

# AMBASSADOR SCHOOL CASE STUDY



## St Columba's PS Straw

[Address of School]

Number of pupils	Age range	Joined Eco-Schools	Number of Green Flags	Date of last Green Flag
135	4-11	2014	4	June 24

At St Columba's, we are very proud to be an Ambassador Eco-School and this is reflected in our ethos and indeed throughout our whole approach to learning. The facilities in the school include, a sensory garden, willow dome, outdoor classroom, polytunnel, pond, mud kitchen and an outdoor stage. We have an after-school Eco club, a wide range of Forest Schools activities and a gardening club and we also have a chicken coop with three laying hens that the children manage and maintain. The pupils have been involved in numerous community projects past and present such as Blooming Ballinascreen, Screen Eco-Schools, SeedBall-inascreen, The Big Screen Clean, The BalGlen Project, Sustrans, Global Learning and various fundraising initiatives for important local, national and international causes. The schools Eco efforts have been recognised on several occasions, winning STEM School of the year where a large part of the portfolio was work on renewable energy through water turbines in P5 and windmills in P6. In the Live Here Love Here

Awards we were recognised as part of Screen Eco Schools grabbing the top award and Mr Brunton also won an individual award as coordinator.

## Topic Actions:

**Outdoor Learning:** All areas of school grounds are used for active breaks or conservation. Polytunnel and sensory garden are used for outdoor lessons throughout the school. After School Eco and Forest School Clubs. Chicken coop managed by children, with eggs sold to pay for feed, and manure used to fertilise vegetable patch. Outdoor buddy system to teach younger children about conservation.



**Litter:** St Columba's regularly take part in litter picks in our local area and are involved in Adopt a Spot, The Big Screen Clean and Wrigley's Litter less Campaign. We have colour coded bins in all classes to promote recycling and waste management.



**Healthy Living:** 'Healthy Me' programme in all classes, expert sports coaching across the school with very strong links to local GAA and Soccer clubs. We are a Sustrans School, and promote active travel to and from school, with regular walk, cycle and scoot days. Participation in sport promoted throughout the school. Healthy eating promoted throughout school with display created in Canteen.

## Sharing Good Practice Actions:

We share good practice through Screen Eco-Schools, an Eco-School cluster of four primary schools and one secondary school in the parish of Ballinascreen and STEM clusters that have many like-minded teachers to share ideas with. We inform the public of our various initiatives through Social Media, our website and newsletters.



## Monitoring and Evaluation:

We monitor and evaluate our progress using the various data collection resources on the Eco-Schools website and through the various campaigns we are involved in.





## Mentoring School:

We helped mentor some of our Screen Eco-Schools partners and our Shared Education partner to their first flags. This involved helping with action plans, planning activities and initiatives and helping to obtain relevant resources.



Making shelters in Forest Schools



Bulb planting in BalGlen Project



Outdoor learning in all classes



Receiving Green Flag in 2024



Litter picking



Feeding the chickens

## Contact

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

### **St Columba's PS Straw**

Eco-Coordinator: Brénainn Brunton

Years involved in the Eco-Schools Programme: 11

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