Here, Adopt a Spot](#) scheme for 2 years and regularly clean up their local beach. With the debris collected from West Strand beach, Y4 created a piece of art named 'The Lost Fish', for the Titanic Marine Art debris competition. They were delighted to discover they had won the competition and their work will be displayed at Titanic during Science Week this month.



'The Lost Fish' artwork created by Millstrand Primary School.

Ulidia Integrated College develop Energy App

A team of 4 pupils from Ulidia College, Carrickfergus, took part in an AES Eco-Challenge with the idea to create a free to download app to support KS3 Science and Geography learners.

With funding from AES Energy and working partnership with ISL Waste the pupils have now successfully developed the app and are proud to share the download at <https://demo.enterprise.theappbuilder.com/clients/ulidia/ulidia>



Well done to Darcy Burrows, Grace Carson, Jamie Davidson, Blake McAlister in Year 12.

Partner News:

Young Environmentalist Awards Ulster Regional Finals – Friday 11th March: 10am – 3pm

For the 6th year running the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre will be hosting the inspiring regional final of the ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards. The Young Environmentalist Awards is an all-Island environmental awards programme that recognises and rewards young people who raise environmental awareness and help improve their local environment.



Mullavilly Primary at 2015's regional finals.

The event will take place on Friday 11th March and will see schools from across the region descending on the eco-friendly centre to showcase their wonderful array of innovative projects, designed to help improve, sustain and safeguard the local natural environment. The projects will be presented to an expert panel of judges for appraisal with the winners going through to the all-Ireland final in May.

Award categories on the day will include best biodiversity, energy, water, recycling and transport projects to name but a few.

Visit www.facebook.com/oxfordislandnaturereserve to find out more or contact the Discovery Centre on 028 3831 1673

International Eco-Schools News:

YRE National Operators Meeting - Glasgow.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful are looking forward to attending the Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) National Operators Meeting in Glasgow this month. This is a chance for countries from all over the world who run the YRE programme to gather for training, inspiration and idea exchanges.

To learn more about the YRE programme watch this [video](#) and read inspiring examples of work from young people around the world [here](#).



**Young Reporters
for the environment**

YRE is a network of passionate young people educating for sustainable development by producing, engaging, creative, environmental journalism. Coordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), YRE is in more than 30 countries worldwide and growing!

Young people aged 11-21 may enter the YRE competition in 3 categories:

- Written Articles
- Photographic
- Video

Pupils chose an environmental issue which is close to their heart and investigate, propose solutions and report on their findings.

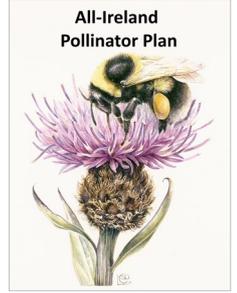


National closing date is **1st April 2016** contact

ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org for more information or visit the Eco-Schools [web-site](#).

Inspiring children to help save the bees! Junior Pollinator Plan launched.

Last year, bee experts in Ireland came together to produce the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020. It explored the challenges facing bees in the world today, the key role they play in our eco system and ways in which everyone could do their bit to help protect them.



Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Eco-Schools are delighted to support the 'The Junior Pollinator Plan', presenting these ideas especially for a younger audience in a fun, easy to understand way. It encourages children to look at how they can help safeguard against the demise of bees in Ireland and will help children understand the importance of bees to our world and empower them to take action to help safeguard our pollinators.

If you are a pollinator, finding enough food is the biggest challenge you have to face. Declines in wildflowers are subjecting our pollinators to starvation. Fertiliser application has resulted in increased crop yields, but in strong declines in wild flowers in managed field and in adjacent semi-natural habitats. Our tendency to tidy up the landscape rather than allowing wildflowers to grow along roadsides, field margins, and in parks, gardens and school grounds is also playing a big part in fewer of these resources being available.

Download a copy of the [Junior Pollinator Plan](#) a great resource for teaching on the topic and full of ideas on how to help bees.

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:

BIG Spring Clean April 2016

Spring into action with our annual national clean-up!

Eco-Schools are delighted to be part of BIG Spring Clean running as part of the [Live Here Love Here](#) campaign.

Register a clean-up and receive a **clean-up kit** including: gloves, bags, high-vis vests, posters and hints and tips. Register your results and we will send you a certificate thanking you for your participation.

For more information on how to register contact ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org



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.

Helping Hand - a BIG 'thank you' 15% discount!

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful have been using [Helping Hand Environmental](#) litter-pick products for over 10 years. To place an order with Helping Hand using the 15% discount visit the Live Here Love Here [website](#) for more information. Offer ends 31st April 2015.

Competitions:

Cookstown Textile Recyclers, Cash for Clobber.

Cookstown Textile Recycler's (CTR) 'Cash for Clobber' is a great way to raise money for your school's environmental projects. CTR will give money for the clothing they collect, **50 pence/kilo**, which is all sorted locally and either distributed to countries in need or recycled into fibers used in industry.

They are the only BSI certified clothing recycling company, with strong environmental ethics at their core, which Eco-Schools Northern Ireland recommends and they have proudly sponsored our Waste topic for the last six years.

You could win up to £3000 for your school by simply recycling all types of clothing and shoes (pairs only please), household textiles and handbags (not duvets or pillows).

Get collecting now! – the rules couldn't be simpler:

The school that collects the most clobber per pupil wins a magnificent cash prize. There are 3 bands to win prizes in, depending on the size of your school.

Band 1 = up to 100 pupils	Band 2 = 101- 250 pupils	Band 3 = more than 250 pupils
£1,000	£2,000	£3,000

The Competition runs from **1 September 2015 until 31 May 2016**. Visit the Eco-Schools [website](#) for more information.

To arrange a 'Cash for Clobber' clothing collection for your school contact CTR at schools@c-t-r.com or phone 028 9447 8880.



[Loanends PS bumper clobber collection 2015](#)



Trócaire Poetry Competition: Forced to Flee: 'This is our exodus'.

Trócaire sponsor the Eco-Schools Global Perspective topic. Together we are focusing on climate change and the impact it is having on different people around the world. Unfortunately it is the people in less developed countries who will likely feel the impact of climate change the most even though they have contributed the least towards it.

Trócaire are asking us, what can we do, here at home, to prevent our lifestyle impacting further on climate change? They have produced a terrific set of [teaching resources](#) on the topic to help pupils understand the issues and think of solutions.

We are delighted to promote the Trócaire/Poetry Ireland poetry competition as a means for pupils to make their voice heard. The competition is open to Primary and Post-Primary pupils and is looking at the theme of displacement/migration caused by climate change.

Closing date **16th March 2016**; for more information and to receive an education pack contact ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

NI Water Poster Competition

You are invited to participate in Northern Ireland Water's (NI Water) Annual Schools Competition. The competition will focus on designing a poster to show the comparison of having safe water in a Northern Ireland and those living without safe water in developing countries.

The competition is open to KS2 pupils in all primary schools in Northern Ireland, with a category for Special Needs Schools. Great prizes to be won. Closing date **25th March 2016**. Contact the NI Water Education team for more information education@niwater.com.

Northern Ireland Amenity Council's Best Kept Schools Awards.

Do you have school grounds and buildings that are beautifully kept with a great environmental focus and enthusiastic, involved pupils? Almost 200 schools entered last year's 'Best Kept' School Awards, which are run by the Northern Ireland Amenity Council.

This annual contest is open to schools for entries until the **11th March 2016** - visit the Northern Ireland Amenity Council's website for the [application form](#). The Schools awards ceremony will take place on 7 June 2016 at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Craigavon.

Other News:

Global Learning opportunity for schools.

Schools in Northern Ireland can bring education for a fair and sustainable world into their classrooms this term by getting involved in the Global Learning Programme (GLP). More than 160 NI schools are already taking part in the staff development initiative and making excellent progress.

All participating schools are offered training on global learning (with sub-cover provided), plus resources and guidance. The next round of GLP training is taking place during late-February/March at a number of different locations across NI. Schools can find out more, plus register for the programme by visiting the GLP website, www.globallearningni.com.

Questions should be directed to glp@centreforglobaleducation.com. The GLP is managed by the Centre for Global Education and funded by the UK government.



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:

- Castledawson Primary School, Castledawson
- Churchtown Primary School, Cookstown
- Sacred Heart Grammar School, Newry
- Portadown Integrated Primary School, Portadown
- Derryhale Primary School, Portadown



Sacred Heart Grammar School, Newry



Derryhale Primary School, Portadown



Portadown Integrated Primary School, Portadown

Contact us at:

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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.