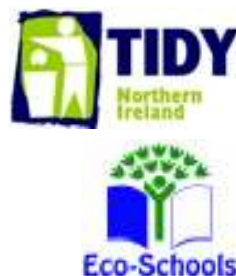


March 2008

# Tidy Up!

The Bulletin for Eco-Schools NI

Published by TIDY Northern Ireland



## Foreword by Joan Peden, Eco-Schools Admin Officer

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of our Eco-Schools bulletin. The focus this time is on **Transport**.

Our growing use of cars has caused a variety of environmental, social and health impacts. Some are highly visible and directly relevant to everyday life: accident statistics show that our roads are dangerous, while traffic congestion has adverse effects on our health and wellbeing. Other impacts are less immediately obvious but no less important. For example, the gases and chemicals released by engines make a large contribution to global warming and air pollution.

Young children today have far less freedom than their parents had at the same age. Fear of traffic and "stranger danger", combined with the overall increase in general car use and ownership, is leading to an increasing number of parents taking their children to school in the car. This has a number of consequences for pupils and staff, particularly in terms of pupil health and wellbeing.

Walking and cycling are excellent forms of physical activity and the journey to school can make an important contribution to increasing these activity levels. Patterns of activity are set in early childhood, so early lack of exercise can lead to a higher risk of future obesity, high blood pressure, poor psychological wellbeing and coronary heart disease. Walking and cycling can help children to gain confidence and make friends, helping both to increase independence and traffic sense. Current research also suggests that more active children arrive at school more alert and focused and achieve better academic results.

This issue suggests ways that pupils, staff and local government can work together to raise awareness of transport issues and come up with practical solutions that make a real difference to pupils' everyday lives.

*Joan*

## New Partners for Eco-Schools

### The Kilbroney Centre for Environmental Education

The Kilbroney Centre for Environmental Education is situated in Rostrevor at the foot of the Mourne Mountains. They have a wide range of programmes (inc. The John Muir Award Scheme) supporting the Revised Curriculum, to help children and young people experience the great outdoors. Creative, imaginative, fun and informative, the staff bring students face to face with their natural heritage.

Topics: Biodiversity, School Grounds

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## Eco-Schools NI Delivery Partners for Transport

### Department for Regional Development Roads Service

Tracey Arlow or Anna Coates

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Web: [www.travelwiseni.com](http://www.travelwiseni.com)

### Sustrans

Eamon Brown

Tel: 01179 150100  
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Web: [www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk)



## Transport Facts

- On average, one in seven children suffers from asthma—one in three in inner city areas
- In slow moving traffic, pollution levels are higher inside cars than outside
- Cycling or walking briskly for half an hour a day can half the risk of heart disease
- The morning school run is estimated to account for 20% of rush hour traffic
- The catalytic converter, which can destroy many polluting chemicals in a car's exhaust gases, only works when it is hot. The school run is usually too short to allow the catalytic converter to reach the necessary temperature
- Since 1994 the proportion of primary aged children walking to school has declined from 61% to 50%
- There was an increase from 30% to 41% in the number being driven to school
- Children aged 16 and under made 62% of all their trips as car passengers
- Children are 50 times more likely to be killed in a car accident than to be abducted

## Activity: Improving school transport

### 1. How do we travel?

Map pupils' routes to and from school. Discuss the impact of the different modes of transport, including congestion, air pollution and hazards. Produce ideas for reducing hazards. Pupils work in groups to produce a list of suggestions. As a class, discuss these suggestions and list the most practical and achievable ideas.

### 2. How do others in the school get here?

Survey how pupils in other classes and teachers get to and from school. Pupils should devise the questionnaire.

### 3. Bringing it all together

Collate the results.

### 4. What have we found?

Interpret the results. Pupils can use a number of statistical techniques to do this.

### 5. How can we improve the local environment?

Propose actions that could improve the local environment by reducing hazards and congestion. What action could be taken by the school? - car sharing, a walking bus scheme? What action will need the cooperation of the local council and local community? —a safety zone around the school, traffic calming measures, cycle lanes?

### 6. Taking action

Devise ways of encouraging pupils and teachers in the school to take the actions proposed. This could be through assembly, an exhibition, posters, an incentive scheme. Pupils could write to the local council with their proposals.

### 7. Monitoring progress

Over time, monitor progress against the action points.

## Additional activities

### Local traffic flow survey

Pupils carry out a simple survey of the different kinds of traffic passing a number of points around the school at different times.

### Measuring carbon monoxide

Pupils investigate pollution by measuring carbon monoxide concentrations in the air.

### Air quality survey

Catching the amount of dirt in the air is a simple indication of air pollution.

### Noise survey

Pupils use a cassette recorder to measure noise pollution around the school.

### Environmental review questions

- Do you monitor how pupils travel to school?
- If yes, how many pupils use the following transport to or from school?  
Walk, bus, cycle, share a taxi, share a car, travel as a single passenger in a car
- Has this data been mapped?
- Does the school have dry and secure cycle storage?
- If yes, is there sufficient space for all users?
- Does the school offer cycle instruction?
- If yes, does it include on-road training?
- If yes, does it meet the national standard?
- Does the school have a network of "safe routes" to walk or cycle?
- Does the school have any of the following?  
Walking bus scheme  
Cycle train  
Park and stride  
Other similar scheme
- Does the school organise regular "Walk to school" or "Cycle to school" events?
- Do any of the school transport vehicles (buses, taxis etc) run on alternative fuels such as electricity, land-fill gas or vegetable-derived oils?
- Does the school have a School Travel Plan?
- Does the school have a pedestrian and cycle entrance that is separate from vehicle access?

## Teaching objectives:

Through work on Transport, pupils could:

- Assess the impact of traffic on the local environment and the quality of people's lives
- Make proposals to improve the local environment and take part in local community initiatives to implement the proposals
- Use, interpret and draw maps, defining and using keys
- Collect, interpret and present information, using ICT where appropriate
- Communicate to a variety of audiences using suitable language
- Work cooperatively with others

## School Case Study

**Ballinderry PS** erected signs telling people not to park in front of the school. The Eco-Committee drew up questions for a traffic survey and sent these out to parents. Year 7 as part of their work in mathematics, analysed the results and produced graphs which were displayed on the Eco notice board to raise awareness of the number of cars bringing one or two pupils to school. The school has been included in the Safer Routes Scheme and will have the route to the school marked out from the centre of the village with pavements and cycle paths.

The pupils participated in the Walk to School Week with many walking all the way or where not feasible, part of the way. Parents made a point of walking with their entire family. The week culminated with a walk to school non uniform day which raised £300 for the project linking the school with disadvantaged children in South Africa.



## Eco-Schools International News



Eco-Schools International Programme numbers are impressive! There are now 40 countries worldwide involved in the programme with more than 21,000 schools, including nursery schools, primary schools and post-primary schools—this represents more than 400,000 teachers and almost 6 million students!

Ten years after the Kyoto protocol, it is proven that the Eco-Schools International Programme is contributing to tackling climate change issues, for example through Energy and Transport or directly through Climate change projects that are implemented in schools throughout the world.

[www.eco-schools.org](http://www.eco-schools.org)

## Announcing the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

UNESCO's Director-General and Assistant Director-General for Education have announced that the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development – "Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade" will be held in Bonn, Germany, from 31 March to 2 April 2009.

Some 700 stakeholders from all over the world will attend the conference, which is being organised by UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO.

Registration will begin in November 2008.



Contact: [esddecade@unesco.org](mailto:esddecade@unesco.org)

## Fantastic New Funding Opportunity for NI Eco-Schools

If your school has already gained its Bronze or Silver Award, you could be eligible for a grant towards gaining Green Flag status.

Thanks to the continuing support of Currys, schools in Northern Ireland now have the opportunity to apply for funding as part of the 'Switched on Communities' programme.

Please note that schools who have already achieved Green Flag Status will not be eligible to apply for funding during this year.

Applications from schools which meet the criteria will be considered for grants of up to £4,000. The grants must be used to pursue positive change and development within the school for projects which contribute to the Eco-Schools themes of **Energy** or **Water**. Priority will be given to projects that clearly demonstrate an energy-efficiency element or identify technological solutions to environmental improvements.

Closing Date for submission of Application Forms: **1st April 2008**

Guidance Notes and the Application Form can be found at [www.tidynorthernireland.org/eco-schools/what-3-s-new-/index.php](http://www.tidynorthernireland.org/eco-schools/what-3-s-new-/index.php)

## BBC Breathing Places

Eco-Schools is now a Northern Ireland delivery partner in the schools initiative.

A BBC Breathing Places folder and information pack will be sent out to schools when they register with the 2008 project. A series of termly activities, starting with a simple school grounds observational exercise and a planting activity will be rolled out and supported by information and downloadable resources on the BBC Breathing Places web pages.

For more information and to register your school, visit: [www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/schools/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/schools/)

## British Council *Local to Global* Video Competition

The British Council has launched a video competition for post-primary schools focussing on global warming and renewable energy to win a voyage of discovery from Iceland to Greenland and Baffin Island.

For more information and terms and conditions, visit [www.britishcouncil.org/nireland](http://www.britishcouncil.org/nireland)

Schools can submit their video entry to [competitionNI@britishcouncil.org](mailto:competitionNI@britishcouncil.org) or send a CD to Jonathan Stewart, British Council, Norwich Union House, 7 Fountain Street, Belfast, BT1 5EG

## Statistics and Awards

So far this academic year 64 schools have registered on the programme, 37 have received their Bronze award and 6 their Silver. We now have 385 Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland. This figure is over one quarter of all schools in Northern Ireland.

### Recent Bronze Awards:

Ballytrea PS  
Bloomfield Collegiate  
Broadbridge PS  
Carrickfergus Colelge  
Cranmore Integrated PS  
Cullycapple PS  
Donaghey PS  
Hollybank PS  
Millburn PS  
Moneymore PS  
Moneynick PS  
Nazareth House PS  
Poyntzpass PS  
St Columba's PS  
St John's PS, Carnlough  
St John's PS, Eglisli (1)  
St Mark's PS, Belfast  
St Oliver Plunkett PS, Newry  
St Patrick's PS, Crossmaglen  
Spires Integrated PS  
Stewartstown PS  
Sullivan Upper Preparatory Dept  
Tor Bank Special School



### Recent Silver Awards:

Bloomfield Collegiate  
Killeen PS  
St Columba's College, Derry  
Stewartstown PS

## Planet.com

A Channel 4 series to help teachers introduce aspects of sustainable education and to provide useful information on how to actually do something.

[www.channel4learning.net/sites/planet](http://www.channel4learning.net/sites/planet)

## Oxfam Education

Oxfam Education offers a huge range of ideas, resources and support for developing global dimension in the classroom and the whole school. All of the resources support Education for Global Citizenship—education that helps pupils understand their world and make a positive difference in it.

This website gives you access to all of Oxfam's free online teaching resources. Packed with lesson plans, assemblies, case studies and whiteboard resources, these pages offer free materials you can use and download.

If you're looking for printed teaching packs, books, DVDs, or posters, then visit Oxfam's Catalogue for Schools pages.

Web: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/)

## Litter

Did you know that 38% of people in Northern Ireland believe there are places where it is acceptable to drop litter?

TIDY NI has produced a Litter Fact Sheet for Eco-Schools working on the Litter topic. You can download it from our website at [www.tidynorthernireland.org/eco-schools/publications/index.php](http://www.tidynorthernireland.org/eco-schools/publications/index.php)



## Delivery Partners News

### The Living Classroom@Ballydevitt

Forty young pupils accompanied by their teachers and classroom assistant came to The Living Classroom to study Ecology. These young entomologists were very interested to find out what minibeasts they could find in deciduous woodland.

The topic chosen by the teachers for study was Living Things: Animals and Plants. An activity based program was devised so that the pupils would have the opportunity to have first hand experiences and practical tasks to carry out.

The children had containers to collect their finds and magnifying glasses to observe their catches. At the end of the task each group had a variety of minibeasts to identify. Minibeasts at close proximity led to lots of questions about their colour, where they lived in the winter and how many legs they had.

The children completed their session with a fun game called Move It. Teaching materials produced by EHS were given to the teachers to reinforce the children's learning back in school.

For further information about customised environmental programmes at The Living Classroom, please ring 028 7086 8378 or Mob: 0784 110 1389

### EHS

The Environment and Heritage Service has published new advice for schools and universities about how they can reduce their environmental impact.

Visit: [www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/sectors/1844747/?version=1&lang=e](http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/sectors/1844747/?version=1&lang=e)

## National Trust

My name is Lisa McCaughan and I am an Environmental Learning Officer for the National Trust. I am based in the North Coast Region and here it is my privilege to create learning programmes around some of the Trust's most spectacular sites. These programmes are all environmentally focused; they link into the Revised Curriculum especially within the World Around Us Area of Learning and they emphasise some of the messages found within the Biodiversity Strategy of Northern Ireland. Importantly, they also link into the delivery of the Biodiversity Strand within the Eco-Schools project.

### Barmouth Bonanza: Birds and Biodiversity

Children have the opportunity for some bird watching through binoculars from a bird hide at the Barmouth.

Pupils consider the rich habitats that exist in this area and explore through an interactive programme, bird adaptation, relationships and interactions in the environment, migration and conservation issues.

### Discovering Downhill

Using the woods in Downhill, children investigate this wonderful environment through tree investigations, bark rubbings, scavenger hunts, minibeast studies and much more. They also consider the influence of people in this environment along with conservation issues.

These programmes offer the unique opportunity for pupils to learn about birds, trees, plants and minibeasts all in their natural environment and allows the eco-committee to understand what their Action Plan for their school needs to consider.

Additionally it will allow the school to set up links with the National Trust, an environmental organisation. This is one of the possible important steps required within the Environmental Review of the school.

Lisa McCaughan – Environmental Learning Officer Tel: 028 2073 1582  
E-mail: [lisa.mccaughan@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:lisa.mccaughan@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Loughs Agency Riverwatch Aquarium and Visitor Centre

From high up in the mountain springs to the brackish loughs, Riverwatch captures the journey of the river, the essence of the local environment and the variety of life in the Foyle and Carlingford areas.

The aquariums represent five different habitats and hold some amazing and interesting species. The tanks are an excellent visual resource and a window to a wonderful underwater world.

Riverwatch offers a wide and varied range of educational outreach programmes that can be delivered at your school or out on the riverbank. Check out the Salmon in the Classroom, Adopt A Stream and Angling Academy programmes on our website at [www.loughs-agency.org](http://www.loughs-agency.org)

All Riverwatch programmes are available FREE to schools

Contact: Gillian or Peter on 028 7134 2100  
E-mail: [gillian.simpson@loughs-agency.org](mailto:gillian.simpson@loughs-agency.org)  
or [peter.odonnell@loughs-agency.org](mailto:peter.odonnell@loughs-agency.org)

22<sup>nd</sup> March                      World Water Day

Riverwatch will be holding a clean up of some local riverbanks. A great opportunity for people to get involved in a positive hands on activity and do one thing for nature!

## Kilbroney Centre for Environmental Education

"The Great Kilbroney Easter Family Fun Day" is on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March. An Easter Egg hunt through the forest, Big games, arts and crafts, face painting, balloon modelling, nature walks, food stalls and touch tanks will all be available again at the second annual fun day.

[www.allianceyouthworks.org.uk](http://www.allianceyouthworks.org.uk)

## Global Dimension in Schools NI

The Centre for Global Education hosts the Global Dimension in Schools NI which is the Northern Ireland regional project for DFID's Enabling Effective Support initiative. The main aim of the initiative is to provide educators with effective and sustained support to incorporate the global dimension into the teaching of all Northern Ireland Curriculum subjects.

The teacher support provided will include:

A web portal that will provide teachers with a 'one stop' resource containing information on the education services offered by all development NGOs in Northern Ireland.

A series of INSET days in each of the five Education and Library Boards to showcase a range of global dimension initiatives.

For more information contact: Nora McQuaid  
Tel: 028 9024 1879  
Email: [nora@globaldimensioninschools.org](mailto:nora@globaldimensioninschools.org)

## Publicise your Eco-School

If you have a story to tell, please send it in with any photographs and we can publish it in our Tidy Up! Bulletin and our International Eco-Schools Newsletter.

## Thank you for your financial support

The post of part-time Eco-Schools Admin Officer is funded by the Environment and Heritage Service and the majority of Local Councils in Northern Ireland.

Joan Peden is the Admin Officer. Office opening hours are 9.30 am —3.00 pm Monday to Thursday.

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