



ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

September 2016

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New School Zone now online

Login to our new Eco-Schools **School Zone** on the [website](#) and save all your Eco-Schools work and data in one location. The new streamlined online Green Flag application is also available from the School Zone.



We are hoping this dynamic new online space will become your go-to-area whatever stage of the Eco-Schools process you are at. Start saving documents and data here now to make your applications easier in the future. Data can even be backdated - once entered there is the option for you to download it in a useful Excel format which can then be used for numeracy tasks. You are even provided with a printable version of data collection sheets to use around the school as you gather your information.

The **Eco-Schools Project Planner** is also now available in the School Zone and you can automatically register for a selection of great ongoing projects here.

We welcome your feedback on the new area and application process. If you have any questions or problems logging on please [contact us](#).

Schools call 'ACTION!' on Translink Travel Challenge

Eco-Schools are delighted to be working with Translink on the Travel Challenge for the eighth year. We would love to see all schools taking part and thinking about green ways to get to school. Reduce congestion around your school gates, get parents thinking eco, and enjoy the health benefits of ditching the car, getting fresh air and exercise for short journeys.



Pupils from Ulidia Integrated College and Acorn Integrated Primary take up the Translink Travel Challenge and tell us why they are #smartmovers.

The Translink Travel Challenge is now open to all schools. The Challenge runs all year until **22nd 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!

This year pupils are also invited to enter a creative **#Smartmovers** project - with either a short written entry with photos or **new this year** a

30 second video clip using the phrase **'We're smart movers because...'**

A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast in June. All schools who send results and/or a #Smartmovers project 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 on the prizes and excellent resources or email ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org.

Schools Bag Big Prizes with Cash for Clobber

Schools across the country are taking part in the 'Cash for Clobber' competition run in partnership with Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Eco-Schools and Cookstown Textile Recyclers. This great method of being environmentally friendly by recycling also raises some welcome funds for the schools taking part.

Last year 235 schools took part and collected a whopping 275 tonnes of clothing. If every school in NI took part an amazing 1163 tonnes of clothing could be diverted from landfill to be re-used or recycled. Not only is this great for the environment but the schools also receive **40 pence per kilo** of clothing collected, raising valuable funds for their school projects.

Schools which collect the most textiles per pupil are in with the chance to win the annual 'Cash for Clobber' competition with fantastic **prizes of up to £1,500**. The closing date for the competition this year is 30th June 2017.

Last year Orangefield Primary School, Belfast, were overjoyed to win the top prize in the large primary section. St Scire's Primary School, Trillick, won in the medium schools section and The Magic Roundabout Playgroup, Sixmilecross, won in the small schools section.

Cookstown Textile Recyclers are the only BSI certified clothing recycling company that Eco-Schools recommends. Clothing collected is redistributed to developing countries around the world or recycled into industrial fibers.

Schools who would like to get involved are asked to call the Cash for Clobber Team on **028 9447 9380** or visit www.cashforclobber.com or www.eco-schoolsni.org.



Orangefield Primary, Belfast, were delighted to bag a top prize in Cash for Clobber 2016.

Wear Green Be Green Day

Monday 24th – Friday 28th October.

Do you know Eco-Schools is run by a charity?

Environmental charity, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, who run the Eco-Schools programme in NI, is asking your school to hold a fun fundraising day so we can continue to provide delivery of the free programme and Green Flag assessments to schools.

Please send your donation by cheque made out to Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to the address at the bottom of the newsletter. Attach a note to say it is a Wear Green Be Green donation to Eco-Schools and include your school name and address.

We would love to see your Green Day photos.



Wear Green!

Come to school dressed in Green and ask each pupil/ family and staff member who takes part to donate £1

Be Green!

Complete a simple green action e.g.

1. Walk or cycle to school
 2. Have a waste free lunch
 3. Turn out the lights for an hour
 4. Plant something in the garden
 5. Pick up some litter
 6. Plan a paper free lesson
- OR come up with your own great idea!

We will send you a receipt and certificate to thank you for participating.

Wrigley Litter Less - Seeks 30 Northern Ireland Schools

This is the sixth year the Litter Less campaign will be running in Northern Ireland through Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, Eco-Schools. Due to the high interest in this campaign there will be a short application process used to shortlist schools. The campaign runs in 31 countries internationally and last year engaged over 280,000 young people.

There are 30 places available on this year's Litter Less Campaign in NI with funding of \$500 (around £300 depending on exchange rate) available to each school to implement a litter or waste themed campaign. The campaign will run from October to April. Contact [Ruth Van Ry](#) for more information. **Closing date 17th October 2016.**



Wrigley Bin It! Schools Tour

Bin It! is a *free* award winning schools programme that runs for 16 weeks throughout the UK. Sponsored by the Wrigley Company, Bin It! will visit around 20 schools in Northern Ireland for 2016. Completely free to schools Bin It! is an actor led programme designed to make students think about the behaviour behind littering and change their attitude towards litter.

This 45 minute workshop is aimed at 11-13 year olds and fits into a timetabled lesson for the schools. Covering important learning points that are part of the Environment and Society curriculum, Bin It! is an engaging and interactive forum for Key Stage 3 students.

The Bin It! Roadshow will be available to schools in Northern Ireland from Monday 14 November to Friday 25 November. Any Secondary school is eligible to request a show and they are booked on a first come first serve basis. Any school wishing to request a show can do so by calling our booking team on **020 8973 0040**.

Topic of the Month: Energy

Energy is a great and easily accessible topic for your pupils to get involved with. Whether it is a simple matter of turning off the lights and appliances, or more advanced sustainable energy production, every school has a chance to make a difference to their electricity and heating bills. Raising pupils awareness of where their energy comes from and encouraging them to take that message home too can be very impactful.



Top tips for school:

- Set up an energy task force to check up on rooms (and teachers!)
- Award prizes and announce in assembly the best performing classes
- Take regular meter readings and enter your data in to the School Zone
- Arrange a Power Down day to see how much impact you can have in one day (schools have reported a 20% decrease in energy on Power Down days)
- Include sustainable energy lessons in your curriculum and explore wind and solar panels
- Lobby for solar panels on your school.



There are lots of great resources available to help you with energy actions:

- [Power Down Day recording sheet](#)
- [Fair Hill Primary Energy Case Study](#)
- [The Global Goals - Goal 7 'Affordable and Clean Energy'](#)
- [Bryson Energy school activities and visits](#)

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



School News:

Two Green Flag nursery schools in Belfast hosted a group of trainee nursery teachers from Stranmillis University College this month. Ravenscroft Nursery School and St Peter's Nursery School, both of whom are on their 3rd Green Flags, hosted the trainee teachers to provide a practical insight in running the Eco-Schools programme at this level. The trainee teachers got their hands dirty helping the pupils to spruce up the school gardens. These nursery schools are prime examples of how the pupil led Eco-Schools programme can work with very young pupils, with lots of hands on activities and instilling positive behaviours at an early stage so they become second nature. It's great to know the future of Eco-Schools is in safe hands!

Pictured: Pupils at St Peter's Nursery hang birdfeeders made from recycled containers.



Green Teacher of the Year 2016

Do you know an exceptional teacher who inspires their pupils and co-workers to go the extra sustainable mile? We would love to hear all about them. Submit an entry to us for the Green Teacher of the Year by **28th October** and win your teacher the recognition they deserve. Prizes and awards will be handed out at the Eco-Schools Teacher Conference in March with teacher and pupils invited along to enjoy the experience.



How to enter:

Pupils write or email eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org no more than 100 words to explain why their teacher should be "Green Teacher of the Year 2016". **This competition is open to Key Stage 2 only.**

Pupils may answer in the form of a poem, letter, storyboard, essay, photos, video or whatever way you think best answers the question – just remember your entry must be within the word limits!

Council News: Eco-Schools Cluster Group Meetings-

Mid and East Antrim:

All at 2pm - 4pm

- 4th October, Carrickfergus;
 - 5th October, Larne;
 - and 6th October, Ballymena -
- Contact [Barry Tapster](#) for more details.

Ards and North Down:

13th October, 3 - 4.15pm - Newtownards - Contact [Clive Catterston](#)

Calling all Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Schools Why not enter the Council's Environmental Calendar Poster Competition?

Primary 6 and 7 pupils and Years 8, 9 and 10 pupils in Secondary schools in the District can enter the competition. The thirteen best "environmentally themed" posters chosen by the judges will feature in the Council's annual Schools' Environmental Calendar, now in its fourteenth edition. There are some great prizes and certificates up for grabs - and all schools in the District will get a free supply of the final calendar.



Closing date for entries is Friday 7th October 2016

For more details email patrick.mcshane@nmandd.org

Thank-you to the following Councils who support the Eco-Schools Programme:



International Eco-Schools News:

Young Reports for the Environment (YRE).

Calling all Post Primary budding reporters, photographers and videographers. We want to hear what you have to say about an environmental issue that interests you. Investigate, propose solutions, report and share your story. To take part read more [here](#) and contact [Ruth Van Ry](#) to register.



UN Environment Programme launch Youth resources

Do you work with young people? Are you working on sustainable consumption and what that means in the job market? We are pleased to inform you of the availability of two long awaited UNEP/UNESCO YouthXchange publications:

[YouthXchange: Green Skills and Lifestyles Guidebook](#)

[YouthXchange Biodiversity & Lifestyles Guidebook](#)

FEE General Assembly

The Foundation for Environmental Education's [General Assembly](#) was held in India this month. We are delighted to congratulate our own Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful CEO Dr Ian Humphreys who has been elected a member of the Board for FEE.

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:

Adopt A Spot

is a volunteering opportunity through Live Here Love Here that allows groups across Northern Ireland to formally adopt an area of their choosing and look after it. This may be a school, a park, a road or a stretch of beach and anyone can get involved from families, community groups, sporting associations and businesses. These groups will be given the tools and equipment to look after the area for a minimum of two years and they dedicate time four times a year to clean up the area and report information back via the Live Here Love Here website. If you would like to get involved please click [here](#) to learn more.



Pictured: Pupils from Ulidia Integrated College clean-up around school and the Carrickfergus lough shore area with Adopt a Spot.

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.



Other News:

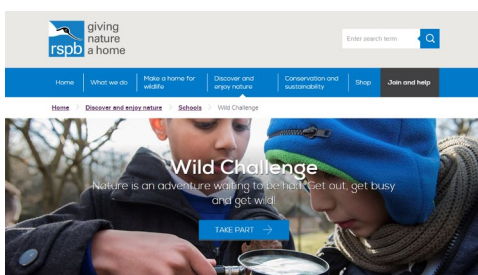
Wild Challenge – the RSPB's new online scheme providing resources and activities for Schools

Wild Challenge is your chance to help wildlife, explore nature, and work towards awards through a selection of fun and educational activities. The RSPB's brand new online awards scheme encourages your class to go out and get stuck into a wild adventure.

The scheme links in to the Eco-Schools Biodiversity Topic and provides activities that will help your school to move towards or retain your Green Flag.

You can choose from 24 digitally-supported activities to go out, explore and take action for nature — all year round, in school grounds or further afield, wherever you are. There are resources and helpful instructions so you know exactly what you'll need, what you can do and how your class can collect their bronze, silver and gold awards.

What will your wild challenge be? To register for free now, go to www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswildchallenge.



Grassroots initiative helps young people champion nature

The future's bright for Northern Ireland's young people and wildlife thanks to a brand new initiative led by Ulster Wildlife – the Grassroots Challenge.

The £1m Big Lottery funded programme will see over 5000 young people equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to give nature a helping hand in their local communities, through the delivery of 'wild idea' projects.

From transforming neglected local spaces into havens for wildlife and people, to inspiring adults and children alike with nature through events and surveys in their neighbourhoods, the Grassroots Challenge will unleash the potential of young people through Young Farmers' Clubs, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and special schools.

As well developing the skills needed to become environmental leaders, young people also have the opportunity to work towards an accredited environmental qualification, improve employment and education prospects, obtain eco-club status, and learn how to influence decisions at local and regional levels, alongside project partners LANTRA, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and Northern Ireland Environment Link. Find out more at www.ulsterwildlife.org/grassroots.



Green Flag application deadlines for 2016-2017

We accept Green Flag applications at **any time throughout the year** however below are some deadlines for applications if you would like to be assessed before a certain time of the year:

- **Pre-Christmas** assessment: **4th November 2016**
- **Pre-Easter** assessment: **6th January 2017**
- **Summer** assessment (before the 23rd June): **10th March 2017**



We will do our best to assess schools submitting after the suggested deadlines but may find this difficult, particularly in the summer term, which is very busy. So beat the rush and get your application in early.

Please note the preferred application method in 2016/17 is through the **School Zone online system**. You may, in special circumstances, download and submit the current paper version of the form. Outdated/old versions of the paper form may no longer be accepted.

Ambassador Eco-Schools

We are delighted to be able to expand our Ambassador Eco-Schools scheme to more outstanding Eco-Schools.

Being an Ambassador Eco-School is recognition that you are an inspirational flagship Eco-School, with exceptional levels of pupil leadership and whole school support which ensures sustainability is embedded in the school ethos.

As well as continuing as an excellent Green Flag school an Ambassador Eco-School will be held up as an example of good practice in the Eco-Schools programme and mentor and work with other less experienced schools.

Read more of the specifics on our [website](http://www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) and contact ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org for more information and an application form to be considered for Ambassador Eco-School status.



Contact us at:

eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

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The Eco-Schools Programme is supported by DAERA

Don't stop here! Visit our Eco-Schools Northern Ireland [website](http://www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for more news, project ideas, programme guidance, case studies, delivery partner information, and much more.