



December 2008

Eco-Schools News

Foreword by Joan Peden, Eco-Schools Admin Officer

This has been a very busy term in the Eco-Schools office. 35 new schools have registered on the programme this term here in NI, making a total of 440 Eco-Schools. This is more than one third of all schools in NI!

The FEE General Assembly 2008 was held in Kendal in the Lake District of England with representatives from 50 countries attending. At this meeting, TIDY Northern Ireland was approved by the FEE Executive Board as an Associate Member.

The Eco-Schools National Operators Meeting took place in November in Morocco where key decisions relevant to schools in NI were disseminated. See our full report on page nine.

Our inaugural "Celebrating Eco-Schools" event was held in Ballymena in November. The full story is on page four.

We are introducing a new series of articles in each edition of our newsletter, highlighting the work of our Delivery Partners. Our focus for this newsletter is Bryson Charitable Group who offer invaluable support to schools on the Eco-Schools topics of energy and waste. Read their article on page three.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Joan



Green Flag schools at our "Celebrating Eco-Schools" event

Eco-Schools International

About FEE

Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable development through environmental education (formal school education, training of staff and general awareness raising).

FEE is an international umbrella organisation with one national member organisation per country representing FEE on the national level and in charge of implementing FEE programmes nationally. FEE has member organisations in 55 countries worldwide.

FEE has since 1981 actively promoted and delivered environmental education through its international programmes, which aim to deliver Agenda 21 commitments and involve people of all ages and nationalities.

FEE is mainly active through its five environmental education programmes: Blue Flag, Eco-Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment, Learning about Forests and Green Key.

www.fee-international.org

Eco-Schools International

Up-to-date, periodic newsletters are produced, usually on a monthly basis, with information on Eco-Schools at the international level as well as interesting national level news. Events, activities, contact detail changes, partnerships, etc are included. These are small files and easy to download, in PDF format.

The latest international newsletter can be downloaded from:

www.eco-schools.org/new/newsletters.htm

Eco-news is your International Eco-Schools newsletter. Send in your stories, photos, poems and pictures and your school could feature in the next edition.

FEE General Assembly

The key discussions and decisions at the FEE General Assembly were:

Approval of new FEE Articles of Association and FEE Rules of Procedure.

Approval of new FEE Branding Guidelines.

Approval of the FEE Environmental Policy.

Confirmation of associate FEE membership for five new organisations.

Confirmation of affiliate FEE membership for seven new organisations.

Confirmation of upgrading from associate to full FEE membership for three organisations and downgrading from full to associate FEE membership for one organisation.

Election of Jan Eriksen as the President of FEE 2008-2012.

The schedule included break-out groups discussing Sponsoring, Climate Change and Social Responsibility.

The Members Forum event was organised to have time for further networking among FEE member organisations. Parallel presentations and discussions took place within three topics: Economy, National Programmes and Environmental Policy in National Member Organisations.

The event host, Encams, also organised various cultural and environmental events including a visit to an Eco-School.

TIDY NI was confirmed as an Associate Member of FEE at the General Assembly. When a national organisation is accepted as member of FEE it becomes an Associate Member of FEE. Within three to five years of FEE membership, the organisation must become a full member (which means that it has fully implemented at least two FEE programmes). TIDY NI operates both the Eco-Schools programme and Blue Flag programme in NI.

Focus on Our Eco-Schools Partners

In Northern Ireland, the Eco-Schools programme is dependent on the invaluable support given by a wide range of Delivery Partners including local councils and NGOs. In the first of a series of articles we are highlighting the work of Bryson Education who support the energy and waste topics.

Bryson Education – Helping Schools to Sort It Out!



Bryson Education have been delivering education programmes to schools in Northern Ireland for over twenty years on a variety of environmental issues.

They currently have two province-wide education programmes delivered by 5.5 Education Officers based in Belfast, Derry and Enniskillen.

Sort It Out! focuses on waste and the reduce, reuse, recycle message. Schools are offered a choice of visits from a menu including presentations, workshops, drama and practical activities and there are programmes suitable for nursery, primary and post-primary schools.

The Energy Efficiency programme offers a classroom workshop for KS2 pupils on energy efficiency in the home and at school.



As both these issues fit in with the Eco-Schools programme, visits from Bryson help schools on their way to achieving their Green Flag.



All staff are trained Eco-Schools assessors, and they have some of the most experienced assessors in Northern Ireland. At the recent celebration event in Ballymena, George Lyttle was presented with a certificate in recognition of his contribution towards the Eco-Schools programme. This wealth of experience means they can offer advice and assistance to teachers and Eco-Committees, from those looking to get started right through to schools going for Green Flag reassessment.

Their work is supported by a website currently under redevelopment by CCEA Multimedia. They hope to have the site fully up and running by the end of the year, but you can view progress at www.brysoneducation.org/newsite and all comments are welcome. Please e-mail them to glyttle@brysongroup.org.

In September this year, Bryson Education were Chartermark accredited so schools have the reassurance that they provide a high quality, professional service.

Deadline for Green Flag Applications

Please make a note that the deadline for all Green Flag applications is **5 March 2009**. All applications received before this date will be guaranteed an assessment visit before the end of the academic year. Applications received after this date will still be considered but an assessment before the end of the academic year may not be possible due to the large number of applications at this time of year.

Remember - you can apply at any time of the year for a Green Flag assessment. **We particularly welcome applications during the spring term.**

You can find more details and download the application form at www.eco-schools.org.uk/apply/

Celebrating Eco-Schools

On 13 November, TIDY NI held the inaugural "Celebrating Eco-Schools" event at The Braid in Ballymena. Nearly 400 delegates saw the schools who achieved their GF in 2007/08 being officially presented with their awards by the President and Director of FEE. The audience was entertained with presentations, dramas and musical numbers from schools. There were also keynote addresses from the NIEA and Eco-Schools in Scotland and China. Delegates came from as far afield as Eco-Schools in England and Wales.

Awards were made to two assessors for their outstanding contribution to the Eco-Schools programme in NI. Frank Jackson from Ballymena Council and George Lyttle of Bryson Group have each undertaken more than 50 Green Flag assessments.

Teachers who attended expressed their enthusiasm after the event:

"Thanks for the invite to a wonderful celebration on Thursday. Our school thoroughly enjoyed the presentations."

"Yesterday's celebration of Eco-Schools was great, very well organised and a tremendous experience for my three Eco warriors! The children were well inspired and enthused."

"It was a super day and we left filled with inspiration and full of new ideas."

One of our Assessors commented: "I want to thank you so much for the lovely day at the Braid. The Eco team encapsulated celebration, success and fun into one event—no mean feat."

Coagh PS was presented with a certificate as the 400th school to register with the programme in NI.

Holy Family PS received a certificate and sign for their Fruit Shop as the 100th school to reach Green Flag status in NI.

We would like to thank Coca Cola who generously sponsored this event. Thanks also to B&Q who donated the gifts for the schools and The Royal Bank of Scotland who sponsor our new website.

The schools who achieved their Green Flags in 2007/2008 are:

1st Green Flag

Ballycraigy PS, Antrim
Belmont PS, Belfast
Holy Family PS, Belfast
Greenhaw PS, Derry
Kesh PS
Lowwood PS, Belfast
Mill Strand Int Nursery School, Portrush
Millquarter PS, Toomebridge
Silverstream PS, Carrickfergus
Star of the Sea PS, Belfast
St Columba's College, Derry
St Columba's PS, Clady
St Mary's College, Clady

2nd Green Flag

Ashfield Girls' High School, Belfast
Ballysally PS, Coleraine
Camphill PS, Ballymena
Dunseverick PS, Bushmills
Grosvenor Grammar School, Belfast
Harberton School, Belfast
Mullavilly PS, Tandragee
Oakwood Integrated PS, Belfast
Riverdale PS, Lisburn

3rd Green Flag

Banbridge High School
Buick Memorial PS, Cullybackey
Euston Street PS, Belfast
Groggan PS, Randalstown
McKinney PS, Dundrod
Orangefield PS, Belfast

4th Green Flag

Ballykeel PS, Ballymena
Carniny PS, Ballymena
Fourtowns PS, Ahoghill
The Country Playgroup, Ballymena



St Columba's PS, Clady

Partners News

Sustrans

The School Travel team at Sustrans (the UK's leading sustainable transport charity) can help you with the transport element of your Eco-Schools work by providing a range of free resources, including a website, e-bulletin and information sheets. New editions of their newsletters all about active, sustainable school travel have just been published.

They are available from the School Travel team: call 0117 9150100 or email schools@sustrans.org.uk for your free copies.

Speedwell's Biodiversity Outreach Programme

Speedwell has initiated an outreach element of their Biodiversity Education Programme. Each of Speedwell's biodiversity programmes follows a three step approach. Speedwell liaises with the schools concerned to outline Speedwell strategy to principals and staff and carry out an audit of school sites. Schools visit Speedwell Centre to participate in a biodiversity programme. Speedwell staff then provide follow-up assistance to schools to facilitate biodiversity actions in their own schools

www.speedwell-trust.com

Autumn on a Dairy Farm

Forty young pupils accompanied by their teachers and classroom assistant came to The Living Classroom @ Ballydevitt to study Autumn on the Farm.

The topic chosen 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.

For further information about customised environmental programmes please call 028 7086 8378. Mob. 07841101389

Pupils are having a whale of a time!

The Cool Seas Road Show is a spectacular educational initiative from Marine Conservation Society to raise public awareness of our wonderful sea creatures. Both pupils and teachers are thrilled to find their school halls filled with life size whales, dolphins, sharks, giant turtles, seals and porpoises - all animals resident in the seas around us.

Contact Gillian or Peter at the Loughs Agency on Tel: 028 7134 2100.



Awards help children grow

A new initiative launched by the Woodland Trust offers schools the opportunity to bring green issues, the great outdoors and the wonderful world of wildlife into the classroom with a range of resources and a new award scheme.

The Green Tree Schools Award scheme rewards schools every time they participate in inspirational learning events, projects or initiatives provided by the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, the Woodland Trust.

To take part, schools need to register for free at www.naturedetectives.org.uk/award.

The Trust is also inviting schools and youth groups to prepare to get planting next spring. Apply online now for a free pack of native trees and/or a free seed kit, which contains everything needed to grow 32 silver birch trees from seed. The tree and/or seed packs will be delivered in March 2009.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/hedge

"SITA Schools Environment Challenge" - Scope for C2K

This competition will require teams of pupils (or individual pupils) to use available material including the educational material produced by SITA Northern Ireland and made available to schools to complete a project of their own design.

The submitted project(s) should illustrate the impact of waste on the environment and show how we can improve the way we look after the environment through our community and individual behaviour.

For more information contact:
Michael Schwartzentruber, ARENA Network
Tel: 028 9046 0606
Email: michael.schwartzentr@bitcni.org.uk

National Trust Feeding Wildlife Outreach Programme

Schools around the North Coast this winter have the opportunity to take part in a new feeding wildlife outreach programme.

Pupils are led in an exploration of their own school grounds. This programme fits fantastically well with the Biodiversity Strand of the Eco-Schools Programme. Schools are encouraged to take the opportunity to engage in this programme to help them on their way to achieve their Eco-Schools Green Flag. This programme is on offer in winter only and so places are limited. For more information please contact Lisa McCaughan on 028 20731582.

The National Trust at Strangford Lough runs environmental learning programmes throughout the year and the winter outreach programme is an ideal way to introduce the topic of biodiversity to your class.

Contact Anna Stamp on 028 4488 1411

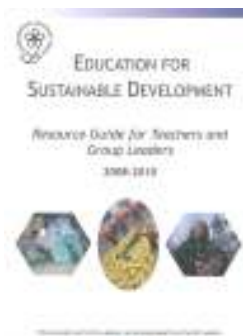
A new outreach programme brings some of the sights and sounds of Crom to your school. Explore your school grounds, learn how to enhance and protect your environment and help reduce your schools Global Footprint.

Contact Lisa Mooney on 028 6773 7837 or 07748321279

New ESD Resource Guide for Teachers Launched

A new ESD resource guide for schools and youth groups, produced by the Environmental Education Forum was launched at a recent EEF conference. The document has been designed to help teachers and group leaders source organisations within Northern Ireland who can contribute to or provide Environmental Education / Education for Sustainable Development visits and talks.

The guide will be sent to every school, youth group and pre-school group in NI. If you would like to receive a copy or further copies of the document please contact eef@nienvironmentlink.org or telephone 028 9045 5770. The document will also be available to download from the EEF website at: www.eefni.org.uk/publications



BBC Breathing Places

The third term's Do One Thing will help birds through the winter by providing them with food and water. You will also learn about mammals and the wider food chains that will be found in your Breathing Place.

Have a look at what some schools have been up to and get inspiration for your own school's wildlife area.

www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces/schools/



One Planet Living Grant Scheme

The B&Q One Planet Living (OPL) Grants are one way in which B&Q are introducing the idea of One Planet Living® to their customers and their communities.



Through the OPL Grant scheme, schools, community groups and charitable

organisations can apply to their local B&Q store for funding to support a local community project. Projects must support at least one of the following themes:

- Environment/Energy Saving
- Natural Habitats/Wildlife
- Local Culture/Heritage

The scheme provides £50 to £500 (at retail cost) of B&Q materials.

For more information, visit:

www.diy.com/diy/jsp/bq/templates/content_lookup.jsp?content=/aboutbandq/social_responsibility_2007/bq_community.jsp&menu=aboutbandq

ABC News wants YOU to report from the future

In an unprecedented television and internet event, ABC News is asking you to help create a story that has yet to unfold. What will our world look like in one hundred years if we don't save our troubled planet?

ABC are launching a massive online event inviting creative minds across the globe to create short video reports that depict the future. Using predictions from top experts, they will feed detailed briefings from the years 2015, 2050 and 2100 – and they are asking you to imagine your future world!

For more information on how to get involved visit <http://earth2100.tv>

Children's Painting Competition

United Nations Environment Programme has launched the 18th International Children's Painting Competition. This year's competition will focus on actions we can take to cope with Climate Change.

Visit the website for more information:

www.unep.org/tunza/children/inner.asp?ct=competitions&comp=int_comp

Watch this space!

Our brand new Eco-Schools website for Northern Ireland will be launched soon.

Featuring resources and support, case studies, templates and an interactive map, it will have everything you need to know about Eco-Schools.

You can visit the website now and input your email address. You will then be notified when the site is live.

Coming soon to:

www.eco-schoolsni.org



Star of the Sea PS

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew launches search for the new Darwin

Royal Botanic Garden, Kew (RBG Kew), is on the look out to find the next Charles Darwin!

To coincide with the 200th anniversary (2009) of Charles Darwin's birth, RBG Kew has teamed up with the Wellcome Trust to create The Great Plant Hunt, an innovative project that aims to get primary school children out and about and excited by nature.

The Great Plant Hunt offers Key Stages 1-2 children hands-on experience of what it's like to be a plant hunter, working with Kew's scientists who play a vital role in saving our natural world heritage.

In March 2009, RBG Kew will be sending the UK's 22,000 primary schools a Treasure Chest full of free resources to be used in the classroom, online and in the great outdoors. The free resources are clearly mapped to the primary science curriculum and include fun activities.

www.kew.org/great-plant-hunt.

Teachernet

The Sustainable Schools area of Teachernet is designed to support schools on their journey to sustainability, introducing the principles of sustainable development and offering guidance on how to embed these principles into the heart of school life.

The site provides useful information for all sectors of the school community, including the leadership team, teachers and parents, and offers a number of excellent online and downloadable tools to help schools identify the best route to becoming more sustainable. The resource library offers a comprehensive online directory providing access to hundreds of teaching resources, places to visit, a useful A to Z directory of organisations that work in the field, information about related programmes, case studies and an inspirational image gallery. The support section contains information about funding, professional development opportunities, research and regional support.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools/

Volvo Adventure—Young people bringing the environment to life

The Volvo Adventure - in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme - is an educational programme that rewards environmental activities and the decision-makers of the future.



To enter, you form a team of two to five members aged 13 to 16 years and perform an environmental project in your local

community. You submit the project via the online submission tool before January 31st 12pm, 2009 deadline.

Projects are judged during February / March and the best projects are selected for an all expenses paid trip to Göteborg, Sweden where they can win: 1st place = US \$10,000 , 2nd = US \$6,000 and 3rd = US \$4,000.

Visit the Volvo Adventure website for more information.

www.volvoadventure.org

New Eco-songs CD resource for ages 7 to 11



Music for Schools Ltd has launched its new songs CD resource—Go for Green! This is a resource relevant to the KS2 curriculum exploring the environment,

conservation, water use and waste disposal/processing. Equally it's an original resource for the music curriculum, designed to motivate pupils in their singing and learning.

'Go for Green!' is a collection of modern, educational songs for children aged 7 to 11, enabling them to think, learn and sing about important environmental issues.

For more information visit www.musicforschoolsltd.co.uk

Eco-Schools National Operators Meeting—Rabat, Morocco

Eco-Schools continues to grow rapidly with interest in this successful education for sustainable development programme becoming truly global. It is estimated that in 2009, Eco-Schools will involve 6.3 million pupils and 400,000 dedicated teachers. In the past year it has involved 5.5 million pupils in 27,000 schools with 5,000 of these attaining the prestigious Green Flag award.



The November 2008 National Operators Meeting (NOM) attracted 57 people from 41 countries (out of 44 countries running Eco-Schools) to discuss how Eco-schools should be developed further to meet the needs of all the participants.

The Eco-Schools NOM 2008 was hosted by the **Fondation Mohammed VI pour la Protection de l'Environnement**. It was well organised and included a visit to a school working towards its Green Flag (see pictures). At the NOM several key decisions which are relevant to schools

in NI were disseminated including:

1. Confirmation that the Permanent Green Flag is not consistent with the aims of the programme and that it needs to be discontinued in countries where this operates.
2. Removal of the need for Waste, Water and Energy to be covered as core subjects. Instead a menu of approximately ten topics will be developed from which schools select three to work towards each Green Flag.
3. Reiteration that following the seven steps process is crucial to reaching Green Flag status and this includes the need for pupils to be actively involved and the whole school to participate.
4. Confirmation that schools must be visited to be assessed at the very least for their first assessment. Thereafter it remains preferred best practice.
5. Biannual assessments are acceptable.

National Operators also heard about exciting research from the Republic of Ireland where Eco-Schools have been shown to send less than half the waste to landfill than non Eco-schools. They use up to a third less electricity and, after studying the transport topic, show a 10% modal shift away from pupils using cars to get to school. They are also saving millions of gallons of water every day. TIDY NI is keen to both encourage schools to start monitoring the impact of working on various topics and to hear from schools that already have statistics on, for example, energy use, water consumption and waste production for their school.



TIDY Northern Ireland is also keen to hear from Eco-Schools wanting to link with schools in another country to help work on specific topics/projects or to link to form a longer lasting/broader relationship.

Dr Ian Humphreys
Eco-Schools National Operator and TIDY NI CEO

Environmental Learning through Arts for Schools

At the B.E.A.M Centre in Donaghmore, a range of arts activities are available for a wide range of school age groups with 'Reduce, Reuse and Recycle' as the underlying themes.



From puppets shows for preschool and early primary years to educational workshops for upper primary and secondary level students, the use of arts as an educational and information vehicle is a concept that the staff at the

B.E.A.M Centre in County Tyrone strongly believe in.

For further information, contact Kathryn O'Neill or Ann Marie McNulty on 028 8776 9157.

Visit The B.E.A.M Centre online at www.beamcentre.com

Konflux Theatre in Education

Konflux Theatre in Education has been touring Environmental Workshops in Northern Ireland for the past 12 years and is returning for a Winter Tour in conjunction with Craigavon and Newry & Mourne Councils. They are visiting 10 schools, working with pupils on a **Play in a Day Workshop** which is a day long drama session with a professional theatre director before performing in a 15-minute play entitled **Reduce Reuse and Recycle**. The **Play in a Day Workshops** concept is a catalyst that focuses the students' attention on recycling and food waste management. Konflux Theatre in Education is also touring Northern Ireland for their Annual Tour in January - March 2009 which will include many of their other environmental and healthy living workshops.

Tel: 01904 674 359
jennie@konfluxtheatre.co.uk

Resource for Post-Primary schools

We have student and teacher booklets entitled *High Sky: Ozonation Education Pack for Secondary Schools*. The teachers booklet comes with a CD Rom and there are lots of activities, worksheets and briefings as well as a section on curriculum relevance. The pack includes sections on the ozone layer, health impacts, climate change and organising a mini United Nations style debate. Please contact Joan Peden on 0845 86 206 86 if you would like a copy.

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 Eco-Schools Newsletter. We are also looking for case studies to feature on our new website.

Thank you for your financial support

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

Joan Peden is the Admin Officer. Office opening hours are 9.15 am — 2.45 pm Monday to Thursday.

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland
PO Box 43
BALLYMONEY
BT53 9AE
Tel No: 0845 86 206 86
Email: info@eco-schoolsni.org
Web: www.tidynorthernireland.org

