

Mark McAdoo
Mid Ulster District Council

**KEEP
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26 February 2020

Dear Mark,

Council support request for the Eco-Schools Programme in Northern Ireland 2020/21.

This letter is a request for support for the Eco-Schools programme in your council area in 2020/2021. Your continued support both financially and with staff time is highly appreciated by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and is critical to the success of the programme in educating your people on the issues of waste, litter and more recently plastic pollution in your Council area. We look forward to continuing the relationship we have established over the years which has helped cement Northern Ireland as top achiever globally in the Eco-Schools programme.

As well as educating young people in your Council area on environmental issues we wish to empower them to make informed choices, take positive action and be the change needed to ensure a sustainable Northern Ireland. We seek to give young people a platform to make their voices heard and influence their peers, communities, policy and decision-makers. The Eco-Schools programme encourages and directs young people to think about litter, waste and recycling, energy saving, water conservation, transport options, biodiversity, the natural environment they are custodians of, and make positive choices for a better future.

Impacts that we have already seen from the Eco-Schools programme are:

- 100% of schools signed up to Eco-Schools Programme which equates to 325,900 pupils in 1,134 schools here.
- 323 schools currently have the Eco-Schools Green Flag and we've seen increases from 147 in 2016/17 to 176 in 2018/19 indicating the upward trends in interest in the programme.
- 340,040 sustainable journeys have taken place since 2016 through the Translink Travel Challenge with 13,586 pupils getting involved
- 46% raised knowledge and awareness of Healthy Living topic since 2015/16
- 19% increase in awareness of Litter topic since 2015/16
- 26% of schools in Northern Ireland are flying the internationally recognised Green Flag - Ensuring a positive experience for our young people – through engaging them in actioned-based and socially-responsible learning.

The Eco-Schools programme is the world's largest environmental education programme run by the Foundation for Environmental Education. Support from local councils has been invaluable and has helped Northern Ireland schools, including those in your Council area, stand out on a global stage, excelling in a programme that now engages in excess of 20 million pupils in 51,000 schools across 67 countries.

Here in Northern Ireland it is run by environmental charity Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful with support from DAERA and all 11 local councils. Its standing with schools here is such that in 2015 we became the first country in the international programme to achieve 100% registration from all our schools. It is going from strength to strength every year however this cannot be achieved without your vital and much appreciated support.

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The support request for **2020/2021** is **£1,700** which equates to an investment of around **6 pence per pupil** in your council area. This represents only a £50 increase in fees from 2019/20 despite a significant increase in support requests from schools as the Eco-Schools programme continues to grow in popularity. Maintaining costs at this level is also an indication of our commitment to work hard to add value to your investment in our young people. We bring additional support from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, grant making bodies and other corporate and charity funders and continue to make efforts to diversify funding opportunities for environmental education in Northern Ireland.

The funding which we receive from councils across Northern Ireland is a vital part of our match funding for the grant received from DAERA to keep this important programme operational. Your funding will secure growth in the programme so every school in Northern Ireland can fly the Green Flag and the programme can grow with its young people to support them through the next level of their education in colleges and campuses around Northern Ireland.

Your continued support also ensures that Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful can offer other environmental education initiatives to schools in your Council area most notably Young Reporter's for the Environment; Single Use Plastic initiatives and the Wheelie Big Challenge, all of which contribute to schools achieving Eco-Schools Green Flag status.

It is important to note that we have so far, because of your continued support, not had to pass the cost on to schools and have been able to offer the programme and assessments for free. We hope to continue this in the future as schools come increasingly under financial pressure.

As well as the associated environmental benefits mentioned above for your funding we can provide your council with:

- A pre-existing programme to **assist council delivery of their waste and litter prevention programmes and to help councils meet waste prevention and landfill reduction targets.**
- Support councils in educating and raising awareness on litter and avoidable single use plastics that will be dealt with in forthcoming EU and (in the absence of an Assembly) UK legislation.
- The opportunity to be associated with this prestigious international environmental education programme.
- Clear linkage to Council support for young people's environmental leadership development.
- Free training for your staff to become Eco-Schools Green Flag Assessors.
- Support of Cluster Group meetings for teachers in the council area which deliver valuable information to schools progressing through the Eco-Schools programme and provide the council with opportunities to promote their own projects and build relationships with teachers.
- Attending and promoting Green Flag award ceremonies hosted by the Council which are important to schools and pupils, re-enforcing the importance of their work and introducing pupils to their local council's involvement and relevance in what they are doing in school.
- Development of the Ambassador Eco-School network in your Council area - Ambassador Eco-Schools are flagship schools driving their environmental message further into the community and mentoring other schools in their area.

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- Providing reports and statistics on schools in your Council area which are involved in the Eco-Schools programme. Biannual reports are provided to supporting councils highlighting statistics for schools and information about initiatives. We provide support for council staff and elected representatives such as responding to ad hoc queries on the status of schools in the council area.
- Access to the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful Data Hub, which puts information and statistics from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful programmes you support at your fingertips (www.keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org).
- Opportunities to promote your campaigns and activities through the monthly Eco-Schools newsletter and multiple social media channels and signposting schools to relevant council contacts on the Eco-Schools website (www.eco-schoolsni.org).
- Preference given to schools in council areas supporting the programme for promotion through media outlets.
- Allowing schools access to additional funding provided through Eco-Schools for projects such as the international Wrigley Litter Less campaign.

We can all sense that these are important times for the environment and society both locally and globally. Eco-Schools therefore will have an increasingly critical role in mobilising staff and pupils to adapt to the changes that will be required and to be part of the answer and the solution to the many issues becoming apparent. It is evident from recent developments including the Global Climate Strikes that young people also are asking for support and affirmative action. Eco-Schools provides a very practical action-based delivery mechanism for the many solutions. Working together we can all build a better future. Whilst any one of us working alone will struggle to get the critical mass needed.

Enclosed is an Eco-Schools Support Request Form. I would be very grateful if you could provide the necessary Purchase Order number by the end of January 2020 to ensure access to the benefits listed above is maintained in 2020/21.

If you require any further information or clarification on anything above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



Carol Forster

Head of Operations
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful

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Eco-Schools Support 2020/2021 Request Form

Eco-Schools Support Cost £1,700

..... Council

☐ Agrees to support the Eco-Schools Programme

OR

☐ Do not wish to support the Eco-Schools Programme

Council Purchase Order Number (required for invoicing)

Signed

Name

Position/job title.....

Date.....

Please return to:

Victoria Rowan
Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful
Bridge House
2 Paulett Avenue
Belfast
BT5 4HD

victoria.rowan@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org

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Mid Ulster District Council Eco-Schools Metrics October 2019

- Number of main schools¹ registered in council area – 123
- Number of active Eco-Schools in council area² – 72 (59%)
- Total number of pupils in council area – 28,905
- Number of pupils in active Eco-Schools³ - 20,592 (71%)
- Number of schools who have achieved the Green Flag – 71 (58%)
- Number of schools with current Green Flags – 43 (35%)
- Number of schools with lapsed Green Flags – 29 (24%)
- Green Flags awarded:
 - 2015/16 - 19
 - 2016/17 – 26
 - 2017/18 – 13
 - 2018/19 – 29 (24% awarded GF status)
- Ambassador Schools:
 - St Colm's High School (new in 2016/17)
 - St Columba's Primary School, Straw (new in 2017/18)
 - Kilronan SP School (new in 2018/19)
- Upcoming Cluster Group Meetings: Please contact Georgina.Black@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org to confirm details of Cluster Group meeting for additional promotion to schools in your Council area.
- Number of schools engaged with YRE 2018/19 – 3
- Number of schools engaged with TTC 2018/19 - 6
- Engagement with topics:

Topic	Number of Schools engaged in topic	Overall Percentage (%) of schools engaged
Biodiversity	30	24
Climate Action	6	5
Energy	31	25
Global Perspective	27	22
Healthy Living	38	31
Litter	30	24
Outdoor Learning	28	23
Transport	10	8
Waste	33	27
Water	11	9

¹ Schools that operate out of the Library Board (accurate as of 09/10/19).

² Accurate as of 09/10/19. This takes in schools involved in various ES projects, programmes and events that are working towards an Eco-Schools Green Flag and those schools that have been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag

³ Based on the average number of pupils in each school (286) multiplied by the number of active schools