

## 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.*

**Date completed: October 2019**

**Completed by: The ECO committee**

### Key

	These are suggested links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For more ideas and information visit <a href="#">our website</a> .
	Pupils can find the answers themselves by looking carefully around the school.
	Pupils may need to ask an adult to find the answers to these questions.
	A little bit more investigation is required, maybe a survey or asking questions to other pupils.
	This is a way of <b>measuring</b> 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.

# Biodiversity



Does the school have trees in the grounds?		Yes ✓	No
Does the school have more hedging than fencing around the parameter?		Yes ✓	No
Are some of your trees and hedging native species?		Yes ✓	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	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:  <u>Log pile</u> <u>Stone pile</u> <u>Minibeast hotel</u> <u>Scented flowers/herbs</u> <u>Butterfly bushes</u> <u>Bird feeders</u> <u>Water for birds</u> <u>Bird boxes</u> <u>Bat boxes</u> <u>Swift houses</u> <u>Bee homes</u> <u>Hedgehog House</u> <u>Hedgehog passages (i.e. under/through fencing)</u>		Yes ✓	No
Are the school grounds free from herbicides and pesticides?		Yes	No ✓
Do you always use peat-free compost?		Yes	No ✓
Have you carried out a biodiversity survey of your school grounds?		Yes	No ✓

## Biodiversity action points/comments:

### Points to improve on:

- Add some hedging around school fencing
- Create a plum orchard
- Create a wildflower meadow
- School compost should be peat free
- Investigate hedgehog house and passages/ pond rescue
- Ask one class to carry biodiversity habitat survey

# Climate Change



Do pupils understand the difference between weather and climate?		Yes	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	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	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> <u>Carpool to school</u> <u>Save energy</u>  <u>Plant trees</u> <u>Use less plastic and paper</u> <u>Save water</u>  <u>Offset air travel through the Global Forest Fund</u>		Yes	No
Do you measure any of the above actions you have taken?		Yes	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:

### Points to improve on:

- Plastic recycling bins in each room
- Plant plum trees to create a second orchard

# 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 ✓	No

## Electricity:

Are lights <b>always</b> turned off in empty rooms?		Yes	Not always
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	Not always

## General:

Do pupils understand how our energy is generated, how it effects the environment, and the benefits of renewable energy?		Yes ✓	No
Do pupils or an adult keep track of the electricity readings?		Yes ✓	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 <a href="#">online</a> . It's a really useful document to track your school's energy efficiency between years.		D 91
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## Energy action points/comments:

- **Each classroom should have a thermometer in order to adjust the room temperature when it is above 18 degrees.**
- **Eco walks to switch off lights around the school**
- **Monitor the electricity we spend.**

# Global Perspective



Does your school have an active link with a school in another country?		Yes	No ✓
Do the teachers have Fair Trade tea and coffee in the staffroom?		Yes	No ✓
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	Not all
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	Not all

## Global Perspective action points/comments:

### Points to improve on:

**Continue to raise awareness of issues the developing world faces and how we can help.**

# 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	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 ✓	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 ✓	No

## Healthy Living action points/comments:

### Points to improve on:

- Healthy lunch survey
- Further develop the daily mile fitness programme
- Investigate the possibility of yoga lessons

# 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:

**More bins are needed, such as plastic and food bins in EACH classroom and the staffroom. Litter picking rota / monthly litter survey / Litter policy**

**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.**



# Marine



Can pupils list 3 reasons why the marine environment/ocean is vitally important to us?		Yes ✓	No
Do the pupils know about plastic pollution in the oceans?		Yes ✓	No
Can the pupils list 3 reasons why marine litter is bad for the marine environment?		Yes ✓	No
Do you study in class the Marine topic and the effects of plastics on wildlife and human health?		Yes	No ✓
Has your school banned any single use plastics? Circle any actions that you are currently doing:  <i>Refusing - plastic straws/ cutlery / bags / Styrofoam food containers</i> <i>Reducing – wrappers / packaging</i> <i>Recycling - plastic / food waste</i>		Yes	No ✓
Do you measure any of the above actions you have taken?		Yes	No ✓
Do the pupils recognise the things listed below as sources of plastic pollution (macro and microplastics)? Circle all that you are able to identify:  <div> <div><u>Packaging</u></div> <div>Farming</div> <div>Construction</div> </div> <div> <div>Coastal Tourism</div> <div><u>Cosmetics and toiletries</u></div> <div><u>Shipping</u></div> </div> <div> <div>Texiles and clothing</div> <div>Road transportation</div> <div>Fishing</div> </div>		Yes ✓	No
Has your school taken part in a litter clean-up of a beach/river/or local area?		Yes	No ✓

## Marine action points/comments:

Please list 3 ways we can prevent marine litter entering the marine environment

**Refuse plastic straws**

**Recycle food waste in the classrooms (the canteen already does it).**

**Lessons on plastic pollution**



# Outdoor Learning



Are there games painted on the playground?		Yes ✓	No
Are there murals, mosaics, sculptures or other artwork?		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?		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	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:

### Points to improve on:

- Survey of number of lessons outside

# Transport



Do most pupils walk, cycle or catch the bus to school?		Yes Not sure	No Not sure
Do you survey how people travel to school?		Yes ✓	No
Is there somewhere dry and safe to store bikes?		Yes ✓	No ✓
Does the school provide cycle instruction for pupils?		Yes ✓	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	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 ✓	No

## Transport action points/comments:

### Points to improve on:

- Tell parents NOT to park in front of the school gates
- Organise Transport Challenge
- Ask school council to provide bike shelter

# 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:



Are 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)					
<u>Paper</u>	Plastic	Cans	Cardboard	<u>Clothing/Material</u>	
<u>Batteries</u>	Phones	Stamps	Glasses	<u>Food</u>	Ink Cartridges
Do you have a compost bin/area that is in use?					 <div>Yes ✓</div> No
Do you use your compost on the school grounds?					 <div>Yes ✓</div> No
Are there enough recycling bins around the school?					 <div>Yes</div> No ✓
Do the recycling bins always have the right things in them?					 <div>Yes</div> No ✓

## Information:

Do you measure how much waste you are preventing from going to landfill sites?		Yes	No ✓
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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:

#### Points to improve on:

- The office does not use recycled paper.
- Price cost of using recycled paper
- Investigate the possibility of recycling ink cartridges

## Water



Is the school free from dripping taps?		Yes ✓	No
Do pupils always turn the taps off fully?		Yes ✓	No
Do you have water saving devices in the toilet cisterns? <i>e.g. a Hippo bag or bottles filled with water</i>		Yes	No ✓
If you have push taps, do they dispense the right amount of water at the right speed?		Yes NA	No NA
Do you have a water butt to collect rainwater for watering plants?		Yes ✓	No
Is rainwater collected and used for anything else around the school? <i>e.g. flushing toilets or maintaining pond levels</i>		Yes	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:

**Find out how much money we spend on water**  
**Learn how to read a water utility bill**