

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

2022-2023

Newsletter

March 2023

Spring has arrived and we are delighted to see plants budding and to hear birds singing. Sadly, there are, or rather were, plants that will never bud again and birds that will never sing. They have become extinct, largely through human activity.

We have now come to that halfway stage in our various projects for this year's *Challenge to Change* so, in this Newsletter, we are sharing glimpses of the work that has been ongoing in the schools. We have a chance to see the variety of projects and the research undertaken.



This year we will have the opportunity to share the completed projects at the Seminars and to meet some of you in person. Happy Days!

"In the time of climate change, it is a time to walk lightly on the earth." Laudato Si

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE SEMINARS

Thursday, 20 April 2023 in Lyrath Estate Hotel, Kilkenny

Wednesday, 10 May 2023 in Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore

On that day you will have an opportunity to display your project, talk about it and exchange ideas with other students and teachers.

You can do your bit towards making our world a better place for all and ensure that no one is left behind.



EMPERIAL PENGUINS IMPERILED—Climate Change's Impact on them

Presentation Junior Primary School Mullingar



Our project aims to make our school community aware of the Sustainable Development Goals in particular Goal 13, Climate Action, and Goal 15, Life on Land.

We hope to engage the children through story, science and activity to help them understand what Climate Change means to them and what we can do to help at home. We want to encourage students and their families to promote active stewardship of the environment in their own home.

Each Class will learn what Climate Change is and then will look at it's impact on the Emperor Penguin in the Antarctic and how we can help at home. Each Class will read a story and discuss the Emperor Penguin and its lifecycle. Infant Classes will contribute an art piece or a written piece about the Emperor Penguin. First and Second Classes will examine the effects of Climate Change on the population of the Emperor Penguin. Each class will learn the **Penguin Dance** and will perform it on our **Action Day** to coincide with Earth Day.

The Emperor Penguin is listed as Threatened under the **Endangered Species Act** as of 26 October 2022.

QUOTES: "I love painting these beautiful birds. They are amazing." "I love learning about them."



ACTIONS

- We purchased a wonderful set of books to help the children learn more about these wonderful birds, e.g. *The Emperor's Egg*, *A Mother's Journey*, *Somebody Swallowed Stanley*, *Mother Earth is Weeping* and *Emperor of the Ice: How a Changing Climate affects a Penguin Colony*.
- Most Classes have done art work or written work on the Emperor Penguin. We plan to re-enact the March of the Penguins with art models or dress-up where the children will create their own Emperor Penguin costumes from recycled materials. We will link with the **Westmeath Examiner** and with the Home-School Liaison Officer and her team of parents. We will participate in the local Spring Clean Up and host a Penguins v. Polar Bears Cake Sale for a local charity. The project will bring about a renewed focus on Climate Change and its impact on the environment.



Co-ordinator: *Eileen Gavin*

Helping Biodiversity in our Community

Scoil Chóca Naofa Killeock

Fourth Classes chose the topic of helping biodiversity in the community as this year our Green Flag Committee are working towards our tenth Green Flag—Global Citizenship, Food and Biodiversity. We thought we could help with this goal and do something to help the community and the planet as a whole. We decided to plant wildflower seeds as they assist with the pollination programme by enticing bees to the area. They will also provide a stimulating area for wildlife.

We hope to

- Inform students about the importance of biodiversity and why we must care for it
- Provide wildflowers to people in our community which will entice wildlife and aid biodiversity
- Research biodiversity and create an action plan on how we will improve biodiversity in our community
- Include members of the local community by providing them with window flower boxes and envelopes of wildflower seeds that they can plant and care for.



ACTIONS

- We took part in a nature walk and identified areas that would benefit from wildflowers.
- We decided to provide classes in the school with window flower boxes where they can grow wildflowers in Spring.
- We contacted a nursing home for Presentation Sisters to offer window flower boxes for the residents to take care of.
- We planted wildflowers in the window boxes and on the school grounds in groups.
- The students created envelopes out of recycled paper. They put seeds in these to bring home to plant in their own gardens. This encouraged biodiversity in the home and allowed the students to share their project with their families.
- We made posters to encourage an awareness of biodiversity and displayed them in the school.

QUOTES

"I never planted before so I really liked getting the chance to do that. It was also cool picking areas in Killeock that lack biodiversity."

"I love gardening and playing outside, it meant a lot to me that our project was about something I care for."



Co-ordinators: Ciara O'Riordan and Ciara Ryan

Let's Travel Light

Scoil Bhríde Shantalla

Fifth Class chose this topic because we had not really studied transport in any of our previous projects. Also, it is a topic that allows everyone to get involved because we all travel around so much and it's a huge part of all of our lives. There is currently a lot of discussion in the media around the role transport and its emissions play in climate change.

We want to

- Promote environmental awareness throughout the school community
- Develop our knowledge and understanding of climate change: it's effects, the role of transport in climate change, the effects of our choices and actions
- Learn about the history and evolution of transport and look at their respective effects on the environment
- Develop and enhance key 21st century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, leadership and teamwork
- Explore greener, cleaner, more responsible and sustainable transport options
- Promote better choices
- Promote this message in our school community.

ACTIONS TAKEN SO FAR

We have composed and distributed a **survey** using google forms. The project team chose the questions, shared them with a sample group and then tweaked it before sharing school-wide.

Some of the team have designed and made **posters**, laminated them and displayed them in prominent locations around the school, encouraging pupils to walk or cycle or avail of public transport.

Others students have started a study of various modes of transport and examined how they have evolved over the decades.

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS

"I liked using forms and Canva to do the project work. I never used forms before so it was good to see how easy it was to use. I love using Canva to make posters."

"I like doing project work. I really liked learning about the history of cars."

"It's great doing the project work and learning like this instead of doing normal work."



Co-ordinator: Brian Ferguson

Extreme Weathers around the World

Presentation Primary School Portarlington

Sixth Class students wanted to research and educate themselves on the different types of extreme weathers that take place around the world.

We plan to

- Research, study and present projects on the different types of extreme weathers
- Study how and why they happen and the impact they have on the countries they effect
- Present the findings through project work, drama, powerpoint and art work
- Link with Science to carry out relevant experiments.

ACTIONS

- A **scientist, Dr. Helena Bonner**, is due to visit the school soon to do some weather-based experiments with the students.



- Each group of students picked a different type of extreme weather to research and report on. They have completed mini-projects based on each type. They have researched and recorded the impact of each of these extreme weathers on the environment and on everyday life.
- We are completing our own weather-based experiments in class: Tornado in a Jar; Raincloud in a Jar; STEM-Tsunami.



- **Green Schools Coordinator**, Karen, visited the class and spoke about climate and climate change.
- The **local weather reporter, Cathal Nolan**, took a scheduled **zoom call** and explained different types of extreme weathers and their effects.
- Students have composed acrostic poems on extreme weathers.
- A **weather video** was produced re-enacting a famous weather report during one of Ireland's extreme weathers.
- Extreme weather **surveys** were carried out in different classes to see how aware they were of the different types of weather and the impact they have.



The project and its findings will be presented to the whole school at Assembly.

Co-ordinator: *Liz Cunningham*

Deforestation Devastation

St. Colman's N.S. Mucklagh

Third Class chose this topic because Climate Change is a big issue for our planet right now. The earth's rainforests play a huge part in providing us with fresh, clean air and removing the harmful gas, carbon dioxide, which in turn helps to regulate the different climates and weather patterns on earth. It is our duty to protect the many rainforests on our planet.



We plan to

- Learn about the **Amazon Rainforest** and the resources it provides for the planet
- Examine deforestation on a local scale
- Understand the causes of deforestation and the negative implications it has for the planet
- Educate our school community on the topic and link with our Green Schools team who are currently striving for our school's fourth Green Flag based on the theme 'Biodiversity'.

ACTIONS

- We learned about the different types of rainforests on earth and the names of them. We researched information using our school laptops and made group projects which we presented to other classes in our school. We all had something to say.
- We painted **toucan art** and are in the process of creating rainforest dioramas.
- We wrote **acrostic poems** using the word 'Rainforest'.



QUOTES

"I really liked working in a group with my friends. We had fun watching Youtube videos about the different rainforest animals especially the colobus monkey!" Thomas

"I loved painting the toucan! My brother and sister also painted a toucan when they were learning about the rainforest in primary school and now I can add mine to our wall at home too." Alice

"I've never made a diorama in school. I'm enjoying using my imagination to build it." Oisín

Co-ordinator: Claire Connors

Let's Be Cool—Be an Eco-Friendly School

Presentation Secondary School Thurles

We looked at the environment and culture of our school and saw that in so many aspects we were not doing enough. We were not exhibiting the level of care that was necessary for the environment. We looked at waste, electricity usage, sustainability, care for the environment and we focused on what we could do to go one step beyond what we were already doing in terms of Green School activities. We worked quite closely with the Green Schools Committee.



We want to

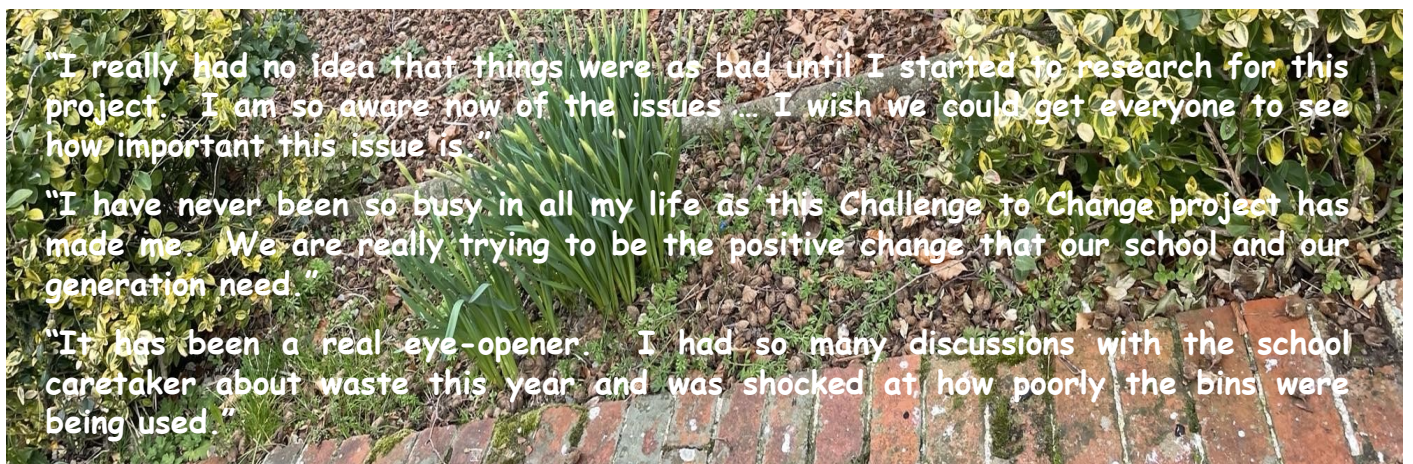
- Reduce the waste being produced by the school
- Lower the school's energy consumption
- Promote sustainability in the school environment
- Raise awareness among the student body about climate change and most importantly what we can do to help
- Create a safe, clean and healthy school environment
- Create outdoor spaces in the school that foster wildlife.

ACTIONS

We held a re-usable bottle campaign in conjunction with the Green Schools Committee.

We are currently planting a bug and bee friendly area and hotel in our school.

We are running many sustainability, waste and electricity initiatives.



Co-ordinator: Susan McGee

Change Our Habits, Not Our Climate

Scoil Íde Clondalkin

In this whole-school project, the students at Scoil Íde wanted to highlight the important role our choices make in affecting Climate Change. They wanted to emphasise that Climate Change is not a problem that only happens to other people in other places. It is something that is directly affecting our lives and we need to alter our habits to make a change.

Our aims are to

- Increase recycling of cardboard, plastic and paper in classrooms
- Effectively dispose of school wide waste
- Increase awareness of Climate Change among students and in our school community
- Reduce classroom tissue waste
- Reduce our school's carbon footprint
- Increase pollinator plants in our school environment
- Encourage our school community to make changes to their habits to positively impact Climate Change.



ACTIONS

Specific recycling bins were introduced in every classroom and in the staff room. These bins can only be used to dispose of clean, dry paper, cardboard and plastic.

Third and Sixth Classes attended **STEM workshops** facilitated by the **Rediscovery Centre, Ballyfermot** entitled "Plastic Problems" and "Climate Heroes" respectively. These workshops focused on the importance of our actions in relation to Climate Change.

In conjunction with our Green Schools Committee, First to Sixth Classes are taking part in "Picker Pals" - collecting and ethically disposing of litter on the yard.

All students are now bringing their own hand towel to school. This is an effort to reduce our paper hand towel waste.

We will link with **Clondalkin Men's Shed** and the **Academy of Near Future**.

QUOTES

"It's easier to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle now that we have the bins in our classrooms." Lucy Mc

"It was really interesting to learn about how Climate Change affects animals in different ways, especially turtles." Lucy K and Freyja

"Planting seeds at the end of the workshop was really enjoyable." Alexia



Co-ordinator: Fiona Gregson

Presentation Primary Tackles Climate Change

Presentation Primary School Kilkenny

Fifth and Sixth Class choose this project after being inspired by reading about **Afroz Shah**, an Indian environmental activist who started by simply cleaning up his local beach. As one of the senior classes, we want to be excellent custodians.

Our aims are to

- Reduce general waste by increasing the amount of recycling our school does
- Teach younger classes how to recycle properly
- Encourage children and staff to travel to school in a greener way
- Monitor and record how the staff are travelling to school
- Raise awareness of different ways that children and staff can tackle Climate Change at school
- Encourage the school community to reuse items, particularly paper
- Encourage the school community to be mindful of their use of electricity.

ACTIONS

- Working in small groups, we made posters showing classes how and what to recycle. We made a short presentation to each class about the poster.
- We used some of the Challenge to Change grant to purchase special recycling bags for each room in our school. We gave them to the classes.
- We collect these bags twice a week.
- We have designed posters encouraging the school community to travel to school in a greener way, e.g. walk, cycle, bus, car pool.
- We have spoken to the staff and told them that we are going to start monitoring the number of cars in the car park from Monday, 6 March.
- We are working on speeches to present to the school community to raise awareness about Climate Change and to suggest ways our school community can tackle it.



QUOTES

"We have really enjoyed creating posters for other classes. They really raised awareness about how to recycle."

"Our school already looks greener. We can't believe how much recycling is collected each time!"

"We hope our staff will make a big effort to travel to school in a greener way, if they can. They have already supported us in the recycling part of our project."

Co-ordinator: Josephine Doyle

Climate Change and Clothes—What Can We Do?

Presentation Primary School Waterford

We have been learning about Climate Change this year in connection with our Green School Flag and we wanted to take a different approach to this subject. When we realised the impact that the fashion industry is having on greenhouse gas emissions, water usage and landfill globally, we wanted to learn more and see what we could do. The girls were interested in learning to knit and sew and so it seemed a nice fit to investigate more sustainable ways towards fashion.

We plan to

- Survey girls from Third to Sixth Class on their shopping habits and awareness of a link between Climate Change and clothes
- Investigate and research the damage being done and what we can do to help
- Raise awareness in our school community of the impact of fast fashion on our planet
- Highlight sustainable approaches to fashion through displays, clothes swap, fashion show.



ACTIONS

- The survey results from Third to Sixth Classes were compiled and illustrated. They showed that many students do not understand a link between Climate Change and clothes and they are getting clothes regularly from retailers such as Penneys, H&M and Shein.
- The impact of fast fashion on the environment was researched and alternative courses of action were examined, e.g. sustainable tips for shopping, climate conscious brands of clothing.
- With the help of several mums and grans, we have learned to knit. We are planning to recycle t-shirts with tie-dye next week.
- Use **Make and Do** costumes for **World Book Day** using old clothes and scraps of fabric.

QUOTES

"I always give my clothes to my sister and I get clothes from my cousin. We don't need to buy much and now I know we are helping the environment."

"I was shocked when I heard how much water was used in making clothes. 2,700 litres for a t-shirt! We don't have that much water in the world."

"I am really liking knitting and can't wait to start the tie-dye."

Co-ordinator: Paula O'Dwyer

Say NO to Climate Change!

Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin

Third Class students choose this topic as they wanted to ensure a safer and healthier future for everyone. Climate Change is a very serious problem in our world today and we want to prevent it from deteriorating any further with the help of our creations.

Our aims are to

- Share the word of how our climate is being affected and what we can do to prevent it
- Design and create different **prototypes** which could be designed and created by engineers in the future to help prevent our environment being destroyed and to make it a safer, happier place to live
- Choose different issues our environment faces and to design different objects to prevent these issues
- Present these to the classes in our school to spread the word and encourage everyone to help save the environment.



ACTIONS

The students researched issues the environment is facing. They worked in groups to create projects and prototypes to prevent these issues occurring in the future. These projects were presented to other classes throughout the school. We will link with **Clondalkin Library**, **South Dublin County Council** and our local **Tidy Towns Committee**.



QUOTES

"I have learned so much making this project!"

"I want to be an environmental engineer when I grow up!"

"I think we can really make a difference with our project!"

Co-ordinator: *Robyn Norris*

Food and Fashion Waste

Presentation Primary School Warrenmount

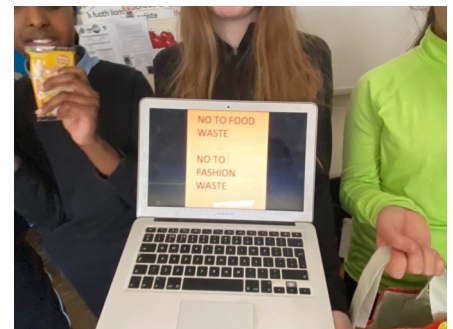


Fourth and Fifth Class students wanted to explore and understand the effects of Climate Change on the environment and how our positive actions can impact and slow down this damage.

The students wanted to raise awareness and understanding of food and fashion waste locally and around the world. They hoped to raise awareness of the carbon footprint related to food and fashion waste. They also wanted to learn how to be responsible for reducing our own food and fashion waste.

ACTIONS

- We designed and conducted a waste inventory.
- We organised a Sustainable Fashion Show.
- We researched clothes sustainability.
- We surveyed food and clothing shops.
- We made contact with local representatives.



The students plan to link in with local food shops and supermarkets, second-hand clothing shops, fast fashion clothing shops and local politicians.



Co-ordinators: *Kate Jennings and Louise Walsh*

Avengers Endgame—Fight Against Indifference

St. Brigid's Primary School Kildare

In class, the students were learning about the Sustainable Development Goals and were shocked that the 'closing date' of reaching the Goals by 2030 was so close. They had never heard about them at home or in school prior to this so we decided that people needed to be informed and 'wake up!'

We wanted to

- Inform the class about the Goals and extend this to some other classes within the school
- Gamify the SDGs for the purpose of teaching other classes in a fun way
- Expand the student's technical skills and capacity for creativity
- Create links with the local Tidy Towns and other national organisations
- Inspire a 'call to action' within the students that one small action can make a difference.



ACTIONS

We linked with **Trócaire** for the Gamechangers project-making boardgames based on SDGs and Global Justice. We linked with the local **Tidy Towns** and created a rota for Sixth Class to clean the town park every Friday in conjunction with a partner Junior Infant class.

We linked with the **Rediscovery Centre** for a talk on plastics and "Life below Water". We created action groups responsible for different areas of the project based on pupil's interests and skills.

We linked with the **Holocaust Centre** for a survivor talk linking with history in a good way to ensure things never happen again and to strengthen the importance of Goal 10, Reduced Inequalities, and Goal 16, Peace and Justice.



QUOTES

"Global justice is good fun in our groups. I think making the boardgames is a fun and creative way to learn. Cleaning up with the Junior Infants was challenging! They are full of energy!"
Shane

"I really enjoyed making the boardgames ... I think it's a good skill to learn how to plan something and sometimes your plan has to change." Katie

Co-ordinator: Gráinne Nugent

All Aboard! A Call to Protect our Oceans

Presentation Senior Primary School Mullingar

Fourth Class students wanted to explore and learn about ocean habitats. They wanted to investigate existing threats to these habitats and to understand how our consumption habits may be affecting the oceans.

We want to

- Explore the role of oceans in our world
- Investigate the ocean as a habitat with plant and animal life
- Investigate the effects of climate change on ocean life
- Investigate the role of human consumption, especially plastic, on marine life
- Spread awareness of the threat to oceans through school wide information drives including posters and video
- Improve recycling and promote smarter use and reuse of plastics among staff and students
- Encourage behaviour change through monitoring and rewarding.

ACTIONS

We will research habitats and food chains, oceans on earth and their uses. Speakers will be invited to the class or to zoom meetings. We will investigate what threats exist through research and NGO information. Students and staff will be interviewed about consumption of plastic.

A school-wide assessment will be undertaken of what plastic products are used by staff and students. Recycling efforts within the school will be monitored to determine how improvements might be made. We will design and create a school-wide campaign to increase awareness of single-use plastics and how we can reduce their use.

A video will be created for staff and students. Information posters will be designed and displayed and the school assembly time will be used to disseminate information. We will monitor progress over a fixed time and report results.

We plan to link with **Irish Wildlife Trust, SEAI, Mulreadys Recycling, Local County Council, OCRA Ireland, Irish Whale and Dolphin Group** and **Bird Watch Ireland** (marine birds).

At the conclusion of our project we hope there will be an increased awareness of the role we play in contributing to climate change and in particular, our use of plastic as a threat to our ocean marine environments. A long-term behaviour change we hope will be a reduction in the use of plastic across our school.

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

- 700 different species of animals are believed to be severely threatened because of plastic pollution in the ocean.
- 22 million tonnes of CO₂ is absorbed by the ocean each day because of rubbish. This makes it harder for fish to breathe and for crabs, lobsters and coral to grow their shells.
- 10% of all dead animals found in beach clean-ups worldwide have been entangled in plastic bags.
- 90% of seabirds eat plastic rubbish, mistaking it for food.

Co-ordinator: Fiona Nally

Garden of Oneness

Presentation Secondary School Wexford

Third Year students wish to connect with the wider Presentation community, in particular with the local community in Kaoma. They hope to visit the Garden of Oneness in Kaoma, Zambia, in 2024.

As part of their project they hope to make a video to spread awareness of climate change and how climate change affects developing countries and in particular, Zambia.

The students will link with Ceist, parishes in Wexford, local newspapers and with Presentation Sisters.

The Garden of Oneness was created by the Presentation Sisters and the local community in 2014. This Sanctuary is a place of welcome for all people of every tribe, culture, religion. Everyone has a place at the table.

The heart of the Garden is the Sacred Web: the unfolding Love story of God. This story is woven with three threads: communion, diversity and essence. The spirit of Africa proclaims Ubuntu "*I am because we are.*" The Peace Hill is an anthill that is sacred to the people in Zambia.



Our Common Home: Earth

Co-ordinator: James Grannell

Making a Positive Impact

Presentation Secondary School Mitchelstown

Transition Year students want to equip students with the right tools to have a positive impact on the environment. They want to limit the school's negative impact on climate change.

To do this, they want to improve the school's waste management, investigate if the school's cleaning supplies are eco-friendly and decrease the use of single use plastic in the school canteen.

The students want to re-establish the Green Schools Committee. They hope to create a biodiversity garden within the school grounds. They want to reduce the use of plastic bags used to package foods in the canteen and to eliminate one-use cutlery in the canteen. They will check that the school's waste bins are used correctly and that lights are turned off when there is natural light in the classroom.

They will link with **Ballyhoura Development** and with **Cork Environmental Forum**.

Co-ordinator: Fiona Garvey

Plastic Pollution: A Turtle Disaster!

St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick

Sixth Class students chose this topic for a number of reasons. Firstly, we think that it is very important to make ourselves and others more aware of the damage being done by plastic pollution. We have a lot of animal lovers in our class and so we wanted to pick a topic that would allow us to help animal life. Lastly, we chose this topic because we want to have a positive impact on caring for our planet and we felt that this topic would allow us to do that.



We want to

- Become aware of the life of the sea turtle and to identify the effects of plastic pollution
- Learn about the **Great Garbage Patch**
- Improve awareness of plastic pollution in the school community and to reduce it
- Contribute to vital fundraising efforts that are needed in the fight to save the turtles.



ACTIONS

The students watched an informative but shocking **documentary**. In groups, they created **lesson plans** and visited each class to teach them about the topic and to create awareness. The lessons varied depending on the class. Lessons included showing videos, singing songs and playing different games, all aimed towards making students more aware of the problem of plastic pollution. This was very successful. We have planned a **beach clean-up** in March. The class will be going to **Sea Life** in Bray to attend a workshop about plastic pollution. Then they will go to the beach to clean it up and get rid of any plastic. The students have been promoting a bottle cap collection around the school as bottle caps are one of the main pollutants of the ocean. We will create a collage using bottle caps.



QUOTES

"So far it has been very interesting and motivating and has really taught me that we need to take care of our planet." Oliwia

"I have really enjoyed it. My favourite part of it was teaching other children in the school about it. Now our whole school is more aware of plastic pollution and what we can do to help." Megan

Co-ordinator: Claire Dollard

How little worms can make a big impact ...

George's Hill Primary School Dublin

Fifth and Sixth Class students in this city centre school chose this topic because they thought it would be good to make use of nature in an urban setting. We wanted to reduce our school waste. Our school started a wormery and we wanted to take responsibility for it. As the senior class within the school we thought it would be a good idea to leave a good example behind us.

We hoped to

- Reduce the amount of landfill waste being produced by our school
- Increase awareness of the need to reduce our waste as a community
- Promote composting within our school community and home communities
- Collect food waste from classes and create compost using a wormery
- Use the more environmentally friendly levels of the waste management pyramid
- Use the new soil for a new purpose
- Gain a deeper understanding of climate change, its negative impacts and the importance of reducing waste



We hope that worms (micro-organisms) will reduce our school waste by turning food waste into compost. We believe the worms will ingest food samples (organic matter) collected from classes. The worms will excrete the digested food waste to produce rich fertile soil. We hope that instead of our school food waste going to landfill, it will now be used to create compost. Our waste will be reused and we will have rich soil for gardening.



ACTIONS

We researched and gathered information on the importance of reducing our waste and on climate change, recycling, compost, sustainability, renewable and non-renewable resources, biodegradable versus non-biodegradable items and composting. We set up a **wormery** in our school. We designed **posters** and spread awareness to other classes about the importance of being mindful of our waste. We allocated and divided up tasks. We gave each class a **compost bin** for their food waste. We collect the samples each Friday and weigh the amount of waste. We give the food waste to the worms. We keep a chart to measure how much waste we are now re-using rather than disposing of it to landfill.

QUOTES

"Did you know red worms have 5 hearts?"

"My favourite part of this project so far is getting to work as a team and a group towards one shared goal."



"Our wormery is very eco-friendly!"

Co-ordinator: Sarah Buckley

Coláiste Íosagáin goes Green

Coláiste Íosagáin Portarlinton

We chose this topic because we are very passionate about environmental issues in our school. We are very keen on raising awareness around sustainable sources of energy. We are very passionate about educating the entire school community about how to reduce their carbon footprint.

ACTIONS



Litter Clean-Up -> We gathered a few trustworthy students from our committee to clean up our local areas around the town. We collected many litter items and our bags at the end of the clean-up were completely full.

Big Travel Challenge -> We encouraged our school community to walk to school. We were joyful to see many of our students walking to school and seeing less cars on our roads in our town.

Water usage and conservation -> We spent days recording the water usage in our school. We interviewed students/staff from our school about how they conserve water. We also filmed how water is used in our school.

Walking Bus on 16 March -> Our theme will be "Fumes from our transport cause such pollution, walking or cycling is a better solution. Leave your car and join us! Ride on our walking bus."

We hope to link with Laois/Offaly County Councils, Solas Eco Centre Portarlinton, a Green Party representative and Midlands Radio.

QUOTES

"I have learned much educational information from being a part of the Challenge to Change project. It's an educational and fun experience. It's made me more aware of how to care for our planet and climate."

"It has enlightened me and heightened my environmental awareness and made me more aware on how to respect and care for the earth. I have inspired environmental awareness amongst my peers."



Co-ordinator: *Brigid Gilligan*

Fairtrade Awareness in PDLs

Presentation De La Salle Bagenalstown

Transition Year 4D students want to raise awareness and educate the school community of PDLs on the importance of Fairtrade in addressing inequality and social and environmental justice.

We aim to

- Hold a Fairtrade Awareness Week in the school from 6–10 March
- Prepare a presentation on Fairtrade and its links to Sustainable Development Goal 9 and to present this to Second Year CSPE classes, complimenting their syllabus
- Organise a Poster Campaign/Competition
- Taste Test/Comparison of Fairtrade produce
- Conduct surveys
- Deliver a presentation to Second Year Classes
- Create/Send a PDLs Declaration to show local politicians there is real grassroots support for global action on climate justice
- Plant wildflower seeds as a symbol of our solidarity with Fairtrade farmers working hard to take on the climate crisis.

As a result of our project, it is hoped that the school community will consider purchasing Fairtrade products instead of non-Fairtrade.

We will link with **Leighlinbridge Fairtrade Town Committee**.

Co-ordinator: Máirín Byrne

Swap Shop

Killina Presentation Secondary School

Transition Year students are undertaking this project to create an awareness of the issues revolving around fast fashion and sustainability. They want to encourage recycling and reusing in relation to clothing. They hope to develop a mindset of preferring second-hand clothing to buying new, i.e. "Second-Hand as First Option."

ACTIONS

- We set up a school swap shop for clothes for all students.
- We staged a fashion show for the Junk Kouture outfits.
- A poster campaign will be conducted to create awareness of the specific issues.

It is hoped that the school community will have an awareness of throw-away culture problems and the consequences of a fast fashion culture. Students will begin to buy more second-hand clothes, renew old clothes and start upcycling clothing. Links will be made with **St. Vincent de Paul, Oxfam, local charity shops, Junk Kouture and Mucklagh Nursing Home**.

Co-ordinator: Eoin Carton

Wind Energy

Scoil Chárthaigh Naofa Rahan

Fifth Class students wish to focus on the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG3, SDG7, SDG11 and SDG13. We want to appreciate the ways in which people use the earth's resources such as wind and water. We also want to orally describe the importance of the earth's renewable resources with a particular focus on wind energy. A visit to a local wind farm, Mount Lucas, is planned and we hope to ask some challenging, open-ended questions during this guided tour. We will compare the impact of renewable sources of energy (wind and solar) and non-renewable sources of energy (coal) on people's physical health.

ACTIONS

- We will create a video based on wind energy to inform viewers of how wind turbines work, where they are located, the advantages of renewable energy and the difference between renewable and non-renewable energy.
- A field trip is planned to a local wind farm where the students will participate in a tour of the wind farm, ask questions and learn more about wind farms in Ireland.
- Posters featuring the students' reports based on a trip to Mount Lucas will be created. A QR Code for video and key learning will be incorporated.
- A mini windfarm, depicting both off shore and onshore, will be created using recycled materials.

As a short-term outcome of the project, it is hoped the students will broaden their understanding of the importance of renewable energy for protecting the earth and for people's health. This will lead to an appreciation of the work of local people in combating climate action.

Long-term, the project will demonstrate a positive attitude towards protecting our environment.

The students will link with **Mount Lucas Wind Farm**, **Wind Energy Ireland** and **Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland**.

Co-ordinator: Carmel Carroll

Promoting Biodiversity

Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny

Transition Year and Fifth Year students want to raise awareness of climate change, endangered and extinct animals. They want to promote biodiversity within the school and make everyone aware of the benefits of composting leading to the production of our own organic soil. They hope there will be a reduction of waste in food bins and a reduction of their carbon footprint. They want to create a welcoming habitat for a range of native wildlife to flourish, survive and reproduce within a city school context. The students also want to raise awareness of fast fashion.

Co-ordinator: Dervla O'Shea

Stepping Stones to Tackling Climate Change

Scoil Áine Clondalkin

This whole-school project is being led by Fifth Class students and the Green Schools Committee. They want to involve the school and the wider community in a project that will look at climate change.

We hope to

- Create an awareness of the importance of climate change and what we can do as a school
- Set up a native forest in our school grounds by linking in with John from the **Stepping Stones Project**
- Learn about the importance of composting and set up a wormery in our garden
- Come up with climate change solutions that we as a school can implement.

ACTIONS

- Lessons on climate change will be taught to all classes.
- All students will be involved in the Stepping Stones Tree Planting Project.
- Compost bins and a wormery will help composting in our school.
- Posters will be created to raise awareness.
- We will hold a **Climate Action Day**.
- Workshops on pollination will be delivered to students.
- Vegetables and plants will be sown.
- WOW days will involve the whole school.

Short-term outcome is that the students, staff and the wider school community will become aware of the effects of climate change and will take steps to tackle it.

Local groups linking with this project are: **Stepping Stones Tree Project, Eco-UNESCO, Composting in Schools, Clondalkin Tidy Towns Committee, Salesforce team.**



<https://steppingstoneforests.org/>



Co-ordinator: Tríona Kílbríde

What a Wonderful World!

Presentation Primary School Clonmel

Classes Third to Sixth want to appreciate the importance of protecting the environment around them. In this project the focus is on keeping the river clean. Students will learn about the affect of marine pollution and work towards preventing it.

ACTIONS

- Students will identify sources of marine pollution and the effects this has on marine life and on our local wildlife.
- They will develop a sense of responsibility towards protecting the environment.
- They will become familiar with the Sustainable Development Goals
- Fifth and Sixth Classes will debate relevant topics.
- A poster campaign will encourage litter picking in the school environment.
- Students will learn about wildlife that live in the locality.
- They will learn about the water cycle and where we get our water from.
- Classes will present projects on the river Suir and on marine pollution.

A short-term outcome will be that the students will realise the importance of recycling, not littering and protecting the natural environment around them. Links will be made with **An Taisce** and the local **Tidy Towns Committee**.

Co-ordinator: Michelle Prendergast

Working for our Crust

Presentation College Tuam

Transition Year students hope to raise awareness through education on the importance of food sustainability. They want to carry out research on people's food wastage using primary sources such as creating surveys to give to junior students. They wish to create important resources to raise awareness about food sustainability and deliver workshop. A fashion show will visible and physically illustrate the importance of sustainability.

ACTIONS

- Breakfast mornings take place on Tuesday and Friday morning for students who do not eat breakfast in the mornings.
- Fruit that is near date has been obtained from our local shops to save fruit being wasted from our breakfast club.
- Herbs will be planted in our school garden to make us self-sufficient.
- Research will be carried out in individual food wastage.
- A fashion show will be held to promote food sustainability.
- T-shirts with slogan promoting food sustainability will be designed.
- Resources and workshops will be created and delivered.
- A music video in modern song on food sustainability will be created.
- Items grown in Transition Year will be available in a food truck.
- There will be environmentally low/minimum packaging for food items from the food truck.
- Reusable bottles will be encouraged.

Links will be made with **Enterprise Galway, Aldi Team, Enterprise Ireland, Teagas, Tuam Men's Shed**.

Co-ordinator: Leona Quirk

Climate Change Activities in Scoil Mhuire

Scoil Mhuire Oranmore

Fifth and Sixth Class want to spread awareness and inform the whole school community on sustainability, biodiversity, plastic pollution and global warming. Both these classes will lead the project with their ideas and thoughts. The students will understand and appreciate the effects of climate change in everyday life situations.

We hope to

- Encourage environmental awareness
- Promote active citizenship and encourage students to take responsibility for our world
- Enhance teamwork, research, collaboration and literacy skills
- Explore and consider topics such as biodiversity, global warming, plastic pollution, sustainability

ACTIONS

- Visiting a local wildlife habitat—seaside/wildland
- Cleaning our school using the correct tools
- Planting plants/food produce
- Creating colouring sheets for infants
- Conducting surveys
- Presenting of group projects
- Rap and poetry

Hoped-for Outcomes include a deeper appreciation of the environment, involvement of the whole school in the student-led project, students will enjoy the learning process. Guest speaker will be invited to speak to the students on the use of plastic.

Co-ordinator: Róisín Black

Working in Partnership

Scoil Chríost Rí Portlaoise

Transition Year students take a lead role in this project aimed at raising awareness of sustainable living.

The students have created a working relationship with **Laois County Council** who have provided advice and ideas on how to promote their chosen theme. They have also been working closely with **Portlaoise Tidy Towns** through their litter picking initiatives.

Local newspapers such as the **Leinster Express** and **Laois Today** have provided publicity on the students' various initiatives such as Action Weeks.

Speakers have been invited to visit the school and address the various classes.

The students hope to build on last year's work when **An Taisce** announced that the school was awarded the **National Global Citizenship School of the Year** having achieved the **Global Citizenship School of the Year**.

Co-ordinator: Anne Dollard

To Be Fair

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel

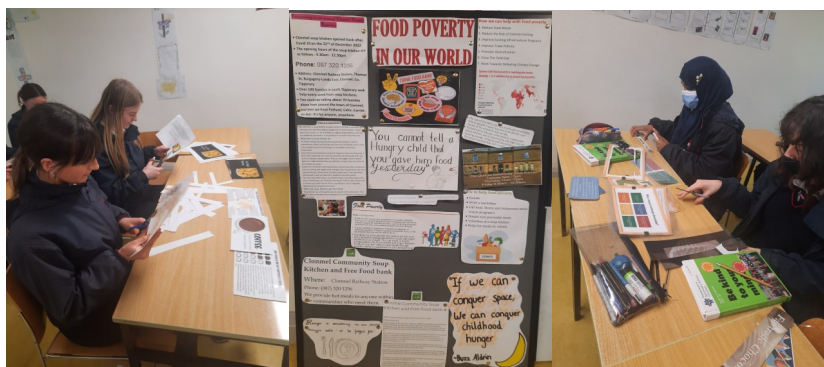
This project aims to get students and staff to look at how they purchase/consume goods and how we can be more sustainable in our approach. The students wanted to research what is being done to achieve zero hunger at local, national and international levels.

We aim to

- Learn about food security and what it means
- Identify three causes of food poverty
- Discuss three simple ways whereby students can minimise their contribution to food waste
- Identify the people who are affected by food poverty
- Find out how we can help with the issue of food poverty in our own community
- Educate ourselves about the issue so we can empathise and take action.

ACTIONS

- Research Fairtrade for projects to present to the whole school as a display.
- Produce a powerpoint that will be presented to First Years along with a Kahoot quiz to help embed the learning from the presentation.
- Set up taste testing with Transition Year class and hope to organise one in the staffroom—challenge your taste buds.
- Research the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically zero hunger, to expand knowledge on what hunger is, causes, countries it effects and different ways to combat it.
- In teams, students were given specific tasks. Group one chose to create a powerpoint on what hunger is and causes as well as focusing on the effects of climate change on Madagascar and how it has led to famine in this region. Group two chose to create a song on hunger to educate students on how they can help.
- Find out about food poverty in our area and research how we can help locally. Students chose to research our local soup kitchen and also to find out how we can help them. Students also watched a documentary about how food poverty affects many people not just the stereotypical person that we see on T.V. that is hungry. This group really were moved by the affect of food poverty on children and as a result we focused more on children's experiences.



QUOTES

"I didn't realise how much food is wasted every week in my house and how easy it is to actually cut it down."

"It's scary that some people wake up in the morning in our town and don't have a breakfast because they can't afford it."

"I thought that when people have jobs they would have no worries. I know now that some people who have jobs are still poor and that after bills are paid they have very little to spend."

Co-ordinator: Margaret O'Mahoney

