

Report to
Abbeyleix Tidy
Towns on
activities of
Abbeyleix
South School
under Green
Schools
Programme



**Abbeyleix South
National School**

Scoil Náisiúnta Mainistir Laoise Theas



***Holder of three green flags:
Energy Conservation – Water Conservation – Litter and Waste Management***

Awarded litter free status by Laois Co. Council

Green School Flag

Abbeyleix South NS has recently been awarded a 3rd green school flag for Water conservation. The Green school flag is awarded by An Taisce. It is a two year programme focusing on a specific theme.

The themes are:

- 1.
2. Energy awareness
3. Water conservation
4. Travel
5. Biodiversity

Participating schools are supported by An Taisce and The Environmental Awareness officer at the County Council Office.

The programme involves following 7 steps:

1. [Green-Schools Committee](#)
2. [Environmental Review](#)
3. [Action Plan](#)
4. [Monitoring and Evaluation](#)
5. [Curriculum Work](#)
6. [Informing and Involving](#)
6. [Green Code](#)

Most schools nominate a teacher to act as green flag co-ordinator. They are responsible for organising how the whole school completes work on the 7 steps. They are also responsible for completing a renewal visit and renewal application (now done online).

Each year work begins when the green school committee meets, each class 1st - 6th has a representative.

The programme began with an environmental survey, which involved:

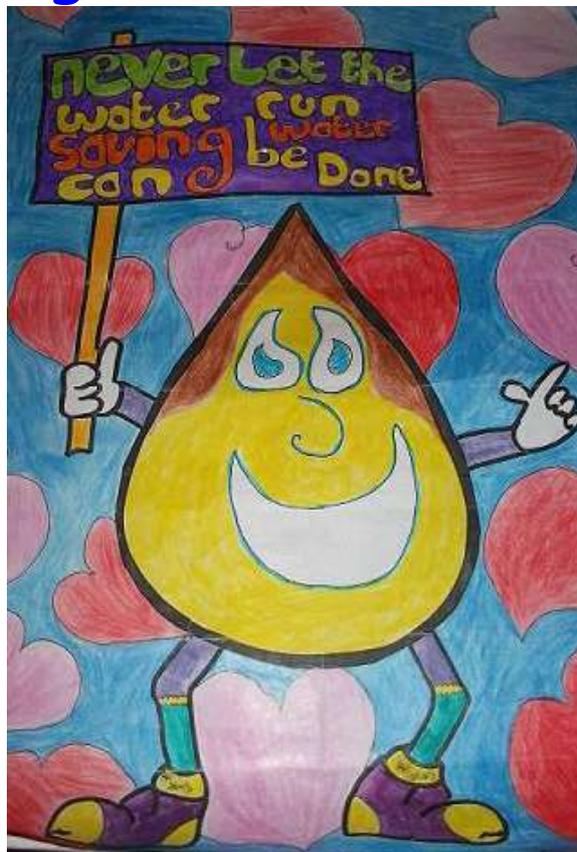
- **Audit of toilets, taps, sinks**
- **Measuring the amount of water used in 1 minute running tap.**
- **Looking at water bills**
- **Knowing where our water comes from**
- **Where our waste water goes**

During the two years the pupils learned about

- **reducing water use at home**
- **the water cycle**
- **water pollution/ prevention**

Our water motto was decided as a result of a poster competition, every pupil was encouraged to participate.

**Never let the water run,
Saving water can be done!**



Litter Management

At this stage we also organise litter duty for the pupils to keep our school litter free. A plan is made of actions for the school. At school we have a green school noticeboard, this is used to display water facts, graphs, litter rota, water saving tips and our school water motto.

We have been awarded **litter free school status** from **Laois county council**.



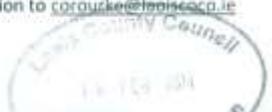
Laois County Council,
Environment Section, Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise, Co Laois
Tidy Primary Schools Competition 2014

SECTION A – TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOLS WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPETITION Schools may also attach 1xA4 page to illustrate environmental activities before the closing date.				
School Name & Address	Abbeyleix South NS Abbeyleix Co Laois		Contact Name & Phone No.	Geraldine Whiteford 057 8731920
School Category <small>(Circle as appropriate)</small>	Up to & incl 3 teacher	Up to & incl 6 teacher	7 teacher school+	Year Opened: 2011
SECTION B – TO BE COMPLETED BY LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL STAFF				
Date & Time of Judging: 25/1/14 11.00am		Judges: Collette O'Rourke, John Hayes		
Weather conditions: Dull & calm				
Judging Criteria				Marks awarded
Litter – focusing on school grounds & immediate approach i.e. around school gates, school car park <small>Judges award marks based on absence of litter based on details overleaf.</small>				50/50
Recycling, Reusing & Anti-Litter Promotion Programmes <small>focusing on composting, recycling initiatives, use of water butts, litter picking rotas and active involvement in anti-litter campaigns (e.g. Clean Up Laois Week)</small>				20/20
Wildlife/Nature Features <small>e.g. bird boxes, bird baths, window boxes, wildlife gardens, plants & flowers etc</small>				10/10
Green Schools Involvement <small>Registered (5/20); Working on Green flag (10/20); Awarded Green Flag (20/20)</small>				20/20
Total				100 /100

JUDGES COMMENTS:

Very inviting entrance with soft landscaping & plenty of mature trees in the ground. No litter observed - well done on large grounds & nearby playing field. This school is perfectly situated with its green flag flying proudly! Other observations included a well used compost, grass over the grassy/leaves of 2 x bird boxes (very nice). Fabulous school!!

Please complete this application form and return it by 19 February 2014 to
Collette O'Rourke, Environment Section, Laois County Council, JFL Avenue, Portlaoise, Co Laois.
Alternatively please scan & email a pdf of your application to corourke@laoiscoco.ie



Maintenance of Initiatives from Previous Years

An important part of the Green School Flag award is maintaining work from previous years.

Over the past years we have started

- **recycling** waste paper, cardboard, batteries
- **composting** fruit peels, teabags etc.
- **turning off lights** when leaving class
- closing outside doors to **keep in heat**
- leaf mould **composter**
- **water butt** on garden shed
- **raised garden beds** for vegetables / potatoes
- **bird feeders**

We elect a **Green Committee** each year to oversee this work:

Green School Committee

2013-2014



Community Garden

This year 3rd class spent a morning sowing seeds in **Abbeyleix Community Garden**. They have been invited to bring their parents to the garden and follow the progress of the vegetables sown.

We also grow our own at the school





Biodiversity

We have a number of **bird boxes** around our school and we have also planted young trees on the grounds to complement the existing mature trees. **Mairead McGuinness MEP** recently **planted an oak tree** which was given to us by **Abbeyleix Estate** (home of the oldest oak woodland in Ireland).

Dr Fiona McGowan has also given us many **tours of Abbeyleix Bog** to explain the wonderful **biodiversity** that can be found there.

