

AMBASSADOR SCHOOL CASE STUDY



Ballycraigy Primary School

Bracken Avenue, BT41 1PU

Number of pupils	Age range	Joined Eco-Schools	Number of Green Flags	Date of last Green Flag
176	4-11 years old	2005	9	2024

Ballycraigy Primary School is very proud to have an extensive working garden which has a large polytunnel which is used to grow plants, fruit and vegetables all year round. The produce is used to make soup for the Big Soup Share in the autumn term, produce is donated to families after the Harvest assembly, children are sent home with produce during the gardening club throughout the year. Volunteers tend to the produce during the summer months. We have raised beds which we use to grow fruit and vegetables or in summer terms classes are set a raised bed challenge to plant up raised beds in a particular theme such as the World Cup, Olympics, the Jubilee etc. The school garden also has a working greenhouse and compost heap. The school has a woodland trail, trim trail, outdoor classroom and this year 2025/2026 we have developed a sensory garden.

Eco Club is held once a month. Children have the opportunity to monitor sustainability, suggest how we develop our programme, litter pick, take part in campaigns such as The Big Spring Clean and Litter Less Campaign which we won in 2024.

The School has taken part in numerous projects such as Garden Show Ireland small bed, small container and scarecrow challenges where we have won categories or have received highly commended. The school takes part in the Adopt a Spot and Big Spring Cleans which are ongoing. The school has successfully applied for Live Here Love Here grants over the past 20 years and have been able to build on and develop projects within the school grounds to enhance biodiversity and sustainability through community projects. In the last 3 years, we have been able to repair our polytunnel, invest in 3 new raised beds, planters, seeds and a sensory garden.

We are also very proud to have hosted a visit from the Minister for Education and Minister for Agriculture in 2021 which focused on environmental education.

The school holds two community green gyms each year (October and April). Parents, grandparents, local MLAs, local volunteers from the community and church attend alongside the whole school. We hold a weekly gardening club on a Friday afternoon with children P4-7. Local volunteers are invited to help children during this time. Each Wednesday volunteers from the local grammar school volunteer in the garden as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Awards

Forest Schools Elder Award

Best Kept School 2015

Best of the Best Kept School 2016

Best Kept School Grounds 2019

Best Kept School Grounds 2020

Litter Less Campaign- first place 2024

Garden Show Ireland 2002- awarded “Best Interpretation of theme”

Garden Show Ireland 2003 and 2025- “Quirkiest Scarecrow”

Topic Actions:

Over the past 3 years we have been working on repairing, replacing and expanding our outdoor space. We successfully applied for two Live Here Love Here grants in 2024 and 2025 which were able to use towards replacing our 15-year-old raised beds, planters, seeds and developing a sensory garden. With the help of Go Fund Me contributions and help from local volunteers we were able to refurbish our polytunnel.





Sharing Good Practice Actions:

Over the past 5 years have had visits from Muckamore Nursery, Antrim Grammar, Parkhall College, Grace Hill Primary School and Dunclug Primary School.

Our work is published on Facebook, Class Dojo and our school Newsletters.

In 2021 we hosted a visit from members of the Education Authority, Minister for Education and Minister for Agriculture.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

We monitor and evaluate our progress in several different ways. We sort and weigh our waste in school through the Litter Less Campaign. We count and weigh bin bags during the Big Spring Clean and we collect biodiversity data through the RSPB's Schools Wild Challenge. We count and publicise outdoor learning lessons and projects



which are delivered through RSPB's Schools Wild Challenge, Forest Schools, Gardening club, Community Gardening events and weekly outdoor learning lessons. Children investigate and record energy consumption. We investigate children's knowledge and interest in Eco Schools activities when asking for feedback and listening to the pupils' voice.



Mentoring School:

We invited pupils and staff from Antrim Grammar School to visit our school grounds in 2024. This was an opportunity for AGS to take back ideas to their own school on how they could develop their outdoor space. In addition, this visit developed links between the two schools as a group of AGS pupils volunteered each Wednesday to help Ballycraigy P.S with our gardening and outdoor learning activities.



[Pond and Greenhouse]



[Big Spring Clean]



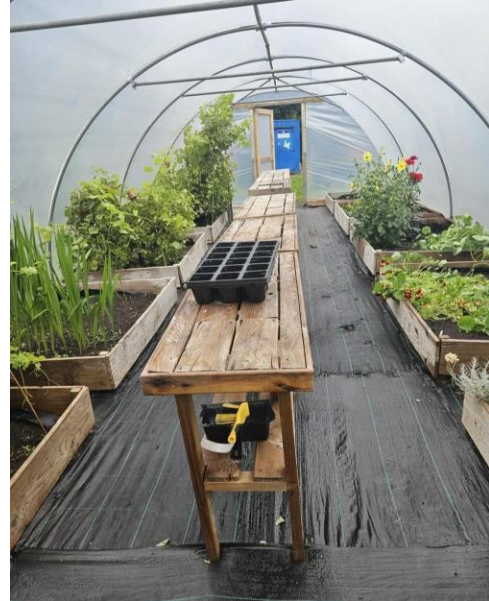
[Woodland Trail]



Garden Show Ireland Scarecrow
competition



New raised beds from Live Here Love
Here funding



Produce growing in our new
polytunnel

Contact

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

Ballycraigy Primary School

Eco-Coordinator: Hannah Farrell

Years involved in the Eco-Schools Programme: 23 years

Address: Ballycraigy Primary School, Antrim, BT41 1PU

Phone: 02894462450

Website: [Ballycraigy Primary School, Bracken Ave, Antrim](https://www.ballycraigyprimaryschool.co.uk)

Email Address: hgourley875@c2kni.net