

Eco-Schools Dumfries and Galloway Annual Report



2011 – 2012 has been another busy and exciting year for Eco-Schools in Dumfries and Galloway, seeing many of our schools going from strength to strength in their dedicated and inspiring work in sustainable education. Recent changes to the way Eco-Schools Scotland is structured, means that the concept of First, Second, Third and Permanent Green Flag status no longer exists; Schools now have to renew their Green Flag status every two years, thus ensuring they maintain the impetus of their eco work. Two topics, plus litter, must be tackled in depth bi-annually. With the new Food and the Environment topic coming on stream in late 2011, there are now a total of ten topics in the Eco-Schools programme.

The Eco-Schools Coordinator has received specific funding to deliver the Food topic to schools for the period 2011-2013. Following the success of 'Fluffville Saves Energy' in 2010, a new set of presentations has been created, featuring Tiddles the Tiger and his friends. Young people are enjoying 'Food in Fluffville', which explores issues around food growing, production, packaging and waste, as well as food in different cultures, fair trade and food miles.



Illustration from 'Food in Fluffville', featuring Tiddles the Tiger and some popular foodstuffs!

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The children's book 'Food in Fluffville' is due for publication in October 2012, and will be distributed to all schools and libraries in Dumfries and Galloway. This will be a sequel to 'Fluffville saves Energy'.

To compliment the food topic, Eco-Schools in Dumfries and Galloway plans to set up four demonstration gardens across the region, where pupils can visit to gain an understanding of food production, talk to experts and have hands-on experience of working in a garden. Two gardens are currently being set up in Whithorn and Moffat, with a further two planned for Upper Nithsdale and the Stewartry.

Some extra-special compost bins will be located in the demonstration garden in Whithorn. The Eco-Schools Coordinator set Whithorn Primary School a challenge to design a 'Compost Bin with a Personality'. One of the winning pupils, James Asbury, is pictured below with his incredible compost bin



Not James and the Giant Peach – James and the Giant Compost Bin!

James went on to be short-listed for 'Young Scottish Green Person of the Year' on Keep Scotland Beautiful Scottish Green List 2012.

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As part of 'Energy, the Way Forward' element of Eco-Schools in Dumfries and Galloway, the Coordinator has been working with Langlands Special School on an animation project which promotes energy-saving message through stop-motion characters. This project was great fun for everyone involved in it, and Bobby Rome, one of the young animators, won the prestigious title of 'Young Scottish Green Person of the Year' in the Keep Scotland Beautiful Scottish Green List 2012. Bobby and his family attended a ceremony and presentation at the Botanical gardens in Edinburgh in March 2012.



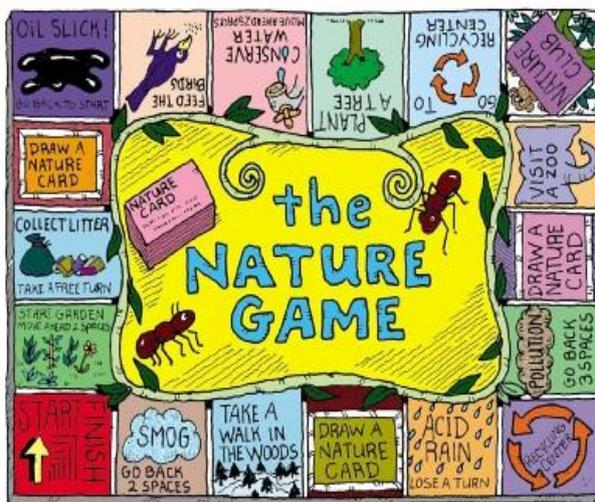
One of Bobby's characters suggesting we ditch that tumble dryer!

The Coordinator continues to support schools in all aspects of their Eco-Schools work, including delivering workshops and structured activities on Eco-Days of Action, such as junk monsters, recycled puppets, food-tracking exercises and eco enterprises. She also gives talks in Assemblies and to classes on any of the ten topics in the programme.

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Partnership working continues to be an effective and important part of Eco-Schools in Dumfries and Galloway, with the Coordinator attending Environment Fair, Science Week and World Ocean's Days, offering fun, practical activities for all the family. Working with Dumfries and Galloway Council Ranger Service, this year's Dr Finlayson Environmental Challenge was a resounding success, using the Glow Intranet to 'live broadcast' and connect with schools nationally. The challenge, to design an eco-themed board game saw twenty schools participate by submitting designs and attending on-line seminars.



One of the designs for the Dr Finlayson Environmental Challenge 2012

Eco-Schools continues to be one the most exciting programmes for young people to engage in; it's compatibility with the Curriculum for Excellence means it is well-received by teaching staff, and its cohesive links with the wider community means it is an inclusive programme, which enables people of all ages and abilities to play apart in.

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