



Green-Schools Programme

Information booklet for schools



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Comhshaoil, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Community and Local Government

Local Authorities

Handbook

Green-Schools Office

Environmental Education Unit, 5a Swift's Alley, Francis Street, Dublin 8
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www.greenschoolsireland.org

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, for example:



Education Unit programmes:
Green-Schools www.greenschoolsireland.org
Blue Flag www.beachawards.ie
Clean Coast www.cleancoastsireland.org
National Spring Clean www.nationalspringclean.org
Green Home www.greenhome.ie
Green Campus www.greencampusireland.org
Green Communities www.antisce.org
Greening Communities www.greeningcommunities.ie

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 organizations 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.

Congratulations to you on becoming a part of Green-Schools. I am proud to be associated with this long-running and very successful programme. Over 90% of all primary and secondary schools are now involved. The programme promotes long term environmental planning for schools and encourages practical actions to protect the environment. An additional benefit is that schools can often make significant savings by addressing wastage. Over the years Green-Schools has involved many thousands of our young people, learning more about their environment and how to live in a more sustainable manner. What you learn on the programme will help you to become a more active and environmentally responsible citizen. You will learn about the importance of protecting and improving our environment and about the actions that you can take yourself. I am delighted that my Department continues to support this excellent programme. The success of the programme depends on expertise, goodwill, hard-work and cooperation from a wide range of organisations and individuals. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of An Taisce, local authorities, parents and particularly the schools.

Mr. Phil Hogan, T.D.,
Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government

An Taisce operates Green-Schools in Ireland in partnership with **Local Authorities**. Local Authorities not only provide funding for the programme but also provide an excellent on the ground support network for schools through their Environmental Education and Awareness Officers. The partnership is seen as the key to the success of the Green-Schools programme in Ireland.

Repak – are proud lead sponsors of the Green-Schools programme in Ireland and recognise the important role our younger generation plays in maintaining and sustaining our earth's natural resources. Repak is a not for profit voluntary member's based packaging recycling scheme established under a voluntary agreement between industry and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. It was established as industry's response to the obligations places on Ireland by the EU directive on Packaging Waste (94/62/EC) and is the only government approved packaging compliance scheme under the Waste Management (Packaging) Regulations 2007. Repak, Ireland's Green Dot company was established to acquire membership from such obligated companies to drive Ireland's packaging recycling rates. Repak succeeded in reaching and exceeding Ireland's EU National Packaging Recovery and Recycling Target of 25% of packaging waste in 2001 and is well on the way to achieving our 2005 EU packaging recovery target of 50%.

The Wrigley Company Ltd. is delighted to support the Green-Schools Programme as part of their on-going commitment to promote anti-littering strategies. Other examples of their commitment to schools and young people include sponsorship of ECO UNESCO's CD Rom and web management system and Foróige's Citizenship Programme Awards. All these programmes are designed to promote proper disposal of chewing gum within the overall context of anti-littering strategies and environmental education initiatives.

What is Green-Schools?

Most young people care deeply about environmental issues, and wish to make a positive change to the environment around them. The Green-Schools programme provides an ideal way for fostering environmental awareness in the entire school in a way that links to many curriculum subjects.

The programme is based on the EU EMAS (Eco-Management and Auditing System) approach, and encompasses four principle aspects:

Green-Schools is an international environmental education programme, offering a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of their school. The Green-Schools programme is run by FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education), and is known internationally as “Eco-Schools”. Green-Schools are now represented in over 53 countries from all over the world.

Green-Schools is holistic. It aims to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of a school. This should include the students, teachers, non-teaching staff and parents, as well as the local authority, the media and local business. Green-Schools endeavours to extend learning beyond the classroom and develop responsible attitudes and commitment, both at home and in the wider community.

Green-Schools is both a programme and an award scheme. Any school using the guidelines given in this handbook can adopt the programme to their needs. While the Green Flag award will be given to schools that complete all the essential elements of the Green-Schools programme, it should be remembered that the programme is flexible, and that different schools will find different routes to achieving Green-Schools status. The Green Flag award is now established as a well respected and recognised eco-label.

Green-Schools is a long-term programme. The Green-Schools award as outlined above takes the form of a Green Flag. This can be flown outside school or displayed in the foyer. However, it is important to remember that the programme is one of continual reduction of the schools environmental impact. Therefore, the award requires renewal every two years. This links in with the themed nature of the Green-Schools programme as outlined in this handbook.



International and national aspects of 'Green-Schools'



International 'Eco-Schools'

'Eco-Schools' is an initiative of FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education), and is referred to by a number of different names in member countries e.g. Eco-Scholen in Belgium, Eco-Schools in the U.K, Green-Schools in Ireland and Umweltshule in Germany (see www.eco-schools.org for more information). 'Eco-Schools' began in 1994 as a pilot project in the UK, Denmark, Germany, France, and Portugal. In 2001, 'Eco-Schools' moved from a European initiative to one of international dimensions with the inclusion of Africa, South America, Oceania, and Asia.

'Green-Schools' Ireland

Green-Schools is operated by the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that are the FEE members in each of the participating countries. An Taisce, as the FEE member for Ireland, co-ordinates the programme in this country. The programme was introduced to Ireland in 1997 and has enjoyed sustained growth each year. Today the Irish Green-Schools programme is among the most successful internationally.

In Ireland Green-Schools is operated in partnership with Local Authorities. This partnership has proved very successful, with Local Authorities working closely with schools on the ground. Since 2001 Green-Schools has been a fully national programme, with all 34 County and City Councils involved. The Green-Schools programme is therefore part of a three-way collaboration involving schools, An Taisce and Local Authorities.

Green-Schools' themes

Green-Schools covers a number of different themes, beginning with Litter and Waste minimisation and followed by the themes of Energy, Water, Travel, Biodiversity and Global Citizenship Litter & Waste.

In order to implement the Green-Schools programme most effectively, the Green-Schools Office encourages schools to resist taking on all themes at the same time. Schools begin by examining the Litter and Waste theme and will receive materials providing information on how best to implement the Green-Schools programme for Litter and Waste. Upon renewal of the award subsequent themes may then be tackled. The sequence of the themes is outlined below:



Litter and Waste

Examines the impact of litter and waste on the environment and explores practical means for reducing and minimising the amount of litter and waste produced by the school.



Energy

Suggests ways in which all members of the school can work together to increase awareness of energy issues and to improve energy efficiency within the school.



Water

Provides an introduction to the importance of water both locally and globally and raises awareness of how simple actions can substantially cut down water use.



Travel

Suggests ways for pupils, staff and local government to work together to raise awareness of transport issues and come up with practical solutions that will make a real difference to pupils' everyday lives.



Biodiversity

Examines the flora and fauna present in the school environment and suggests ways to increase the levels of biodiversity around the school and raises the pupils awareness of biodiversity and nature.



Global Citizenship Litter & Waste

Examines what our rights and responsibilities are on a National, European and Global scale and encourages staff, students and parents to look at the impacts our consumptions habits have on other parts of the world.

Benefits and requirements of the 'Green-Schools' Programme

The Green-Schools Programme offers your school opportunities to:

- Help develop children's decision-making skills
- Build students' confidence and sense of citizenship through participation
- Supply curriculum materials and ideas for projects and events
- Gain access to a network of support agencies
- Link with other schools in Ireland and internationally
- Gain a prestigious award
- Provide local and national publicity
- Save money
- Reduce waste and litter
- Improve the school environment
- Reduce energy and water consumption levels
- Tackle and improve transport issues around the school community
- Involve the local community.

It requires:

- The support of the Principal and Board of Management
- The appointment of a Green-Schools Coordinator to manage the programme
- The willingness to involve children in decision-making and action at every stage
- Active involvement of staff and support from parents and the local community
- The willingness to take action to instigate long-term change.

Four stages of the Award Scheme

The award has four main stages:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 Registration | 3 Applying for your Award |
| 2 Implementation of Green-Schools Programme | 4 Award Renewal |

Note: that there are minimum requirements that must be fulfilled and that the school must have implemented all of the seven steps before applying for an award. The following pages cover each of these seven steps in detail.

Registration

Before you register your school you need to be sure you have sufficient support from the Principal and other staff. We suggest that one or more core members of staff read this handbook and present an outline of the Green-Schools programme to colleagues and the school's Board of Management. The presentation should cover the:

- Benefits to the school;
- Seven essential elements as described on the following pages;
- Scheme's flexibility;
- Intention to start with small, achievable targets;
- Long-term nature of the programme;
- Programme's potential to act as a focus for developing a whole-school policy for environmental education.

If the idea is received with sufficient enthusiasm for it to continue you will need to register your school. You can register at any time of the year. You will receive a certificate of registration along with your Green-Schools theme booklet. To register log on to www.greenschoolsireland.org.



The Green-Schools Programme

The Green-Schools programme is based on 7 steps. These steps are outlined below:

7 step programme



1 Green-Schools Committee

2 Environmental Review



3 Action Plan

4 Monitoring and Evaluation



5 Curriculum Work

6 Involving and Informing



7 Green Code



1

Green-Schools Committee



Aim

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.

Composition and Selection

Ideally, the committee should be as representative of the whole school as possible. It should primarily be made up of students (making up the majority of the committee members whenever possible) and could also incorporate a combination of teachers, the Principal or a member of the Board of Management, non-teaching staff (particularly the school caretaker), parents, and any other interested and applicable members of the local community.

Regarding size and operation, it should be remembered that there is no set formula or rules for a successful committee. Often the committee is made up of volunteers from the student body as well as teachers and other interested members of the community. In some cases schools will go through a full election process with manifestos, election speeches, canvassing, election posters, and ballots in order to fill the various positions on the committee! Many secondary schools select the committee members from the CSPE or Transition Year classes that are undertaking the Green-Schools programme or a similar module as part of their course work. It is important, however, to ensure that the student members of the committee are as representative as possible of the different classes and age groups in the school. This will also ensure greater continuity in your programme over the years.

The committee may take different forms depending on the age and ability of the students. A formal committee where the members are assigned different roles e.g. Chairperson, Minute Taker, Timekeeper etc. has worked well even with young students but less formal committees are fine if they achieve the same purpose. However informal it is, the committee should be representative of all and should keep records of meetings held and decisions made (you are asked to include a sample of your meeting minutes in the Application form).

The purpose of the committee is to:

- Ensure the six other steps are successfully adopted and implemented
- Give students responsibility and to make them recognise that their ideas are valued
- Ensure the views of all members of the school community are heard and acted upon where possible
- Ensure the continuity of the programme
- Link with school management and the local community.

2

Environmental Review



Aim

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.).

Review

Before you even start to think about the solution you need to find out more about the problem. The Environmental Review is an open-ended checklist of all aspects of the school's impact on the environment in relation to the theme you are working on.

You are required to complete specific actions for your review, however we also recommend that schools complete other suggested options too. Schools are encouraged to come up with their own ideas to build on their environmental review, in order to gain a full understanding of any issues present within the school.

The Environmental Review allows you to:

- Assess the initial situation of the school
- Identify areas for improvement
- Gauge progress of the Green-Schools Programme
- Help students and the rest of the school community understand the impacts
- Help to prioritise the actions to be taken.

In summary, your environmental review should:

- Give a clear indication of the schools environmental impact for the specific theme (e.g. the amount of waste produced, the amount of energy consumed, etc.) before the Green-Schools programme is implemented;
- Be undertaken by the students when and where possible.

Top Tip

Download the application form, specific to the theme you are working on, from www.greenschoolsireland.org and fill it in as you progress through the seven steps. This will help keep your school focused and reduce the workload in year two of the theme.

3

Action Plan



Aim

The action plan aims to identify goals and provide a structured timetable for the reduction of the environmental impacts identified in the review.

Action Plan

The action plan is the core of the Green-Schools programme. It is a timetabled series of specific goals for improvement over a fixed time scale. Quantifiable targets should be set where possible e.g. 50% reduction in waste in 6 months, 100% recycling of cans in 8 months, 10% reduction on electricity consumption from previous year, etc. Using our map and road-trip analogy, the action plan is our route planner, giving the finer details on how we aim to reach our destination. It should always be developed from the results of the review. The sample action plan excerpt given describes the actions taken by a school to achieve their goal in a clearly defined step by step process.

The action plan should, if possible, be linked to curriculum work and have realistic and achievable goals. These goals should be specific and quantifiable where possible, with proposed completion dates that will show real success. Success increases confidence and builds enthusiasm for setting subsequent targets for your Green-Schools programme.

It is crucial to work out how you will monitor and measure your progress and this should be integrated into your action plan. Try to involve all the committee members in the development of the action plan, and as much of the school as possible in its implementation.

Do not be tempted to be too ambitious at first as failure is very demotivating

The action plan is not a review of the work that has already been carried out, but a list of future targets and goals of your programme and a detailed description of the actions to be implemented (and by whom) within specific time frames in order to achieve those goals and targets.

Sample Action Plan

Goal: Reduce schools landfill waste by 40% in 6 months

Action	Person/Group Responsible	Timeframe	Achieved
Contact waste provider to get recycling bins in school.	Caretaker.	Within the next week.	✓
Contact Local Authority about getting compost bin for school.	Green Schools Co-ordinator.	By the end of September.	✓
Organise a 3 bin system in the classrooms.	Green Schools Co-ordinator, Green Schools Committee, Staff.	With the next 2 months.	✓
Organise a Bin Warden rota – rota of students to check bins and ensure all bins are empty.	Green Schools Committee, All Classes.	With the next 2 months.	✓
Design posters for bins to inform students and staff what material goes into each bin.	5th and 6th Classes.	By the end of October.	✓
Organise 'Waste Free Day' in school to highlight the amount of waste everyone usually produces.	Green Schools Committee and Green Schools Co-ordinator.	By November 21st.	✓
Inform parents of aims for the Green-School programme and encourage recycling at home – School Newsletter.	Principal.	September.	✓
Encourage use of lunchboxes in school.	Green Schools Committee, Teachers, Principal.	On-going.	–

In summary, your action plan should:

- Be developed from the results of your review;
- Contain realistic and quantifiable goals and targets. These goals should be displayed at the top of the action plan;
- Be in table format (as above), identifying action, person or group responsible, the time frame for completion and a column to tick whether or not the action has been achieved;
- Be displayed on your Green-Schools notice board;
- Include regular monitoring, and be updated if and when necessary.

4

Monitoring and Evaluation



Aim

Monitoring your Green-Schools programme will ensure that progress towards targets is checked, amendments made where necessary and success celebrated.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation gives your Green-Schools programme its credibility. As mentioned previously, it should be developed in parallel with your action plan. As far as possible, the students should do the monitoring. This will help give them a greater sense of ownership of the programme. (Also, teachers have more than enough to do themselves!). Monitoring is vital for identifying areas in your action plan that can be improved upon and amended. This aids performance and feeds back to further actions and new goals. It also enhances whole-school awareness by highlighting the successes of your Green-Schools programme. This can provide a 'feel good' factor about the achievements and progress to date and continue motivation and participation at a whole-school level.

Publicise your results

Make sure the whole school is aware of your progress by displaying any results and figures prominently in the school (e.g. on your Green-Schools notice board, school newsletter, assembly, school website, etc.). Remember, successes should be celebrated loudly!

Top Tip

A simple way of envisaging your monitoring programme is to think of it as a number of 'mini' reviews. The unit of performance chosen for your environmental review may now also be used in your monitoring process (e.g. number of bins going to landfill weekly, electricity costs per month, water consumption per student per year etc.). This allows easy comparisons with the initial results of your review and thus proper evaluation of the rate of success of your action plan.

In summary, your monitoring and evaluation programme should:

- Be developed in parallel with your action plan;
- Be carried out by the students when and where possible;
- Use the same unit of performance as for your environmental review to allow comparison with initial figures;
- Feed back into your action plan to identify areas for adjustments and improvements to be made when and where necessary;
- Increase the likelihood (or reduce time required) for achieving goals formulated in your action plan;
- Be publicised (e.g. display graphs, charts, etc. on your Green-Schools notice board, newsletter, etc.).

**Aim**

To integrate the Green-Schools programme with the curriculum work of the school when and where possible.

The principle behind Green-Schools is that environmental topics being studied in the classroom should influence the way the whole school operates. What you decide to study should, if possible, enhance the environmental actions (i.e. your action plan) being undertaken by your school. This will provide greater relevance for the students. Opportunities exist within Green-Schools to make curriculum links into a range of subjects at many levels. The table on page 13 outlines just some of these opportunities. Most schools are already incorporating a variety of environmental issues into the curriculum.

Top Tip

Each themed booklet shows in greater detail how and where the Green-Schools programme can link with the curriculum.

**SESE (Primary)****SCIENCES, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY (Secondary)**

- Study of materials and their properties.
- Develop a scientific approach to problem-solving.
- Promote communication of ideas, report writing and presentation.
- Develop a critical understanding of environmental issues at local and global level.
- Study of human and natural environments (sustainable management of resources, etc.
- Examine the impact of the environment on people's health in different historical periods.

SPHE (Primary)**CSPE (Secondary)**

- Promote personal development and well being.
- Develop citizenship and a sense of personal and social responsibility.
- Promote communication, co-operation and working with others.
- Encourage media awareness.

Languages

- Source of topics for essays, poetry etc.
- Promote communication skills, public speaking, debates, etc.
- Potential for many activities involving speaking and writing.

Linking to the Curriculum

Music

- Reusing old materials to create instruments.

Art

- Creation of posters/murals/fashion to aid environmental awareness.

Maths

- Provide real life situations for mathematical analysis.
- Use of charts and graphs, introduction to database management and IT.

The above examples are for direct links to the curriculum. However, there are an infinite number of indirect links to all the other areas of the curriculum.

In summary, the Green-Schools programme should be:

- Integrated with the curriculum through as many subjects and levels as possible;
- Used to inform the whole school of environmental issues and instigate action in the school community.

6

Informing and Involving



Aim

To spread the Green-Schools message throughout the whole school and the wider community through ongoing publicity and a 'Day of Action'.

Informing and Involving

It is important to ensure that actions and events organised for the Green-Schools programme are well publicised. This helps ensure maximum participation from the different groups involved. Methods of informing the school and wider community could include:

- A special Green-Schools notice board in a prominent position for students and visitors to see.
- The use of a school or parish newsletter to publicise the programme, or if possible create a specific Green-Schools newsletter.
- The use of assemblies to announce success in achieving targets or for children to present their research and results.
- Exhibitions of project work, both in school and in the wider community.
- Making use of local press and radio.

Top Tip

Contact your local newspaper and ask them to publicise details of the success of your Green-Schools programme as detailed by the students.

Day of Action

The 'Day of Action' is an opportunity for students, staff and the wider community to get together to work towards achieving some of the targets set out in your action plan. In some cases it may be carried out in conjunction with local or national projects (e.g. Tidy Towns, National Spring Clean, Tree Week, etc.).

Benefits of the 'Day of Action' include:

- Raising awareness of Green-Schools within and beyond the school.
- Involving the wider community. Parents, neighbours, local business and the Local Authorities can all be involved. They can give advice and practical help.

In summary, informing and involving the school and wider community should:

- Ensure that both the school and wider community are fully informed of the progress of your Green-Schools programme;
- Cover as many media sources as possible, e.g. television, internet, radio, school newsletter, notice board etc;
- Encourage greater numbers of the school and members of the community to get further involved in your Green-Schools programme.

7

Green Code



Aim

To state the objectives that demonstrate the school's commitment to environmentally friendly actions.

The Green Code should be negotiated by as many of the pupils and staff as possible and it should relate to your action plan and curriculum work. It is important that pupils feel they have had involvement in developing this code, otherwise they will ignore it. Personal and social education periods offer a good place for discussing the values underlying a common Green-Code, and provide an opportunity to extend the discussion to personal codes and values. Many schools have used a competition to develop their Green Code. This is also a good way of informing and involving the whole school.

As further themes of the Green-Schools programme are undertaken additional statements can be incorporated to the schools Green-Code. This will help to successfully integrate the new themes.

Make sure you display your Green Code on your notice board and in the classrooms so it is highly visible and informs visitors of your good habits. You could also publicise it in the local press and send it home to parents.

Top Tip

As outlined above, the Green Code can be an excellent 'hook' for informing and involving the whole school. Some schools have turned their Green Code into a 'rap' or slogan that all students and staff can use. **A further development of this is the use of a catchy 'mnemonic' or 'acronym', where by the first letters of each line of the green code spell out an aspect of the code (see examples below).**

Try
Recycling
Ashbourne
Shows
How

**Paper will not be wasted;
All pages in copy will be filled;
Photocopies will be backed;
Every box, paper and cardboard will be reused, recycled and therefore reduced;
Reduction of paper is our aim.**



Applying for your first Green Flag



Before a school can apply for the first Green-Schools flag it must have completed the following criteria:

- Registered with An Taisce's Green-School Programme;
- Working on the programme for at least one school year;
- Completed all 7 steps of the Green-Schools programme;
- Completed an environmental review for Litter and Waste;
- Have an current action plan, with future targets.

The Green-Schools application form is available on the Green-Schools website, www.greenschoolsireland.org – please select the 'Application Process' tab, from here you will be able to navigate to the application form for new schools working on 'Litter and Waste', or use the direct link www.greenschoolsireland.org/new-schools/application-form. There is a document to guide you through filling out the Green Flag application.

Please note that we strongly recommend you download and run the latest version of Adobe Reader, a link is provide on the application forms page, before downloading and saving your application form. Downloading the latest version of Adobe Reader will ensure you will be able to type on and save updates to your application form. After you have downloaded the latest version of Adobe Reader, please download the Litter and Waste application form and save it to your computer.

When the form is completed and all the steps and criteria are complete you can submit this form to gsapplications@eeu.antaisce.org or it can be printed off and sent it to Green-Schools Office, Environmental Education Unit, 5A Swifts Alley, Francis Street, Dublin 8.

New applications for the first flag must be submitted before the 1st of December every year.

When you submit your schools application form to our office, a member of the Green-Schools team will look over your application and you will be contacted with possible recommendations for your programme and requests for any missing or unclear information. There will be a timeframe provide within which you will be required to submit the missing information. When your application is approved an Assessor will arrange to visit your school. This visit is an opportunity to show off the great work completed in your school. After the assessment visit we will contact your school regarding the Green Flag award.

Once you have received your first flag you must renew it every 2 years under a different theme to maintain your Green Flag status. Information on your new theme will be sent to your school in the September following the awarding of your schools Green Flag. If you have not received this information please contact our office and we will be able to send this information on again.



Renewing your Green Flag



Before your school can apply for the renewal of its Green-Schools flag the following criteria must be completed:

- You are currently in at least your 2nd school year of working on your current theme;
- You have maintained the work for the previous themes;
- You have completed all 7 steps of the Green-Schools programme;
- You have completed an environmental review;
- You have a current action plan, with future targets;
- You have had at least one Renewal visit.

All the above criteria must be completed before you apply for the renewal of your Green Flag. The Green-Schools renewal application form is available on the Green-Schools website, www.greenschoolsireland.org.

On the Home Page please select the 'Application Process' tab, from here you will be able to locate the application form for your current theme. Please note that we strongly recommend you download and run the latest version of Adobe Reader (a link is provided on the renewal application form page) before downloading and saving your application form. Downloading the latest version of Adobe Reader will ensure you will be able to type on and save updates to your application form. After you have downloaded the latest version of Adobe Reader, please download the renewal application form for your current theme and save it to your computer. When the form is completed, all the 7 steps are in place and criteria above are complete you can submit this form to gsapplications@eeu.antaisce.org or it can be printed off and sent to Green-Schools Office, Environmental Education Unit, 5A Swifts Alley, Francis Street, Dublin 8.

Application forms must be submitted by the end of March, application forms received after this date will be processed the following school year. There is a document to guide you through the Green Flag application, which can also be found at www.greenschoolsireland.org. When you submit your schools application form to our office, a member of the Green-Schools team will look over your application and you will be contacted if any information is missing or unclear.

Emailing the form to us is the most efficient and eco-friendly way!

Renewal Visit

To renew your flag, you will need to arrange a renewal visit at some point during the 2nd year that you are working on your renewal theme. The visit can take place at any time before you submit your renewal application form by the end of March. The purpose of the visit is so that An Taisce can see you have an active Green-Schools programme in operation. You do not need to have completed every step before the renewal visit, however this will need to be achieved prior to submitting your application. During the renewal visit you will have the opportunity to show the assessor documentation such as folders, newsletters, posters, photos etc. of work and achievements over the past two years.

To arrange your renewal visit contact An Taisce or your Local Authority Environment Section.

If you are successful with your application your school will receive:

- An invitation to attend the Green-Schools Awards Ceremony, where your school will be presented with a Green Flag and a Certificate.

If you are not successful:

- Your school will be sent a letter which will provide details of the reasons for not awarding the flag on this occasion.