

AMBASSADOR SCHOOL CASE STUDY



Cooley Primary School

90 Cooley Road

Sixmilecross

Co. Tyrone

BT79 9DH

Number of pupils	Age range	Joined Eco-Schools	Number of Green Flags	Date of last Green Flag
69	4-11	2011	7	2025

Cooley Primary School is a modern, rural Primary School. The school has fantastic grounds which provide an excellent environment for outdoor learning and Eco Schools work. We have a grass area at the front of the school, a large playground, playing field and polytunnel. The boundary of our playing field is sloped and one of our early eco activities was to obtain grant funding to plant the banks with trees. One thousand trees were planted, involving the pupils, staff, Conservation Volunteers, members of the local community and the local Garden Centre owner. These trees are all now well matured and provide an abundance of habitats for wildlife and minibeasts. Another incredibly significant Eco Project was the construction of our Polytunnel. We worked in collaboration with our

PTA and were able to apply for and access funding. The PTA and members of the local and school community played a vital role in getting the polytunnel ready for the pupils to use.

The pupils and staff of Cooley Primary School have been involved in the Eco Schools Programme since April 2011. We were awarded our Bronze Award in June 2011 and our Silver Award in June 2012. We were awarded our first Green Flag in 2013 and have recently been awarded our 7th Green Flag.

Cooley Primary Schools ECO Committee is made up of pupils from year 3-7. Each year pupils apply to become a member of the Eco-Committee. They apply by designing a poster, writing a poem, making a video, or writing a song/rap. The pupils present their application to their class. All pupils can then cast their vote for the pupil they feel will be the most suitable candidate. The results of the elections are announced in a whole school assembly, where the newly elected Eco-Committee are presented with their badges. At the first meeting of the newly elected Eco Committee a chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary are elected. The Eco Committee meets regularly, at least one per term but this can be monthly when events are being organised.

Throughout our Eco work we have established good relationships with members of the local community, some of whom are past pupils or parents/grandparents of present/past pupils. They are always keen to help with our Eco Schools activities. We also have links with a local community group, Friends of Marshall Group who support us in our work.

Through our Shared education sessions, there has been the opportunity to support a newly appointed teacher who had taken on the role of Eco School Co-Ordinator and did not have any experience of the Green Flag application process. I have had the opportunity to consult with and share good practice with other Eco-Schools Co-Ordinators through school cluster meetings and Staff Development Days. We have also been able to support Eco Coordinators from other schools in the process of looking for a polytunnel for their school. We have shared our successes in obtaining our Green Flag awards and various funding awards through the local media.

We share our projects and successes with parents, the local and wider community through "Cool News," our school newsletter, through Seesaw, Class Dojo, Google Classroom, our school website, Instagram, and Facebook pages.

Topic Actions:

The aims of our most recent action plan were that:

- * All pupils would develop an understanding within school and the wider community of the problems associated with waste going to landfill sites.
- * There would be increased awareness of the impact of litter in our environment, and we would reduce the amount of litter in our local areas.
- * We would increase awareness of the importance of animal habitats and improve the variety of wildlife/ minibeasts within our school grounds.

Activities

Bottle Tops Project.

We signed up to the School Cycled Scheme which involves collecting bottle tops which can be reused to make furniture for our school.

As part of this project the Eco Committee held a bottle tops competition to see which class could collect the most bottle tops. The competition ran over a 4-week period.

Each class was responsible for weighing and recording the bottle tops collected. The amounts collected were announced in assembly each Friday. Each week the winning class could, under the guidance of their class teachers, pick their own prize.



SchoolCycled Scheme



Our Eco-Committee showing you our the SchoolCycled box.

We are taking part in SchoolCycled which is an initiative designed to educate young people about recycling and sustainability.

Our ECO Committee are encouraging everyone to collect bottle tops. For every kilo collected, school will be rewarded with 250 tokens which can be spent on school furniture, play equipment, signage and bins made from the plastic collected

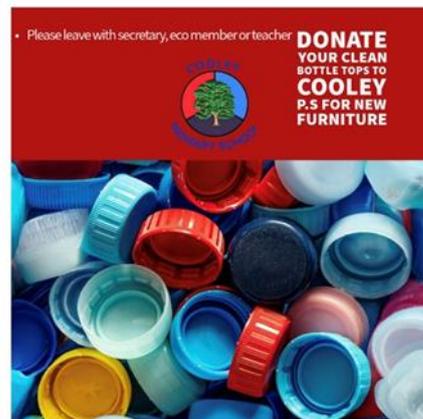


Please send in any plastic bottle tops or lids with your children.
Thank you for your support.



To inform parents and the wider community of our Bottle Tops Project, a competition was held for P5-7 to design a poster that could be shared on our school website and social media pages. This saw our pupils put their ICT skills to use using Adobe to create their posters.

Winning design from Bottle Tops poster competition. The poster will be shared with local community via the schools website, Facebook and Instagram pages.



School Tracker	Delivery Date	Weight (KG)	Earth Tokens
Cooley Primary School	18/10/2023	11.92	2980
Cooley Primary School	18/10/2023	13.54	3410
Cooley Primary School	18/10/2023	15.72	3930
Cooley Primary School	18/10/2023	11.16	2790
Cooley Primary School	23/10/2023	15.94	3985
Cooley Primary School	21/02/2024	10.52	2630
Cooley Primary School	02/09/2024	12.8	3200
Cooley Primary School	16/12/2024	9.4	2350
Cooley Primary School	16/12/2024	12.98	3245
Cooley Primary School	05/02/2025	12.96	3240
	Total		31760
		127.04	

From our Bottle Tops Project, we have collected **127kg** of bottle tops this earned us 31760 Earth Tokens. The Eco Committee decided to use 24000 Earth Tokens to order a table and four chairs.

Earth Tokens	Purchase Order Total	Balance
31760	24000	7760

We have a remaining balance of 7760 Earth Tokens. The Eco Committee has decided that they would like to aim for a new total of 51000 Earth Token so that a mud kitchen can be bought.



Bottle Tops Update May 2025



Since beginning our SchoolCycled Bottle top project in September 2023, we have collected 127kg of bottle tops. This has earned Cooley Primary School 31760 Earth Tokens.



We have used 24000 Earth Tokens to order a table and four chairs.

We have a remaining balance of 7760 Earth Tokens. The Eco Committee have decided that they would like to aim for 51000 Earth Tokens so that we can get a book case.



We need 43240 Earth Tokens to reach our target.



- These types of tops are accepted
- *Detergent tops
 - *Medicine bottle tops
 - *Toothpaste tops
 - *Milk jug tops
 - *Drinks bottle tops
 - *Hairspray and deodorant tops
 - *Flip lid tops e.g. ketchup bottle

Please help us reach our target by continuing to collect as many bottle tops as you can.

We have attached details of bottle tops that are suitable.

Many Thanks,
Eco Committee

Parents have been kept up to date with our progress with flyers that have been sent home.

Eco Committee and School Council Meetings



Meeting to plan stall at school fair

Meeting to choose poster to be sent to parents and displayed in school.



Sorting the books, toys, games and jigsaws.

Preloved Toy & Book Stall

The Eco Committee and the School Council had through their individual meetings requested to have a way to reuse/recycle items from home that are no longer of any use to them but were too good to throw out. At a joint Eco Committee and School Council meeting the pupils decided

that they would work together to organise and hold a Preloved Toy and Book Stall at our summer fete in June 2024.

The Eco Committee and the School Council worked together to design posters advertising their stall. At a joint meeting, the best poster was chosen, which was displayed throughout the school and on all social media platforms.

The Eco Committee, School Council and Librarians are again running the Preloved Book and Toy Stall at this year's School Fete in June.



Cooley Primary School Eco Committee and School Council

We are having a stall at our summer fete. We want to sell old toys, books and games.



We would like you to donate any pre-loved toys, games, jigsaws and books.



Please make sure that all items are in good condition and that the toys, games and jigsaws have no missing pieces.

Please leave items into school from Monday 10th June - Wednesday 12th June.



Bin Monitoring Project

The bin monitoring project had two elements to it. Firstly, the Eco Committee wanted to make sure the blue and black bins were being used correctly, so, they decided that they would monitor the bins.

Secondly, the eco committee wanted to know how much waste was going into the blue/black bins, with the aim being to reduce the amount of waste we throw away.

Following the initial monitoring it was found that the correct items were not always being put in the correct bin, it was also noted that there were items ending up in the blue/black bins that could be reused. Each class was asked to weigh/record the amount of waste in blue/black bins over the period of a week.



The Eco Committee gave a presentation in assembly to remind pupils and staff of the items that could be put into each bin. They also reminded classes about doodle boxes for any paper that could be reused and introduced Reuse containers, for items such as polystyrene fruit pots.

The Eco Committee then asked each class to record the amount of waste in the blue/black bins and the weight/number of items in the reuse box. This was carried out over the period of one week. The Eco Committee also carried out follow up bin monitoring.

Litter Pick Project

Litter Picking in our Local Communities
Pupils took the litter pick packs home at the weekend and carried out a litter pick in their local community.



Litter Pick Project

Litter Pick Pack Project was introduced to encourage responsibility in looking after our communities.

Each class has a litter pick pack, consisting of an adults and child's litter pic, an adults and child's hi-vis vest, bin bags and gloves.

The litter pick pack is sent home with a pupil on Friday. Along with their parents they carry out a litter pick in their local area. The pupils take pictures of the area before and after the litter pick. Photos of their litter pic are uploaded onto Seesaw or Class Dojo.

Eco Schools/Shared Education Community Litter Pick

As part of our litter topic a shared education community litter pick was organised during our Eco Week. This involved Year 6/7 pupils from Cooley PS and our partner school carrying our litter picks in Beragh and Sixmilecross.



Litter Picks/Eco Buddy Scheme


The Big Spring Clean
Cooley Primary School
Friday
14th March 2025



Regular litter picks are carried out in the school grounds. All Children participated in The Big Spring Clean 2025. Our litter pic event was held on Friday 14th March 2025. We collected 3½ bin bags of rubbish.

The Eco Monitor Scheme was introduced to make sure the school grounds are litter free. The Eco Committee members check the school grounds at lunch time to make sure there is no litter lying around.

All pupils and staff participated in our Big Spring Clean. We collected 3 1/2 bin bags of rubbish from the schools grounds and the banked area around our playing field. The results of our Big Spring Clean was entered on the Litter Log on 7/4/25

Tree Planting January 2025



Tree/Hedge Planting

From the environmental reviews it was noted that there was very little natural habitat at the front of the school to encourage wildlife and insects.

To address this problem the Eco Committee felt that planting trees/ hedging would provide more habitats. We were accepted onto 'The Conservation Volunteers' tree planting programme which was funded by Northern Ireland Electricity Networks.

All the Year 1-7 pupils were involved in planting the trees which included Alder, Beech, Willow, Pear and Apple.

We were also successful in a grant application to the Woodland Trust Orchards for School Programme. This provides us with a further six fruit trees and hedging plants. The fruit trees have all been planted together at the front of the school, creating a mini orchard.



Tree/Hedge Planting

20th March 2025

The Tree Council
Orchards For Schools Grant



Eco Weeks

Each Year we hold an Eco Week which focuses on elements of our Eco Schools Action Plan.

Indoor Greenhouses

During Green Week 2024 we reused plastic packaging to make indoor greenhouses.



In 2024 the focus was Waste and Recycling. Teachers were provided with resources and interactive games to share with classes.

All classes reused plastic food packaging to make indoor greenhouses.

In 2025 the focus has been on Biodiversity and Litter. All pupils have been involved in improving our minibeast hotel and creating small minibeast habitats to be placed in the raised beds at the front of the school.

Cooley Primary School Eco Week Timetable Tuesday 6 th - Friday 9 th May 2025			
Tuesday *Minibeast Hunt (Recording sheet will be provided) *Experiment - How to Catch Bugs in a Pitfall Trap  YouTube Clip (LINK) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=388888888888 *Minibeast Hotel - Improvements - Each class to add items to existing minibeast hotel	Wednesday *Biodiversity Learning Day *Art Ideas  *Literacy Ideas  *Maths Ideas 	Thursday *Raised beds at front of school - add minibeast habitats e.g. small log stone piles and bird baths *How to make a bird bath - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=388888888888 *Polytunnel / Weeding Litter Pick in Beragh & Sainsbury's. Brough Kearney from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful will be attending these.	Friday *Year 6/7 Shared Education Litter Pick in Beragh & Sainsbury's. Brough Kearney from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful will be attending these.

*Competition is to be set as homework and is additional to maths/literacy homework
 *We will need pupils to bring in the items for the minibeast hotel. Eco Committee will announce this in assembly after Easter.
 *We can meet to discuss where classes want to carry out their minibeast habitats and birdbaths for the raised beds.
 *Please take lots of photos of your class throughout the week!



Eco Week 2025 Competition

 **Eco Week Competition**
 Reuse a Plastic Bottle to Make Something Useful 



A competition was held where pupils were asked to create something useful from a plastic bottle.

 **Eco Week 2025 - Competition** 

Reuse a plastic bottle to make something useful.

You can use any size of bottle you want. You can paint your bottle, cover it with paper or add any embellishments e.g. stickers, jewels, buttons or beads.

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking!



Have fun, get creative and we look forward to seeing your creations!
 Bring your creations into school by Friday 9th May.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Throughout our activities monitoring and evaluation has been an important part of the process.

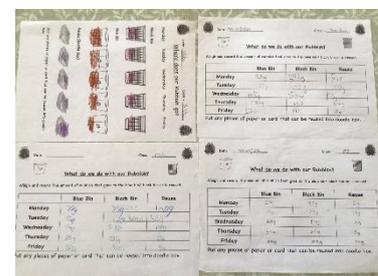
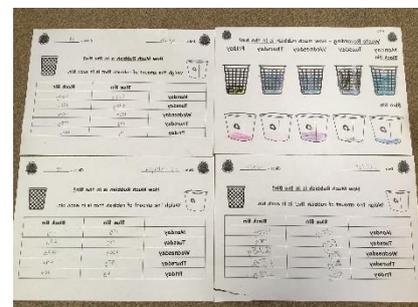
Monitoring has been carried out by the Eco Committee. For example, in the Bin Monitoring Project, the Eco Committee was responsible for checking the bins. They recorded their results on the bin monitoring form. These results were then transferred to a display chart on the eco notice board, which pupils and staff could clearly see who was using bins correctly.



	Year 1/2	Year 3/4	Year 5/6	Year 7
Week 1	155g	5kg 850g	880g	200g
Week 2	900g	630g	360g	15g
Week 3	300g	1 85g	1kg 470g	250g
Week 4	1kg 160g	1kg 325g	50g	2kg 50g
Total	2kg 515g	7kg 890g	2kg 260g	2kg 515g

All pupils participate in monitoring as they have had to weigh/count the amount of rubbish in blue/black bins and reuse containers in The Bin Monitoring Project and weigh the amount of bottle tops collected by their class over the four-week period of the Bottle Top Project. This gives the pupils ownership of the projects being carried out.

Bin Monitoring Project before and after recording sheets.



The Eco Committee have the opportunity through our regular meetings to raise concerns and bring feedback from the pupils. This all feeds into the actions we take in our eco activities.

Contact

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

Cooley Primary School

Eco-Coordinator: Mrs Julie Mitchell

Years involved in the Eco-Schools Programme: 14 years

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