



ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

November 2015

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International Eco-Schools National Operators Meeting (NOM) a great success.

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Eco-Schools successfully hosted 100 international delegates from 54 countries in the Foundation for Environmental Education’s (FEE) largest ever NOM.

Representatives from FEE and 54 countries worldwide came to Northern Ireland this month to share good practice and discuss the on-going development of Eco-Schools for the benefit of young people and our environment globally.

The conference was opened by Mark H Durkan MLA, Minister for the Environment; a welcome from Angelina Fusco, Tourism NI and Ian Humphreys, CEO Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Our guests also had the opportunity, between all the hard work, to enjoy a welcome reception at Stormont, hosted by Anna Lo MLA, Chair of the Environment Committee, and David Weir MLA, Chair of the Education Committee, and visit some excellent local Eco-Schools showcasing good practice and celebrate their achievements at a farewell gala dinner in the Ulster Museum.

Fairview Primary School, Ballyclare hosted a visit from the NOM visitors which featured on BBC Newsline - view it [here](#). We would like to say a big “thank-you” to all schools involved in visits, display boards, reporting and performing during the three day event, you left a lasting, very positive impression on our visitors: Fairview Primary School, Belmont Primary School, Lagan College, Ulidia Integrated College, Hezlett Primary School, Ballycraigy Primary School, Fair Hill Primary School, Downpatrick Nursery School, Sullivan Upper School and Grosvenor Grammar.

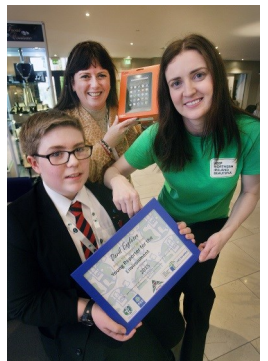
More news from the NOM can be found on the Eco-Schools website [news section](#) and [NOM blog](#). The Foundation for Environmental Education also featured an update and photos on their [website](#). Tweets from the event can be found [@Eco_SchoolsNI](#) [#ecoschoolsNOM](#) and updates on our facebook page [Eco-Schools NI Official](#).



Alpha Newspapers and Eco-Schools Young Journalist winner reports on the NOM.

David Eagleson, a year 9 pupil from Rainey Endowed School in Magherafelt, impressed the judges of the Alpha Newspapers and Eco-Schools Young Journalist competition with his well structured and passionately worded entry explaining why he would like to attend and report on the Eco-Schools National Operators meeting.

David attended the NOM where he had the opportunity to interview Mark H Durkan MLA, Minister of the Environment, representatives from the Foundation for Environmental Education, International Delegates and Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Staff. His finished article was published across the Alpha Newspapers and can be read in full [here](#).



David Eagleson, Young Reporter for the Environment, receives his prize from Karen Scott Kaplan, Alpha Newspapers and Carmel Fyfe, Operations Manager, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.

Eco-Schools World Days of Action - Live Here Love Here



65 schools signed up for this year's Eco-Schools *World Days of Action*, [Live Here Love Here](#) campaign which encouraged everyone to show some love, for this place we call home, by taking part in an environmental day of action at the beginning of November.

We invited schools to register an event and do one or all of the following:

- **Clean-Up** - tidy up your school grounds or a local grot spot by holding a litter pick event.
- **Green-Up** - brighten up a run down plot by clearing out the weeds and doing some planting.
- **Spruce-Up** - come together to tackle graffiti and vandalism by splashing a little paint around and revitalising a dingy corner.

Over 1100 participants took part, with more than 900 Kgs of litter lifted, and 4000m² improved. Schools reported on lots of interesting actions from weeding, planting and litter picking to creating artwork from recycled bottle tops! Thanks to all who took part and reported results. Congratulations to Glengormley High School who won the Clean-Up Kit prize.



Over 100 pupils from St Colm's High School and St Mary's Primary School in Draperstown took part in a mammoth Clean-Up of their local area and collected 23 bags of litter!



Andrews Memorial PS - Green Up



Six Mile Integrated PS - Spruce Up

Don't forget you can still [pledge](#) your support to the Live Here Love Here campaign and receive updates about actions being taken in your community.

Hedgehog Campaign

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 36.5million hedgehogs in Britain.



Hedgehogs hibernate every year, usually from about November to around Easter, but this is much affected by the weather. Hedgehogs normally wake up several times over winter and often build a new nest made of leaves, tucked under a bush or log pile or garden shed, anywhere that offers support and protection.

Please be careful if you are planning a bonfire or a garden clear-up as hedgehogs may have chosen your pile of logs or rough ground as their home.

For more great ideas on how to protect our wild, furry friends have look at the [RSBP 'Give Nature a Home' resources](#).

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

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Belfast, get to grips with Waste.

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School in Belfast have been tackling the Waste - Resource Efficiency topic. They took part in the Belfast City Council, Wheelie Big Challenge last year and managed to go from having no recycling in place in the school to over 80% of their waste being recycled - a tremendous achievement!

To find out how they approached the topic, and ended up saving the school money while also saving the environment, read the case study they developed on the Eco-Schools website. Follow this link - [Our Lady of Lourdes, Waste Case Study](#).



Partner News: Belfast City Council and Eco-Schools 'Going for Awards' Cluster Group Meeting

Belfast City Council and Eco-Schools are hosting a 'Going for Awards' cluster group meeting in Malone House, Barnett's Demesne, on Wednesday 9th December 3.30pm - 5pm.



Last year this meeting proved hugely successful with nine schools attending progressing through Eco-Schools awards, seven of which achieved Green Flag awards.

If you are interested in attending please contact ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

International Eco-Schools News:

Foundation for Environmental Education to take part in COP21 Climate Change Summit in Paris.

There is little or no doubt any more that Climate Change is the most important, urgent and complex challenge facing humanity. This challenge requires each and every one of us to act responsibly, make changes in our perception and behaviour and be willing to make sacrifices for the good of those who will follow us. Education is recognised as an essential part of any process that looks to inform and empower people to better understand any issue and to change their behaviour based on the understanding they have achieved.



During COP21 summit the Foundation for Environmental Education will be hosting a Conference titled "Climate change as part of the curriculum from kindergarten to university", at the Climate Generations Area on 4 December 2015.



To read more about this go to the FEE [website](#).

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 take part in the Belfast Climate Change Rally

Staff from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful attended the People's Climate Change Rally in Belfast on the 29th November. The rally was one of many across the world with actions staged to mark the UN conference on climate change in Paris at the end of the month.

The Damp weather didn't dampen the spirits as several hundred people took part in the rally in Writers' Square, to show solidarity with everyone working for climate justice.

On November 30th, world leaders will gather in Paris at the UN Climate Summit. The decisions they make on issues such as global carbon emissions and renewable energy will impact each and every one of us for years to come.

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland were also proud to carry a banner for Eco-Ecole in France who were unable to take part in their own rally due to the recent terrorist attacks.



Other News: EWWR 2015

After six years of successful implementation, the European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR) returned for its annual appointment with another intensive week of awareness-raising events. From the 21st to the 29th of November 2015, more than 12,000 actions related to waste reduction, products reuse and materials recycling, as well as Clean-Ups, were carried out in 33 countries.

EWWR actions aim at increasing awareness on resource efficiency and circular economy. The objective is to change the behaviour of European citizens regarding their consumption patterns and waste habits; promoting waste reduction, repairing and reusing of products as well as waste sorting and recycling, in particular in countries where sorting and recycling rates are still low.

Waste prevention holds a strong place in the EWWR, as it makes more sense to avoid waste or to reduce it at the source than dealing with it once it has already ended up in garbage bins. To highlight this EWWR focused on the topic of Dematerialisation - meaning to use less or no material while delivering the same level of functionality. During the EWWR, a great number of actions addressed dematerialisation through creative workshops, reuse market and repair cafés, including extensive awareness-raising campaigns in schools and other activities all over Europe and beyond! Visit the EWWR [website](#) for more information.

Reduce, reuse, recycle: it is time to take action, and every action counts!

Lagan Valley Regional Park Resources.

The Lagan Valley Region Park is in the heart of Belfast but feels a world away. It offers a great variety of experiences for schools from cultural to natural history. Their website offers great resources which would complement any school trip.

Visit their [website](#) for more information and get back to nature in this outdoor classroom.

Competitions: Cookstown Textile Recyclers Cash for Clobber Competition 2015/2016

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.

Translink Travel Challenge

The Translink Travel Challenge is now open to all schools. The Challenge is running in the Autumn and Spring terms for any 2 weeks that you choose. Record your results in the resources provided and 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.

This is not only a competition but a great project with lots of learning resources provided. Visit www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools for more information or email ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org.

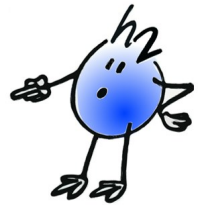
Woodland Trust - Competition

Woodland Trust are inviting entries to a Tree Champions Challenge - create a woodland character to promote their new Charter. They are seeking entries from KS2 and KS3 and the winning entries will have the opportunity to work with acclaimed children's author Jackie Morris to develop their character. There are also teaching resources and free books available.

To read more about the competition go to the Woodland Trust [website](#).
Closing date 4th December 2015.

NI Water Poster Competition

You are invited to participate in Northern Ireland Water's (NI Water) Annual Schools Competition.



NI Water provide us with clean safe drinking water delivered straight to our homes but unfortunately for some people around the world the reality is very different. 650 million people live without safe water, walking to collect dirty water from a pond or lake and carrying it back to their families. The aim of this competition is to highlight the importance of clean safe water for life.

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.

Grow Wild Seed Kits

- Groups can register for **free Grow Wild seed kits** to share. Register online at growwilduk.com from October 2015 to mid-February 2016
- **Be inspired** by our 2014 and 2015 community projects. [Click here](#) to visit our interactive map to read their profile pages



Eco-Schools Green Flag application deadlines 2015/16.

If you are planning to apply for the Green Flag this year, please note that there are two deadlines for the academic year 2015-2016, **8th January 2016** and **11th March 2016**.

We guarantee that applications received before the 8th January 2016 will be assessed before the Easter break and that applications received before 11th March 2016 will be assessed before 24th June 2016. Whilst applications received after 11th March 2016 will still be assessed at some time, we cannot guarantee that this will be before the 24th June.

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:

Carmoney Primary School, Carmoney.



Carmoney Primary School celebrate Green Flag success.

Contact us at:

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful
Bridge House, 2 Paulett Avenue
Belfast, BT5 4HD
Tel: 028 9073 6920
eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

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.