



KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND BEAUTIFUL



ECO-SCHOOLS

# ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

April 2016

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## Big Spring Clean time for Ballyclare Schools.

Ambassador Eco-School, Fairview Primary in Ballyclare, have decided to tackle litter, not only in school, but also the surrounding community. They invited three other local schools to lend a hand with a Big Spring Clean of the Grange Estate: Ballyclare Primary, Ballyclare High and Tir-na-Nog Primary. 43 pupils and teachers took part with support from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Wrigley, ASDA and the Grange Community Group. Enthusiastic pupils' spirits weren't damped by the rain as they collected 16 bags of litter.

Fairview Primary School registered the clean-up as a **Live Here Love Here**, Big Spring Clean, Northern Ireland's biggest clean-up. Every year thousands of people, schools and community groups take part in Big Spring Clean; to take part or learn more visit [www.livehereandlovehere.org](http://www.livehereandlovehere.org).

The clean-up will also form part of Fairview's Wrigley's Litter Less campaign, through which they, and thirty schools across

Northern Ireland, are determined to combat litter and waste. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful are delighted to be delivering the Litter Less campaign for the fifth year through the Eco-Schools Programme in partnership with the Foundation for Environmental Education. The [global campaign](#) is running in 31 countries around the world, raising awareness of litter problems and encouraging positive behaviour changes.

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.



*Pupils from Fairview Primary, Ballyclare Primary, Tir-na-Nog Primary and Ballyclare High clean-up.*

## Last calls for this year's Translink Travel Challenge.

There is still time to take part in the Translink Travel Challenge this year. The closing date for entries into the competition is **23rd May** which means the last date you can start the **2 week** challenge is the **9th May**.

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.

A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast on **Wednesday 8th June**. 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](http://www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools) for more information on the prizes and excellent resources or email [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).



## Green Flag application update.

Well done to all the schools who got their Green Flag application to us by the deadline. We have had a record number of schools apply this year and are working our way through processing them all. If you haven't heard from us yet, you will shortly. In the meantime if you could email [cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) dates that you know for sure **will not** suit you for an assessment in May or June, this may help us organise assessment dates for you.



Missed the deadline? Don't worry you can submit your application at **any time of the year**, although applications submitted now will probably be assessed in September/October.

## 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 36.5 million hedgehogs in Britain. It seems likely that there are now fewer than 1 million hedgehogs left.

Hedgehogs should be up and about now that spring is in the air. They will be looking for a mate and the hedgehog 'rut' happens around May-June. Males attempt to woo females in lengthy encounters that involve much circling and rhythmic snorting and puffing. The commotion can attract rival males to the scene and courtship can thus be interrupted as interlopers are confronted and rival males square up to one another; head-butting and chases are not uncommon. [Read more here...](#)



You could try leaving some tasty snacks out for hedgehogs that are visiting your school or garden. Don't forget though, milk is actually bad for hedgehogs! [Read more here...](#)

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](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) and have a look at our Hedgehog Campaign on our [website](#).

## School News:

### Christ the Redeemer Primary School, Belfast, achieves Green Flag glory.

Christ the Redeemer Primary School in Belfast were delighted to be awarded the prestigious and internationally recognised Eco-Schools Green Flag award this month. The school has been focusing on eco-friendly activities and pupils have been working hard to reduce litter and waste, save energy and think about their impact on the environment on a global level. All the pupils in the school are involved in different eco projects in class as well as practical actions around the school. You can view some great videos they have created on the climate change topic [here](#).

The school has been working with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's Eco-Schools on a number of different projects including the ['Wheelie Big Challenge'](#), supported by Belfast City Council, a waste themed project and competition in which pupils take a close look at the rubbish in their school bins and think of ways to reduce, reuse and recycle more. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful are delighted to be supported by Belfast City Council in the delivery of the Eco-Schools programme which has resulted in 20% of schools in the Belfast City Council area now being Green Flag Eco-Schools.



## Partner News:

### Belfast schools take on a Wheelie Big Challenge

30 schools from across **Belfast City Council** have been looking at recycling and food waste issues with this year's [Wheelie Big Challenge](#). Schools will be completing a waste audit and putting in place actions to reduce waste. A description of actions and results will then be entered into a competition with final judging on the 10th June in the Great Hall, Belfast City Hall. There is still plenty of time to take part with the project running until the end of May. Free resources and bins or a wormery are also supplied. Contact [cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:cathy.gorman@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for more information.



### Bee Curious - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June: 11am – 4pm

The Bee Curious event at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre aims to celebrate the value of pollinators and their significance to local food producers and the wider countryside. This free family day out offers an exciting insight into the magical world of bees through a live demonstration hive where you can see bees working at first hand, learn all about bee keeping and check out the equipment used, how to make your garden friendly for these pollinators as well as having the opportunity to buy wax products including delicious honey and luxurious cosmetics!

As well as buzzing bees and other pollinators including butterflies, damselflies and hoverflies, this family friendly event will also have legendary chef Jenny Bristow carrying out scrumptious cooking demos giving you top tips on how to use ingredients produced by pollinators in your own recipes – with some tasty morsels to sample!

Add in arts and crafts activities, face painting, a walk-a-bout bee, flower arranging workshops, quizzes, willow weaving, stalls selling locally grown and produced fruits, vegetables, chutney and oils as well as native plants and flowers this is the perfect way to bring the family back to nature.

Organised by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, Bee Curious will take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June from 11am to 4pm. Guided walks on the day must be booked.

Visit [www.facebook.com/oxfordislandnaturereserve](http://www.facebook.com/oxfordislandnaturereserve) to find out more or contact the Discovery Centre on 028 3831 1673.

## Shout out for Eco-Schools Volunteers:

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, the Eco-Schools operator, is a charity which always welcomes volunteers to help out with the busy task of running the programme in all our wonderful schools to help them progress towards their Eco-Schools awards. Volunteers could be helping us deliver particular projects or events, helping with office admin tasks, trained as an Eco-Schools Green Flag assessor or out visiting schools to give them advice on the programme.

If you have the time and enthusiasm to lend us a hand, and are interested in the environment, education and inspiring our young people, and would like to learn more, please contact us for a chat on 028 9073 6920 or email [eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).

## Ambassador Eco-Schools new website section.



If you have been visiting our website [www.eco-schoolsni.org](http://www.eco-schoolsni.org) recently you may have noticed that we have been updating the look and functionality of the site.

A recent addition to the website has been a new [Ambassador Eco-Schools](#) section under the 'Awards' tab. Here you can read about what it means to be an Ambassador Eco-School and find out what our 10 current, fantastic Ambassador Eco-Schools have been doing. We are hoping to expand the Ambassador Eco-School scheme in the next school year so if you think you would like to be

involved or learn more keep an eye out for updates or contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).

## International Eco-Schools News: Eco-Schools USA seek sustainable Food Pathway

More than 30 million children in the United States eat a school lunch five days a week, 180 days a year. Regrettably, most of these school lunches are filled with poor quality, highly processed foods that contribute to childhood obesity, diabetes, reduced attention spans and poor grades. The Sustainable Food Pathway encourages schools to take actions such as utilizing school gardens and local farmers to provide more healthful foods and lessen their environmental footprint. [Learn more about the Sustainable Food Pathway.](#)



Michelle Obama visited Eco-School, Philip's Academy Charter School, in New Jersey, as part of her efforts to promote healthy eating in schools. Check the [Tweet](#) by Eco-Schools USA and feel free to share or retweet it!



## 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:

### Let's Clean Up Europe!

Well done to Lismore Comprehensive School, in Craigavon, as they have become the first school in Northern Ireland to register their, Let's Clean Up Europe, activity.



Over the years there have been several clean-up campaigns implemented in Europe to tackle the litter problem. The **European Clean-Up Day**, Let's Clean Up Europe, intends to bring these initiatives together to have a Europe-wide clean-up event that takes place on the same day all over the continent, in order to involve and reach as many citizens as possible. The European Clean-Up Day this year will take place from the **6-8 May 2016**.

Taking part in Let's Clean Up Europe is easy and you can register your actions on the Live Here Love Here website [www.livehereandlovehere.org](http://www.livehereandlovehere.org). To help with your event we will send you a clean up kit with some additional resources for you to publicise your Let's Clean Up Europe event. This is our opportunity as European citizens to team up, to clean up the environment, and tackle the litter issue, by allowing participants to realize how much litter is dumped in their own neighbourhood and throughout Europe. This action provides a unique opportunity to raise citizens' awareness on the litter problem and help change behaviour.

You can find out more about Let's Clean Up Europe and on how to organise a clean-up action in the [Let's Clean Up Europe Factsheet](#).

## Competitions: Cash for Clobber Competition deadline 31st May.

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, **40 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.



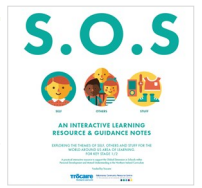
St Joseph's Primary, Carryduff, winners in 2015.

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-tract.com](mailto:schools@c-tract.com) or phone 028 9447 8880.

## Trócaire Resources - S.O.S: Interactive Learning Resource and Guidance Notes.



SOS is a development education programme for children at Key Stage 1/2 (years 3-5) that will explore the theme of Self, Others and our relationship to 'Stuff' and consumerism, inspired by some of the material on the Story of Stuff website. The resource aims to:

- Develop children's self-esteem and their own self-worth by exploring what makes them unique.
- Build on the children's understanding of themselves through their relationships with others and specifically our relationships with the global south.
- Explore how we make decisions and choices, especially around consumerism and how these can affect people in other parts of the world.

Find the resource on the Trócaire [website](#) ...

### Other News: Engaging students on litter.

Zilch UK are as passionate as we are about eliminating litter and that's why they created a new online resource aimed at post-primary school students; individuals aged between 11 and 18.

The online questionnaire asks respondents to rank over 30 reasons why they shouldn't litter, indicate what sort of messages they think might persuade them and their peers not to drop it, and suggest what factors might prevent them from pickup up litter.

So by completing the exercise they will have taken an in-depth look at the detrimental effects of litter and how, if they were to litter, they might be perceived by their friends and colleagues. All this is designed to influence their behaviour and change it for the better.

But that's not all. Participants will also be rewarded for their effort: a £10 prize will be drawn every 100 completed responses and a £100 prize will be awarded to someone every thousandth entry.

A great conversation starter or something students can be told about and do in their own time, so take a look by following this link <http://bit.ly/KNIBZilch> and work out how you might make best use of it.

### Free Trees!

Woodland Trust are giving away free packs of native trees to schools and community groups.

Groups can now choose between packs of 30, 105 or 420 saplings, depending on how much space they have to plant. There are different mixes of tree species to choose from too, including packs themed for autumn colour, wood fuel and wildlife.

Planting trees is the perfect way to help children and young people connect with and learn about nature. To find out more, head to [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/freetrees](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/freetrees).

### 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:

- Ballycraig Primary, Antrim
- Dromore Primary, Omagh
- Bunscoil an Luir, Newry
- St Colman's Primary, Kilkeel
- Grosvenor Grammar, Belfast
- Fair Hill Primary, Dromore
- Loanends Primary, Crumlin
- St Joseph's Primary, Crumlin
- Ballinderry Primary, Lisburn
- St Columbanus' College, Bangor
- Carr Primary, Carryduff
- Greenwood Primary, Belfast



Bunscoil an Luir, Newry



Dromore Primary, Omagh



St Colman's Primary, Kilkeel

#### 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.**