



LONGSTONE SCHOOL

Eco Schools Policy October 2023

Article 29

Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you to learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

To be reviewed October 24



Eco-Schools Policy

Longstone School is a Silver Award Eco-School. By participating in the Eco-Schools Programme we hope to encourage our pupils to care deeply about the environment (**UNCRC Article 24**) and inspire them to make a positive change in the world around them both locally and globally (**UNCRC Article 29**). Our Eco-Schools Programme aims to foster environmental awareness throughout the entire school through the curriculum and enrichment experiences.

We aim to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of our school. We want to develop responsible attitudes and commitment, both at home and in the wider community, and for everyone involved in Longstone School to work together to protect the planet we call home. (**Article 29 Respect the Environment**).

Eco-Schools NI Programme

By participating in the Eco-Schools Programme our school gains the following advantages:

- Opportunities to raise achievement, enhance learning and thinking skills.
- Encourages active citizenship.
- Gain access to a network of local delivery partners.
- Make financial savings.
- Reduce waste and litter.
- Improve the school environment.
- Reduce energy and water consumption.
- Promote healthy lifestyles.
- Involve the local community.
- Develop national and global links.

Longstone Eco-Schools Topics

Longstone's Eco-School Programme is focused around seven key environmental topics.

Biodiversity

Our pupils take action to improve the biodiversity of wildlife and plants within our school grounds and local community by enhancing the environment. Pupils learn about and value their native wildlife.

School Grounds / Outdoor Learning

Our pupils improve the school grounds to create a more stimulating environment and useful teaching resource. This topic encourages teachers to facilitate outdoor learning with the pupils.

Waste Resource Efficiency

Our pupils examine the impact of waste on the environment and explore practical means for reducing, reusing and recycling. When studying the waste topic, we think about resource efficiency. For example, we try to reduce waste first and reuse resources and then try to increase our recycling.

Energy

All members of the school work together to increase pupils' awareness of energy issues and to improve energy efficiency within the school, from simple measures like switching off equipment to more long term goals like renewable energy sources.

Global Perspective

We are working to improve our pupils understanding of the local and global impact of their way of living. We are considering the environmental, social and economic impacts of the decisions they make through the study of other countries.

Plastic-Less

We are working hard to reduce the amount of single-use plastic we use in our school.

The four items we are focusing on are:

1. Plastic straws

Suitable alternatives include cutting a hole in the milk carton and drinking milk without a straw or using re-washable cups and mugs for serving milk.

2. Plastic bags

Instead of using plastic bags for shopping, carrying lunches or P.E kits we are encouraging everyone to use bags for life.

3. Single use plastic bottles

Instead of buying water or juice bottles everyone will be encouraged to buy re-fillable water bottles. Pupils will be encouraged to re-fill their bottles at the water fountain in school.

4. We have banned the use of balloons in our school.

Seven Stages of our Eco-Schools Programme

1. Eco-Schools Committee

Our Eco-Schools Committee directs our school's involvement in the programme. Eco Schools Committee changes on a termly basis to coincide with clubs. Two School Council members are given the position of 'Eco Eagle' in order to share ideas across the two Student Leadership groups. **(UNCRC Article 12 right to an opinion).**

2. Environmental Review

Our committee regularly reviews our school's current performance in the six topic areas.

3. Action Plan

Our Eco-Schools Action Plan is based on results from full environmental reviews and outlines the actions and goals to be achieved each year. We try to use specific and measurable goals wherever possible.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress towards goals and targets are measured by pupils, we make adjustments where necessary and celebrate achievements.

5. Curriculum Work

Our Eco-Schools work enhances and complements our curriculum and teachers are encouraged to explore projects which link into our six key topic areas.

6. Informing and Involving

We have an Eco-Schools noticeboard displayed prominently in our entrance hall. We also regularly hold school assemblies which fit in with our Eco-Schools topic areas. When we have achieved success in a target area we inform our local media.

7. Eco-Code

Our Eco-Code outlines our key objectives in a fun and memorable way. This is regularly reviewed to reflect changes in our Eco-Schools strategy.

Policy Review:

This policy will be a working document for the Eco-Schools Committee. It will be reviewed in August October 23.



