

Report on	Eco-Schools Programme Support 2022/23
Date of Meeting	11 th January 2022
Reporting Officer	Mark McAdoo, Assistant Director, Environmental Services
Contact Officers	Mark McAdoo, Assistant Director, Environmental Services

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval to continue providing financial support to the Eco-Schools Programme
2.0	Background
2.1	Eco-Schools is an international award that guides participating schools on their sustainable journey, providing a framework to help embed these principles into the heart of school life. The Eco-Schools programme is an internationally recognised Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) programme now operating in 72 countries worldwide, representing more than 59,000 schools and 20 million pupils. In addition to Eco-Schools, FEE runs Green Key, Young Reporters for the Environment, Blue Flag for Beaches & Marinas and Learning about Forests as well as supporting other initiatives such as Single Use Plastics and Wrigleys Litter Less Campaign.
2.2	Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland is administered by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) with financial support from DAERA and all 11 local Councils. It is also supported by 8 sponsors and 32 Delivery Partners without whose practical support the programme could not have achieved the success and recognition it has received.
2.3	The programme encourages and directs young people to think about litter, waste and recycling, climate action, energy saving, water conservation, transport options, biodiversity, marine life, healthy living and the natural environment they are custodians of, and make positive choices for a better future.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	At the end of October 2021 the programme had 1,136 schools registered in Northern Ireland which is 100% of schools. The total number of live Green Flag awards is 358 which represents 32% of schools and is an increase of 5% since February 2021, with a greater number of schools receiving their assessment and award following reopening after Covid enforced closures.

3.2	<p>In addition to the Eco-Schools Green Flag, schools can also achieve intermediate accreditation by obtaining Bronze and Silver self-assessed award status, with at present 123 schools having achieved a <i>maximum</i> of Bronze level and 164 having achieved a <i>maximum</i> of Silver level. KNIB assessed and awarded 94 schools with Green Flags in Northern Ireland from April 2021 – June 2021. The graph below shows the percentage of live and lapsed Green Flags within each of the supporting council areas:</p>
3.3	<p>Mid Ulster Council's Recycling Officer team support schools wishing to gain Eco-School status as a means of assisting with the delivery of recycling and waste education in schools and the wider environmental message through a range of other topics e.g. litter.</p>
3.4	<p>Detailed metrics for Eco School activities in Mid Ulster are provided as an appendix.</p>
3.5	<p>Mid Ulster District Council has financially supported the Eco-Schools programme in Northern Ireland since 2015. KNIB has presented two funding options for continued support in 2022/23; Option One at £10,942 and option Two at £2,975 for the year. It is proposed that we support option two at £2,975 (which equates to an investment of approximately 10 pence per pupil in Mid Ulster). It should be noted that this is an increase in funding on previous years where £1,700 was contributed annually. The increased amount requested this year has been partially attributed to inflation which was not previously factored in. Additional Eco School staff have also been recently appointed and can offer further direct guidance to schools as a result of the increased funding.</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: The expenditure of £2,975 can be met from Environmental Services budget
	Human: The Recycling Officers assist in the delivery of the programme and are trained Eco Schools assessors
	Risk Management: None

4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	It is recommended that approval is granted to continue providing financial support to KNIB for delivery of the Eco Schools Programme to the amount of £2,975 in 2022/23.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Letter from KNIB outlining Eco-Schools Support Request for 2022/23
6.2	Report on the Eco Schools Programme for Supporting Councils
6.3	Mid Ulster District Council Eco-Schools Metrics (as at October 2021)