

Green School Policy

SLIABH A'MHADRA NATIONAL SCHOOL

It is the policy of Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. to foster in the children love, respect and appreciation of all living things and their environment and to become active agents in the conservation of environment for future generations. Participating in the Green-Schools – a European educational programme, we hope to promote responsible behaviour among the children and the wider community.

Aims

1. To foster a sense of responsibility for the long term care of the environment and a commitment to promote the sustainable use of the Earth's resources through personal life style and participation in collective environmental decision making.
2. To enable the child to live as an informed and caring member of Local, National, European and Global Communities.
3. To acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes towards the environment.
4. Through explanation, investigation and hands-on experiences the children will acquire skills to help care for our environment immediately and have a long term impact.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2004, Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. was awarded the prestigious Green Flag by An Taisce. It was awarded for measures taken to reduce waste and knowledge on waste management

It was a great honour for the school, its pupils, teachers, parent body and the school community to receive this award and it marked the culmination of a lot of hard work by all concerned over a number of years.

As well as being presented with the Green Flag, which is flown at the school's entrance, each qualifying school was also granted permission to use the Green Schools' Logo on school stationery.

Every school that has been granted the Green Flag is reviewed every two years. During the review the school must show that it has maintained the achievements of the previous two years and built on them by expanding its original programme and meeting new targets.

Since then we have worked on themes- Water management, Energy and our biggest target –Travel. We now have four flags and are working on Bio-Diversity.

Implementing the Green Schools Programme

Sliabh a' Mhadra School has always been a school which promoted among its staff, pupils and parents an awareness of the environment and of the necessity to make the school community conscious of its obligations to preserve our "green environment" through the reduction of waste and waste re-cycling.

Mrs. Norma O'Carroll made the initial application on behalf of the school, set up the Schools' Committee and set about implementing the Green-Schools seven point plan. Progress has been ongoing since 2001 and we now feel we have fulfilled the criteria necessary to receive the Green Schools' Award. This work is continuing under our present committee comprising of teachers, ancillary staff, members of the B.O.M. and most importantly pupils themselves.

Environmental Review & Action Plan

Theme 1 : Litter

Sliabh a' Mhadra School has always had a policy on litter.

- Pupils eat their lunch in the classroom so no food is taken to the yard.
- Wrappers, cartons etc. is taken home unless the pupil is able to wash carton themselves.
- Waste bread is put in 'Ducks' bin. Noel the cleaner takes this waste home.
- Apple cores etc, is placed in the compost bin. Pupils from 6th class are responsible for collecting this and putting this in compost bin.
- Other rubbish is disposed of in the recycle bin or landfill.
- Much paper is shredded and pupils take this home for animal bedding.
- Pupils in third class collect recycle bins at 2.50pm and empty them into wheelie bins.

What improvements have the Litter Policy brought about:

An overall reduction of on non-organic waste resulting in the black bin only being emptied once/twice a term.

Cost saving to the school of €32 a fortnight.

A cleaner and healthier environment overall.

Policy on Paper Re-cycling:

Before photocopying – Do you really need it?

Could you use an overhead projector!

Photocopying both sides of the page

Write notes on the back of old letter/pages

Save old paper for art and use recyclable materials for Art & Craft where possible

Use re-cycled paper where possible

Return used printer cartridges for re-cycling. (Jack & Jill Campaign Re-cycling Appeal) and get cartridges re-filled.

Recommendations to Pupils

Use your copies efficiently. Always fill the whole copy. Keep old copies as jotters. Remember paper is made from trees and trees help our environment.

Theme 2 : Electricity

Switch off those lights if you don't need them!
Lighting is generally cost effective – fluorescent type in all classrooms
Lights were often left on during breaks

Recommendations

That a child in each class be assigned the task of switching off all lights at break-time and before going home in the evening. - Energy Detectives.

Theme 3: Water

Water conservation measures were installed in the school in October 2010 comprising displacement bags in the cisterns, percussion taps in the sinks, including isolation valves and thermostatic mixing valves. Water pressure was also reduced thus saving on water output.

The Outdoor Environment

While the school is in a very bleak area we bring colour and life to the place by

- Planting flower boxes
- Feeding birds
- Planting vegetable garden
- Planting trees

Recent Developments

Other Projects

- Annually we clean up the road side and help out in the local beach clean up.
- Visit Knockreer House for ecology day
- Visit Knockbrack Farm
- Invite people to talk on related issues
- Currently collecting:
 - Batteries
 - Ink cartridges
 - Stamps
 - Video games
 - Library books
 - Mobile phones

All these items help charities in various ways

Curriculum

Environmental Studies has been part of the School Curriculum since 1971 and the importance of caring for the environment has been further developed in the New Curriculum being implemented on a phased basis in all Irish Primary Schools.

Care of and respect for the environment is Cross Curricular Geography, Religion, History and S.P.H.E. The S.P.H.E. Volume of the New Curriculum states that children should be taught to:

“Appreciate the environment and develop a sense of individual and community responsibility for caring for the Environment and being custodians of the Earth for future generations.”

Children are taught by example and school alone cannot solve all the problems of the environment. Children should be taught not to litter from a very early age. Parents too need to be educated or re-educated as required.

As a nation we are not the best at keeping our environment “Litter Free.” Irish people returning from holidays abroad often remark on how litter free other countries are. Likewise tourists visiting this country often remark on how we are de-facing our beautiful country with litter.

In teaching any subject the New Curriculum recommends beginning with the children’s own experiences and environment. So the classroom work undertaken in Environmental Studies will always have its primary focus on the Home & School Environment and on the Green Schools Project.

We may not be able to solve the problems of the world but we can strive to get our own ‘patch’ in order.

Informing and involving the school and wider community

As is evident from the composition of the Green Schools Committee there is a wide cross section of people involved in organizing and implementing the Green Schools Programme – Teachers, Ancillary Staff, B.O.M. and pupils are all represented. Angela Wall, Green Schools Co-Ordinator from An Taisce and Micheál Ó Coileán of Kerry County Council are always at hand to give advice when called on.

Methods of transmitting information

A special Notice Board in a prominent position has been set aside within the school and the contents of this Board can be viewed and read by pupils, teachers, ancillary staff and visitors to the school.

PUPILS	-	The general pupil body are kept informed by the Notice Board, teachers' and pupils on the committee.
STAFF	-	Staff are kept informed by correspondence, staff committee members, the Notice Board and at Staff Meetings.
PARENTS	-	The General Parent Body are kept informed by – correspondence from The principal (as necessary), the Notice Board and the parent representatives on the committee.
B.O.M.	-	The B.O.M. are kept informed by the Notice Board, B.O.M. members on the committee, correspondence and B.O.M. meetings.
THE WIDER COMMUNITY		Anne White, School secretary is in regular contact with the media in relation to all school activities including the Green Schools Project. Photographs have appeared in the press in relation to tree planting, school clean-up, Travel ideas and other associated activities.).

GREEN CODE

The Green Code Statement forms an important part of the Schools Green School Policy.

Our Environmental Review and Action Plan outlines where we have come from and where we hope to go to as a school in relation to our school environment. Much if not all of what is to be contained in our Green Code Statement has already been dealt with in previous sections but the points need to be stated concisely and unambiguously to focus the attention of all concerned on the project at hand. On arriving at a Green Code Statement the committee consulted with all relevant parties. A consensus was reached that the statement should be brief, practical, clear, have achievable aims and be easily understood by all.

SLIABH A'MHADRA SCHOOL GREEN CODE STATEMENT

We are dedicated to creating a clean, healthy and pleasant school environment for all our staff and pupils.

We aim to achieve this by our Green School Code:

Green Code

We will

- 1- put our litter in the proper bins.
- 2- turn off unnecessary lights.
- 3- close all doors when we leave rooms.
- 4- not waste hand towels.
- 5- make sure that all taps are turned off.
- 6- compost dead flowers.
- 7- not waste pages of our copies.
- 8- try to cycle or walk to school more.
- 9- carpool.

Travel Code

- 1- Walk or cycle when you can.
- 2- Walk on the right side of the road.
- 3- Look left and right when crossing.
- 4- Cycle on the left.
- 5- Always wear a helmet.
- 6- Always wear your seatbelt.

Green-Schools Committee

➤ Principal		Breda O' Dwyer
➤ Class Teacher		Norma O' Carroll
➤ Member of B.O.M.		Mary wallace
➤ Non Teaching Staff		Anne White
➤ Parents' Association		Helena O' Carroll
➤ Pupils	3 rd class	Aoibhe Joy
	4 th class	Shane O' Sullivan
		Leanne Barrett
		Aoife O' Connor
	5 th class	Kailem Gittins
		Róisín Teague
	6 th class	Darragh Enright
		Annie O' Carroll