

Eco-Schools Primary Environmental Review

This review is a suggested format, designed to be an audit tool for the Eco-Committee to use in your school. The questions are labelled so that you can tell which will require investigation by the pupils, which they will need to ask a member of staff about and which may take a bit of research.

The Eco-Schools programme does not require that you complete all the suggestions in this document. It is designed to be a stimulus that you can use to assess what happens in your school at the start of the programme and as a baseline audit each year.

You may not know all the answers to all the questions in each section but if you choose to work further on a topic the answers should be found by the next time you complete the review. It also might not include every possible idea that you could carry out, so please don't take the questions as exhaustive.

The questions will help Eco-Committee members to think of actions that can be undertaken in the school to improve the environment and the school's impact on our planet. The 3 chosen topics (1 major and 2 minor) for the year should then be put into an Action Plan.

Take the time to investigate every year as a lot can change over 12 months

Completed by: Mrs Hutton and Eco Team

Date Completed : 4th November October 2020

	<p>These are suggested links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For more ideas and information visit our website.</p>
	<p>Pupils can find the answers themselves by looking carefully around the school.</p>
	<p>Pupils may need to ask an adult to find the answers to these questions.</p>
	<p>A little bit more investigation is required, maybe a survey or asking questions to other pupils.</p>
	<p>This is a way of measuring the impact that you are having on the environment so you can show how much you are improving. This is an important part of being an Eco-School.</p>

Litter



Inside the school:

Is the inside of the school free from litter?		Yes ✓	No
Are there enough bins inside the school?		Yes ✓	No
Are the bins in the right places?		Yes ✓	No
Are the bins emptied often enough?		Yes ✓	No

School grounds:

Are the school grounds free from litter?		Yes ✓	No
Are there enough bins around the school grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Are the bins in the right places?		Yes ✓	No
Are the bins suitable? E.g. does the litter blow out or are they too small/big?		Yes ✓	No
If litter is present, is it coming from children in school or from outside the school grounds?		School	Outside ✓

Outside the school:

Is your community generally litter free?		Yes ✓	No
Are there enough bins in the community?		Yes	No ✓
Does the school help to keep the community clean?		Yes ✓	No

General:

Does the school have a clear policy on litter?		Yes ✓	No
Do all pupils know the problems caused to the environment and wildlife by dropping litter?		Yes ✓	No
Do you keep a record of what, where, when and amount of litter found?		Yes ✓	No

Litter action points/comments:

The eco team normally collect litter in the school grounds on a daily basis. However, due to Covid restrictions and timetabling restraints, this will be reduced to twice a week, starting in the New Year. It will be a limited eco team made up of P6 and P7 children who formed last year's eco team.

In the past the eco team have picked litter outside the school grounds once or twice in the year. This will hopefully resume in the near future.

The Glen Community Church which uses the school premises promotes an environmental day when members of the community can take part in a litter pick and clean-up of the area.

Please note Eco-Schools NI consider balloon releases a form of mass littering. Having a balloon release at school may put your Green Flag status in doubt. Please consult the litter topic section of the Eco-Schools website for more information.

Waste



Reduce:

Does the school use email to send newsletters?		Yes ✓	No
If you send letters, is it one per family?		Yes ✓	No
Do teachers photocopy back to back when they can?		Yes ✓	No
Do pupils bring their packed lunch in reusable containers?		Yes ✓	No

Reuse:

Is there scrap paper trays in the classrooms?		Yes ✓	No
Are the toilet paper and hand towels made from recycled paper?		Yes ✓	No
Does the office and photocopier use recycled paper?		Yes ✓	No
Do you reuse any packaging in the classrooms (e.g. junk models)?		Yes ✓	No
Do you have a swap shop for school uniform/games/ books/DVDs?		Yes ✓	No

Recycle:

Which of the following do you recycle? (circle or highlight)



Paper

Plastic

Cans

Cardboard

Clothing/Material

Batteries





Phones

Stamps




Glasses

Food

Ink Cartridges

Do you have a compost bin/area that is in use?		Yes ✓	No
Do you use your compost on the school grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Are there enough recycling bins around the school?		Yes ✓	No
Do the recycling bins always have the right things in them?		Yes ✓	No

Information:

Do you measure how much waste you are preventing from going to landfill sites?		Yes	No ✓
If so, does everyone in the school know how much waste you are saving from landfill?		Yes	No
Do pupils in the school know the issues of landfill?		Yes ✓	No

Waste action points/comments:

There will be two Cash for Clobber collections, one in November 2020 and then in April 2020-21

The school have more recently took part in battery recycling and it has successfully recycled over 450 kg of batteries in the last 4 years.

Through the Terra Cycle programme, the school and connected families usually recycle used stationery and crisp packets. At least 35 kg of stationery was recycled in June 2019 and there was at least 2kg of crisp packets brought to recycling centres every 8 weeks.

However due to Covid restrictions and minimising risk, parents have been asked not to send items for recycling into school, instead they have been provided with other options for recycling including a 'Freepost' address for plastic bottle tops.

The children in school have however continued to recycle crisp packets from lunch boxes and teachers are still using the battery collection point.

We are now a 'Refill School' and all pupils were supplied with a refillable bottle in 2019 to use at home. The children bring their own reusable bottles for use in class.

Energy



Gas / Oil:

Are windows and doors always kept shut when the heating is on?		Yes	No ✓
Does each classroom have a thermometer so you can try and keep the temperature at 18 degrees centigrade?		Yes	No ✓
Is there insulation in the roof of the school building to reduce heat loss?		Yes ✓ *See Note	No

Electricity:

Are lights always turned off in empty rooms?		Yes	No ✓
Are lights turned off as soon as there is enough daylight?		Yes ✓	No
Are projectors/whiteboards, computers and monitors switched off when not in use?		Yes	No ✓

General:

Do pupils understand how our energy is generated, how it effects the environment, and the benefits of renewable energy?		Yes ✓ KS2	No
Do pupils or an adult keep track of the electricity readings?		Yes ✓ adult	No
Has the school investigated possible sources of renewable energy?		Yes	No ✓

What is your Display Energy Certificate (DEC) score? You should be able to find it in your school or online . It's a really useful document to track your school's energy efficiency between years.		D
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Energy action points/comments:










As a new roof was placed on the older block of the school in the summer of 2020, in addition to new windows, it is hoped that the energy efficiency of the school will improve.

Last year we had an energy audit, an assembly, and a follow up audit. Big improvements were recorded and can be viewed in the evidence uploaded to the resource/evidence library. With Covid guidance that all windows should be opened as much as possible throughout the school year, due to Covid, there is a concern that improvements made to heat loss may suffer. All staff will be reminded throughout the year about conserving energy by eco monitors in KS1 and KS2 classes.

As school finished abruptly in March 2020, thermometers promised to all classrooms by June, were not purchased. These will be supplied by June 2021, financed by eco funds.

Water












Is the school free from dripping taps?		Yes ✓	No
Do pupils always turn the taps off fully?		Yes ✓ Most turn off automatically	No
Do you have water saving devices in the toilet cisterns? <i>e.g. a Hippo bag or bottles filled with water</i>		Yes In all applicable toilets	No
If you have push taps, do they dispense the right amount of water at the right speed?		Yes ✓	No
Do you have a water butt to collect rainwater for watering plants?		Yes ✓ 2	No
Is rainwater collected and used for anything else around the school? <i>e.g. flushing toilets or maintaining pond levels</i>		Yes ✓ Water Play	No
Do you learn about water issues in other countries?		Yes ✓	No
Is the school involved in any river or coast conservation projects?		Yes ✓	No
Are pupils or an adult able to take water readings from the meter or from the utility bill? (NI Water may be able to help you with this)		Yes	No ✓

Water action points/comments:

Save a Flush bags were placed in all appropriate toilets in 2018-19.

Transport



Do most pupils walk, cycle or catch the bus to school?		Yes	No ✓
Do you survey how people travel to school?		Yes ✓ Through class Numeracy sessions and during Walk to School Week	No
Is there somewhere dry and safe to store bikes?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school provide cycle instruction for pupils?		Yes ✓ P7	No
Do you hold regular walk or cycle to school events/days?		Yes ✓	No
Is it safe to walk or cycle to school?		Yes ✓	No
Do cars park away from the entrance to the school?		Yes Coned off area	No
Do pupils understand the environmental benefits of sustainable transport?		Yes ✓	No
Have you taken part in a sustainable transport challenge i.e. the Translink Travel Challenge?		Yes ✓ P5 in 20-17-18	No











Transport action points/comments:

More children are travelling to school by bicycle and scooters thanks to our bicycle shed.

Our annual Walk to School Week will take place in May 2021 if Covid restrictions allow.

Outdoor Learning



Are there games painted on the playground?	* See note 	Yes ✓	No
Are there murals, mosaics, sculptures or other artwork?	* See note 	Yes ✓	No
Are there plenty of things for climbing and balancing on, jumping and swinging from?		Yes ✓	No
Are there quiet places to sit and talk?		Yes ✓	No
Do you grow your own vegetables or fruit in the school grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Do you have an outdoor classroom/log circle area?	* See note 	Yes ✓	No
Do you have friendship stops or buddy benches?		Yes ✓	No
Are any lessons held in the school grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Do you keep count of how many lessons are held in the school grounds?		Yes See note*	No
Do all pupils have the opportunity to suggest what changes or new things they would like in the school grounds?		Yes ✓	No

Outdoor Learning action points/comments:

***All teachers have 8 weekly planners which document Outdoor Learning activities, therefore a log is unnecessary. An audit of visits outside school was part of the WAU action plan in 2019-20. This will continue when restrictions are lifted and all available experiences can be agreed on.**

Our school has witnessed much progress in the last number of years regarding the development of our Outdoor Learning Space. We now have a working STEM trail incorporating a poly tunnel, an orchard and fruit trail, a seasonal planting/weather trail, wildlife zones (birds and bugs), a climbing area incorporating a sensory area, and a quiet space willow pod. FS also benefit greatly from a range of learning zones, including a water and sound board and a mud kitchen.

Pre Covid we had an Outdoor Learning club on a Monday, approximately 3 times per term to give all children from P4 an opportunity to experience nature, through gardening and taking care of their school environment. It is hoped that this will return asap.

Due to demand our Super Saturdays returned last year and took place in October and March. Unfortunately, the one in May did not take place because of the school closure. During these families get the opportunity to come to the school or to a local beauty spot, and together with their children they help improve/maintain this area.

It is hoped that these too will return after Covid.

Last year we had planned to develop the outdoor space to the same extent as FS but due to Covid we were unable to redevelop STEM 7 and create a learning zone in the senior playground. This redevelopment included the repainting of the playground markings. It is

hoped that this will happen by the end of June 2021 if Covid restrictions on class bubbles/ mixing is removed. This will be funded through eco sales and our PTA.

As part of our school redevelopment large portions of the building were re- plastered and many of the existing wall displays/ murals/art work were disposed of. There is an intention to replace these in the near future.

We are very fortunate to have an amazing PTA who fund many things in our school. It was felt that due to Covid we would really benefit from an Outdoor Classroom. In August 2020 contactors installed a lovely hexagonal building in our Junior playground for all year groups to make use of. This has served as a wonderful space to enable children to not only get more fresh air, even in the rain this year, but it has also enhanced the appearance of our grounds. We have a water butt attached which will be used to water plants and use for other water/ capacity/ play based lessons. Pictures have been added to the evidence library.

Biodiversity



Does the school have trees in the grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school have more hedging than fencing around the parameter?		Yes	No *See note
Are some of your trees and hedging native species?		Yes ✓ See note	No
Does your school have a pond or marshy area?		Yes	No ✓
Does your pond have an exit route for frogs, toads, newts and hedgehogs?		Yes	No
Does your school have a wildflower meadow?		Yes ✓ See note	No
Does your school have areas of long/undisturbed vegetation linking habitats together?		Yes	No ✓
Does your school have any of the following aids to biodiversity? Please circle/highlight the ones that you have:		Yes ✓ See Note	No
<p><u>Log pile</u> <i>Stone pile</i> <u>Minibeast hotel</u> <u>Scented flowers/herbs</u></p> <p><u>Butterfly bushes</u> <u>Bird feeders</u> <u>Water for birds</u></p> <p><u>Bird boxes</u> <i>Bat boxes</i> <i>Swift houses</i> <i>Bee homes</i></p> <p><u>Hedgehog House</u> <u>Hedgehog passages (i.e. under/through fencing)</u></p>			
Are the school grounds free from herbicides and pesticides?		Yes ✓	No
Do you always use peat-free compost?		Yes Mostly.	No
Have you carried out a biodiversity survey of your school grounds?		Yes	No ✓

Biodiversity action points/comments:

***We have increased the amount of hedging around the fenced perimeter over the last number of years, with raspberry and blackberry bushes being provided through Live Here Love Here funding. They are beginning to mature and will serve as a great addition to the orchard area. Over previous years we benefited from a parent who visited us from the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime. Mr Lees spoke about squirrels and the threat posed to our native species.**

***Unfortunately, last year we were to avail of a visit from one of our kitchen staff's sister, Valentine Finlay, who runs Vee's Bees, in order to promote the importance of bees in our eco system. This was cancelled due to Covid but we will hopefully benefit from this in the future.**

This year our eco team is made up from just P6 and P7 children who were on the eco team last year. They will take turns to carry out duties such as bird feeding and watering plants on a rota basis from January. This is to keep in line with Covid guidelines on bubbles and movement around schools.

Last year we took part in the Live Here Love Here, 'Leaf Project.' This entailed working with another school in the area, St Finnian's, to provide more trees in our school grounds. Pupils took part in the initial stage of the programme and planted trees in each of the partner schools. Their growth was however not followed up due to Covid school closure. It is hoped that this will begin again, according to guidance and when pupils are allowed to enter all parts of the school again.

I have just organised, with representatives from Eco Schools NI and Live Here Love Here, a suitable time to plant the remainder of the trees. This will take place in early December. Only a few children will be able to take part in a photo opportunity in order to ensure the bubble system is maintained.

At STEM trail 5 there was a wildflower garden but unfortunately it was too difficult to maintain. It was agreed with staff and pupils that we might indeed benefit more from a sensory garden/ area. Development of this area began in August 2020 and was completed with the help of some amazing parents in November 2020. We now have a sensory area containing a range of herbs, and insect /butterfly and bee friendly plants.

Recycling was also a theme in this area with the greenery planted in painted tyres, again done by some willing parents. A range of mirrors were purchased with eco funds and attached to a display board already part of this area. Children can not only have sensory experiences of touch and smell, but sight as well.

Evidence of this new feature is in the resource library.

While we no longer have the wildflowers, there are plants which should attract insects that would normally have frequented this area. There is however an area in the school orchard where some wildflower grows of its own accord each year.

Global Perspective



Does your school have an active link with a school in another country?		Yes	No *See note
Do the teachers have Fair Trade tea and coffee in the staffroom?		Yes	No ✓ *see note
Are there any other Fair Trade products used in school? (fruit juice, footballs, bananas)		Yes	No ✓
Do pupils recognise the Fair Trade symbol and understand its meaning?		Yes P7	No
Do you have any visitors from the local community/Eco-Schools delivery partners to talk about local or global issues?		Yes	No ✓
Are pupils aware of their Rights and Responsibilities (linked to the UN convention on the Rights of the Child)?		Yes	No ✓
Do you have any whole school awareness days to support people in other countries/situations?		Yes	No ✓
Do you ever raise money or collect clothing/toys for charities working in developing countries?		Yes	No ✓
Are pupils aware of, or are lessons linked to, the UN Sustainable Development Goals?		Yes	No ✓
Do pupils understand that choices/behaviours in the developed world can effect people in the developing world in an unfair way?		Yes	No ✓











Global Perspective action points/comments:

***Teachers are aware that Fair Trade products are not chosen for the staff room. This was to be highlighted last year when the core staff team being returned after absences. However, Covid then caused school closures and the issue was never addressed. This will be discussed next year and action taken.**

*** We have links with Uganda through the organisation, Compassion. We sponsor Katherine and have enabled her to avail of schooling for the last number of years. We receive letters and updates on a quarterly basis which are read to each class. We also raise funds throughout the year from various sponsored events: Fitness Day, Red Nose Day, Children in Need, and the money raised is donated to a range of organisations to help in their work. Over previous years we have donated thousands to Habitat for Humanity, Saint John's Ambulance, Autism Support to name but a few.**

Healthy Living



Do you have a fruit tuck shop that is run by pupils?		Yes	No ✓
Are pupils encouraged to bring fruit for break?		Yes ✓	No
Do you measure how many pupils bring a healthy break/lunch to school?		Yes *See Note	No
Do pupils have the opportunity to suggest what healthy choices they would like to include in the dinner/canteen menu?		Yes	No ✓
Is there free drinking water available to pupils all day?		Yes ✓	No
Do all pupils get to experience growing and then eating their own food at school?		Yes ✓ Most year groups	No
Is there a fitness programme established in the school?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school invite outside health agencies to come and talk to pupils about their health?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school have an anti-bullying policy?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school run any mindfulness and meditation lessons?		Yes ✓ *See Note	No

Healthy Living action points/comments:

***Last year our principal Mrs Wallace, approved and funded by the BOG, completed a training initiative to become a facilitator of a programme called Fresh Little Minds which seeks to improve children's emotional resilience. Particular children identified by teachers in conjunction with parents attend interactive sessions on a weekly basis. These sessions include techniques in relaxation and managing emotions. This initiative has not taken place this year due to Covid and the bubble requirements.**

We also have a school councillor from 'Jigsaw' who comes in one day a week. She has sessions with children identified by need, through collaboration between parents and teachers.

We are also availing of the new Engage programme from the EA to help those children who were detrimentally affected by the closure of schools.

***In Londonderry Primary School we have a Healthy Eating programme that works very well from P1-P3, where the children's parents pay an annual fee and their children receive wholemeal toast and a range of fruit for break each day.**

Teachers and some children have expressed concern that the Healthy Eating programme in P4-P7 is not having as big an impact as it used to. Normally the children in each class earn tokens for healthy choices and the healthiest eating class each month, get a certificate. At the end of the school year the class who have the most certificates get a reward such as a trip to the swimming pool. It was noticed by teachers that the percentage of healthy choices being made was

decreasing, so as part of a whole school approach we had introduced a 'Free Choice Friday' for P4-P7 in 2019-2021, as an incentive to boost healthy eating throughout the week and then having a treat on a Friday. As part of last year's Action Plan the eco team were going to compare data from the previous year and compare it to that collected in 2019-2020 to see if there was any improvement. As an extra incentive the eco fund was going to pay for a class trip to the leisure centre in December, making two awards possible through the year.

Unfortunately, comparisons and rewards did not take place due to the school closure. This will be addressed in the future when restrictions are lifted. There is still a reward being given twice in this year however, one funded by school and the other by eco finances.

Climate Change



Do pupils understand the difference between weather and climate?		Yes KS2	No
Is there an understanding of the contributing factors to climate change i.e. the use of fossil fuels and the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere?		Yes ✓ Age appropriate level	No
Do some classes study the effects of climate change on different people and wildlife around the world?		Yes ✓	No
Do pupils understand their carbon footprint and know ways to reduce it?		Yes ✓ Age appropriate level	No
Which of these things do you do to reduce the school's carbon footprint: Circle all that you are doing: <u>Walk/cycle/take the bus to school</u> <u>Recycle all the waste you can</u> <u>Buy local food</u> <i>Carpool to school</i> <u>Save energy</u> <u>Plant trees</u> <u>Use less plastic and paper</u> <u>Save water</u> <i>Offset air travel through the Global Forest Fund</i>		Yes	No
Do you measure any of the above actions you have taken?		Yes Batteries Clobber Stationery	No
If yes, have you used an online carbon calculator to see how much carbon you are saving? <i>Hint one is available in the Eco-Schools Resource Library.</i>		Yes	No ✓

Climate Change action points/comments:

Walk to School Week will be hosted again in May 2021 if restrictions allow.