

Castletroy College

Green-Schools Programme





Castletroy College and the Green-Schools Programme

Background to the Green - School Programme

Green-Schools is Ireland's leading environmental management and education programme for schools.

Promoting long-term, whole-school action for the environment
Green-Schools is a student-led programme with involvement from the wider community.

The programme is operated and coordinated by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce (FEE member for Ireland).

As the first Secondary School in County Limerick to receive the Green-Flag in 2002, following a two-year green endeavour from 2000, we are delighted to have kept up the tradition of following the given themes and applying for our Green flag every two years which we have successfully done with the leadership of many staff members and students along with the support and involvement of our whole school community following our **School Motto 'Ut Sint Unum'- 'That they may be one'** & our **Green-School's motto 'Tús maith agus glas leath na hoibre' – (A good green start is half the work)**

Our Green-Schools Programme reflects our School Ethos 'Care of the Earth and Care of Each Other'.

Themes

Every two years we engage with an allocated theme (as below) and we are currently in the second year of the Travel theme.

[Litter and Waste](#) Litter & Waste is the first theme. It focuses on litter and waste issues, encouraging a sense of responsibility

[Energy](#) looks at the steps which can be taken at school to reduce energy consumption and raise awareness of climate change

[Water](#) This theme develops awareness around water conservation and how to effectively manage this important resource in schools

[Travel](#) This theme aims to increase the number of students walking, cycling, scooting, using public transport or carpooling to school

[Biodiversity](#) looks at increasing awareness in schools of the importance of native plants, animals and habitats

[Global Citizenship – Litter & Waste](#) This theme enables schools to discover how work on Green-Schools has positively influenced our global community

[Global Citizenship – Energy](#) This theme gives schools the chance to revise Energy and look at issues surrounding energy use globally

[Global Citizenship – Marine Environment](#) This theme focuses on raising awareness of marine ecosystems and the work being done to save them

[Global Citizenship Travel](#)

This theme will allow schools to explore and discover how local actions on the Green-Schools Travel theme positively influence environments worldwide and connect with the SDGs. The Global Citizenship Travel theme will allow schools to maintain work done previously on the Travel theme.

[Global Citizenship Food and Biodiversity](#)

This theme will allow you to partake in local actions, including growing your own organic food as well as focusing on the positive global impacts of consuming locally produced foods.



The Seven Steps towards being awarded a Green Flag

1. Green Schools Committee

This directs the school's involvement in the programme. Ideally, the committee includes students, teachers, non-teaching staff, management and pupils.

2. Environmental Review

A process of examining the school's environmental impacts in order to identify targets for action and improvement.

3. Action Plan

This gives specific and achievable targets with proposed completion dates that will show real success.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Constant monitoring of the programme ensures that progress towards targets is checked, amendments made where necessary and success celebrated.

5. Curriculum Work

Curriculum materials are provided that give ideas on how to integrate environmental issues into lessons.

6. Informing and Involving

A publicity programme keeps the school and wider community involved and informed through displays, assemblies and press coverage.

7. Green Code

This is a statement of the school's commitment to environmental good habits.

In applying for the Green-Schools flag, we follow the seven steps guidelines as outlined above.

- Please see **Appendix one** for our recent completed and successful application



Our School's Green Journey to date

Eight Green Flags = 7th Renewal

Year	Theme
2000 - 2002	Litter and Waste
2002 - 2004	Energy
2004 - 2006	Water
2006 - 2008	Travel
2008 - 2010	Biodiversity
Education cuts - pause on official Green-Schools work	Current initiatives continued on a smaller scale
20015 - 2017	Litter and Waste
20017 - 20019	Energy
20019 - 2021	Water
2021 - 2022	Travel



The Role of the Green-School's Co-ordinator, Ms. Brenda Cribbin

is currently part of an Assistant Principal Role AP1- Environmental Officer.

All environmental issues and activities are carried out in association with 'The Green-Schools Programme'

It is currently my duty to coordinate the following activities:

1. Form a Green-Schools committee including e.g. pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, management and parents. This group currently meets once a week.
2. Organise an environmental review with staff e.g. through staff meetings and students on the committee and within subject classes e.g., CSPE, Religion (Ash Wednesday) TYR- Ecology, Art, Science, Languages, all practical classes.
3. Encouraging all subjects to promote and display environmental activities/projects in their subjects.
4. Design an action plan for the year e.g. reduce paper waste from September to June.
5. Monitor and evaluate targets.
6. Make environmental information/resources available to staff- this is done via online resources being made available, staff room, announcements, recycling area and environmental notice boards, previous newsletters, school website, school magazine and our school TVs
7. Informing and involving the school and wider community about environmental activities, through displays, assemblies, intercom announcements, school newsletters, and press coverage.
8. Liaise with the caretaking staff and our canteen 'School Food Company' where possible, re environmental issues e.g. Clean Schools and recycling.
9. Create days of action e.g. staff room tidy twice a year, poster campaign around the school to create a clean school, battery recycling, clean up, TLC campaign, Neat Streets campaign, Junk Couture competition.
10. Create links with other schools and recycling companies.
11. Liaise with An Taisce, our Limerick City and County Council Environmental Officer, Sinead McDonnell and outside agencies and attend yearly meetings and workshops (currently online) provided e.g., Neat streets, Water Ambassador Programme.

This document was adopted by the Board of Management on 9/5/22

Date of next review: September 2023

Appendix 1

Details of our most recent application for our Green Flag awarded in 2021

1. Green-Schools committee

Our committee is made up of students (open to all year groups) and staff (teachers, subject coordinators, School Chaplain, school secretaries and caretaking staff. Staff can be full time members or associate members, if they cannot attend weekly meetings.

We rotate the roles of secretary to give students experience and we in time hand over the chairing of the meeting to a more senior experienced student.

From our workshops, we also varied our meetings to stand up meetings, which gave extra energy and momentum to the meetings.

This year we minimised face to face meetings and had Google meets, communicated via Google classroom. We had face to face meetings with our two TY Water Ambassadors who received their full training and gained greatly from the experience.

2. Actions for Water surveys

- Calculated water usage through reading the water meter; monitoring water bills or estimating use based on everyday water use (flushing/washing etc)
 - Conducted leak tests
 - Conducted a manual water audit
 - Conducted a water use survey
 - Investigated the water pressure in taps and water fountains
 - Conducted surveys/questionnaires to gauge awareness around water conservation
 - Investigated the possibility of rainwater harvesting in the school
 - Reviewed the use of detergents and cleaning agents in the school that may be hazardous
 - Visited another Green-School - Villiers Secondary School Limerick, who have already received their Green flag to share experiences and best practices
 - Promoted and got involved in Team Limerick clean-up 2021
 - Two of our TY students trained as Water Ambassadors
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- Calculated the total number of water bottles saved from our water fountains - weekly audits and links with Math's dept.- results put on Green- Schools noticeboard
 - A review of water bottles being used by our First years showed an increase to 75 % initially and subsequently to 90-100%
 - SPHE teacher Michelle Gillan conducted a review of plastic bottles being thrown in the recycling bin on one day = 4% of school population = 50 plastic bottles

3. Three ways that you maintain and monitor your work on the Litter & Waste theme:

- Intercom announcements re clean and tidy areas and correct use of bins
- Invitation to the school community to take part in TLC- Team Limerick Clean up each year both in school and in their own communities. In 2021- we had Limerick Hurler and All Ireland winner Mr Cian Lynch as a PME student who joined us to promote TLC6
- Regular collections of used batteries by ERP and used ink and toner cartridges by Data Pac
- Shredding of confidential documents
- Reviews with our caretaking staff on better ways we can support them
- Announcements on the intercom of the total number of water bottles being saved by reuse at the 4 school fountains
- Photos of staff using reusable water bottles highlighted
- Highlighting the cleanest areas in the school in consultation with our school caretakers
- Extra bins for our First year courtyard

4. Ways that you maintain and monitor your work on the Energy/Water theme

- Intercom announcements - promoting tips for reducing energy in the home
 - Links with subjects that have energy as a topic on their curriculum e.g. Geography, Engineering, Home Economics
 - Promotion of battery recycling. We have a battery collection point at the front entrance of our school at our Green-Schools noticeboard
 - School now has sensors on all room lights that switch off on a timer if the room is not being used
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- **Action Day 1**
In preparation for our Water Flag application in 2017 we visited Villiers School, another Limerick Green School, who had just received their Water Flag. We learned a huge amount about how they promoted valuing water thanks to Deirdre Carswell and her Green-Schools team. Activities included, team building, quizzes, tour of the Green-Schools grounds, complimentary lunch and review of cross curricular links between subjects
 - **Action Day 2**
In November 2019 two members of our Green-Schools were part of our school E-mining team who went on a trip to Brussels for the E-mining competition.
 - We also had a team of TY students including our water ambassadors working along with TLC6 ambassador, teacher Mr Cian Lynch in promoting TLC6 in Limerick this year, via three Google classroom meetings and school promotions on Twitter. For April 2nd 2021(Good Friday) the whole school community were informed and invited to clean an area close to their home, within Covid 19 guidelines and to send in photos to TLC6. Resources were made available from TLC6. One student reported having her eyes being opened as to what she found at her local green - pen tops cigarette butts and a nappy.

A letter from JP McManus from the previous year of lockdown

Dear Ms Cribbin,

The unwavering commitment of Castletroy College to our city and county, through your support of TLC has been inspirational.

Your school signing up to volunteer on Good Friday is a hugely meaningful expression of community camaraderie and purpose for the betterment of Limerick.

The COVID-19 virus confronting us now is one we can face resolutely through our TLC network of volunteers. By embracing and complying with the behavioural advice being given to us by the Government, we can overcome this challenge together.

The heroic staff in the HSE and other State Bodies are here to guide us through this and I would urge all our 20,000 TLC volunteers to follow their advice and guidelines.

We can overcome this and with the correct behavioural measures and resilience we can help our families, friends and neighbours to face it down.

Next year, Team Limerick Clean-Up will be bigger and stronger than ever with you and your school's never-ending support and commitment.

Stay safe and take care,

JP McManus

5. How the whole school is informed of and involved in the Green-Schools programme

Information is shared via our school intercom rotating between members of the Green-Schools team, our Green-Schools noticeboard, class visits, electronic surveys via IT classes, school twitter @CastletroyC (photos downloaded at the end of this application) and Facebook account, school magazine, subject coordinators with a green theme, school website, Google classroom, school canteen, school food company, tutor time announcements, battery collecting competitions for Barretstown, school TVs powerpoints with water saving tips, linking in with our school E-mining team to promote reuse of phones, recycling and reduction of the need for new electrical items to reduce the effect on the countries supplying the raw materials.

6. How the wider community is informed and involved in the Green-Schools programme

Our school website, school Twitter and Facebook, An Taisce- Water workshops 2/10/19 Maldron Hotel, Feb 2021, Limerick City and County council , environmental officer emails and supports as well as organising workshops, two tree saplings received from the Tree company of Ireland, ERP and Data Pac collection of batteries and used toner cartridges.

Plans to connect with our local Tidy Towns before Covid 19, future flag raising of our Water flag, we would hope to invite back Mr Cian Lynch to assist our TY Water Ambassadors after a launch in the school of water use again and a result of our water audit in Sept /Oct 2021 along with a visit to our local river, the River Mulcair.

Resources learned about via Green-Schools twitter and Green-Schools website sent on to subject coordinators as resources for their departments. Links with other Green-Schools via Green-Schools workshops

Industry links with our waste management company- meeting in June 2020 re promotion of recycling and signage.

Our Green- Schools' Code & the Green Code for the Water theme is:

Tús glas agus maith leath na hoibre is our overall green code

Our water code is 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Relax'

7. Positive aspects we encountered while working on the programme

- Increase in students social and IT skills
- Peer mentoring - students helped younger members and developed their leadership skills

- Some students achieved a Gaisce Award following their involvement with the Green-Schools Programme
- Linking with outside companies and agencies, e.g. Data Pac, ERP Vistacon, Veolia

8. Challenges while working on the programme

- Covid 19 - severely reduced the number of Green-Schools meetings and as we had more staggered breaks at school, lunchtime meetings changed to online meetings with some face to face 5-10 min meetings following Covid guidelines
- Less guest speakers and days of action which are excellent and visible signs of the Best of Green-Schools in action