

If you print this newsletter out, please remember to double-side!!

Welcome to the Autumn 2008 edition of the Eco-Schools Scotland newsletter.

In this newsletter...

Getting a First Green Flag Award is a fantastic achievement for any school, but as we all know, the Eco-Schools journey doesn't end there. A Green Flag is valid for two years; after which time a school must be assessed again for its Second Green Flag, and so on; until the acquisition of the Fourth - and Permanent - Green Flag. Thereafter, schools are asked to submit an annual report on their eco work to the Eco-Schools Scotland team, so a school's commitment to the high standards required for Green Flag accreditation is a lasting one.

This edition of the Eco-Schools Scotland newsletter focuses on the topic of Green Flag renewal; something that is becoming increasingly widespread in Scotland as more and more of our schools attain the coveted Flag. We've included an overview of what our assessors want to see when they visit a school going for Flag No. 2,3, or 4 - and what they don't. We've also asked some of the best Green Flag- (re-)awarded schools in the country for the secrets of their success, and we hope that these will inspire those schools who are looking for fresh ideas.

From January 2009, Eco-Schools Scotland will be simplifying the documentation required for Green Flag renewal, and we anticipate that this will make the re-award process easier for our schools. We'll still, however, be looking for the same dedication, hard work and commitment! As always, full details of the requirements for a Green Flag application can be found on our [website](#).

The Eco-Schools Scotland Team

STOP PRESS!

Canongate Primary School in St Andrews, Fife, became the 700th Scottish school to be awarded the Green Flag following their assessment on 23 September 2008. Our congratulations to everyone involved.

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The new Eco-Schools Scotland Guide

We're very pleased to announce that the Eco-Schools Scotland Handbook has been completely revised.

It's now known as the **Eco-Schools Scotland Guide**, and a copy has been sent to all of our registered Eco-Schools.



The Guide has been produced in an easy-to-use CD-ROM format, which has enabled us to make links to useful websites. Each section of the Guide can be printed out if you need to have paper copies. It's also available on our [website](#), which has just undergone a makeover.

We've also made some changes to the documents that schools are required to submit when [applying for their Green Flag](#). These can all now be completed and saved on-line.

Click on the image to view the Guide. We hope you enjoy it!

Going for Green - again

You sent in your Green Flag submission, the Eco-Schools Scotland assessors have been and gone, and you've gained the top Eco-Schools Award - the Green Flag. The whole school is delighted, and a very successful event was held to celebrate this achievement and all the hard work that went into it.

Everyone in the school and local community are determined to retain Green Flag status, and your Eco-Committee are starting to think about what needs to be done for your next Flag...so what now?

From January 2009, Eco-Schools Scotland will be simplifying the requirements for schools renewing their Green Flag Award. These new guidelines should make it easier for schools to know exactly what they need to do to earn their Second, Third, or Fourth Green Flag.

Read on to find out more...

Part A - Three steps to success.

Renewing your Green Flag is pretty straightforward. There are three key elements to what you need to do:

1. **Maintain what you did for previous Flags**
2. **Meet any recommendations given**
3. **Expand the programme**

1. Maintain what you did for previous Flags

Our assessors will want to see evidence that work undertaken for previous Green Flag awards has continued. Activities such as recycling initiatives, energy monitoring, and school grounds developments should still be ongoing. The Litter topic is the only mandatory Eco-Schools Scotland topic and must **always** be included in your Action Plans.

2. Meet any recommendations given

Our assessors send a letter with your Green Flag and Certificate, and if this letter contains any recommendations, they will expect these to have been addressed by the time of your next assessment. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with [Eco-Schools Scotland](#) or your [local authority representative](#) if you need further advice on what to do.

3. Expand the programme

Eco-Schools Scotland currently offers a 'menu' of nine topics, with the addition of the new 'Sustaining our World' topic. Schools must conduct the Environmental Review on an annual basis for all nine topics, but they are then free to select which of these they will focus on.

FIRST GREEN FLAG

For a First Green Flag, we will be looking for in-depth work on a minimum of **THREE** of the nine topics, one of which **MUST** be Litter.

SECOND GREEN FLAG

For a Second Green Flag, we will be looking for evidence that the work done on the topics selected for the First Green Flag has been maintained, and that the school has added a minimum of a further **TWO** topics, making a total of **FIVE**.

THIRD GREEN FLAG

For a Third Green Flag, we'll expect work from the First and Second Flags to have been maintained, and another two topics to be added; making a total of **SEVEN**.

FOURTH GREEN FLAG

For a Fourth (Permanent) Green Flag, we'll be looking for the work from Flags 1, 2, and 3 to be ongoing, plus one more topic, making a total of **EIGHT**. This allows schools some flexibility when choosing which topics to focus on.

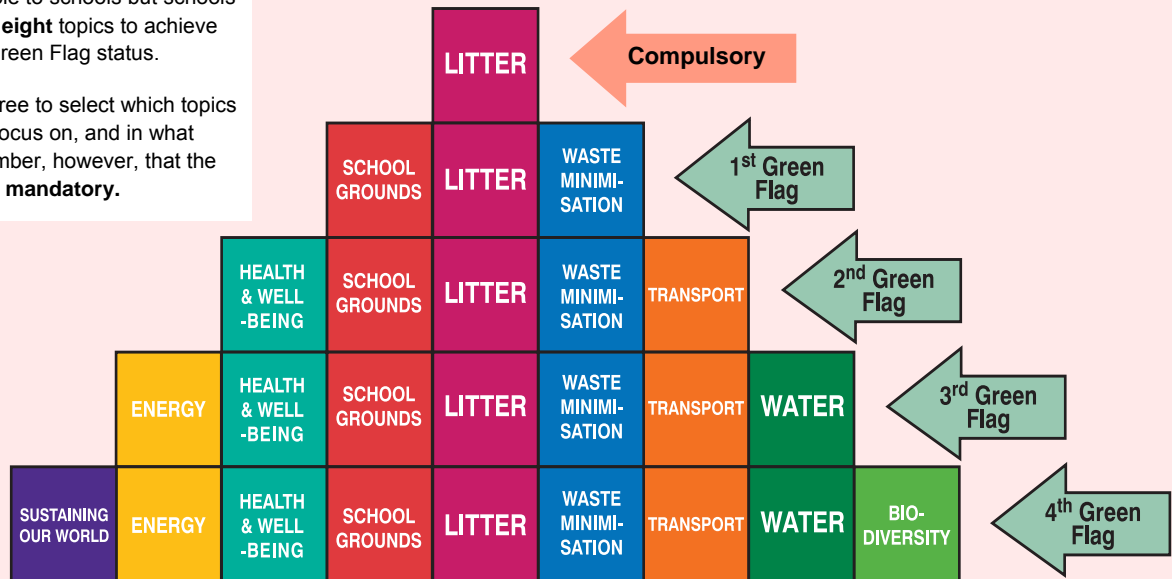
A sample route as to how this could be achieved is shown on page 3.

A sample route to Permanent Green Flag status

This shows how Permanent Green Flag status *could* be achieved. Please remember that the order in which the topics are tackled is entirely up to the school, with the exception of the mandatory Litter topic, which **must** be included for every Green Flag.

NB: The pyramid shows all of the topics available to schools but schools need only do **eight** topics to achieve Permanent Green Flag status.

Schools are free to select which topics they wish to focus on, and in what order. Remember, however, that the **Litter** topic is **mandatory**.



Part B - The paperwork

As with any award, a certain amount of paperwork is required before our assessors can visit your school. Luckily, the process is almost identical to that of the First Green Flag Award.

You'll be sent a reminder several months before your Flag expires which will outline what needs to be sent to us prior to assessment, but here's an overview of what we'll need:

We'll need **TWO** copies of:

- Your answers to the [Twelve Questions](#)
- Your latest [Environmental Review](#)
- Your [Action Plans](#) for the two years since we visited you last, as well as your current one
- Your [Eco Code](#)
- Your answers to the [Supplementary Questionnaire](#) for renewals.
- Your [Curricular Audit](#) (*secondary schools only*)

Full details of all of the above can be found on our website, as well as in the new Eco-Schools Scotland Guide, which will be sent to all of our registered schools in the next few weeks.

Once we receive your application, we'll check it through to make sure that it contains everything we need. If it's incomplete, we'll write to you, giving you **one month** to send in what's missing. If we don't hear from you by this time, we'll call to discuss the way forward.

Please remember, however, that you run the risk of losing Green Flag status if there is a significant delay.

Part C -Dos and don'ts

Some additional advice...

√ Yes please! 😊

- The whole school is aware of, and involved in, Eco-Schools work.
- Pupils are fully involved in all aspects of Eco-Schools work; including planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Any recommendations given after previous assessments have been addressed.
- The submission contains all of the information we require (see P.3 for details)
- Monitoring and evaluating of work is ongoing and readily available to everyone in the school. **There should be at least one piece of evidence of monitoring and evaluation per topic.**

✗ No thanks! 😞

- The school's Eco-Schools work is too teacher-led; with little or no pupil involvement.
- Eco-Schools work is only happening in one or two classes, with the rest of the school unaware of what's going on.
- Litter is not included in the school's Eco Action Plan, and there are items of litter in the grounds/corridors.
- The Action Plan does not show what has been done to maintain work done for previous Flags.
- The submission does not include all of the necessary items (see P. 3 for details)
- The school is not monitoring or evaluating its Eco-Schools work.

Questions and queries

We recognise that every school operates under a unique set of circumstances, and that some aspects of the Eco-Schools programme may be trickier than others. Here are a couple of the issues that we're often asked about, and our thoughts as to how to tackle them. Remember that the Eco-Schools Scotland team or your local authority representative are always available to answer any specific queries you may have.

1. Our school has already tackled all eight topics - where do we go from here?

If your school has already done all eight Eco-Schools Scotland topics, then our assessors will be looking for evidence that you've maintained all eight to the standard they saw at your previous assessment(s), and that you've built on your work for the required number of topics for each Flag; i.e. 5 x topics for Second Flags, 7 x topics for Third Flags, and 8 x topics for Fourth (Permanent) Flags. For example, if your work on School Grounds had included the creation of a wildlife garden, our assessors will want to see how this has progressed, and how it's being used as a learning resource. If you'd been doing work on saving Energy, our assessors will want you to tell them if there has been any reduction in the amount used and how this has been achieved. If you'd been doing Walk to School week as part of your work on Transport, they'd want to know if this activity has been repeated and whether it made a difference to the amount of pupils and staff taking part.

Remember that the new Eco-Schools Scotland 'Sustaining our World' topic is now available, and this should provide you with a fresh challenge.

2. Most of the pupils at our school come by bus/taxi because of distance/special needs - how can we tackle the Transport topic?

We recognise that there's not a great deal that schools in this situation can do to tackle the actual physical issues around getting their pupils to school in a more sustainable manner, but the Transport topic can still be studied. Schools can look at the environmental impact of various travel methods, and conduct traffic surveys to e.g. find out how many vehicles have gone by with only one passenger in them, or find out the most common type of vehicle on their local roads. They could also investigate transportation methods worldwide and compare/contrast them with their own experience. Our Winter 2006 newsletter contains some hints and tips on tackling the Transport topic. Remember that although we require schools to undertake the Environmental Review for all nine topics, there is some flexibility in that schools will only have to have covered eight of these by the time they reach Fourth Flag status.

Over to the experts...

We got in touch with some of our most successful schools with Second, Third, and Permanent Green Flag status and asked for the secrets of their success when it came to renewing their Flag...

Helpful hints from Hamilton Grammar

Hamilton Grammar in South Lanarkshire was awarded its Second Green Flag in 2006, and are now working towards their Third. Sinclair Dyer, Principal Teacher of Biology, and the school's Eco-Coordinator, tells us more:

'The assessors were impressed by the way in which Eco-Schools has become embedded into the ethos of the whole school with pupils, parents, teaching/non-teaching staff, and management working together to build on the strong foundation established at the time of the First Green Flag award. The assessors identified a number of strengths which were key in their decision to award a Second Green Flag, which included:-

- Whole-school involvement: e.g. litter awareness and recycling initiative; commitment to healthy living initiative.
- Detailed action plan : e.g. detailed plant survey of school grounds; development of school garden area.
- Strong links with local community: e.g. work carried out for local nursery school; parents, especially during parents' nights.

A particular strength was the **level of individual responsibility shown by pupils**, who have taken on specific duties relating to the Eco-Schools programme. Pupils on the Eco-Committee have been repeatedly invited to talk to prospective teachers at the annual 'Biodiversity at the Chalk Face' seminar in Perth. The Eco-Committee regularly runs workshops for local nursery and primary schools, and were involved in helping with the re-launch of the Eco-Schools initiative in South Lanarkshire Council (SLC).

Future plans

We have expanded our Health & Well-being work, and have now agreed to get involved in the HIV Educators programme run by Christian Aid. This will involve pupils being trained, and then talking to PSE classes, about a range of issues involving HIV.

We have also 'gone international' and are planning to help make our school carbon-neutral by helping to fund the planting of a mango farm in Ghana. We have been awarded 'Partners in International Education' status by SLC and are involved in working with Donkorkron Agricultural School in the Afram Plains of Ghana.

Top tips for success

- Pupils must be involved - and given real autonomy in planning, setting and carrying out targets.
- Give specific tasks to named individuals and trust them to complete them.
- Just do it - don't think too much about the possible problems. If you are offered the chance to get involved in something new, say yes!!

Eco-Schools has proved to be a fantastic experience for us here at Hamilton Grammar, and we hope that you will give it a go.'

Our thanks to Sinclair, and the pupils at Hamilton Grammar, for the above article.

Top tip #1

Make sure everyone in your school continues to be involved as much as they can be in your eco work.

Our assessors will want to see evidence that you've maintained a whole-school approach when they come to visit you.

Top tip #2

Don't forget to include everything we need when you send in your application. See page 3 for full details of what to send us, or log on to our [website](#), where you can access all of the necessary documents.

Please DON'T send us lots of photos and other evidence - our assessors will see all of this on the day of the assessment.

Top tip #3

It's essential that you have a system in place to maintain continuity between Eco Committees. This will ensure that none of your Eco-Schools work is forgotten about when the new Committee is elected. It's also a good idea to have several members of staff on your Committee, as this minimises the risk to your Eco-Schools work if a key person leaves the school.

Continuing success at Cowgate Under-5s Centre

Cowgate Under-5s in the City of Edinburgh, was awarded its Second Green Flag in 2007. Lynn McNair, Centre Manager, shared her thoughts with us:

'Being a Green Flag school has come easily to us, and has stimulated our progress in countless ways. Being a Green Flag school now underpins everything we do, and we have found that it easily supports other initiatives such as being a Health-Promoting School. Our natural interest in the outdoors stimulated us to pursue Forest School training, and we now offer a Forest School experience for our children. We began our ecological development with our garden, and this has been an exciting and wonderful (on-going) project.

How we maintained what we did for our First Flag In many ways, we have found that being a Green Flag Eco-School has become integral to everything we do. We maintain our developments in a very natural way; for example, the children empty their water trays at the end of the day into the water butt in the garden, and then water plants from the water butt as a matter of routine. We believe that by creating a nature nursery, where our children begin their school years by gaining firsthand knowledge of the physical environment, we benefit the child, their family, and the world.

How we met the recommendations given to us after previous assessment visits Ideas are always welcomed. Eco-School assessors have experience in abundance to share, and we have been able to implement their recommendations easily into current work. We also seek ideas and recommendations from children, parents and staff.

Future Plans We plan to cut down on gas consumption by fitting a new condensing boiler. We are currently raising funds for photovoltaic panels and solar battery chargers, and are purchasing a food digester. We make sure that everything we buy - whether it be children's furniture, food, stationery, or eco-friendly alternatives for cleaning and laundry - are from well-managed, renewable, and if possible, fair-trade, sources. Our staff have realised that being an eco-school has become very much part of our lifestyle and is now how we live at home. Our staff even drink organic wine! We have decided to donate the money we would spend on Christmas gifts for each other to cotton farmers in the developing world to enable them to plant sunflowers to deter pests, rather than use harmful chemicals.

Finally... Being an eco-school with Green Flag status, does not mean we are an authority on ecological development, as we are constantly learning and developing. We [all Green Flag Environments] can guide each other, share and exchange expertise; because little ideas that help make little changes can all make a big difference. Something as simple as changing your light bulbs, deciding to grow a herb garden or plant potatoes with the children, can have a profound overall effect on them and the environment. Having your Green Flag does not compete with everything else you do; it is quite the opposite as it complements all other initiatives and sits beautifully with the Curriculum for Excellence.

Good luck with your journey - we would love to meet you.'

How we maintained the school's enthusiasm and interest We have incorporated weekly trips to the recycling centre into our routines, something that the children always volunteer to be involved in. We select an eco helper every day, and again, always have an eager volunteer for the task. Our Forest Schools group takes a litter picker with them on their trips, and each child vies for the responsibility of carrying it. Enthusiasm in children is, luckily, available in abundance. We simply ensure the opportunities to nurture it are constantly available.

How we built on our successes and incorporated more topics We constantly research new ideas, and build on our current work. Our Eco Committee, made up of children, parents and staff, has supported our on-going development. Learning and sharing together, we deliver in-service courses, present at conferences and offer regular tours around the centre to share and exchange practice with other interested professionals. Our [website](#) ensures that families are aware from the outset of our philosophies and practices.

Our thanks to Lynn for her hints and tips.

Real results at Ravenscraig Primary School

Ravenscraig Primary School in Inverclyde gained Permanent Green Flag status in 2008. Headteacher and Eco-Coordinator, Isabella Lind, tells us more:

'We have been involved in promoting eco ideals for eleven years now, and have reflected on what we believe helped us to achieve our Second, Third and Permanent Green Flag. We've identified several key points which are listed below:

1. People are your greatest resource

(Effective Contributors)

Central to this is the Eco Committee, but involve everyone you can, whenever you can. Involve the PTA and Parents Group. Gain the help of other schools or establishments. This was very effective for us when we applied for our Third Flag, and were having particular difficulties with litter on neighbouring sites. Experiment with different arrangements, meeting formats, and meeting times.

3. Make your Eco-Schools work cross-curricular and a context for learning

(Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens)

Use your Eco-Schools work as a context to link the curriculum together. The longer you work at it, the easier this becomes. Some ideas include:

- **ICT** - this is invaluable - it motivates, involves and is a vital communication tool. Involve pupils as much as possible in e.g researching websites, and use the school website/blogs to keep parents and families updated.

- **Expressive Arts** - we have composed several songs, and poems. Particularly effective were the 'It Only Takes A Minute To Bin It' litter song, and a poem summing up all of our Eco-Schools work, which was presented to Inverclyde Education Committee on the 9th of September.

- **Personal values** - Honesty, Empathy, and Responsibility are shared values embedded in Eco-Schools work. *(Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens)*

2. Maintain and use evidence for effective monitoring and evaluation

(Successful Learners)

Maintain an eco diary with photographs. We have done this since 1998, and it is invaluable to mark achievements, record success - and work out how best to deal with setbacks.

Recognise that everything does not always go smoothly. Be honest when you do your annual Environmental Review and accept that you may not always achieve everything you planned. Keep at it - it has taken us these eleven years to really get to grips with litter and our secret ingredient for success was humour. Instead of nagging all the time, we made our search to find the 'phantom wrapper dropper' into a game.

4. Celebrate and publicise your achievements all along the way and share your success as much as possible.

Enjoy what you do and make it fun. Ensure that the pupils' ideas and suggestions are taken forward wherever possible to ensure a real sense of ownership and achievement.

5. Creativity is an essential element of Eco-Schools work

(Successful Learning)

Be creative and encourage everyone with their ideas and suggestions. We designed logos for all the elements of our work: Curriculum, Review, Eco code and committee, Action Plan, Trust, Involvement, Values, Evaluation. Your Eco Code will need to develop as your school develops its understanding and commitment.

6. Use your assessment visit and critical friends to bring fresh ideas.

Before the assessors come to visit you, ask a critical friend to come round and share ideas.

7. Keep at it. You must promote your Eco-Schools work all the time to maintain its profile.'

Our thanks to Isabella for her help and advice.

Success at Straloch PS, Perth & Kinross

Straloch PS gained their Second Green Flag in 2008. Penny Crawford, their Eco-Coordinator, shares their ideas with us:

'As a rural school with, currently, five pupils, we are very proud of our achievements so far. Our small size means all the pupils are fully involved in everything; from planning what's to be done, to doing the jobs and monitoring them. This is certainly one of the keys to our success. At Straloch PS, our Eco-Schools work is embedded in the ethos of the school, and is seen as an ideal opportunity for 'active learning'; and not as something 'extra', tagged on to 'real' learning. To achieve this, we are flexible with our timetable; allowing the children time to do what is needed, from writing letters, designing flyers, doing the weekly paper towel count, calculating the month's electricity use, designing surveys, making graphs to work out the school's global footprint, or working in the garden.

- **Keep trying hard.**
- **Get the community involved**
- **Have fun.**
- **Work hard and work together.**
- **Keep up all your good work.**

*Katie, Corrie, Chloe, Hannah, and Rachel,
August 2008.*

Building on our success Over the past four years, we have built on our existing work. It has been through careful monitoring and evaluation that new projects have emerged. Often projects have taken the form of improving or developing what we have, or they have involved starting something completely new. Keeping the work going from previous years takes time, but as the children develop skills from year to year, the maintenance work becomes easier, because the children know what they are doing and can share their skills with younger pupils.

Ownership and responsibility Maintaining interest and enthusiasm in Eco-Schools work can be challenging at times but it underpins success. In our experience, we achieve this in a number of ways. We give the children ownership and responsibility for the work they are involved in; they have to make important decisions and offer solutions to problems that arise. This means stepping back, but still supporting and guiding them gently when needed - often without them realising! We spend time discussing our work - when children understand why they are doing something, it becomes more meaningful for them, and enthusiasm and motivation follow on. We have a committed staff; all of whom are enthusiastic and genuinely interested in the school's eco work, and we have the invaluable and strong support of parents and the community; without whom we would not have achieved all that we have.



Tackling recommendations The recommendations from our first Green Flag assessment were discussed at subsequent Eco Committee meetings, and it was refreshing and inspiring to witness the children's 'anything is possible' attitude to the suggestion that we reinstate the old bridge opposite the school so that children could walk or cycle to school safely. It's been a huge undertaking, and we are not there yet, but we are hopefully getting closer!

Put simply, our eco journey has been about working together as a team - and having fun!

Our thanks to Penny, and the pupils at Straloch, for the above article and their 'top tips'.

Top tip #4

Make sure you're monitoring and evaluating your work as you go. Photos, questionnaires, surveys, measurements - all of these should involve pupils, and the results should be shared with the school community at assemblies, via class Eco-Reps, and on your Eco Board. Our assessors will want to see **at least** one piece of monitoring/evaluation for each Eco-Schools topic that you're looking at.

Malta calling...

Eco-Schools Scotland recently had a visit from Marvic Refalo, one of the Eco-Schools team in Malta.



She thoroughly enjoyed her visit, and observed some of our Green Flag assessments, as well as finding out more about how the Eco-Schools programme operates here in Scotland.

She also told us about some Maltese eco-schools who would love to make links with Scottish eco-schools, so if your school would like to do this please get in touch with Marvic at: marvicekoskola@naturetrustmalta.org.

Expert advice from Richard Stewart Nursery Centre, North Lanarkshire

Richard Stewart NC achieved Permanent Eco-Schools status in 2008. Here are some of the things they did to achieve this wonderful accolade:

Q. How did you manage to maintain what you did for previous Flags? We managed to maintain projects from each flag application by incorporating them into our yearly and monthly planning. We evaluated the projects on a monthly basis and built on children's interests. However, as we all know, children don't only learn at nursery, and, therefore, parents/carers were invited to join in our projects and were kept informed of progress through newsletters, displays and photographs.

Q. How have you maintained the school's enthusiasm and interest in its eco work? Each year, children arrive with a new enthusiasm for learning. The Eco Committee is then formed, which gives the children ownership of the various eco projects. Each core topic is addressed through fun activities linked to the curriculum. Parents become enthusiastic as their children pass on their new found knowledge; which, in turn, encourages us to become more enthusiastic.

Q. How did you build on existing success to incorporate more of the core Eco-Schools topics? While carrying out annual and monthly reviews, we found that children were not getting to participate in the full range of the core Eco-Schools topics as they were only with us for approximately two years. As we felt that all the core topics were equally important, we decided to come up with a way for all children to participate in all topics. The method we came up with was 'Eagle Eye'. 'Eagle Eye' is an eagle puppet who comes to the nursery to tell each group of children about litter, water, air, recycling etc. The children meet 'Eagle Eye' at group time with their keyworker on a fortnightly basis. This method ensures that all children get the opportunity to learn about each of the core topics. Areas of particular interest to the children are also addressed through 'Eagle Eye', which have included the new recycling bins delivered to their homes, and the Unicef appeal for Gambia.

Q. How have you managed to meet any recommendations given to you after previous assessment visits? Fortunately, we have had very few recommendations given to us, but each one was met with a 'new project', or an evaluation of an existing project.

Q. Any other hints and tips?

1. Projects never become "previous" they become "existing"
2. Incorporate into other initiatives and projects e.g. Health Promoting Awards, E-Twinning and Enterprise.
3. Look out for government initiatives that will become a way of life for the children e.g. recycling, Unicef.
4. Tailor the projects to the age and stage of children.
5. Keep everyone involved through newsletters, displays, and meetings.
6. Use strengths and knowledge of staff, parents and community.
7. Remain positive - you can achieve!

Our thanks to Lorraine Wilson and all at RSNC for their help and advice.

Top tip #5
 Make contact with schools in your area who have already renewed their Flag. Get your Eco Committee to find out what went well, what went less well, and how they met any recommendations made to them by Eco-Schools assessors.

Thoughts from Turnbull High...

Turnbull High School in East Dunbartonshire gained their Second Green Flag Award in 2007. Matthew Lamb and Laura Quinn, pupil members of their Eco Group, tell us how they managed it...

Top tip #6

Pupils must be encouraged to take the lead wherever possible in the planning, execution, monitoring, evaluation and annual review of your eco work.

'Maintaining what we did for our first Flag

We kept standards high by continuing our eco work around the school and raising its profile wherever possible.

This included the continuation of monthly litter picks around the school and the surrounding area, anti-litter campaigns and stepping up plastic bottle recycling. The collection of mobile phones and old ink cartridges for recycling was also continued. Our regular weekly meetings continue to be well attended.

How we built on success and incorporated more topics

We've built on our existing success in various ways. These have included cross-curricular efforts, such as the growing and sale of herbs and flowers. This has helped to increase the biodiversity of our environment. Our Art department has assisted us in our efforts to minimise waste by making use of old materials such as yoghurt pots etc... for a mask making project. Home Economics and PE have also promoted healthy lifestyles through healthy-eating campaigns and Active Schools projects.

How we maintained enthusiasm for our Eco-Schools work

This has been done in various ways. Competitions with prizes to produce publicity materials for anti litter campaigns have been used to attract attention to our efforts. We've stepped up collection of recycling bags and sited more recycling stations for plastic bottles. We've become more active in relating information about the work of the eco group to the school at large through assemblies. This has had the effect that more people have become involved in Eco-Schools work.

How we met the recommendations we were given after our last assessment

We have implemented a more effective group structure. This includes a Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom are elected yearly. Our minute-keeper is rotated. Our planning has also improved as we take regular stock of what we have done and what to do next. We have formed closer links with our local community and are currently involved in improving the environment in one of our local parks. We are at present trying to encourage more cross-curricular eco work, and trying to get as many departments as possible to take part.

Hints and tips

We believe that a whole-school commitment to the Eco-Schools programme is vital for its success. This will become even more marked as we move towards A Curriculum for Excellence and move into our new accommodation. We also believe that good communication and co-operation between the school and the surrounding community has been important in our success.'

Our thanks to Matthew and Laura for sharing the secrets of their success with us.

Winning ways at Wigtown PS, Dumfries and Galloway...

Wigtown Primary School gained its Third Green Flag in June 2008. Their pupils, staff, and parents sent us their thoughts on how they managed to achieve this...

Hints and tips from staff...

- Eco-Schools work is an intrinsic part of our curriculum, not an add-on.
- All staff provide time and opportunities to support initiatives / activities. There is whole school involvement, from nursery to P7, and shared ownership of all initiatives.
- The maintenance of previous initiatives has become 'buddy group' responsibilities; which are rotated and changed on a monthly basis.
- We meet recommendations by addressing them in the following year's Action Plan.
- We constantly adopt new ideas to keep things fresh.
- We award the Eco Owl Prize as an incentive to work hard.
- We provide regular information updates via newsletters/agendas/minutes of meetings - let everyone know what's going on. Reminder of significant issues by means of Eco Rap.

Continued on next page...

Hints and tips from pupils...

We make eco fun so we get on with things better. We have things like our Garden Party, and Hallowe'en Eco Disco. we put our rubbish in the bin and have novelty bins which help encourage us.

We recycle glasses, stamps, phones, batteries and ink cartridges and we encourage others in the community to help. Our recycled things help others and sometimes make money for our Eco Bank Account. we recycle our fruit and veg and have fun compost bins called 'Fred', 'Freda' and 'Tina Tumbler'.

We made a lorry to record weights of things that we recycle and so don't need to go to landfill.

Everyone is involved in eco, and every buddy group has their own eco responsibilities. We also have lots of good school people helping e.g. children, teachers, parents, dinner ladies, cleaners, and janitors.

We sponsor a pod of dolphins which helped us learn about global responsibility. We have a lot of homes for animals in our garden which we have helped build and raised money to buy. "we grow our own vegetables and fruit and entered them in the flower show", our fruit garden produce is eaten and used to make jelly, jam, smoothies and pies etc. We use our own water which we collect using 'Philipa Pail'!

All of our eco work makes us a happier school!

What parents said...

We are involved in events and meetings, and kept informed through newsletters, and other means.

We work together as a team with the school.

Our thanks to Lynn Allan, Eco-Coordinator at Wigtown for collating everyone's views.

Other Eco-Schools Scotland news...

And the winners are...

We recently sent out evaluation questionnaires to all those schools who had undergone a Green Flag assessment between January and June 2008, and we're very pleased to announce that nearly all of them gave us very positive feedback regarding the application and assessment process.

All those who responded were entered into a prize draw for an Eco-Schools Scotland goody bag, and the lucky recipients are:

- Hayocks Primary School, North Ayrshire
- Fair Isle Nursery, Fife
- Achahoish Primary School, Argyll & Bute
- Springfield Primary School, Dumfries & Galloway
- Ravenscraig Primary School, Inverclyde

Our thanks to everyone who took the time to respond - your comments are always very welcome and will help us to make the Green Flag application and assessment process even more user-friendly.

The Eco-Schools Scotland team

Hot dogs at Polbeth Nursery

Polbeth Nursery School in West Lothian was among the winners of the first West Lothian Eco-Schools Energy Challenge, launched jointly by Livingston's Almondvale Shopping Centre and West Lothian Council's Education Service. The aim was to find the most innovative eco-idea which would benefit the school concerned and support work being done for Eco-Schools Awards.

Polbeth Nursery School, one of the four winners, entered their draught-detector stick, their 'Hot Dog' draught excluder, and sang their 'Save Energy, Stuff that Draught!' song (written by the school secretary). New blinds were purchased for the nursery with their £500 prize money, which will help them to continue to reduce draughts and save energy. Click [here](#) to read more...



Grounds for success at Auchmuty High

Pupils at Auchmuty High School in Fife are benefiting from a National Lottery Grant of nearly £7,000, which has paid for gardening equipment and railings. The railings protect an area at the front of the school where flowering plants, vegetables, and herbs are now being grown by S3 and S4 pupils, who are studying for Managing Environmental Resources (MER) qualifications.



The garden area is soon to have a greenhouse, which the janitors are kindly erecting for them, and future plans include the installation of a fountain and the building of a dry stone wall by pupils.

Shown in the picture are Charlotte Dixon (S3), Michael Billington (S4), and Keirran Murphy (S3).

Eco-enterprise in action!

St Elizabeth's PS in South Lanarkshire applied for an SNH Sustainability Grant after feedback from pupils (via their Pupil Council and class suggestion boxes) indicated that they were fed up with having nothing to do in their new school grounds. Every pupils compiled a wish list and suggestions included games painted on to the playground, and more flowers and plants. Funding for the playground games had already been applied for, and is still awaited, however the idea of a school garden for use by every class; as well as the local community was 'sown'.



Getting started...Each pupil was given a garden template to record their own ideas and the May 08 edition of the school newsletter requested donations of resources, help, and further suggestions. Within days a local timber merchant met with some pupils to develop their ideas for wooden planters; grandparents, current (and former parents) had donated plants, plant pots, time, and really valuable advice - all centred on turning the pupils' suggestions into reality. There certainly was a 'buzz' about the place! South Lanarkshire's 'Changing Places' became another business partner in that they too looked at pupil designs and ideas before committing 'people-power' and even more garden resources. One market gardener parent also came up to the school after reading the school newsletter and promised to return and meet with the Gardening Club to discuss future needs and give advice. The SNH Grant was approved on the basis of pupils' designs, and some of this money was used to buy seeds, seed trays, small tools, and compost.

Making it happen...Each class was put in charge of a tray of flower, vegetable, and herb seedlings prepared by the School Eco Club which were transplanted into the School Garden before the start of the holidays. At this same time our local authority began to generally upgrade our school grounds, which included grassing-over large areas for future play. A major problem then arose, however, as birds were soon gobbling up all the newly sown grass seeds. Time for a school assembly to discuss the problem, and as a result, each class decided to make a scarecrow. These were made from recycled materials and when they were ready, they were given a 'Grassing-Out Parade' (!) by everyone and soon became a topic of conversation in the local community.

Using the garden...Pupils returned to school in August to find battered and bruised scarecrows, but beautiful grass and a garden overflowing with flowers, vegetables, and mini-beasts. Our first term's science project focuses on 'Living Things', and our new garden area is a perfect learning resource to meet the requirements of 5-14, the Curriculum For Excellence ... and the achievement of our fourth Green Flag! We've already had the P1s lifting early carrots and lettuce for class tasting, classes using buckets to collect rainwater and, in class, to collect and record the amount of water left over from the bottles of water delivered daily by the council. The garden looks great and has potential for enjoyment, ownership, gardening experiences and much more. The older Eco Club members discussed costings and best value for money when choosing suppliers, and this approach will be developed with all Eco Class Reps throughout the next session when sourcing future resources.

Our thanks to Christine Emmett for the above article and photo.

First Green Flags awarded...

School	Local Authority	Date	School	Local Authority	Date
Aboyne Primary	Aberdeenshire	29 Sep 08	Kingsbarns Primary	Fife	01 Jul 08
Athelstaneford Primary	East Lothian	10 Sep 08	Kinloss Primary	Moray	10 Sep 08
Bellahouston Academy	Glasgow City	08 Oct 08	Kirklandneuk Primary	Renfrewshire	10 Sep 08
Bonnybroom Nursery	Glasgow City	04 Jul 08	Law Primary	East Lothian	10 Sep 08
Bridgeton Family Centre	Glasgow City	04 Aug 08	Letham Primary	Angus	26 Sep 08
Canongate Primary	Fife	23 Sep 08	Meldrum Academy	Aberdeenshire	07 Oct 08
Craigie Primary	Perth & Kinross	30 Sep 08	Milngavie Primary	East Dunbartonshire	04 Sep 08
Dalgety Bay Primary	Fife	19-Sep-08	Ralston Primary	Renfrewshire	23 Sep 08
Deanston Primary	Stirling	11-Sep-08	Robert Douglas Memorial Primary	Perth & Kinross	01 Oct 08
Durris Primary	Aberdeenshire	09 Sep 08	Saltergate School	Midlothian	09 Sep 08
Friarton Nursery	Perth & Kinross	29 Aug 08	St Clement's School	Highland	12 Sep 08
Giffnock Primary	East Renfrewshire	08 Oct 08	St Eunan's Primary	West Dunbartonshire	03 Sep 08
Girvan Primary	South Ayrshire	03 Oct 08	St Patrick's Primary (G65 ONA)	North Lanarkshire	02 Sep 08
Hottsbridge Primary	Dumfries & Galloway	19 Sep 08	Tarbolton Primary	South Ayrshire	12 Sep 08
Houston Primary	Renfrewshire	12 Sep 08			

Second Green Flags awarded...

School	Local Authority	Date	School	Local Authority	Date
Allans Primary	Stirling	19 Sep 08	Macmerry Primary	East Lothian	19 Sep 08
Applegrove Primary	Moray	11 Sep 08	Mearns Primary	East Renfrewshire	07 Oct 08
Bellsquarry Primary	West Lothian	29 Sep 08	Newmains Nursery	North Lanarkshire	22 Sep 08
Boghall Primary	West Lothian	03 Oct 08	North Berwick Nursery	East Lothian	17 Sep 08
Cambusnethan Nursery	North Lanarkshire	04 Jul 08	Rutherglen High	South Lanarkshire	23 Sep 08
Douglas Street Nursery	Renfrewshire	01 Sep 08	Shaw Nursery	Renfrewshire	09 Sep 08
Gretna Primary	Dumfries & Galloway	19 Sep 08	Thornhill Primary	Stirling	27 Jun 08
Kells Primary	Dumfries & Galloway	19 Sep 08	Tower Nursery	Clackmannanshire	01 Sep 08

Third Green Flags awarded...

School	Local Authority	Date	School	Local Authority	Date
Abrohill Primary	North Lanarkshire	07 Oct 08	Lawthorn Primary	North Ayrshire	01 Sep 08
Carmondean Primary	West Lothian	12 Sep 08	Quarter Primary	South Lanarkshire	24 Sep 08
Humbie Primary	East Lothian	09 Sep 08			

Fourth Green Flags awarded...

School	Local Authority	Date	School	Local Authority	Date
Richard Stewart Nursery	North Lanarkshire	03 Jul 08			

Congratulations to all of the schools listed here - we know how much work has gone into getting your Green Flag. If **your** school is thinking of going for an Eco-Schools Green Flag, be sure to have a look at the advice on the [Eco-Schools Scotland website](#). Good luck!

The Winter 2008 edition of the newsletter will have a focus on Global Footprinting - a great way of monitoring and evaluating your Eco-Schools work. We'll be featuring news from schools across Scotland as usual, so if you have a story to share, send it to [Kirsten](#) to by Friday 21 November.



All figures correct at 21 Oct 2008	Current number of registrations	3,257
	Total Bronze awards	1,840
	Total Silver awards	1,368
	Total 1st Green Flag awards	708
	Total 2nd Green Flag awards	272
	Total 3rd Green Flag awards	60
	Permanent Eco-Schools	14
	Eco Centres (with GF status)	5

NB Totals are not cumulative. The number of 1st Green Flag awards is the total number of schools in Scotland who have been awarded Green Flag status.

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