Eco-Schools Scotland

24/01/2023

Congratulations to everyone at Catterline Primary School for achieving your 4th Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag Award!

I thoroughly enjoyed reading through your application and learning about the fantastic work you have carried out during this journey. You have covered all Seven Elements of the Eco-Schools programme.

Staff and pupils have shown commitment and determination in completing your planned actions. Well done.

Your actions were very positive, and it is wonderful to see that the pupils have been covering a really good range of issues through their work.

The pupils have achieved a good understanding of your chosen Sustainable Development Goal, Life on Land, as well as having learned about Litter prevention, reducing environmental pollution, Waste Minimisation, Waste Management, Biodiversity, Life Below Water, Energy, and Climate Action through engaging, dynamic, and interactive activities throughout the journey.

Your Eco-Code has displayed a clear message of the school’s mission in how by contributing their time and efforts the pupils can contribute to the solutions of climate change. The Eco-code shows great input of the pupils. This is nice to see. I liked learning that the Eco-code is displayed at the community noticeboard to encourage the whole community to help look after our planet. You have used the noticeboard well sharing your eco vision, values, targets, and achievements this has helped to keep the whole school community up to date about your Eco-Schools work.

It is great to see that Learning for Sustainability is embedded within the curriculum. This has helped pupils to achieve a better understanding of how to build a socially-just, sustainable, and equitable society. This has also provided them with the opportunity to continually explore Eco and Environmental issues. Throughout the journey, staff have been able to develop a wide range of resources and materials, shared lessons that linked up to explore key ideas and shared learning opportunities across the school. The activities have allowed the whole school community to play a role in being a 'Green Flag school' and collaboration was encouraged throughout different Eco-subjects.

Your links with the community has allowed pupils to take an active role in their community to work with others to make our planet more peaceful, sustainable, and fairer. These activities have also allowed them to foster responsible behaviour within the school and wider community. They have become aware that by contributing their views, time, and talents, they can play a part in bringing about positive change in their school and wider community. The beach clean actions have helped raise awareness how as a community they can take action and develop and increase a sense of social connectedness.

Throughout the journey pupils have displayed data simply, clearly, and accurately by creating tally marks, tables, and charts, they have also carried out investigations and surveys; used a variety of methods to gather information; worked with others to collate; and organised and communicated the results in an appropriate way. These elements of Measuring and Monitoring has enhanced your work, experience, and application.

The Litter and Waste Minimisation actions have helped to increase pupil’s understanding of the harm litter brings to the environments and wildlife. The actions have also provided them with practical skills and responsibility to prevent and manage litter and waste to prevent this from happening and encouraged long-term positive behavioural change in their communities and beyond. I loved how you replaced the stickers for praise. Stickers have been made using a coating of plastic and a toxic adhesive as a result it takes decades to decompose. Well done for achieving the ‘Really Rubbish Award’. Your actions have helped to stop litter ending up in seas and oceans, harming marine life.

Carrying out waste audits has helped you to identify your methods of handling waste and to determine what improvements can be made. It is great to see this has helped you to reduce food waste. The Halloween Eek-oh day has helped to develop pupil’s understanding of the importance of reusing and how this contributes to waste minimisation. The different recycling stations has helped pupils and staff dispose their waste effectively and efficiently and diminish unnecessary waste ending up in landfills. Responsible discarding of waste has helped to protect waste from contamination and the environment from pollution. The uniform bank is a good way to keep these materials in the loop for longer. This initiative could be an opportunity for you and the pupils to discover and explore the Circular Economy: to recapture the believe of waste as an item/material with a single purpose. Donating pre-loved books to charities should help to improve the quality of life for other and build stronger communities.

Taking part in citizen science surveys has helped scientists across Scotland in understanding how the environment is doing and where more action is needed. These activities have also allowed pupils to learn the features of their local environments and wildlife. Pupils have developed a good understanding of aspects of Biodiversity and Climate Change as part of their work towards their John Muir Award. Creating bird boxes, baths, and feeders and providing different foods has encouraged a variety of birds to visit the school grounds. These activities have allowed pupils to learn about bird behaviour and needs throughout the seasons. Creating habitats of wildlife has helped develop pupil’s understanding that everything is connected in nature. This has also help them to understand that it's important to preserve their environment and how to build a healthy relationship with it.

Looking into Energy conservation has helped to develop pupil’s understanding that energy conservation is the effort made to reduce the consumption of energy by using less of an energy service and that it can contribute to reducing carbon footprints.

Growing your own foods has helped enhance the pupils understanding of how plants grow and develop; how to look after them; and how growing your own foods contributes to sustainable lifestyles. Using the harvest in basic food preparation and cooking techniques has allowed pupils to develop life skills.

The Eco-committee have been very eager to act as role models and drive the school Eco-message into the community, this shows how strongly the Eco-committee has led this journey. All pupils benefitted from a wide range of challenging, motivating, meaningful and fun learning experiences which support them to develop creativity, resilience, and independence. Their efforts throughout the journey should support them to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.

Achieving a Green Flag Award means a good amount of versatility and commitment from staff and pupils. Staff has helped to create a nurturing, inclusive, innovative, and stimulating learning environment, and a respectful and positive ethos by working closely with everyone in the school community. You have taken a unique chance to reflect on your findings, reflecting on what the pupils have learned and how to go forward.

Please, be aware that since August 2021 the topics of Litter and Waste Minimisation have merged into one. Since September 2022, the new Core Topic is Climate Action. You are still encouraged to incorporate a (Community) litter pick in your future journeys as litter picks are a simple activity to enhance pupils understanding of the harm litter can cause, provide practical skills to prevent litter from happening, and to foster long-term positive behavioural change in their communities and beyond.

Keep up the outstanding work and a big congratulations again to Catterline Primary School from everyone at Eco-Schools Scotland!

Your application was assessed by Hendrika. If you have any questions or need further advice, please contact me at hendrika.psaila@keepscotlandbeautiful.org

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