

AMBASSADOR SCHOOL CASE STUDY



St Mary's PS Draperstown

24 Magherafelt Road, Draperstown, County Derry

Number of pupils	Age range	Joined Eco-Schools	Number of Green Flags	Date of last Green Flag
181	4 to 11 years (P1 to P7)	2010	7	June 2024

- Our school is in the village of Draperstown in the parish of Ballinascreen at the foothills of the picturesque Sperrin Mountains. We have been a Green Flag school since 2010 and have worked closely with local community groups and schools on a range of eco projects. We are a member of the award-winning Screen Eco Schools. The school has developed the school grounds to promote outdoor learning and ecology. An extensive school garden and biodiversity area promote sustainability and environmental education. Eco Schools is embedded in the curriculum at St Mary's. Blooming Ballinascreen was a very ambitious Screen Eco Schools project that we were involved in. The whole community embarked on daffodil planting across the parish! We are currently involved in an exciting community project called Balglen. In this project our parish is twinned with the Glenties in County Donegal.

Topic Actions:

Major Topic: Litter

Established school 'Litter Patrol' at breaks and lunch times.

Class litter picks in biodiversity area/pitches, Draperstown Village and in Plantin Park.

Community litter picks: Joint litter picks with St. Colm's High and community litter picks.

Draperstown in Bloom - Community initiative with St. Colm's to plant areas with flowers. It is funded by the council. Children are informed of the issues of littering. They are encouraged to come up with solutions.

Minor Topic: Healthy Living

My Marathon/Mini Miles - whole school (and school community) running/walking initiative. During month of October.

Daily Mile - encouraged classes to get outside for a walk/jog.

Sustrans Active Travel Programme - Increased the number of children who regularly walk or cycle to school.

Eco-Committee presentation to classes on healthy lifestyles. Healthy living lessons delivered in all classes. Healthy Living theme included on all teaching planners.



Minor Topic: Outdoor Learning

Established a gardening team to maintain the school garden. Gave all classes opportunities to plant and harvest in the school garden.

Provided resources and lesson ideas to support classes with outdoor learning.

Disseminated Key Stage appropriate resources to encourage outdoor learning. Outdoor learning was included on teaching planners.

Developed our outdoor spaces to facilitate lessons and learning opportunities.



The First Minister at My Marathon!

Sharing Good Practice Actions:

We have a long well-established relationship with St Colm's High. We have supported each other in our green flag applications and ambassador actions. We also supported Gaelscoil na Speiríní with their Eco Schools journey. We have also provided advice and guidance for St Eoghan's PS for their initial Green Flag application. The award-winning Screen Eco Schools promotes the sharing of good practice across all the local schools. First Minister, Michelle O'Neill visited the school to observe and participate in our My Marathon initiative. The First Minister learned how the initiative promotes health and wellbeing.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Litter

Measure litter collected on litter picks and log on Eco Schools data zone.
Daily monitor use of recycling and bins in classrooms.

Healthy Living

Daily monitoring of healthy breaks.
Record methods of travel during Big Walk and Wheel.

Outdoor Learning

Completed before and after surveys with target classes.





Eco Committee sharing good practice with teachers from Gaelscoil na Speiríní

Mentoring School:

We were the first school in the local area to become an Eco Ambassador school. We have supported all the local schools in their Green Flag applications. There is a culture of excellent collaboration in the parish through Screen Eco Schools. We supported Gaelscoil na Speiríní and St Eoghan's with visits to our school. Our Eco Committee have also shared examples of good practice with these schools.



Litter picking in Plantin Park with St Colm's High School



Eco Schools Awards 2024



Planting in the school garden



Planting bulbs at a local green space

Outdoor Learning



Community Litter Pick



Sustrans Ditch the Stabilisers



Draperstown in Bloom with St Colm's High

Gregory Brunton (Eco schools Coordinator)

For more information on this Eco-Schools Ambassador School, see details below.

St Mary's PS Draperstown

Eco-Coordinator: Gregory Brunton

Years involved in the Eco-Schools Programme: 14

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