

Name	Fir Park School
Local Authority	North Lanarkshire
Type	Urban SEN school
Numbers	200 pupils, 45 teachers, 30 ASNAs
Joined Eco Schools in...	We began our Eco-school work in August 2004 but we were registered some years before this.
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How did our involvement with Eco Schools come about?

As the Science teacher at the school, I originally felt that the Eco Schools programme would complement the Science curriculum and after attending 2 eco courses, initiated the project within the school. As the work developed and especially after our first eco day, other staff became more interested and involved. I found out that many pupils and staff were already involved in 'eco' tasks.



Who's involved and how we communicate

- We have one pupil from each year group (P6 to S6) on our committee.
- Staff members represent 5 different departments of the school to aid communication and pupil involvement at different stages.
- We also have a school board member and a parent member.
- We take pupil minutes and staff minutes at our monthly meetings.
- Eco information and questionnaires arising from our meetings are delivered to the whole school at registration classes and school assemblies so that everyone can be involved in the decision-making process.
- The committee has made presentations about Eco School issues to the rest of the school at assemblies.



Actual activities and topics studied

- We focused on Litter and Waste during the first year. Since then we have included School Grounds, Healthy Living and just recently Energy.
- Everyone at the school has been involved in litter picking and we sent letters to our neighbours asking them to help too. We recycle paper, cardboard, ink cartridges, old clothes and we have a compost bin in the garden. The Technical department reuse lots of old materials to make new products and the children sell items they made from waste materials in our Novelty Shop.
- We have planted flower tubs, wild flower seeds, bulbs, herbs, a rustic garden and a pitch and putt area. The school tuck shop, café, supermarket and dinner hall are healthier now and we have promoted healthy packed lunches for the pupils.
- We run an Animal of the Month project displaying information on a new endangered species each month to raise awareness of global threats to the environment.



Future plans.

- We will continue to develop all our previous topics and look more closely at Energy this year. Our S5 and S6 pupils will plan and implement ideas to save energy around the school.
- We have planned another Eco-Day before Easter 2007. We are hoping to achieve our second Green Flag by the end of the 2007 school session.

Hot tips for success...

- Develop a sharp-eye! Many Eco-activities are already going on throughout the school and in the curriculum. Make sure you notice them – you could be amazed.
- Use pupils' own ideas and don't under-estimate them. They are more enthusiastic about these ones.
- Revamp activities regularly to stop them becoming stale.
- Make recycling activities simple so they run effortlessly and permanently.
- Photograph everything – all the time!
- Let everyone know what's going on. Update whenever you can – at assemblies, registration time, in the newsletter.
- Display good work. We have our Eco-warrior, scrapbooks, photo albums and posters on show around the school.



What our Green Flag assessors thought

- Real sense of whole-school involvement and fantastic links to other initiatives such as Enterprise: eg pupils had arranged for their Eco Code to be put on to fridge magnets and were selling them as an Enterprise project, as well as greetings cards (made with paper the pupils had made themselves from scrap paper) that came with a detachable 'flower-seed impregnated' section for the recipient to plant out.
- Pupils were very much in charge of the programme. Our assessors were shown a PowerPoint presentation about the school's eco work made by the pupils themselves and the pupils were responsible for showing our assessors around the school and explaining the various eco-activities going on.
- Eco work was very visible throughout the school and there were lots of good curricular links to areas such as Art & Design, ICT and Maths, as well as lots of posters, displays and activities which were appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils concerned. The internal courtyard had been transformed into a wonderful garden with a variety of raised beds containing sensory and edible plants and pupils were in charge of maintaining it.

