



# ECO-SCHOOLS NEWS

January 2016

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## Eco-Schools Green Flag application 2015/16 reminder.

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](mailto:eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org). We are always happy to answer any queries you have 02890 736920.



## 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.

The repercussions are already being seen in some countries as climate change affects weather patterns resulting in crop failures and extreme natural disasters. One of the results is migration and displacement of people from affected areas seeking food, shelter and work elsewhere.

## Environmental Change

Temperatures are rising,  
Sea levels are rising too,  
I don't own a canoe,  
So what do you suggest I do?

I could move to Scandinavia,  
And live amongst the ice and snow,  
But if the temperatures keep rising,  
All of that too will go.

I suppose I could recycle,  
Turn the lights off as I go,  
Maybe plant a tree or two  
It might help, you never know.

Environmental change is happening,  
It is something we can't outrun,  
Can we explain to our children  
Just what we have done?

*Patrick Barrett, Primary Winner, 2015.*

Trócaire work with people around the world to help find solutions to the damaging results of climate change. But they are also 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 would like to encourage Eco-Schools to study this important topic and 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](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org)

## Calling all Young Reporters for the Environment!

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.



**Young Reporters  
for the environment**

National closing date is **1st April 2016** contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for more information.

## Hedgehog Campaign - Winter Weather Challenges.

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 hibernate every year, usually from about November to around Easter. *The Telegraph* has reported that the unpredictable winter weather may have disturbed our hedgehogs sleep patterns this year. After the wettest, mildest December on record, hedgehogs may have been impacted by flooding in some areas. Read the full story [here](#).

If you have sometimes worried that pets might disturb, or even kill hedgehogs, [here](#) is some reassuring information from Hedgehog Street.

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: Northern Ireland Schools selected for Global Scrapbook Challenge.

Last month we put a request out from Eco-Schools in Finland asking if any schools in Northern Ireland would like to get involved with their Global Scrapbook Campaign.

In the campaign Eco-Schools pupils will send their greetings to other countries by traditional mail. The purpose is to connect Eco-Schools in different countries with each other and make it possible for them to share their stories and Eco-School projects with each other. The scrapbooks will travel around the world from school to school, following a route planned in advance.

The campaign had an overwhelming response with over 300 schools applying to take part from around the world. Only 80 schools could be chosen to take part so we are delighted to say that 4 Northern Ireland Schools have been chosen. Congratulations to:

- Cloughoge Primary School, Newry
- Lismore Comprehensive, Craigavon
- St. Paul's College, Kilrea
- Ulidia integrated college, Carrickfergus

We look forward to seeing how the project goes and will report the results here in the newsletter.



## Partner News:

Eco-Schools is looking forward to working with Belfast City Council on the waste themed project and competition the 'Wheelie Big Challenge'. The project asks pupils to have a close look at the waste in their bins and put practical actions in place to reduce waste and increase recycling.

This year there will be a focus on food waste, an ever more important issue which creates a large carbon footprint. The project will run from February - May with the closing date of 6th May for competition entries. A competition final and celebration event will take place in Belfast City Hall's Great Hall on the 10th June 2016.

The project is open to all schools in the Belfast City Council area. If you would like more information on how to take part contact [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).



## International Eco-Schools News: Hello Denmark calling!

The International Eco-Schools Director, Bríd Conneely, made a long distance video call to Malaysia Eco-Schools during their conference last month sharing her aspirations for the young agents of sustainability. The participants really enjoyed the call and were inspired to action. They have kindly shared the video so we can be inspired too! Click [here](#) to view.



## Making savings and gains from Eco-Schools projects: Goibei High School, Kenya.

Goibei High School joined the Eco-Schools Kenya Network in 2004. Since then, the school has been implementing many projects, ranging from roof-harvesting of water, crop and livestock production and energy saving. One of the increasingly popular projects to adapt to climate change and food security is bee-keeping for honey production. The enterprise has been a major income generating activity at Goibei High school since 2007. The project has proved to be very apt in reducing the percentage of the rural poor also, by boosting local entrepreneurship as well as creating an alternative source of income.

The school has a student population of about 700 pupils, 40 teachers and about 10 non-teaching staff. With these numbers the Eco-Schools programme has benefited not only the school but also the surrounding community.



The school now acts as a demonstration/training centre showcasing best practices in agribusiness and environmental sustainability. It promotes sustainability awareness by publishing an annual magazine (Stretcher Magazine) about its activities.

## 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.

Last year over 90,000 people showed that they love where they live, work and learn by getting involved in the BIG Spring Clean, picking litter from their beaches, streets, countryside and school grounds – making them cleaner and tidier for us all to enjoy!



Holy Family Primary School, Belfast, taking part in BIG Spring Clean 2015.



**LIVE  
HERE  
LOVE  
HERE**

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.

Register a clean-up and receive a clean-up kit including: gloves, bags, high-vis vests, posters and hints and tips.

Our Local Councils support this initiative with litter-pickers and collection of rubbish bags.

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](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org)

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

Helping Hand Environmental are the UK's Number 1 Litter-picker manufacturers and distributors, they have been producing the litter-picker that we all know and love since 1965. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful have been using Helping Hand Environmental products for over 10 years and we now have our own bespoke litter picker.

Check out the Helping Hand [website](#) for great products.

To place an order with Helping Hand using the discount visit the Live Here Love Here [website](#) for more information or phone Helping Hand on **01531 635678**.

**15% OFF**

clean-up equipment  
until **31<sup>st</sup> April 2016** quote:

**CLEAN16**

when placing an order.

### 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](mailto: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 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.

A celebration award ceremony will be held at Central Station, Belfast on the **15th 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](http://www.translink.co.uk/ecoschools) for more information or email [ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:ruth.vanry@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).



#### Translink Travel Challenge Prizes

##### Most Eco-Journeys Post- Primary

£150 and bus or rail journey for 1 class

##### Most Improved Class Primary

£150 and bus or rail journey for 1 class

##### Best #Smartmovers Project Primary and Post Primary

£150 and bus or rail journey for 1 class

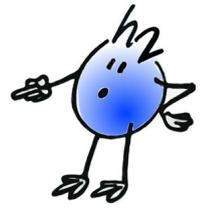
##### Best Pupil All Schools

£50 book token and family travel ticket for the winning pupil

## 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](mailto: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. The competition encourages both staff and pupils to work together to improve the school's environmental surroundings.



*Ballycraigy Primary School, Antrim, last year's winners of the 'Best of the Best' award.*

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](#).

## Other News:

### Habitat for Humanity - Our Waste, Our World workshops

Eco-Schools delivery partner Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland is building on the success of its Our Waste, Our World programme in 2016 and is encouraging primary schools across Northern Ireland to sign up.



Our Waste, Our World helps schools achieve their waste, litter and global perspective Eco-Schools topics through this creative, interactive workshop. Primarily aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils, it has direct links to the curriculum and is delivered by Habitat's experienced facilitators. Read more [here](#).

For more information or to register a class please contact Victoria Trimble on 028 92 635 635 or email [victoriat@habitatni.co.uk](mailto:victoriat@habitatni.co.uk).

### Global Learning Programme - teacher training opportunities

The Global Learning Programme (GLP) is a new formal education project designed to enhance the global learning taking place in schools throughout Northern Ireland. Primary, post-primary and special schools can all get involved. Check out the [website](#) for more information.



Education for a Fair and Sustainable World

They are currently inviting schools to take part in their exciting training programme to assist teachers in delivering global learning. More details are available [here](#) or contact [glp@centreforglobaleducation.com](mailto:glp@centreforglobaleducation.com).

### NI Science Festival - Mission Starlight

This year's NI Science Festival will run from 18 to 28 February see the [website](#) and [twitter](#) for more information. We are asking people to take part in a science experiment, wherever you happen to be, and upload your results to the Global Experiment website where you can compare your findings with others from around the world.

On 23 February, they will be launching the 2016 Global Experiment - 'Mission Starlight' which includes a series of experiments, prepared in collaboration with the Principia Mission, the UK Space Agency and the European Space Agency. These experiments are based on the premise that astronauts are exposed to higher levels of UV light than we are on earth and so precautions have to be put in place so that the UV light does not harm them. All the experiment information, including a video featuring Tim Peake, will be available on their Global Experiment website from 4 February 2016. To take part please register online [here](#).

### 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:

- Portstewart Primary School, Portstewart.



#### 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.**