

# Create your own "School Protected Area"

## Curriculum links

SPHE, Art,  
Geography, Science,  
Maths

## Learning Objective

To think about our marine  
environment using creative  
and spatial thinking

## Materials

Measuring tape,  
chalk, pieces of  
string etc.

## Target Age

All ages

## Learning Methodology

Idea storming, spatial thinking, discussions, art,  
gardening.

## Preparation

Watch MPA video with older  
classes

As we have learned from watching the Marine Protected Area video, the aim globally is to protect 30% of our planet's lands, waters, and ocean by the year 2030. Is it possible to create your own *School Protected Area* by assigning 30% of your school grounds or school yard to nature?

This activity enables a discussion and allows creative thinking of how to increase protected areas for biodiversity on your school grounds. If your school has limited space, how could you create some protected areas? Think about spaces such as window boxes, walls, school roof, be creative and educate.

Begin with the older classes and by using measuring tape, measure out the school yard/grounds. If your school yard/grounds is large, simply measure how many footsteps make a metre, then count how many footsteps it takes to measure the school yard. Once you have measured the school yard/grounds calculate the area to  $m^2$ , then calculate what is 30% of your school yard.

Now that the students can visualise what 30% of your school yard/grounds looks like, are you able to dedicate 30% to nature? Ideally like MPA we would like to be able to dedicate a large space but if not possible would smaller spaces work? Allow discussion among students and highlight all the work your school is doing already in allowing biodiversity to flourish on your school grounds.

If your students believe they need to increase the amount of space dedicated to protecting nature, remember that simple actions like preventing litter going down a drain helps the marine environment. Here is an example from Kinsale Community College who decorated drains to raise awareness that the sea starts. Could you do this in your school?



# Create your own "School Protected Area"

After the older class groups have measured and discussed the possibility of a *School Protected Area* in your school, involve the younger classes by presenting your ideas and findings. Ask each class to contribute to your School Protected Area by protecting, planting and raising awareness of the biodiversity on your school's ground.

Here more examples of how to assign more space to biodiversity in your school and to raise awareness of how important the ocean is.



Don't forget to raise awareness by using your school website and social media and please show us your School Protected Areas by tagging us [@GreenSchoolsIre](https://www.instagram.com/GreenSchoolsIre) [#greenschools](https://www.instagram.com/greenschools)