



GREEN-SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

An Taisce – The National Trust for Ireland is the foremost environmental organisation in Ireland. Its range of interests extends from the natural heritage of land, air, water, flora and fauna, to the heritage of buildings and gardens. Through its local, national and international networks, it seeks to educate, inform and lead public opinion on the environment and influence policy and development. Strategies to achieve these aims include awareness and education projects. See below for Environmental Education Unit Programmes.

FEE (The Foundation for Environmental Education) seeks to promote environmental education by carrying out campaigns and improving awareness of the importance of environmental education. It is composed of a network of organisations which undertake individual projects in their own countries and participate in international efforts. An Taisce as the Irish member of FEE co-ordinates these campaigns in Ireland.

An Taisce's Education Programmes:



Green-Schools

www.greenschoolsireland.org



Neat Streets

www.neatstreets.org



Climate Ambassador

www.climateambassador.ie



Green Campus

www.greencampusireland.org



National Spring Clean

www.nationalspringclean.org



Learning About Forests

www.leafireland.org



An Choill Bheag

www.leafireland.org/themes/an-choill-bheag



Globe

www.globe.gov/web/ireland



Young Reporters for the Environment

www.yreireland.org



Clean Air Together

www.cleanairtogether.ie



Safe Routes to School

www.saferoutestoschool.ie



Blue Flag

www.beachawards.ie



Clean Coasts

www.cleancoasts.org



Green Flag for Parks

www.greenflagaward.org

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Message from the Green-Schools Manager

It gives me great pleasure to present the Green-Schools Annual Report for the academic year 2024-2025.

This year has been one of growth, innovation, and collective action, as schools across the country continued to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, environmental awareness, and positive change in their communities.

Throughout the year, students, teachers, and school communities have worked tirelessly to embed sustainable practices into everyday school life. From reducing waste and conserving energy, to restoring biodiversity and encouraging sustainable travel to school. Their creativity and leadership have once again shown how education can be a powerful driver of change.

The impact of the Green-Schools Programme is felt far beyond the classroom. It equips young people with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to make informed choices for a more sustainable future. It also fosters collaboration between schools, families, local authorities, and national partners.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2024-2025, we are reminded that every action, no matter how small, contributes to a larger movement towards climate resilience and environmental stewardship. This report celebrates those actions, highlights key milestones, and acknowledges the dedication of all who make the Green-Schools Programme possible.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our students, coordinators, teachers, SNAs, principals, caretakers, cleaners and partners for their enthusiasm, commitment, and vision. Together, we continue to inspire change and shape a more sustainable future for all.

-Joanne Scott, Green-Schools Manager



1. Introduction to the Green-Schools Programme



Green-Schools is an international environmental education programme, environmental management system, and award scheme for primary and secondary schools. In Ireland, it is operated by An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit in partnership with Local Authorities nationwide. The Green-Schools programme is student-centred and promotes long-term, whole-school action for the environment. Based on the EU's Eco-Management and Auditing System (EMAS) approach, it offers a clear and practical framework for schools to integrate environmental issues, climate action and global citizenship education into both their curriculum and daily operations.

At the heart of Green-Schools is the voluntary dedication of student advocates and their teachers, who drive the programme forward with energy, creativity, and commitment. Through their involvement, students engage with key environmental themes and are empowered to take meaningful climate action within their schools and local communities. In addition to environmental knowledge, participants develop vital 21st-century skills including critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, leadership, teamwork, and communication.

The Green-Schools programme provides students with valuable opportunities to lead campaigns, express their views, and influence positive change on issues they care about. These experiences not only enhance personal growth but also contribute to the development of a generation equipped to lead innovative and collaborative responses to the climate crisis. Supporting the development of these skills is essential for ensuring a more sustainable future.

This report highlights the achievements and developments of the Green-Schools programme during the 2024–2025 academic year. It reflects the strength of collaboration among schools, coordinators, local authorities, funders, and partner organisations—working collectively towards a shared goal of environmental stewardship and systemic change.

Looking ahead, Green-Schools remains committed to empowering young people to become active citizens and environmental leaders in their schools, communities, and beyond.

1.1 International

Green-Schools – known internationally as Eco-Schools – is coordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). FEE is an international umbrella organisation with one national member organisation per country representing FEE at a national level and charged with implementing FEE programmes such as Eco-Schools nationally. FEE currently has 98 member organisations in 77 countries worldwide. Eco-Schools is currently being run by member organisations in 73 countries throughout the world. 'Eco-Schools' began in 1994 as a pilot project in the UK, Denmark, Germany, France, and Portugal and was introduced to Ireland by An Taisce in 1997.



1.2 Programme Stages

1. Registration: If a school wishes to take part in the programme, they must register with An Taisce. A Green-Schools coordinator must be appointed, and the registration form should be signed by the school's Principal to show support for the programme.

2. Implementation: Successful implementation of the programme is based around a seven-step methodology which is similar to the EMAS and ISO 14001 environmental management systems.

3. Application: If a school wishes to apply for a Green Flag (the award for the successful implementation of the programme) they must submit a written application to An Taisce outlining how they have applied the seven-steps of the programme successfully within their school.

4. Assessment: Schools applying for the award also undergo an assessment visit from An Taisce or the relevant local authority which offers the school an opportunity to showcase what they have done and a chance for the assessor to certify their achievements.

5. Award: Feedback from the assessment visit is subsequently submitted to An Taisce where a final decision is made on whether to award the Green Flag to the school. If successful, the school is invited to attend a Green-Schools award ceremony where they will be presented with the Green Flag which is a recognised best practice eco-label for schools.

6. Renewal: The award of a Green Flag is valid for a period of two academic years – by which time a school will need to have added a new theme to its programme and submitted a renewal application to continue to fly the flag. A new Green Flag is presented to the school on successful completion of the renewal process and the two-year cycle starts again.

1.3 The Seven Steps

The 7-step process is the framework used by schools to implement the programme and ensure it is effective and sustainable. Schools adopt and adapt the steps as is practical for their particular situation. The 7 steps are outlined below:

1. Committee: The Green-Schools Committee aims to direct and address all phases of the Green-Schools Programme. It is the driving force of the programme and should ensure that all of the 7 steps are carried out.

2. Review: The aim of the review is to identify the initial situation within the school regarding the environmental theme under investigation (e.g. litter and waste, energy etc.).

3. Action Plan: The action plan aims to identify goals and provide a structured timetable for the reduction of the environmental impacts identified through the implementation of a series of actions.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation: Monitoring of the Green-Schools programme ensures progress towards targets is checked, amendments made where necessary and success recognised.

5. Curriculum Work: Schools are encouraged to integrate the Green-Schools programme with the curriculum work of various classes when and where possible.

6. Informing & Involving: The aim of step 6 is to encourage the spread of the Green-Schools message throughout the whole school and the wider community and directly involve as many students in the programme as possible.

7. Green-Code: The Green-Code is a statement of the objectives that summarises and demonstrates a school's commitment to environmentally friendly actions.



1.4 Support and Partnership

The Green-Schools programme is supported and sponsored by a variety of public and private organisations, many of which are linked to a specific theme or aspect of the programme.

Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

The Green-Schools programme is supported by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.



Local Authorities

The Green-Schools programme operates in Ireland in partnership with local authorities who have been involved with the programme from the very beginning. An Taisce principally works with Environmental Awareness Officers in each administrative area to ensure schools receive the best support available. In addition to practical support, each local authority contributes financially to the programme on an annual basis.



Department of Transport

The Travel theme of the Green-Schools programme is funded by the Department of Transport.



Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The Global Citizenship-Marine Environment theme is supported by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.



National Parks and Wildlife Service

The Biodiversity theme of the Green-Schools Programme is supported by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.



Irish Aid

The Global Citizenship themes of Litter and Waste and Energy are supported by funding from Irish Aid.



Uisce Éireann

The Water theme of the Green-Schools programme is sponsored by Uisce Éireann.



The Wrigley Company

The Wrigley Company is a subsidiary of Mars and a long-term sponsor of the Green-Schools programme, investing in education and awareness around litter and waste issues.



EirGrid

The Energy theme was re-introduced this year with support from EirGrid, already offering many educational interventions to schools working on the theme.



1.5 Green-Schools' themes

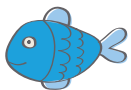
The Green-Schools programme operates on a thematic basis as schools add a new theme to their programme following award and renewal of the Green Flag every two academic years. Litter & Waste is the first theme that schools focus on, and the most recent theme to be added to the programme is Global Citizenship Food and Biodiversity.



1. Litter & Waste – Schools initially examine the impact of Litter and Waste on the environment and explore practical means for reducing and minimising the amount of litter and waste produced by the school while also increasing recycling and exploring



6. Global Citizenship Litter & Waste – offers schools an opportunity to revisit the original Litter & Waste theme to review and improve its application within the school while also encouraging schools to explore litter and waste issues in a global context.



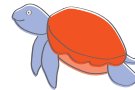
2. Water – Implementation of the Water theme increases awareness of water conservation, supply, protection and pollution issues among schools and offers practical ideas, actions and solutions on reducing consumption levels and increasing sustainability.



7. Global Citizenship Energy– offers schools an opportunity to review the original Energy theme within the school and also encourages schools to explore Energy in a global context.



3. Travel – Green-Schools Travel promotes walking, cycling, carpooling and other sustainable travel initiatives on the journey to school, and encourages health, safety and fitness within the school community.



8. Global Citizenship Marine Environment– focuses on raising awareness of the global issue of Litter and the impact it has on the environment.



4. Energy – The Energy theme focuses on conservation and efficiency and encourages schools to increase awareness of energy issues and make low-cost and no-cost changes to improve energy efficiency within the school.



4. Global Citizenship Travel offers schools an opportunity to review and maintain their actions in relation to sustainable travel to school, whilst exploring related global issues.



5. Biodiversity – The Biodiversity theme examines the flora and fauna present in the school environment and suggests ways schools can raise awareness of biodiversity issues and increase biodiversity within and around the school.



10. Global Citizenship – Biodiversity & Food focuses on food literacy, food security along with associated global issues, and the role nature has in producing our food.

2. Growth



2.1 Registration and Flags

There are currently 3,548 schools and centres registered and active in the programme, and 3,395 of these have been awarded at least one green flag*. 89.6 % of schools in Ireland are now registered and active with Green-Schools. An impressive 81.9% of secondary schools are now registered and active with the programme, 85% of primary schools are registered and active and the remainder consists of a small number of pre-schools and adult education centres.

86 long term deferred schools re-engaged with the programme in 2024-25 and a total of 22 new schools signed up for this year.

*It should be noted that during the 2024-25 academic year, the archiving of long-term deferred schools, who had been inactive on the programme for several years, was carried out. These schools were removed from the Green-Schools database. As such, the figures below may be lower than reported in previous years, but more accurately reflect the number of schools and centres actively engaged with the programme.

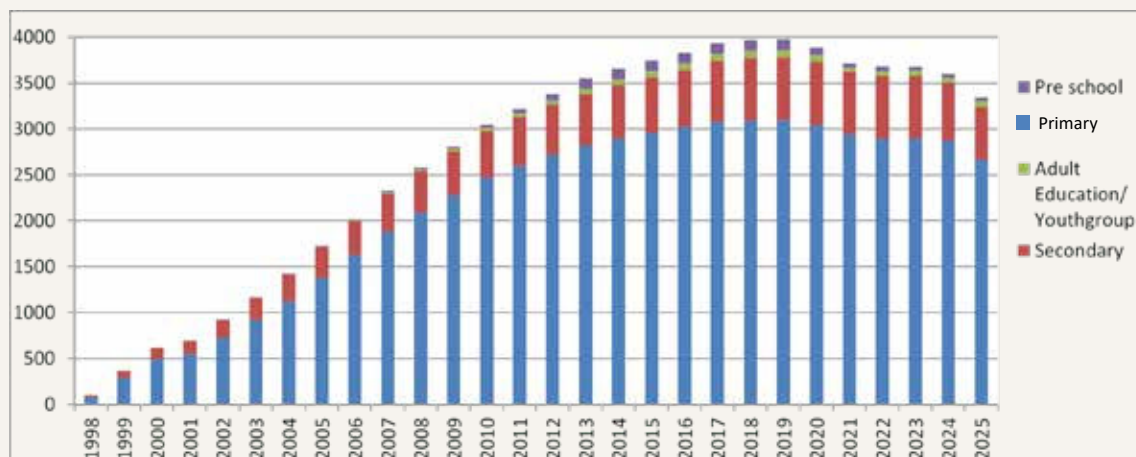


Table1: Numbers of schools/centres awarded the green flag. (*Not all registered entities are included in the categories below.)

Numbers schools/centres awarded the Green Flag	Total
Overall	3395*
Primary Schools	2668
Secondary Schools	587
Special Schools	69
Adult Education Centres	18
Pre-Schools	36

During the academic year 2024-2025, a total of 734 schools were awarded the Green Flag and 32 schools were awarded their first Green Flag.

Table 2. Flags awarded per theme

Green Flag awarded per theme	Total
Overall	734
Litter & Waste	58
Water	77
Travel	97
Energy	1
Biodiversity	116
Global Citizenship- Litter & Waste	112
Global Citizenship- Energy	76
Global Citizenship- Marine Environment	70
Global Citizenship-Travel	70
Global Citizenship- Food and Biodiversity	42
Green-Schools Primary Climate Ambassadors	15

3. Activity

3.1 Engagement

During the academic year 2024–2025, engagement in the Green–Schools programme remained strong, with schools across the country actively participating in a wide range of initiatives. Many schools expanded their actions beyond the classroom, fostering community partnerships and hosting events that promoted climate awareness and sustainable practices. Established online offerings such as Teacher Training Seminars, Marine Week, and Biodiversity Week remained popular. The increased offerings in Irish have been much appreciated by schools and this will expand further when translation of the handbooks continues.

Green–Schools Irish Language Officer

This is a new role created to promote the use of the Irish language throughout the Green–Schools Programme, enhancing the educational outreach, improving language resources, and supporting the engagement with Irish-medium schools across Ireland.

One of the most important initiatives has been the integration of Gaeilge into the Green–Schools themes and projects. This has involved auditing, improving, translating and creating key Irish language resources for each theme, including activity sheets, surveys, quizzes and educational videos. As a result, students from Gaeltacht regions and in Irish-language schools across the country can now engage with environmental materials as Gaeilge.

There are 253 Irish language medium schools registered on the Green Schools Programme. This is 77% of the Irish medium schools in Ireland (without the six counties included). We have published a significant amount of Irish language resources this year either being translated internally or by a translation service included in this the newly design Irish handbooks will be launch in January 2026 with sponsorship from an Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG), Eirgrid and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Within Green Schools and An Taisce, there has been a concerted effort to improve in, promote and be creative with the Irish language amongst staff. The staff of An Taisce are a multi-national group and use this to an advantage in understanding where we are in the world.

“We are delighted to see a huge increase in the amount of resources available in Irish. And we were delighted that our renewal visit was mainly conducted through Irish.”

–Scoil Náisiúnta Mhín Tine Dé.



Oifigeach Gaeilge Chlár na Scoileanna Glasa Is ról nua é a cruthaíodh chun na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn sa chlár Scoileanna Glasa, cur le for-rochtain oideachais na Gaeilge, achmhainní Gaeilge a fheabhsú agus tacaíocht a thabhairt d'ionad gaelscolaíochta timpeall na tíre. Ba é an cuspóir is tabhachtaí ná iomlánú na Gaeilge i dtéamaí agus i dtionscnaimh Clár na Scoileanna Glasa. Ina dteannta seo bíonn, iniúchadh, feabhsaithe, aistriúchán agus cruthú na n-acmhainní Gaeilge le haghaidh gach téama ina náirítear bileog oibre, suirbhéanna, tráth na gceist agus físeán eolais. Mar thoradh ar seo, tá scoláirí ón nGaeltacht agus i ngaelscolaíochta timpeall na tíre, in ann topaicí faoin gcomhshaoil a gabháil trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Tá 253 ionad gaelscolaíochta clárithe le Clár na Scoileanna Glasa. B'in é 77% d'ionad gaelscolaíochta na tíre seo (gan an sé contae san áireamh). Tá méad mór achmhainní Gaeilge foilsithe againn imbliana agus iad aistrithe go hinmhéanach nó le seirbhísí aistriúchán ina dteannta sin beidh na lámhleabhar nuadeartha gaeilge á seoladh againn i mí Eanáir 2026 le hurraíocht ón gComhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG), Eirgrid agus an Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht.



Mapa gaelscoileanna agus gaelcoláistí na Scoileanna Glasa

3.2 Green-Schools Projects

This was the first year schools that completed all ten themes of the Green-Schools Programme moved onto our Green-Schools projects. Over the last two years, the first schools to complete all themes moved onto Primary Climate Ambassadors which has since been adapted as a Green-School maintenance project. Fifteen schools were awarded Primary Climate Ambassadors in 2025 with a further twenty schools in the second year of the project.

The suite of projects on offer was expanded in the 2024-2025 academic year as a further 48 schools moved to Green-Schools projects. 41.6% of schools progressed to Primary Climate Ambassadors with the remaining schools signed up to a pilot project. A total of ten projects were on offer for schools for 2024-2025 with plans to further expand projects to meet demand as numbers increase in the coming years. In 2025-2026, a further sixty schools will commence the projects phase of Green-Schools. 33% will progress onto Primary Climate ambassadors whilst the remainder will be split across the other nine projects.

The projects assigned in 2024-2025 included:

1. GSP Primary Climate Ambassadors
2. GSP SeaKeepers
3. GSP LEAF
4. GSP Nature Restoration
5. GSP Little Green Fingers
6. GSP Travel
7. GSP Global Goals Go Local
8. GSP Fast Fashion
9. GSP Climate Smart
10. GSP Lets Fix Fashion

Each school works on the assigned project for one full academic year followed by a year focusing on the renewal and maintenance of previous green flags.

3.3 Assessment Visits

To receive the first Green Flag, or renew the Green Flag award, each school must undergo an assessment visit. If a school is applying for their first flag, the assessment will be arranged following their initial application. If the school is renewing the award, the assessment can take place at any stage during the second year of the renewal period. This visit is an opportunity for the school to showcase all the work they have done on the relevant themes and for the assessor to verify that the school has completed an appropriate level of work, and also to offer them guidance and feedback. The visits give the schools an opportunity to really showcase their work to the assessor in a more personable way. The assessor can get a real sense of how embedded the programme is in the school.

3.4 Applications

Schools are also required to fill-out and submit an application for the first Green Flag and subsequent flag renewal every two years. Applications are reviewed in detail by An Taisce staff with recommendations for further actions, and positive feedback sent to each school. Standardised thematic application forms and guidance notes are available for all themes.

The online application platform allows Green-Schools Coordinators to apply digitally and save their information as they progress through their current theme on an ongoing basis.

3.5 Awards

The 2024/25 annual Green-Schools award ceremonies took place throughout the month of May in 12 locations across the country. 58 schools received the first Green Flag for their work on the Litter and Waste theme. 1 school renewed their Green Flag on the theme of Energy. 77 schools renewed on the Water theme. 97 schools received the Green Flag for their work on the Travel theme. 116 schools received the Green Flag for Biodiversity and a further 112 schools received Green Flags for the Global Citizenship Litter and Waste, 76 for Global Citizenship Energy, 70 for Global Citizenship Marine, 70 for Global Citizenship Travel and 42 for Global Citizenship Food and Biodiversity. Fifteen schools were awarded a green flag for their work on Primary Climate Ambassador project over the last two academic years. Overall 734 schools were awarded with a Green Flag this year.

The award ceremonies were held in Dublin, Louth, Donegal, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Athlone, Mayo and Galway. The awards were attended by approximately 3,000 students, staff and parents around the country who were presented with their green flag and certificate on the day.



3.6 Training and workshops

3.6.1 Teacher Training Seminars

Each year Green-Schools delivers a series of seminars for teachers coordinating the programme. The seminars are theme specific and provide teachers with an introduction to the relevant theme and tips for how to apply it successfully to their programmes. Teachers are also notified of any new initiatives within Green-Schools. This is also an opportunity for teachers to talk to their peers and share experiences. Secondary schools specific seminars were introduced in 2023 which allows both students and teachers to attend. The Environmental Awareness Officers for each Local Authority get the opportunity to share local information and green initiatives. Some Local Authority areas were combined in 2023/2024 to make the process more efficient. 6 seminars were delivered online this year by Green-Schools staff, over 570 teachers attended online and 74 attending the secondary students seminar online.

The seminars were delivered by Green-Schools Officers and consisted of a 45-minute PowerPoint presentation covering an introduction to Green-Schools, and the structure and initiatives of the theme. Videos, activities and resources were highlighted, as well as information on workshops and events throughout the year. Followed by a 10-minute introduction to the Environmental Awareness Officer for each local authority in simultaneous breakout rooms.

Online teacher training seminars allow greater flexibility and allow for additional support sessions split into primary and secondary for new schools starting out. In addition, a one-off online "Renewal clinic" seminar was held on 26th February 2025, to provide additional guidance for teachers preparing to apply for the Green Flag award.

3.6.2 Climate Change, Science and Action summer course

The 'Climate Change, Science and Action' teacher summer course ran from 1st July to 22nd August 2025 and teachers who registered for the course completed 20 hours of work in their own time between the aforementioned dates. This EPV approved course, developed for primary teachers was fully accredited by Drumcondra Education Centre on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. The course aimed to empower primary teachers to confidently explore climate change as part of the curriculum and encourage climate action in school communities. The major benefit of this online course was the potential to reach teachers in remote locations, connect meaningful experiences that would otherwise never be in the same 'room', and enrich the overall engagement. The course consisted of 5 modules:

1. Introduction to Climate Change
2. Climate Science
3. Climate Solutions & Communications
4. Green-Schools
5. Climate Action

Teachers completed learning logs for each of the 5 modules and a final assignment and evaluation was submitted on completion of the course. Only 9 teachers completed the course this year, a significant drop from previous years. This will be an area of focus for the coming years. Green-Schools face to face course did not run this year due to low numbers.

3.6.3 Green-Skills week

The Green-Schools secondary school officer carried out extensive research with secondary schools during the 2022-2023 and compiled a report with recommendations on how we can improve resources and engagement for secondary schools. These recommendations are based on feedback directly from student focus groups. The need for skills training for committee members, such as "how to run a Green-Schools committee meeting", "how to start a communications campaign in your school", and "how to send an email to senior management" were common themes among the feedback. Based on these requests Green-Skills Week was first introduced in 2023, to great reception, and was repeated in November 2024. These online workshops, aimed at secondary school students, addressed the topics below:

- How to run a Committee Meeting, assign roles and take minutes i.e. effective meeting skills
- How to start a communications campaign in your school,
- How to run a school campaign for a wider audience, bring your message home and to the wider community.
- Making your voice heard – getting your message across in writing
- Facilitation skills

As the recordings of 2023 and 2024 are available on the Green-Schools Youtube channel, topics and delivery of Green Skills Week are under review for the next academic year.

3.6.4 Litter and Waste Workshop

In May 2025, we hosted an end of year workshop in one of the participating Litter and Waste secondary schools, Newbridge College. Over 50 students took part in the event, which aimed to deepen their understanding of how pollution affects biodiversity and wildlife in their school grounds and wider community. The workshop featured three interactive stations; a Litter Pick, River Testing and a Biodiversity Blitz. As the school is located on the River Liffey, these activities offered a hands-on experience that directly tied to the local environment. Each student was equipped with a litter picker, gloves, hi-visibility vest and a bag. Small groups targeted different areas of the school's grounds, focusing especially on the riverbank and the playing pitches. Together, these activities gave students a holistic understanding of the local environmental issues and the importance of taking action at a community level. To finish up the workshop, students completed an Action Plan Worksheet, where they reflected on their learning and outlined group actions they intend to take moving forward.



Neat Streets Workshop Newbridge Workshop

3.6.5 Green-Schools Water Workshops

Virtual Water Workshops

At the beginning of the 2024 – 2025 academic year, all Year 1 Water schools were sent a link to a folder called “Virtual Workshops” with three sections for gaelscoileanna, primary and secondary schools.

The virtual workshops allow teachers (both primary and secondary) to facilitate a water workshop themselves in class, at a time convenient to them. The content includes narrated PowerPoint presentations, recorded by Green-Schools Water Officers, and informative videos and information about water treatment, and campaigns such as Think Before You Flush and Think Before You Pour. It also contains instructions for a range of water conservation activities and games, such as how to carry out a litter clean-up, how to test the water quality in a local river or how to raise awareness through a Walk for Water event. A custom-made quiz is included for the students to test their knowledge at the end of the workshop. We were happy this year to provide an Irish language version of the primary school workshop content as well, to facilitate the participation of gaelscoileanna.

The virtual Water Workshops were distributed to 92 Year 1 Water schools around the country in October 2024. Based on an average of 22.5 students per class (Department of Education Statistical Bulletin, July 2022) and two teaching staff, we can conservatively estimate a reach of 2,070. However, this does not take into account the high likelihood of teachers sharing this resource with other classes within their school, and a small number of additional teachers who specifically requested a link to the folder on an ad-hoc basis throughout the year.

Regional in-person Water Workshops

The Water Workshops allow Green-Schools staff to educate students directly about water conservation and to provide ideas, tips and practical tools for them to use in school and implement as part of their Green-Schools programme, as well as facilitating an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning.

Six regional workshops took place at venues around the country (Dublin, Cork and Limerick) between November 2024 and January 2025. Water schools in the locality were invited to apply for spaces at these workshops (typically five attendees per school). The workshops were aimed at Green-Schools committee members from primary and secondary schools working towards their Water flag.

The regional workshop typically runs from 10am – 1:30pm and includes icebreaker games, a talk about the Water flag and water conservation, water saving tips, experiments, water quiz, action planning and a guest speaker from Uisce Éireann (where available). In total, 240 students and teachers attended the regional Water Workshops.



Primary School Regional Water Workshop held in Dublin

Examples of Water Workshop Feedback 2024 – 2025

The feedback regarding the Water Workshops was extremely positive, with teachers praising the interactive, hands-on nature of the workshops, with plenty of practical ideas provided for activities that could be carried out back in school.

Samples of the feedback received is included below:

“The hands-on activities are great motivators and the kids and teachers thoroughly enjoyed them.”

“The water workshop was brilliant.”

“Four of our pupils from our Green Schools Committee took part in a Water Workshop in the Lifetime Lab in Cork. This was an amazing experience for our pupils”

“We had the privilege of attending a water workshop run by Green Schools in January 2024, which was an incredible event to take part in. The children who attended the workshop came away inspired with lots of practical and theoretical ideas for our water theme.”

3.6.6 Green-Schools Marine Workshops

Seven regional Marine Workshops, for primary schools on the Global Citizenship Marine Environment theme, were held around the country in November 2024, in Cork City, Clonakilty, Kilkenny, Stillorgan, Tallaght, Castlebar and Letterkenny.

The workshop content included:

- A general introduction to the marine environment and the importance of protecting marine ecosystems
- An introduction to marine litter and a litter sorting activity
- Tips on reducing single-use plastics
- Upcycling plastic collage activity using plastic waste collected by the schools. This year we also introduced the “Plastic Footprint” activity, whereby each student was given a footprint outline to add their plastic rubbish to, highlighting their personal plastic footprint. These had magnets on the back so they could be taken home and displayed on the student’s fridge to raise awareness in their household
- Marine good-news stories
- Overview of the Seven Steps of the Green-Schools programme
- Action planning activity to inspire the students for when they returned to school

Right: Students show off their plastic footprints at a marine workshop in Tallaght.

One-hundred and fifty-nine primary school students and teachers took part in the Marine workshops this year. Each school group was given a gift of a non-fiction book about the oceans, “The Atlas of Ocean Adventures” and each student received a Green-Schools badge and a bamboo toothbrush.

Participating teachers rated the workshops on average 4.8 out of 5 stars, based on twenty-three responses, for how beneficial they were for the students. Feedback was very positive, noting that the workshops were engaging, informative and hands-on, comments include

“Thank you so much. It was a very enjoyable and informative day, we all feel full of enthusiasm now!” and “The day was very helpful and inspirational”.

In addition to the in-person Marine Workshops, all primary schools on the theme were given access to an online shared folder containing the “Life Below Water” virtual workshop content. This four-part online workshop contains narrated presentations, videos and activities covering an introduction to the marine environment, marine litter, the impact of climate change on the ocean, and global citizenship.



3.6.7 Secondary Schools Beach Workshop

An exciting event we held this year, was our beach workshop for secondary schools students, which took place at Bull Island, Co. Dublin on 22nd October, in collaboration with Clean Coasts. Secondary schools working on the Marine flag, and those previously awarded Marine, were invited to register for the workshop, which ran from 10am until 1:30pm. Thirty-six students and six teachers from three Dublin secondary schools took part in the event. After some quick introductions and health and safety briefing, all participants were given a Green-Schools beanie hat, and the group walked down to Dollymount Strand, where they were divided into three mixed-school groups which would spend the morning rotating at thirty-minute intervals between three activity stations.

Station 1: Ecology BioBlitz – at this station, Green-Schools facilitators provided an introduction to sandy shore ecology, as well as to the sea birds and wading birds that can be seen in Dublin Bay Biosphere. Students were provided with identification guides for bivalves and seashore species, and were provided with “bioblitz” activity sheets, and encouraged to survey the seashore to see what species they could find.

Station 2 – Beach Clean-Up – this station was led by Clean Coasts Officer, Richard Curtin. Students were given an introduction to marine litter and plastics, common sources of marine litter, ways that litter makes its way into the sea, and the impact which it can have on marine ecosystems and wildlife. Students were provided with a clean-up kit, including bags, gloves and litter pickers, and carried out a clean-up along Dollymount strand.

Station 3 – Nature Photography Skills – at this station, students received tips on composing a photograph from professional photographer, Conor Healy. Students were given a “nature photography prompts” guidance sheet and were encouraged to look around the area and use their mobile phones to compose interesting photographs of nature, and people interacting with nature. Students were encouraged to use their photographs to enter the Marine Spatial Planning Photography Competition.

The groups rotated three times until everyone had visited all three stations. At the end of the workshop the group gathered for a discussion and debrief before having a well-deserved picnic lunch on the beach!



3.6.8 Green-Schools Energy Workshops

In February and March 2025, we carried out our first ever regional energy workshops. These workshops brought together schools working on the energy theme in their area to share ideas and learn about energy. We carried out three primary school regional workshops and the fourth was a secondary school regional workshop. These took place where clusters of schools working on the energy theme are present, in Galway, Athlone and Carlow, for the primary workshops and in Cork City for the secondary school workshop. In total 11 schools around the country attended the regional energy workshops, this amounted to 70 students and 18 teachers taking part. The workshops were well received by students and teachers alike.



3.6.9 GC Teacher Training

A one-day workshop titled “Problem Solving for Global Justice” at Maynooth University (April 2025) trained 31 pre-service teachers using design thinking, LEGO Serious Play, and systems thinking. 97% reported increased knowledge and confidence in teaching GCE. The workshop will evolve into a certified 3-day module in October 2025. Two teacher designathon workshops in Wexford and Waterford engaged 10 teachers in hands-on SDG 12 and circular economy training. Teachers reported an average 44% increase in confidence and significant gains in knowledge and problem-solving. A broader CPD survey (499 teachers) found demand for flexible, affordable formats (especially online summer courses) and practical content on green skills and global citizenship.

3.6.10 GC Initial Teacher Training

A one-day workshop titled “Problem Solving for Global Justice” at Maynooth University (April 2025) trained 31 pre-service teachers using design thinking, LEGO Serious Play, and systems thinking. 97% reported increased knowledge and confidence in teaching GCE. The workshop will evolve into a certified 3-day module in October 2025.

Left top: Energy workshop, Spring 2025; Left bottom: Circular economy workshop

3.7 Green-Schools Water Ambassador Programme

The programme is open to secondary schools nationwide that are on or have achieved the Green-Schools water flag. It seeks to engage teachers and students from 1st – 6th year, through the provision of training, support and resources in water conservation issues. The aim is to empower students and teachers to spread awareness on water related issues throughout their school and into their wider community. Thus, increasing understanding, changing habits, and improving use and conservation of our rivers, lakes, seas and treated water coming to our homes and communities.

Green-Schools put the call out for participants to the water ambassador programme in September 2024 and interested students had until Friday 4th of October to apply to the programme. All applicants were required to have a support teacher in place to attend events and assist them with their work.

This year we accepted the highest number of water ambassadors ever, with 181 students participating from 43 secondary schools from all over Ireland. We also had 67 teachers sign up to support their water ambassadors in their endeavours to raise awareness around water topics in their school and surrounding community, which is consistent with the previous year's high participation rate. The chosen participants were divided into four regions for the duration of the programme: Southern, Dublin, Eastern/Midlands, Western/Northern.

The water ambassadors and accompanying teachers received in person training in each of the regions in water related issues.

This year we changed the format to allow the students an opportunity to engage in smaller groups with the topics. We had four stations at each training session: fast fashion and its impacts on water resources, water conservation with Uisce Éireann, water quality with LAWPRO and GLOBE, Think Before You Flush with Clean Coasts. A large part of the training sessions is dedicated to imparting skills that will help water ambassadors and teachers spread awareness. For example, they learned how to develop a campaign, put together an action plan and spread awareness using various communication techniques. At the end of each of the training sessions each water ambassador received a joint branded water ambassador hoodie.

	River Health	Water Conservation	Fast Fashion	Think Before You Flush
What did I learn?				
How do I feel?				
What would I like to do?				



Above: Images from the Water Ambassador training sessions 2024-25.

Water Ambassador Programme (cont'd)

As some of the schools which registered were unable to attend the in-person training, we provided an online training session on the 26th of November, which 8 schools attended. An essential part of the water ambassador programme is to submit progress reports so that Green-Schools can assess the students' progress, identify their interests and where they need help. We provided an online support session, which was designed based on the information from these reports and organised for January. The sessions encourage peer-to-peer learning as they provide the opportunity for students to share progress on their campaigns, future campaign ideas and any problems they encountered. Green-Schools staff also provide further information on their listed interests and helped water ambassadors find a topic of interest and create relevant campaigns that effectively engage their target audiences.

To complete the programme final reports are required and the deadline this year was April 3rd. These reports detail all the work carried out by ambassadors and allow runner up and regional water ambassadors to be chosen from each region and awarded at a special water awards ceremony. All water ambassadors who complete the programme receive a certificate and are informed that they may be invited to attend future Green-Schools events in their capacity as water ambassadors.



Above: Images from Water Ambassador Training Sessions in Dublin (on left) and Cork (on right)

Water Ambassador Programme (cont'd)

1. Dublin Region

*Jose Vacas Ruiéal, Diarmuid Ó Maoláin,
Cormac ó Cába agus Clíodhna Ní
Leannacháin*

Gaelcoláiste Reachrainn

Is sárghrúpa iad daltaí an Choiste Glas Gaelcoláiste Reachrainn. Is cosúil go raibh gach seachtain mar mheitheal acu chun gníomhachtaí caomhnú Uisce a chur ar bhun agus a spreagadh in a bpobal scoile. Cuireadar 3 Seachtain na Timpeallachta ar siúl don phobal scoile uilig le haoichainteoirí, gníomhachtaí móra scoil, comórtaisí ealaíne agus taispeantaisí eolais.

Seaseadar i bhfód an bleachtair (detective) ag aimsiú na fadhbanna ba mhó a raibh sa scoil i dtaobh cur amú uisce agus na fadhbanna a bhí bainte le hiompar daoine i dtaobh cur amú. Bhí laghdú 637,938 litres idir mhéan usáid uisce na scoile ó 2023-2024 go 2024-2025! Dochreite!



Above: Gaelcoláiste Reachrainn Water Ambassadors

2. Eastern and Midlands Region

*Megan Murray, Emily Pullen, Cormac Tormey
Ratoath College, Meath*

Cormac, Emily and Megan have taken creative steps to promote water awareness in their school. They created an original water awareness video, highlighting general challenges, as well as their school's context and practical ways to help protect this most precious resource. To further engage students, they organised a "Water Week" campaign. This included a documentary screening, a sustainable clothes swap event, a water-themed exhibition and a Walk for Water to raise awareness about global water access issues. Their work not only educated their peers but also fostered a sense of shared responsibility for water conservation within the school.



Above: Water workshop by Water Ambassadors, Cormac, Emily and Megan

Water Ambassador Programme (cont'd)

3. Southern Region

Seán O' Donovan, Pearse Ó Cróinín, Jacob Wallace, Cillian Twomey

Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh, Cork

Jacob, Mark, Cillian, Séan and Pearse have been actively involved in raising awareness about water conservation and environmental responsibility. As part of their "Walks for Water" initiative, they led First Year Physical Education classes on a 6km walk along the Lee Fields, highlighting the impact of littering and pollution on local water sources. During the walk, students collected rubbish using litter pickers and sorted waste for recycling, reinforcing the importance of protecting our waterways. They also carried out peer tutoring sessions, where they delivered presentations to junior students on the importance of water and practical tips for reducing water usage. Looking ahead, the ambassadors plan to organise beach clean-ups to continue raising awareness about marine litter and its environmental consequences.



Above: Litter pick-up carried out by Water Ambassadors from Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh, Cork

4. Western and Northern Region

Cora Cassidy, Alyssa Cleary, Annie Warnock, Ruby Kerins

Magh Éne College, Donegal

Alyssa, Cora, Ruby and Annie are the Water Ambassadors for Magh Ene College. Supported by TY students and a group of 5th year girls, they led several impactful initiatives to raise water awareness. One of their standout events was a Christmas Fast Fashion Pop-Up Stall, where they promoted the idea of "pre-loved fashion" to highlight the environmental cost of fast fashion, including its high-water usage. The stall encouraged reusing, swapping and buying second-hand clothing. Proceeds from the event were donated to charity, reinforcing both the environmental and social values of the campaign. They also organised a large-scale Walk for Water involving approximately 125 students and staff from 1st, 2nd and TY years. The walk was designed to build empathy for those facing challenges accessing clean water while reinforcing the importance of water conservation in daily life.



Above: Photos from pre-loved pop-up at Magh Éne College

3.8 Green-Schools Marine Ambassador School

At the beginning of the academic year, secondary schools working on the Global Citizenship: Marine Environment theme were invited to apply for the role of “Marine Ambassador” school – to act as leaders on the theme and take part in training and awareness raising opportunities throughout the year. Errigal College in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal were selected as the Marine Ambassador school for 2024 – 2025.

To kick-start their term as Marine Ambassadors, the students met online with the Green-Schools Marine team in November, 2024. This online meeting provided the students with an introduction to the Global Citizenship Marine Environment theme, marine biodiversity and marine litter. The seventy students and seven teaching staff who made up the committee were gifted Green-Schools beanie hats and Marine Ambassador hoodies, as well as a treat of marine-themed cupcakes! The school were asked to write an article for the Green-Schools Newsletter in November to introduce themselves to the Green-Schools network.

In February, the Marine Ambassadors took part in a Green-Schools workshop which was held in Errigal College and Rathmullan Beach, Co. Donegal. Green-Schools Marine officer, Friederike Eimer, was joined by Clean Coasts Officer, Sinead Keogh, twenty-two students and two teachers. The day started with a presentation on the marine environment, an introduction to Clean Coasts, a true/false marine walking poll and an activity to help the students learn the skill of writing a letter. After a short snack break, the students were given a research project topic and received training on how to design an infographic. After lunch, the group travelled to Rathmullan beach by bus and spent the afternoon carrying out a beach clean, working on a waste degradation game, and observing the biodiversity of the beach.



Green-Schools Marine Ambassador School (cont'd)

The Green-Schools Coordinator and committee members from Errigal College attended the National Green-Schools Marine Environment Conference in Sligo on Thursday 3rd April 2025. Members of the Green-Schools committee presented their Green-Schools work on stage. The highlight of their presentation was the performance of the song which was part of their 'Bottle Back' campaign. The 'Bottle Back' campaign tackled single-use plastic waste, encouraging the community to recycle their plastic bottles, reduce usage of plastic bottles and encourage use of reusable bottles.

Errigal college also wrote an article for the Green-Schools newsletter at the end of the school year to reflect on their year as the Marine Ambassador School. It was a positive learning experience for the committee and they enjoyed their role. In their article, the committee said :

“Going forward, we hope to use our enhanced communication and campaigning skills to raise awareness further and encourage more people to get involved in protecting our precious marine environment. This ambassadorship has truly empowered us to be effective environmental advocates”.



3.9 SeaKeepers Project

The SeaKeepers Project is an optional module of the Global Citizenship: Marine Environment theme focusing on marine biodiversity. Teachers who register their classes for the project receive a suite of resources on the ecology of six native marine species. A sample of students from participating classes take part in a "species identification survey" both before, and after taking part, using the resources to test baseline knowledge and measure the impact of the intervention on student knowledge. SeaKeepers aims to give students a grounding in marine biology, and to introduce them to some of the species they may spot along the Irish coast. The lessons fall under the Living Things and Environmental Awareness and Care strands of the SESE curriculum. The project was initially piloted in 2019, and has continued to grow in popularity year on year. We now have two sets of six species that we can offer on alternating academic years, allowing classes to take part over the two years of working on their Marine flag. This academic year, participating schools received resources about the basking shark, oystercatcher, limpet, bladder wrack, mackerel and grey seal.

This year, participating classes each received a gift copy of the book "Blue Planet II", to encourage participation in the Project and curiosity in class about marine biology. At the end of the Project, one class was selected at random to receive a free beach exploration workshop. All classes who submitted their repeat survey received a certificate of achievement in the post. Classes who completed their SeaKeepers Project in Irish, also received their certificate in Irish.

For the 2024 - 2025 academic year, 90 classes from 56 schools nationwide, registered for the SeaKeepers Project and completed the baseline survey. 1,712 students took part in SeaKeepers this year, based on class numbers reported by participating teachers. The winning class was 2nd class at Urlingford N.S., who enjoyed a free beach exploration workshop at Tramore, Co. Waterford, in June!



SeaKeepers Project (cont'd)

Overall, the feedback from participating teachers was extremely positive, 53% of the teachers that answered our feedback survey said that their students showed a significant increase in knowledge and understanding since beginning the SeaKeepers Project, and 47% said their students showed a moderate increase. Teachers rated their students' enjoyment of the project as 4.6/5 stars on average. 94.1% of teachers surveyed would recommend the project to another teacher. The average rating score from teachers for the project was 4.7/5 stars. Sample feedback from participating teachers, 2024 – 2025:



"I loved the accompanying resources with these lessons. Very child friendly – colourful and pitched at an appropriate level for the senior classes in primary school!"



"My pupils have very little access to the sea and I feel like they benefited from this."



"Really enjoyed these lessons and felt that they were so beneficial for our classes. Given our location in Donegal, we felt the children really enjoyed them and were eager to talk to us about some of their own experiences with these animals. Both classes completed group projects on the animals and presented them to the class"

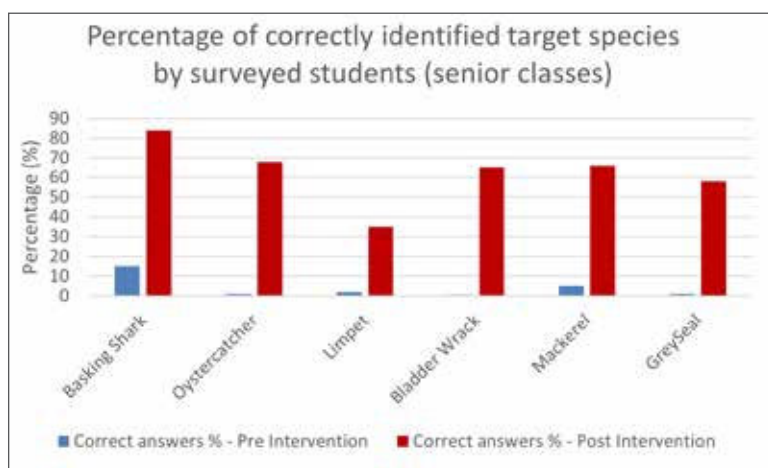


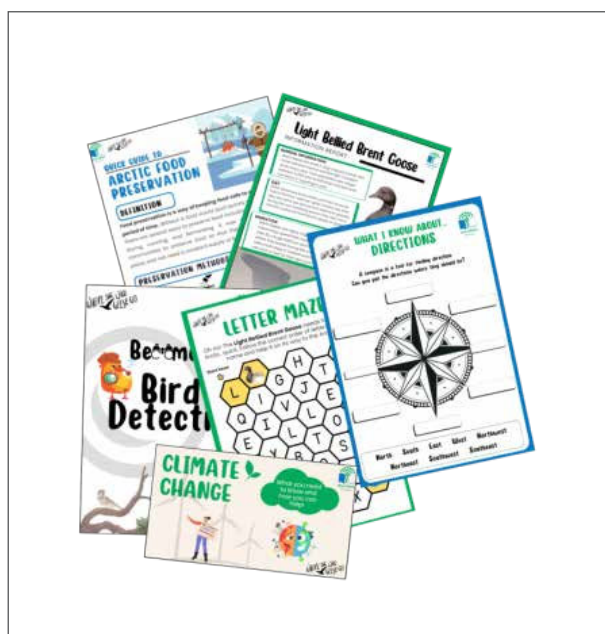
Fig. 2.1 Percentage of students surveyed who were able to correctly identify target species pre- and post-intervention (senior classes)

3.10 Where the Wild Geese Go

At the beginning of the academic year, Green-Schools Marine team created 84 brand-new brand new educational resources as part of a collaboration project with TV production company EZ Films, to support their children's documentary series "Where the Wild Geese Go". The series, which aired on RTÉ in October, features thirteen ten-minute episodes, which follow the journey of a flock of brent geese from their wintering grounds in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, all the way to their breeding grounds in Arctic Canada. Along the way, viewers meet the people and places, the geese pass by on their epic journey, across Ireland, Iceland and Greenland, before they arrive in northern Canada.

Green-Schools developed a suite of teaching resources to accompany each episode; the resources can be accessed through an interactive website, www.rte.ie/geese, and are available in both English and Irish. The resources are aimed at various age groups within primary schools, and include quizzes, literacy and numeracy worksheets, bird identification guides, debating worksheets and more. The links between each episode and the Green-Schools Programme, and the Sustainable Development Goals, are

highlighted on a resource pack overview sheet for each episode. The series and resources were promoted to schools working on the Global Citizenship Marine Environment theme, and the wider Green-Schools programme. This project has added greatly to the bank of resources available for schools and promotes global citizenship, citizen science and conservation actions.



Sample "Where the Wild Geese Go" resources.

3.11 Lets Fix Fashion

The 2024–2025 academic year marked the fifth successful year of the Green-Schools Let's Fix Fashion Campaign, an initiative that empowers secondary school students to engage critically with the issues of fast fashion and sustainability. Open to all secondary schools working on the Litter and Waste and Global Citizenship themes, this year's campaign engaged 35 schools, including five schools from Kenya, further expanding the campaign's international reach. Students from both countries collaborated on practical solutions, sharing experiences around textile reuse, upcycling, and circular innovation combining education, creativity, and real-world action to challenge the fast fashion industry. JSS school in Dubai also contributed to the final catwalk event with a live presentation of their junk kouture entry.

The campaign was structured around four virtual events, each accompanied by tasks for students to complete. The thematic focuses were:

- Impacts of Fast Fashion
- Upcycling and Repairs
- The Circular Economy
- Clothes Sharing and Reuse

The Let's Fix Fashion campaign launched during SDG Week 2024 with resources linking fast fashion to the Global Goals and a student handbook. A key initiative, "Second-hand September," challenged students to buy charity shop outfits for €24 to promote sustainable shopping. During Climate Action Week, 2,500 students and teachers participated in screenings of Inside the Shein Machine, followed by a webinar featuring Kenyan and Irish speakers. Students then led awareness campaigns in their schools.

Workshops and webinars throughout the year focused on upcycling, circular economy principles, and student-led initiatives like swap shops. Partners included FASH Forward, Mamukko, and designers like Jessica Brennan. Green-Schools supported students in developing sustainable fashion solutions and leading change in their school communities.



Lets Fix Fashion (cont'd)

The Brú Ború final catwalk event celebrated six schools' year-long sustainability efforts. Students showcased charity shop or upcycled fashion looks under €30 and received certificates. With 150 attendees, the event featured talks, a swap shop, and hands-on stations promoting reuse and repair skills.

The Let's Fix Fashion Instagram (@GS_letsfixfashion) which launched in September 2024, promotes sustainable fashion, student achievements, and events. The account highlights fast fashion issues and supports youth-led action, aiming to grow engagement and collaboration as a platform for storytelling and awareness.



Participants from the Let's Fix Fashion Catwalk Event

3.12 Global classrooms

In 2024–2025, 982 students across Ireland, Kenya, South Africa, and the UAE engaged in five key events including a global launch and SDG-themed actions. Activities focused on child-led, design-thinking approaches to SDGs, intercultural learning, and student empowerment. Key outcomes included a 64% teacher-reported improvement in global citizenship and a 52% boost in student confidence. The programme validated peer-led learning and cross-border solidarity. South African youth engagement was enhanced through the Innovate Challenge Fund, supporting digital storytelling and tech access for Eco-Schools.



3.13 Global Goals Book Club

Global Goals Book Club expanded to 93 teachers and reached ~7,573 students in 2024–2025. Four new SDG-themed books were introduced, with support from authors like Yuval Zommer and Eoin Colfer. A library pilot with Kildare Libraries will provide class book sets. The “Changemakers Chill Corner” at the Green-Schools Awards celebrated book club engagement. Plans include expanding to Irish-language titles and broader access



Left: Global Classrooms Carrigboy NS Visit; Right: Global Goals Book Club chill out zone

3.14 Secondary School and Third Level Young Reporters for the Environment

To celebrate 30 years of the International YRE programme, some exciting updates and changes to the Young Reporters for the Environment competition for the 2024-2025 school year were announced.

New Competition Theme

Green-Schools committee members were encouraged to report on the importance of restoring our planet's ecosystems to help support the important work that FEE is undertaking as part of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration.

Changes to Competition Categories

Adjustments to the YRE international competition categories were made to futureproof the programme. The addition of a new podcast category strengthens young reporters' media and communication skills and allows to connect on a more nuanced and personal level with people affected by environmental issues in their community as well as with people who have in-depth environmental knowledge. Articles were expanded to include not only print or traditional media articles but also online articles such as blogposts and extended Facebook posts. Photos has expanded into 3 subcategories; single take, staged campaign and photo story's. Videos now include a 1 minute Tik Tok, reel of vlog and must include a call to action.

Workshops were held throughout the year providing journalistic skills in storytelling, print, photography, videography and podcasting. The volume of entries to the competition in 2024/25 trebled with entries focusing on fast fashion, illegal dumping, nature restoration and biodiversity loss. Students were awarded a framed certificate along with their prizes and vouchers up to the value of €2,000 cumulatively at the Green-Schools Global Citizenship awards in Hotel Kilkenny on May 15th. Yuming Lian, a student from Belvedere College national winner in the photography category for his picture titled 'Golden Fawns' has since been published to the Phoenix park gallery and has been shortlisted for an international award. Five students from Athlone Community College were also shortlisted for their video 'The choice' highlighting illegal dumping in Co. Westmeath. Winning articles, video's and photos can be viewed at <https://yreireland.exposure.co/>



3.15 Environmental Awareness Officer Meeting

28th January 2025

The Green-Schools team hosted an in-person meeting with Environmental Awareness Officers (EOOs) from Local Authorities to build on our partnership and to plan for the year ahead at the Wood Quay Venue in Dublin City Council. Cathy Baxter, the Director of the Environmental Education Unit at An Taisce opened the meeting and highlighted the prominent role Local Authorities have played in the Green-Schools programme since the beginning. It was a great opportunity to discuss everything that's going on in each theme, including upcoming events, the new Green-Schools Projects, preparing for upcoming Renewal visits and to hear from EOs about the challenges and successes they experience with schools. Feedback from EOs was that they found great value in the day and look forward to this meeting becoming an annual event.



4. Communications & Publicity

4.1 Green-Schools Website

The Green-Schools website, www.greenschoolsireland.org, features dedicated theme pages, a searchable resource database, an online application system and a shop, along with a prominent news and events section.

The 2024/25 academic year was the first full school year with the redesigned Green-Schools website, www.greenschoolsireland.org. The website features a calendar overview, dedicated theme pages, a searchable resource and case studies database, an online application system and a shop, as well as a prominent news and events section. The Department of Environment and Climate Communications logo is displayed in the 'Sponsors and Supporters' bar at the bottom of the website's home page and other pages throughout the site, along with the various other sponsors of Green-Schools.

The response to the improved site navigation and features has been overwhelmingly positive, through anecdotal user comments as well as evidence in analytics data.

In the one year between summer of 2024 and early July 2025, the Green-Schools website exceeded 222,000 page views, with an event count of 585,645 from more than 24,000 users. The resources search engine is ranked second in pageview listings under the website homepage.

4.2 Green-Schools and Social Media

Green-Schools has a very visible social media presence and utilizes a variety of social media channels to share news and events across a scope of audiences. These platforms include Twitter/ X, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, as well as Tiktok and LinkedIn.

The wide range of social media platforms used ensures that the theme resources and other information are available and accessible to a wide audience.

The Green-Schools brand identity has been fully integrated into social media posts through carefully crafted graphics to further enhance brand recognition online.

X(Twitter)

X (formerly Twitter) is a fundamental element of the Green-Schools' social media presence. Schools, classrooms, teachers and older students are vocal and engaged through Twitter and it remains an active and valuable Green-Schools channel. At the end of the academic year the Twitter account had 11.3k followers, with 230.5K overall impressions throughout the year.

Green Schools Twitter presence benefits all themes of the programme both in our ability to promote events and raise awareness as well as to hear from schools and amplify the work they are doing.

Social Media (cont'd)

Facebook/Instagram (Meta)

As of 30 June, the Green-Schools Facebook page following remains strong and growing, with more than 7k page followers. The Instagram account has 5,087 followers, an increase of more than 700 from the year before.

In addition to the main greenschoolsire account, a designated Instagram page was created for Green-Schools Water, Green-Schools Travel and the Let's Fix Fashion project in autumn of 2024. This was in response to diluted content on the main page, with various Green-School initiatives competing for space. The uptake was wholly positive, with each account gaining between 170 and 325 followers in the first year.

These Meta accounts have an average of 85% followers from Ireland, which is our main target audience. The Facebook Green-Schools Coordinators Group remains active and has over 910 members this academic year. The closed group gives us direct contact with the members and was used during the 2024/2025 academic year to promote events linked to all themes including call to action weeks and competitions, as well as teacher training courses and seminars.

LinkedIn

The LinkedIn showcase page is a subpage of the EEU LinkedIn page. The purpose of the page is to highlight the many professional connections we have within An Taisce, as well as with GS stakeholders, in addition to advertising job opportunities within Green-Schools. The page has 754 followers as of 15 July, 2025, a 35% increase on the previous year.

Video

The Green-Schools YouTube account received 34,500 views in the past academic year, an indication of the value of the platform in sharing educational material with schools. The account has grown significantly this year to 855 subscribers, a 14% increase on the previous year.

Social media campaigns of note

Litter and Waste Social Media Campaign

In September 2024, we launched a new social media campaign, No Waste Wednesday, to support schools working on the Litter and Waste theme. The social media initiative was launched to serve as a weekly reminder to students to take small meaningful waste-free actions where they can. The campaign has received growing engagement and helps to reinforce the message that sustained small actions can lead to change. Each Wednesday new tips and examples to reduce waste are shared on the Green Schools Instagram account and the Green Schools website.



4.3 Green-Schools Newsletter

The Green-Schools Newsletter is issued monthly to 7,390 contacts including schools, Local Authorities, sponsors, partners, environmental organisations, the International FEE Network and members of the public.

The newsletter provides information about upcoming events, achievements, news, deadlines and competitions, and is also a chance to report on the work going on around the country in schools. During the 2024/2025 academic year, eleven newsletters to the mailing list were published. The newsletter can be subscribed to directly from the Green-Schools website homepage and is promoted at events including the teacher training seminars throughout the year.

4.4 Press Media Coverage

The Green-Schools programme received an abundance of positive coverage across all media throughout the 2024/2025 academic year. This included national television, radio, online news and media as well as regional news coverage, including newspapers and radio. While the exact extent of coverage is difficult to ascertain, an estimate would be more than 200 articles across various aspects of the Green-Schools programme, including regional news pieces for the winners of national competitions such as Marine Spatial Planning Poster Competition, Water Schools of the Year and the Let's Fix Fashion Campaign's catwalk event.

4.5 Green-Schools Theme Handbooks

The Green-Schools theme handbooks are a valuable resource for schools and serve as a guiding reference for Green-Schools committees while working on their individual themes.

A redesign was undertaken at the start of the academic year, with a view to update all information, refresh the look of the layout, and make the handbook accessible digitally, for online reading or printing individually.

The aim was to give each handbook a fresh look, appealing to both students and teachers, while ensuring the digital version and printed copies have minimum impact on the environment, in keeping with the ethos of the organisation. The work was completed by The Factory and has been well received by schools around the country. Additionally, the project has been cost effective in saving printing and postal costs, while also being more sustainable in the reduction of printed material.



Green-Schools redesigned handbooks

5. Events

5.1 World Water Day and Walk for Water 2025

To mark International Day of Action for Rivers (March 14th) and World Water Day (March 22nd) and raise awareness for the sustainable management of rivers, lakes and other freshwater resources, a variety of online and in-person events were held throughout the month of March.

As part of this, Green-Schools hosted Walk for Water events in three locations across Ireland. Walk for Water is an annual event held around World Water Day, where students are encouraged to walk a 6km route carrying up to six litres of water. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the journey that women and girls, in water-stressed regions, must undertake every day, to collect drinking water for their families. The events also highlighted the important role that local rivers and lakes play in supporting our ecosystems and creating spaces for recreation and joy for local communities.

An event guide was also shared with all schools to encourage them to carry out their own Walk for Water events to raise awareness about safeguarding freshwater resources in their local communities. The Green-Schools regional Walk for Water events were held in Howth (Co. Dublin) and Salthill (Co. Galway) on March 19th and Lee Fields (Co. Cork) on the May 2nd. In Howth, 100 secondary school students and teachers participated in a 5km walk up the Hill of Howth. The event in Galway had 48 primary school pupils walk along the Salthill Promenade, carrying up to six litres of water each. The walk in Cork was attended by 28 students from local secondary schools. Representatives from Uisce Éireann attended each walk, which were led by Green-Schools staff members.

The Walk for Water events provided students and teachers an opportunity in each region to meet, share ideas and enjoy an active day-out, learning about and appreciating nature and reflecting on the privilege of being able to access clean drinking water straight from the home-tap. There was an increased emphasis on appreciating nature during this year's walks.

The Walk for Water event in Lee Fields, Co. Cork received media coverage in the Cork Safety Alerts. The article focused on celebrating the value of fresh water and raising awareness about people around the world who live without access to drinking water. The Green-Schools event in Salthill, Co. Galway was covered by Midwest Radio. The local walk by students of Scoil Mhuire, Abbeyleigh was covered by Laois Nationalist newspaper.



Walk for Water events in Lee Fields, Co. Cork (top) and Salthill, Co. Galway (bottom)

5.2 Comhrá ar son Uisce

This series of talks is aimed at senior primary and secondary school students; to gain insight into the relationship people have with our water in Ireland. Any (senior) primary or secondary school with an interest in Water was invited, but the focus was on gaelscoileanna who are on the Water theme or who are involved in the Water Ambassadors Programme, the Let's Fix Fashion Programme, and Young Reporters for the Environment. We ran three sessions and have plans for more in the next school year.

Comhrá 1: le Eanna Hyland as Clár Uiscí na nÚdaráis Áitiúla (LAWPRO)

Session 1: Based on registration 322 students attended

Cuireamar an lucht féachana ag smaoineamh faoin gceangal láidir saibhir idir sinne, an ithir agus an uisce. Bhí caint ar an dtionchar abhíonn ar uiscí de bharr feirmeoireacht iomarcach agus an athrú athagann ar bithéagsúlacht agus stádas as tuisce le seo.

Comhrá 2: Le Daithí Brooks

Session 2: 15 registered school groups

Bhí béim láidir sa chomhrá seo ar an athrú a bheidh ag teacht agus a bhfuil ag tarlú cheanna féin dár dtimpeallacht. Bhí trácht ar chonas feasachta a mheadú agus nasc níos láidre a cothú le uiscebhealaí intíre na tíre trí spóirt agus am a chaitheamh ina dteannta. Dhéan Daithí comparáid idir uiscebhealaí in Eirinn agus i dtíortha eile ar nós Peiriú agus an chinéal brú orthu i leithe an feirmeoireacht thar timepeall orthu.

Comhrá 3: Le Ríon Hannora, dearathóir faisean

Session 3: Based on registration 139 students registered

Ghleas Ríon daoine mór le rá, ar nós CMAT, Kate Nash, PJ Kirby agus an banna ceoil Biird, i bhfeistis gréagach agus iad déanta as ábhar athchúrsáilte agus le teicstílí ruaimnithe go nadúrtha le hábhar ar nós síolta avocado agus craiceann liomóin. Sa chomhrá, chuir sí béim ar an laghdú ar idiú uisce a bhfuil bainte le fabraic atá déanta cheanna féin a athúsáid. Luaigh sí na ruaimeanna sinthéiteach a dhéanann an dochar d'uisce agus na roghanna eile a chuireann sí chun feidhme chun an tuisce a choiméad glan.



D'iarr Meadhbh, an tOifigeach Gaeilge, ar na haochainteoirí abairt a thabhairt dúinn ar thábhacht comhrá ar son uisce óna n-éarnáil féin, caighdeán uisce agus an bithéagsúlacht in uisce, gníomhú ar son na haéiríde agus an éarnáil faisean.

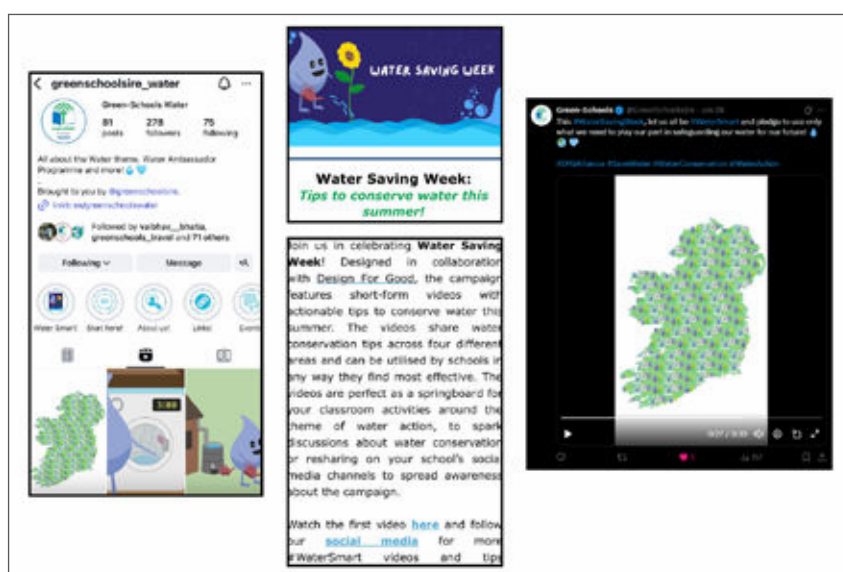
5.3 Restoring Rivers Webinar

To celebrate the International Day of Action of Rivers, a webinar with Ellen Murphy (Community Water Officer with LAWPRO) was organised on March 13th. The conversation focused on how water quality can be improved by using nature-based solutions. "Nature-based solutions harness the power of nature to boost natural ecosystems, biodiversity and human well-being to address major societal issues, including climate change," (WWF). Ellen along with the Water team showed how the health of Ireland's rivers can be improved by harnessing the power of nature. They shared positive examples of river restoration in Ireland and throughout the world. This session was aimed at secondary school students. Approximately 85 students attended it live

5.4 Water Saving Week 2025

Green-Schools Water Theme in partnership with Design For Good delivered the Water Saving Week campaign in June 2025. The campaign was run through the Green-Schools social media channels on Twitter/X, Facebook and Instagram and shared in Green-Schools Summer Newsletter, with the goal of engaging students and teachers to recognise the ways in which they use water. The campaign featured short-form videos with actionable tips to conserve water in the summer. The resources share water conservation tips across four different areas and can be utilised by schools in any way they find most effective. The videos are perfect as a springboard for classroom activities around the theme of water action, to spark discussions about water conservation or resharing on school social media channels to spread awareness about the campaign.

The campaign posts received a total of 1,718 views on Instagram reels, 614 impressions on Green-Schools X and a reach of 340 on Facebook.



Above: Water conservation videos shared on Green-Schools social media channels and newsletter for Water Saving Week 2025

5.5 Marine Week

Green-Schools Marine team were delighted to celebrate the fifth annual Green-Schools Marine Week, which took place from Monday 31st March – Friday 4th April, 2025. Initiated in 2021, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this online campaign has evolved into the main event of the Green-Schools Marine calendar year, and continues to see high engagement year-on-year. Schools nationwide take part in the campaign, both through their own activities in class and by taking part in the online talks and activities hosted by Green-Schools throughout the week. This year, 343 teachers registered their classes to take part, totalling 10,796 student participants, based on the class numbers provided by teachers on registration.

Each day brand new activities were added to the Marine Week webpage, including daily “Ocean Wonders” video presentations. This year we focused on polar species: elephant seal, arctic tern, cod, polar bear and krill. The videos covered an overview of the ecology of the species, and the threats facing them, such as climate change, melting sea ice and overfishing. Each Ocean Wonder was accompanied by a “Draw with Rob” art tutorial, showing how to draw these animals. As well as these videos, a number of new downloadable resources and activity sheets were created, including: quizzes, a cuardach focal (Irish language word-search activity), a factsheet on invasive species and a “Where’s Whaley?” picture search game. Secondary school students could avail of daily “Marine Career Profiles” giving examples of careers within the marine sector and insights from professionals in those fields. This year’s career profiles included: Marine Advocacy Officer, Professor of Zoology, Green-Schools Marine Officer, Citizen Science Officer at the National Biodiversity Data Centre and Freediving Instructor.

Green-Schools Marine Week!
31st March - 4th April 2025

Join us online each day for brand new Ocean Wonders videos, “Draw with Rob” tutorials, Marine Career Profiles for Secondary School students and much more! Read below to see our schedule of live webinar events and a taste of the new resources we will be releasing...

MONDAY 31ST

- 11:30 Zoom Webinar: Victoria Poppleton, Marine Invasives Officer, National Biodiversity Data Centre
- 13:45 Marine Week Watch-along! Join us live for a special screening of Episodes 1 & 2 of Where the Wild Geese Go

TUESDAY 1ST

- 11:30 Zoom Webinar: Jenny Bartoluzzi, Shark Ecologist
- Winners of Marine Creative Writing Competition announced!

WEDNESDAY 2ND

- 11:30 Zoom Webinar: Olive O’Flaherty, Clean Coasts Officer & Big Wave Surfer
- Where’s Whaley? activity
- Green Wonders: Arctic Tern

THURSDAY 3RD

- National Marine Environment Conference, Sligo!
- Craífhocal ar Mhuirípeaíocht na hÉireann
- Marine True or False activity

FRIDAY 4TH

- 11:45 - Secondary Schools Online Marine Film Club & Webinar: “Sonic Sea” documentary & discussion with Dr Martin Mulholland
- Marine Week Quiz!
- ALL WEEK - Share your photos and tag Green-Schools #marineweek25 on social media for a chance to win spot prizes!

With thanks to our special guests & contributors...

Logos of special guests and contributors: National Biodiversity Data Centre, Clean Coasts, Green Schools, NREDC, DIAS, and others.

Marine Week (cont'd)

We held five live online events as part of Marine Week, including three educational webinars for senior primary students, a “watch-along” screening event for primary schools and on Friday, we hosted a secondary school Marine Film Club event. For this event, we screened an 18-minute documentary, “Sonic Sea”, which investigates the impact of underwater noise pollution on whales and dolphins. Following this screening we had a webinar from Dr Martin Möllhoff of Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. Martin is a seismologist, and recently carried out research into the ability to monitor fin whale presence by detecting their calls as they vibrate through the Earth’s crust. After his webinar, students were invited to submit questions. One-hundred and forty-seven secondary school students joined this event (based on figures reported by the attending teachers). Three students were awarded voucher prizes for the questions they submitted.

As well as the resources and live events, the winners of the Marine Creative Writing Competition were also announced in a special video on the second day of Marine Week, and schools were also invited to engage with us on social media using the hashtag #MarineWeek25 to be in with a chance of winning a marine-themed book bundle. On Friday, schools could take part in a Marine Week quiz and download a certificate of participation to print and display in their classes. Overall, the week was highly successful, full of fun and learning about a wide range of marine topics.



Marine Film Club, left; Marine Week webinar, right

5.6 Green-Schools National Marine Environment Conference

The 2025 National Marine Environment Conference took place on Thursday, 3rd April, at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Co. Sligo.

All primary schools working on the Marine Environment theme were invited to apply for spaces at the conference through an online application form. Schools could apply to bring one class group, from senior primary level (3rd – 6th class). Over 130 students attended from nine schools around the country. Participating classes showcased their school projects on marine topics to other schools attending the conference.

The conference was opened by Joanne Scott, National Green-Schools Manager, followed by a welcome address from Conall O'Connor, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The schedule included games and activities including "Sounds of the Sea" and the "Blue Flag Beach Challenge" game. Marine Ambassador school, Errigal College, Letterkenny, gave a fantastic presentation about their "Bottle Back" campaign, which encourages students to avail of the ReTurn bottle recycling scheme, they even demonstrated their "Bottle Back" campaign song and dance. While Gartan National School, from Churchill, Co. Donegal, delivered a brilliant presentation all about their Green-Schools work and their project into deep sea animals!

The keynote presentation was given by special guest, Macdara Ó Cuaig, fisheries scientist at the Marine Institute, Oranmore. Macdara gave a fascinating insight into his experiences at sea and the life of a fisheries scientist. Also in attendance, were Clean Coasts and the Think Before You Flush campaign, and the Marine Institute's Explorers Education Programme.

The conference showcased the hard work being carried out by schools around the country, and the substantial knowledge that the students working on the Marine Environment theme have acquired. The conference received highly positive feedback from both students and teachers, with one teacher commenting "We really enjoyed the day and learned loads." The teachers highlighted the keynote presentation, viewing other schools projects and the presentations from the two marine schools, as the highlight of their day. We look forward to putting together another exciting programme for the 2026 conference.



Images from the 2025 National Marine Environment Conference.

5.7 National Biodiversity Week

To celebrate National Biodiversity Week 2025, Green-Schools Ireland ran a week-long programme of events throughout the school week of May 19th to May 23rd. The Biodiversity Week event reached schools in every corner of Ireland and, in its fourth year, again proved to be extremely popular.

Our event page for the week- ([Welcome to Biodiversity Week 2025 | Green-Schools](#)) provided schools with everything they needed for the week.

We had a daily quiz during the week that invited students to guess the Irish animal being described by a student in the 1930s from the "Schools Collection" on ducas.ie.

We also held a series of webinars which focused on the connection between nature and dark skies and the methods used to record urban wildlife. In addition to the webinars, we had resource sheets for both junior and primary students which had ideas for outdoor activities, spotter sheets, interactive quizzes and craft activities. There were 1,562 visits to the event page during the week which provided access to the fact files and resources. While we can not measure the number of visitors who took a resource and carried it out with their class- there is the potential for over 1000 classes to have engaged with a biodiversity activity.

We also had two prerecorded "Draw Along" videos which featured a demonstration of how to draw a Robin and a Frog. These videos were available in English or Irish. This was the second year that we featured multiple resources and activities that could be completed in Irish.

A total of 85 classes joined during the live webinars with a further 33 individuals/classes watched back the recordings after the live event on the Green Schools YouTube channel and 533 individuals/classes watching the "Draw Along" videos.

Assuming that on average each webinar or video viewing was indicative of an audience of approximately 20 students (although most classes would in fact be likely to contain > 25 students) it is roughly estimated that >13,00 individuals engaged with our Biodiversity Week webinars and videos.



Right: Images from our Biodiversity Week webinars and schools engaging in Biodiversity Week activities.

5.8 National Tree Week 2024

We celebrated National Tree Week from March 10th to 14th 2024. The Green-Schools Biodiversity team collaborated with GLOBE Ireland ([About GLOBE in Ireland - Ireland - GLOBE.gov](#)) and LEAF Ireland (www.leafireland.org) to support schools with live webinars, online lesson plans, activities, fact sheets and quizzes. We held two live webinars. The first was in Irish and focussed on Ireland's native trees, the natural processes that help them to grow and the stories that they have to tell us. The second webinar was in collaboration with GLOBE Ireland and launched the citizen science challenge of finding, identifying and measuring the tallest tree possible during the month of March. We had over 100 classes register to attend these webinars live and an additional 50 watching the recordings of these sessions of these live webinars after the event on the Green Schools YouTube channel. The tallest tree measured that week was a Pinus nigra in Donegal which was over 44 metres tall.

Our event page was a hub for all of the information needed for teachers and students. There were 2,584 visits to the event page during the week which gave a huge number of schools access to the resources provided. Schools all over Ireland got involved, and we also had a large number of international schools attend the webinars which was a great opportunity to share information about trees around the world!



Image from our Webinars

5.9 European Maritime Day & MakeEUBlue Awards

European Maritime Day was hosted by Cork City from 21st – 23rd May. The event brought together businesses, governments and NGOs in the maritime and marine sectors, with a conference, workshops, networking events and exhibition stands focusing on the blue economy, marine environment and more. Green-Schools Marine theme was represented throughout the event, with Green-Schools Officers manning an exhibition stand, alongside our Clean Coasts colleagues, where we informed visitors about the work of the Marine theme, and the wider Green-Schools programme. The event provided a fantastic opportunity to reach a wider audience, and highlight the role of the Green-Schools programme for ocean literacy in Ireland.

A highlight of the European Maritime Day event was the MakeEUBlue Awards ceremony on Friday 23rd May, where Green-Schools Marine received third prize. The MakeEUBlue awards is a competition organised by the EU4Ocean coalition to recognise outstanding projects in ocean literacy throughout Europe, particularly those demonstrating innovation and supporting youth achievements. The winning projects were selected for their replicability, innovation, impact and engagement, and demonstration of social and collective learning. Three winners and a “special mention” project were selected from fifty-four applications, and Green-Schools Marine was chosen as third place winner, receiving the “Sky Blue” award. Green-Schools Marine Officer, Chloe Devlin, attended the awards ceremony on behalf of the team to accept the award. The Green-Schools Marine team and wider An Taisce organisation are delighted and honoured to receive this recognition in a Europe-wide competition.



5.10 Global Goals Week 2024

Global Goals Week 2024 was a key highlight of the Global Classrooms programme, serving as a focal point for student-led action and intercultural exchange. It brought together students from Ireland, Kenya, South Africa, and the UAE to explore and present solutions to global issues like clean water, poverty, and biodiversity. The week featured collaborative activities under the “Global Classmates” initiative, fostering empathy, respect, and critical thinking.

During the week, students showcased SDG-inspired projects and participated in intercultural dialogue, culminating in 15 student-led actions across countries. These activities reinforced the message of “Think Global, Act Local” and demonstrated the power of peer learning and youth-driven advocacy. The event had high levels of participation and impact despite minimal social media promotion.



5.11 New Green Schools Energy Partnership Launch

On the 21st January 2025 An Taisce Green-Schools officially relaunched its Energy theme for primary and secondary schools around the country at St Mark’s Junior School in Tallaght, Co Dublin. This relaunch was, thanks to Green-Schools new partnership with EirGrid, the operator and developer of Ireland’s electricity grid. Prior to the Launch Green Schools visited the school and did an Energy related workshop so the school refresh their Energy knowledge. Alongside the Green-Schools and EirGrid staff in attendance, RTE’s News2day sent a team out to capture the event, this aired the 24th January, but is no longer available on playback.

[Relaunching the Energy theme with EirGrid! | Green-Schools.](#)



5.12 Green-Schools Festival Of Energy

The week of March 24th to March 28th was the Green-Schools online Festival of Energy, the very first dedicated Green-Schools Energy theme week. Our online Festival of Energy was a great success, and the Webinars and Videos are available on our YouTube channel.

Each day of the week, new activities were released on the Festival of Energy webpage for students to enjoy. The live interactive webinars aimed at senior primary school students took place at 11:00am each day, with a dedicated secondary school careers talk on the Thursday at 1pm.

The week opened with a talk from EirGrid on the Monday, Green-Schools delivered a talk entitled, 'A brief history of energy' on Tuesday, there were guest speakers speaking about solar energy and wind energy on Wednesday and Thursday, and the week finished with an Irish language energy webinar.

Speakers and topics included: EirGrid on the National Grid, Green-Schools' Energy Co-ordinator on a brief history of energy, Capital Power on Solar Power, Wind Energy Ireland on Wind Energy and our Green Schools Irish Officer teaching Energy in Irish.

In addition to live webinars, prerecorded videos and energy theme resources were released daily. These included videos on making your own energy pledge, a static jump video, make your own rubber band car video, make your own prop pop video, as well as an Irish version of our make your own energy pledge video (Conas Bolgán solais a chruthú Féile Fuinnimh). Downloadable resources included standby vampire hunt, learn about static electricity resource, meter resource, and quizzes in both English and Irish.



Festival of Energy

5.13 Climate Action Week

Ireland's 8th National Climate Action Week ran from October 14th to 20th 2024 and saw 343 events take place, organised by 470 people and directly engaging 14,907. Over 823 climate communications took place reaching an estimated 355,098 people. Features were published in the Irish Independent, Dublin Gazette and several regional newspapers. Climate Action Week was featured on several radio stations including LMFM and was included in segments on The Six O'Clock Show and Ireland AM.



Junior Primary Storytime

112 classrooms and an estimated 3,000 students tuned in live to what is fast becoming a #ClimateActionWeek tradition. Author and illustrator Oisín McGann read 'We Want Our Park Back' to thousands of primary students, followed by a draw-along lesson and a session on 'Ask the Author'. To complete the resource pack, we screened the new animation for the first time. The recording can be viewed [here](#).

Senior Primary Climate Ambassadors

21 Green-Schools around Ireland were invited to take part in a Primary Climate Ambassadors. These schools have been awarded all 10 Green Flags. The launch can be viewed [here](#). 2nd to 6th classes nationwide were also encouraged to watch this Short Hopeful Talk about Climate Change.

6. Competitions

6.1 Green-Schools Water School of the Year Awards

The Green-Schools Water Awards 2024-25 were held over two days in the Wood Quay venue in Dublin on Wednesday, 14th May 2025 and Thursday, 15th May 2025. The Awards were split into two days, the first day was for primary schools and the second day was for secondary schools. The awards are a highlight of the year for Green-Schools Water, as we have the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the wonderful achievements of our participants throughout the year.

For the primary awards, winners of the Water Poster Competition and the Water School of the Year, were all awarded at the ceremony. An exhibition of the winning posters was put on display for the attendees to peruse before the ceremony started. The national winner of the Water School of the Year was announced during the ceremony.

For the secondary awards, the winners of the Water Poster Competition, the winning entries for the Video Competition and the outstanding Water Ambassadors were awarded at the ceremony. In addition, four secondary schools were named as regional winners of the Water School of the Year award, and the national winning school was announced during the ceremony. An exhibition of the winning posters was put on display for the attendees to peruse before the ceremony started.

Both ceremonies opened with an address from Joanne Scott, National Green-Schools Manager, followed by a speech by Cathy Baxter, Director of An Taisce Environmental Education Unit, and a welcoming speech from Geoffrey Bourke, Customer Operations – Business Operations Manager, at Uisce Éireann. This year for both ceremonies the students were more of the focus as they presented their work through a variety of performances. Both events showcased the student's hard work and creativity. There were 172 attendees at the ceremony, and feedback from the event was extremely positive and complimentary of the Water programme.

Water National Winners

Primary School: Scoil Phádraig, Ballyhale

Students created stop-motion videos focused on UN Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation. For their Action Day, everyone wore blue and took part in water-themed activities, including a Walk for Water and a jumble sale organised by 6th Class. The event raised €830 for charity. The school installed water butts and took practical steps to reduce water waste, such as replacing attic tanks, turning off outdoor fountains, and shutting off water during holidays. Awareness was spread through posters and classroom projects. They also explored their local river's biodiversity through hands-on kick-sampling and microscope work with the Heritage Council.

Secondary School: Mungret Community College, Limerick

The Green-Schools Committee is a student-led team of over 40 members, supported by 10 teacher mentors. Peer education is a core element. Initiatives included "Bin It or Flush It" experiments and a tip sheet for water-saving at home. Annual Action Days such as "Blue Day" combined fun with purpose through themed games, bake sales, face painting and awareness stations. Proceeds have gone to organisations like Self Help Africa to plant trees. With water surveys and a "Water Think-In" with local schools, this school is leading by example in whole-community sustainability education.



Above: National Primary School of the Year- Scoil Phádraig, Kilkenny at the Green-Schools Water Awards 2025



Above: National Secondary School of the Year- Mungret Community College at the Green-Schools Water Awards 2025

Water Regional School of the Year Winners

Primary:

Dublin Region:

- St. Patrick's Girls' National School Ringsend
- St. Kieran's Special School for Traveller Children, Bray

East and Midlands Region:

- Scoil Mochua, Cellbridge, Co. Kildare
- Scoil Phádraig, Ballyhale, Co. Kilkenny
- Scoil Mhuire, Abbeyleigh, Co. Laois
- Gaelscoil an Inbhir Mhoir, Arklow, Co. Wicklow

Southern Region:

- Murrintown NS, Murrintown, Co. Wexford

North and West Region:

- The Model School, Bailieborough Co. Cavan
- St. Peter's National School, Mountcharles, Co. Donegal
- Esker National School, Athenry, Co. Galway

Secondary:

Dublin Region:

- St Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School, Finglas, Co. Dublin

East and Midlands Region:

- Loreto Secondary School, Bray, Co. Wicklow

Southern Region:

- Mungret Community College, Co. Limerick

North and West Region:

- Royal and Prior Comprehensive, Co. Donegal

6.2 Green-Schools Uisce Éireann Poster and Video Competition

The annual Green-Schools Uisce Éireann Poster Competition was launched in January 2025. Primary and secondary school students around the country were invited to enter a poster on the theme of “Water is Life”. The competition was advertised to all primary and secondary schools active on the Green-Schools programme.

Eigible schools were invited to submit up to a maximum of ten A3-size posters per category, with many schools running internal competitions to select their best entries. The categories for entry were: Junior Primary (entries from Junior Infants to 2nd Class), Senior Primary (3rd Class – 6th Class) and Secondary School (all year groups). The deadline for the poster competition was Friday, 14th February 2025.

Over 4,300 entries were received for the 2025 Water Poster Competition. These entries were subdivided by age category and geographic region (Dublin, South, East and Midlands, North and West) and then shortlisted by Green-Schools Officers. Regional and national winning entries per category were

selected by Uisce Éireann. Each regional winner received a prize of a professionally printed and framed copy of their poster, as well as a €100 One4All voucher. National category winners were awarded €150 One4All and a certificate of achievement. The winning poster entries can be viewed [here](#).

Secondary school students were also invited to enter the Water Video Competition. The theme for the video competition was also “Water is Life” and students were invited to submit individual or group entries of original videos of no more than three minutes duration. The deadline for the video competition was Monday, 10th March 2025. Eleven entries were received in the video competition. The winning entry was by Cara Copeland from St. Michaels Community College, Co. Clare. Two runner-up winning groups from St. Joseph’s Secondary School, Rush and Regina Mundi College, Cork were also selected. Each group received a €200 One4All voucher and certificate of achievement. The winning videos can be viewed [here](#).

All winners were invited to the 2025 Water Awards ceremonies where they were presented with their prizes and the winning entries were displayed.



Above: Promotional posters for ‘Water is Life’ Poster and Video Competition 2025

6.3 Biodiversity School of the Year Award

This year, for the second time we awarded one primary school and one secondary school with the Green-Schools Biodiversity School of the Year Award. Only schools who were applying for the Biodiversity Green Flag were eligible. We used the information gathered during the renewal assessment visits and on the application forms to assess the schools. The winners were chosen based on the impact they had on Biodiversity in their schools and communities during their work on the theme.

The Biodiversity Secondary School of the Year Award was Mercy Secondary School, Kilbeggan in County Westmeath.

Mercy Secondary School carried out amazing work on the Biodiversity theme. They added a variety of impactful habitats to their school grounds which will help to attract nature to the area. This included planting 80 trees which will not just provide amazing benefits to wildlife but will also present great opportunities for education and enjoyment. The school also created smaller habitats like wild grass areas for pollinators, log piles and bird and bat boxes

The Biodiversity Primary School of the Year was St. Naul's National School in Keelogs, Co Donegal

St. Naul's really went all out in efforts on the Biodiversity theme. The school has gone to massive efforts to improve their school grounds for wildlife and also to allow students to learn about and connect with nature. With the addition of native trees, log piles, bird feeders, a polytunnel and even an outdoor classroom, the grounds sound like the perfect place to observe nature.



Mercy Secondary School, Kilbeggan (left) and St. Naul's National School (right) accept their awards

6.4 Green-Schools Global Citizenship School of the Year Awards

In 2025, eight primary schools were shortlisted as regional winners for exceptional work on the Global Citizenship Litter & Waste and Energy themes. Two national winners were selected:

St. Colman's NS (Cloyne, Co. Cork) for their impactful fast fashion awareness campaigns and swap shops, demonstrating strong SDG understanding and a focus on fashion waste in the Global South.

Our Lady Queen of the Apostles NS (South Dublin) for creative climate action projects, use of storytelling and games, and community partnerships. Their inventive energy-saving campaign, "Take 5 to Unsubscribe," highlighted digital energy awareness.

These awards celebrated student leadership, creativity, and deep engagement with global citizenship



GC School of the Year awards

6.5 Alternative Green-Schools Energy School of the Year

One school was awarded this academic year Scoil Éinne, from Co Galway. In the absence of a school of the year awards ceremony, it was decided to celebrate, with Scoil Éinne, in person in June of 2025. The celebration involved both Green Schools and EirGrid staff attending the school for a workshop and flag raising ceremony. As Scoil Éinne is a Gaelscoil, this event was conducted in Irish for the most part. The workshop was delivered as a collaborative effort by both the Green Schools Irish officer and native Irish speakers from EirGrid. The students re-enacted their Green Schools flag raising for us on the day, as they had already carried out a whole school celebration which was captured by reporters for Nuacht Cúla 4, and broadcast nationally live. We also made a short video of the flag raising and workshop, with EirGrid, Green Schools and importantly the students telling their story, in Irish (Scoil Éinne, Green Flag celebration Video). As a very important end to the celebration, we provided the whole school with Ice Creams for all their hard work.



Bhí spraoi againn ag ceiliúradh an Brat Glas fuinnimh i mbliana le Scoil Éinne. Bhí cluiche faoin mbogadh fuinnimh (slabhra fuinnimh), faoi tuirbíní gaoithe agus faoi foinse fuinnimh. Dhéan Liam Ó Cuidithe as Eirgrid chur is láithir faoin eangach soláthair fuinnimh a stuiríonn Eirgrid.

6.6 National Marine Creative Writing Competition

The annual National Marine Creative Competition ran from the 27th January until the 7th of March, 2025. This was the fifth year running this popular competition. Primary and secondary school students were invited to enter a poem or short story inspired by the theme "My Ocean". This theme was inspired by the Irish Ocean Literacy Network's "My Ocean" campaign, which aims to gather perspectives from people all over Ireland about what the ocean means to them.

There were four age categories for entries: 1st – 2nd class, 3rd – 4th class, 5th – 6th class and secondary school. In total, there were 241 entries received in this year's competition. The entries from the students were imaginative and wonderful. Some students wrote about their sense of ownership of the ocean while others wrote from the perspective of a sea creature living in the ocean.

The winners of the competition were publicly announced through a video announcement posted on the Marine Week 2025 webpage. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes were awarded in the four age categories. The twelve winners were then invited to attend the Marine Environment Awards ceremony in Dublin on Friday 16th May, where their winning entries were displayed and the winners were awarded with their prizes, which included trophies, whale adoption packs, book tokens and more! The Marine Creative Writing Competition is a true highlight of the Green-Schools Marine theme, with great feedback from teachers each year about their students' enthusiasm to take part.



Pictured at the Marine Environment Awards (L-R) are Joanne Scott (Green-Schools National Manager), Katie McCartan, 1st place winner of 3rd-4th class category, Kilskyre National School, Kells, Co. Meath,

6.7 Green-Schools Marine Environment Awards

On 16th of May, Green-Schools Marine team were delighted to host the second Green-Schools Marine Environment Awards at the Hyatt Centric hotel in Dublin. This event provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements by schools on the Global Citizenship Marine Environment theme, and in particular, give recognition to those schools who stood out for their work on this theme.

We received 72 Green Flag applications for the Marine theme this year, and from those, eight regional schools, who stood out for outstanding work on the Marine theme were chosen based on the strength of their Green Flag applications, to receive the "Marine School of the Year" award. From these fantastic schools, a national primary school winner and national secondary school winner were selected. Regional winning schools received a unique handmade wooden trophy, and a certificate of achievement, while the two national winners also received an additional "national winner" trophy and a €500 prize to go towards their Green-Schools Committee work.

At the same awards ceremony, the winners of the National Marine Creative Writing Competition were also awarded. Twelve talented young authors received their prizes, and their stories and poems were exhibited on display boards for guests to read.

The ceremony itself included a welcome address from Conall O'Connor, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, an introduction to the National Marine Creative Writing Competition from competition judge, Catherine Gaul, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and a wonderful performance of a poem by a student from one of the Marine Schools of the Year. At the end of the ceremony, the guests were provided with a two-course lunch. A list of the Marine School of the Year winners, and a summary of the national winners' work, is provided below. Overall, the awards ceremony was a great success and a wonderful way to raise awareness of the work being carried out by schools on this theme. We look forward to next year's Marine Environment Awards, and to encouraging schools to work towards the Marine School of the Year accolade through their Green Flag applications in 2026.

Marine School of the Year, Regional Primary School Winners:

Dublin Region: [Scoil Mhuire Junior School, Blakestown, Dublin](#)

East and Midlands: [Scoil Mhuire Réalt na Mara, Brittas Bay, Co. Wicklow](#)

South: [Limerick School Project, Co. Limerick](#)

North and West: [Scoil Náisiúnta Corrchloch, Belmullet, Co. Mayo](#)

NATIONAL WINNER: [Scoil Mhuire Junior School, Blakestown, Dublin](#)

Scoil Mhuire is a junior school with pupils from Junior Infants to Second class. Their aim was to educate their students to look after the Marine environment from a young age, to take responsibility and to care for the environment and to be active global citizens. They raised awareness of sea life, ocean habitats, threats to the marine environment, our use of the oceans, and pollution. The marine environment was integrated across the curriculum to compound the learning and this was achieved through marine life quizzes, small world play, music, visual art, P.E. movements and sharing of information between peers and between classes. This school embraced this theme with enthusiasm and energy. They extended their ideas to inspire positive change across the wider community. They sent home information to parents, asked parents to get involved in STEM in projects with the pupils, a local youth initiative created a polar bear mural in their hall, guest speakers have visited the school and they took part in a community clean up with An Taisce and several other local schools.



Scoil Mhuire Junior School

Marine School of the Year, Regional Secondary School Winners:

Dublin Region: [St Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School, Glasnevin, Dublin](#)

East and Midlands: [Coláiste Íosagáin, Portarlinton, Co. Offaly](#)

South: [St Colman's Community College, Midleton, Co. Cork](#)

South: [Scoil Bernadette, Montenotte, Cork](#)

NATIONAL WINNER: [St Colman's Community College, Midleton, Co. Cork](#)

St. Colman's have carried out remarkable work in raising awareness about the marine environment and advocating for its protection. The school's "Environmental Society" of students is an active and dynamic student-led group that plays a central role in promoting sustainability, climate action, and environmental awareness throughout the school community. Their work is rooted in the principles of stewardship, citizenship, and action. Members regularly give presentations, organise workshops, and represent the school at environmental conferences and events. Their work is shared on the school's social media platforms and through local media, helping to inspire action beyond the school gates and into the wider community.

Key initiatives completed have included coastal clean-ups with Clean Coasts Ballynamona, raising awareness of plastic pollution and microplastics, promoting sustainable travel and litter reduction, and leading campaigns on water conservation and biodiversity. They have also taken part in national and international awareness days, such as World Oceans Day and Climate Action Week.



St Colman's Community College

6.7 Marine Spatial Planning Poster and Photography Competitions

This year, we ran two competitions in collaboration with the Marine Planning Policy section of the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment. The Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Poster competition was open to primary and secondary school students, on and awarded the Marine flag, while the new MSP Photography competition was launched for secondary school students. The competitions' theme was "You, Me and Our Future Seas", and this invited students to imagine the future of Ireland's marine and coastal environments, and how they might be used for renewable energy, recreation, sustainable fisheries, protected areas and more. The poster competition received over 2,700 entries! The winners of the competitions were awarded at a special ceremony in Dun Laoghaire in February 2025. Prizes included an overnight stay at the Royal Marine Hotel, trophies, their framed artwork, vouchers and more!



7. Performance

Here are some of the savings and statistics from the Green-Schools programme in 2024/2025.

7.1 Litter and Waste:

Over a two-year period, schools participating in the Litter & Waste theme reported strong progress:

- 85% of schools reduced the volume of general waste
- 58% of schools increased recycling rates

Composting efforts also improved significantly, with over half of schools introducing or enhancing composting systems.

Schools engaged in a variety of programmes, including Picker Pals, National Spring Clean, Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE), and Let's Fix Fashion. Popular activities included local litter picks, swap shops, and participation in the deposit return scheme.

These results reflect meaningful progress in school sustainability efforts.

7.2 Water:

Green-Schools Committees and Water Ambassadors played a key role in raising awareness about water conservation among their peers.

Activities included:

- Presentations and quizzes
- Fundraising events and "Walks for Water"
- River and beach clean-ups
- Swap shops and awareness campaigns

Students advocated for better water infrastructure, identified and fixed leaks, and requested improved taps and water fountains from school management.

As a result of these efforts, it is estimated that nearly 9 million litres of water were saved

4,300 entries we received to the Water Poster Competition 2025

7.3 Travel:

- 88.9% of the schools engaging in the travel theme recorded a decrease in car usage. A further 64.7% recorded an increase in walking since starting the theme.

- Overall, schools participating in this theme experienced a 20% increase in walking and an 8.5% increase in cycling compared to Year 1.

7.4 Biodiversity:

- 3794 trees were planted this school year. As these trees grow, they will have lots of amazing benefits, including offering homes and food to many different species of animals, storing tons of carbon and providing opportunities for education and enjoyment for the school's students.

- Schools also created other spaces and food sources for wildlife including 129 wildflower gardens, 398 bird/bat boxes and 40 wildlife ponds

7.5 Global Citizenship Litter and Waste and Energy

The Global Citizenship Litter and Waste theme enables schools to discover how Green-Schools work has positively influenced people and environments worldwide while revising the previous Litter and Waste theme. Schools make these positive impacts through a wide range of positive actions and awareness raising.

Schools working on the Global Citizenship Litter & Waste managed to reduce their waste by a staggering 296,000 kilograms. This equates to about 1,000 pigs or 5 million tennis balls.

The level of awareness on Litter and waste increased by 22% while a clear and better understanding of Global Justice increased by 40%.

7.6 Global Citizenship Marine Environment

Over 93% of participating schools investigated sources of marine litter and ways that they could reduce this, and over 90% of schools carried out a #2minutebeachclean or street clean!

93 classes from schools all over the country took part in the SeaKeepers Project and learned all about six Irish marine sea creatures. An amazing 342 classes took part in Green-Schools Marine Week in April and joined live webinars, and took part in lots of online activities all about the ocean. These schools visited beaches, carried out projects on their local river, encouraged their wider community to use reusable bottles and much more.

7.7 Global Citizenship Travel

- The schools working on Global Citizenship Travel revisited all their previous efforts walking, cycling, scooting, parking 'n' striding, getting the bus and carpooling to school but they also focused on the three Sustainable Development Goals most relevant to sustainable travel.

- In the past two years the Green-Schools and Safe Routes to School Programmes have installed 10,500 cycle parking spaces and 1638 cycle parking spaces were installed across the country.

7.8 Global Citizenship Food and Biodiversity

Schools working on the GC Food and Biodiversity theme did an amazing amount of work growing and cooking their own food. On average, schools working on the theme grow 10 food crops with an incredible 43 different crops in total being grown. Some crops were more popular than others with spring onions, lettuce and potatoes being grown by 85% of schools and others like sprouts and fennel are only being tried out by less than 5%.

Schools also made a big impact on reducing food miles, food waste and packaging by cooking with their own produce. Schools tried out over 41 different recipes which ranged from lots of different kinds of salads and soups to pizzas, potato wedges and even apple tarts and crumbles

7.9 Primary Climate Ambassador

These amazing schools are some of the original Green-Schools who have achieved all their 10 Green-Schools Flags and have worked their way through the programme for 20 years or more. Your dedication to the programme has helped shape it for future students.

This year we had 15 fantastic schools complete their Green Schools renewal, reigning from Carlow, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Limerick, Offaly, Roscommon, Tipperary, Waterford and Wicklow. They completed 30 challenges including Zero Waste Lunch, Zero Power Hour, Renew Your Energy, I like to Move it, Move it, Blooming Brilliant and Grow It Yourself. These projects were based around the topics of food waste, energy, biodiversity and travel. No doubt these schools and students will be outstanding champions of the Primary Climate Ambassador Programme for years to come.

Green-Schools is a flexible, whole school programme which continues to directly benefit student development and education. The programme encourages positive behaviour change and participants learn about our environment and the importance of a sustainable lifestyle. They are also provided opportunities to learn, develop and use key skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, and communication. These can then be applied to other areas of their life going forward.

7.10 Feedback

Here is a sample of feedback from our participating teachers :

'The students thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the wider school community. It promoted the children's confidence having a role within the school. Children with additional needs are also a part of the committee which highlighted the importance of inclusion. Children enjoyed gaining wider insight into the issues surrounding litter and waste in the wider world. It promoted litter and waste awareness in all aspects of life - not just in school.'

-Litter and Waste Theme

'It was great to work with students on the water theme. Throughout the two years, I was amazed at the knowledge of some students and how environmentally aware they are. They are huge advocates for their environment and are very aware of issues and their carbon footprint. It was great to be able to work with the committee and my fellow teacher on the theme. As we are a brand-new school, expanding in numbers each year, it was great to be able to instil the Green Schools programme into everyday life.'

-Water Theme

'We learned about pollination and how the reproduction of plants works, this made us appreciate and respect the world and nature around us, this also helped us become aware in our everyday lives of the positive changes we can make. A positive aspect would be that we learned how to be sustainable, for example how to make compost and all about the different types of plants like winter heliotrope, which is an invasive species. We also learned that moss is a carbon sink and now know how to make fertile soil.'

-Biodiversity Theme

'Green Schools really encourages hands-on Learning, Students engaged in real-world energy monitoring, analysis, and problem-solving. The programme promotes critical thinking and encourages students to think about energy consumption and sustainability globally. It enhances STEM Education – Integrated science, technology, engineering, and maths into practical applications.'

-GC Energy Theme

8. Going forward

Green-Schools remains committed to strengthening its impact and responding to the evolving needs of schools across the country. In the academic year ahead, a key focus will be on supporting and encouraging schools that have deferred their Green Flag for a number of years. Through targeted communications and tailored guidance, efforts will be made to re-engage these schools and support their continued involvement in Education for Sustainable Development and Climate Action.

Work will also continue on the translation of the remaining Green-Schools handbooks into Irish, with the goal of ensuring full accessibility for Gaelscoileanna and schools in Gaeltacht regions. This initiative will enhance inclusivity and allow more schools to engage with the programme through the Irish language.

Increased attention will be given to aligning the suite of offerings for secondary schools, broadening the scope and depth of student engagement at post-primary level. In addition specific training and resources will be introduced to support schools implementing the new Climate Action and Sustainable Development subject at Leaving Certificate level, equipping teachers with the tools needed to deliver the new subject.

Both teacher training courses will be undergoing re-evaluation to ensure we are meeting the needs of teachers. This process will help align professional development opportunities with the current curriculum pressures and the realities faced by teaching staff. In recognition of the volume of communication schools receive, the Green-Schools team is also working to streamline communications, aiming to provide clear, timely, and manageable information that supports participation without creating unnecessary burden.

These actions represent the next steps in strengthening the Green-Schools programme, ensuring it remains responsive, inclusive, and impactful. With continued collaboration from schools, teachers, and partners, the programme is well-positioned to build on its success and foster meaningful climate and environmental action across Ireland. Thank you to the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment for continuing to support the Green-Schools programme.