



## What is Eco-Schools?

Eco-Schools is an international awards programme that guides schools along a path to sustainability. The programme provides a framework to help embed sustainable principles into the heart of school life and encourage environmental leadership among pupils.

### Key features of the Eco-Schools programme:

- Pupil-led
- Involves the whole school community
- Focuses on learning and behaviour change, in school and beyond
- A systematic approach to assessing and reducing a school's environmental impact

How much you engage with Eco-Schools is up to you. At the very least, Eco-Schools motivates pupils to make small but meaningful changes to their actions in school. At its most effective, embedding Eco-Schools in your curriculum can cultivate an approach to learning that is creative, empowering and based in real-life with sustainability at its heart.

*We hear a lot about the changes that will take place over the coming years – in technology, population, energy supplies, water and food availability, climate and education. The Eco-Schools framework can be seen to guide schools towards topics and ways of learning that will help them deliver a quality education that prepares children for their future.*

### Eco-Schools is not:

**Only about the school building:** Following Eco-Schools can lead to changes being made to the building and facilities, but it's the behaviour and understanding of the school community that is most important.

**Expensive:** You don't need a budget to start out with Eco-Schools, although it can be helpful. Many of your activities could save the school money.

### Why sign up to Eco-Schools?

Working towards Eco-Schools can help to:

- Enrich your curriculum
- Link your school with the wider community
- Make sustainable school improvements
- Save money
- Gain recognition for your sustainability work

There is anecdotal evidence that suggests following Eco-Schools enhances pupil's learning and development and can improve motivation, pupil engagement and well-being. Eco-Schools encourages leadership, responsibility, critical thinking and problem-solving.

For more information about the benefits of Eco-Schools, read the Kids Industries Eco-Schools report at:  
[http://www2.keepbritaintidy.org/ecoschools/AssetLibraryFiles/EcoSchools\\_Report\\_2013\\_1183.pdf](http://www2.keepbritaintidy.org/ecoschools/AssetLibraryFiles/EcoSchools_Report_2013_1183.pdf)



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## The 7-step framework:

The framework guides you through the steps involved in setting up Eco-Schools and identifying your areas of work. Eco-Schools have a comprehensive range of resources, including templates and lesson plans, to support every step.

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| <b>1. Eco-Committee</b>                                    | The Eco-Committee is led by pupils and is driving force behind the Eco-Schools work.   |
| <b>2. Environmental Review</b>                             | A full environmental audit of the school, carried out by the Eco-Committee.  |
| <b>3. Action Plan</b>                                      | Informed by the Environmental Review, this outlines the areas the Eco-Committee wants to tackle and how they plan to do it.  |
| <b>4. Involving the whole school &amp; wider community</b> | The Eco-Committee represents the whole school and involves them and the wider community in the Eco actions. e.g through assemblies, an Eco-noticeboard, whole school day of action.                  |
| <b>5. Linking to the curriculum</b>                        | Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the Eco-Schools themes and actions into the curriculum.<br>e.g. bringing Maths and ICT to life by interpreting real data of your school's energy consumption. |
| <b>6. Monitoring and evaluation</b>                        | Checking how effective your work has been against your Action Plan – e.g. calculating financial savings from energy conservation, surveying the school grounds for wildlife.                         |
| <b>7. Eco-Code</b>   | The school agrees, adopts and displays an Eco-Code – your statement of your environmental commitments. It can be as imaginative as you like – a charter of aims, a song, poem, even a rap.           |

## 9 topics:

The framework supports work around 9 different environment and sustainability topics:

**Energy • Water • Biodiversity • School grounds • Healthy living • Transport • Litter • Waste • Global citizenship**

You don't have to work on all of the topics at once - after completing the Environmental Review, the committee can decide which topic areas to tackle. However, whilst working on one topic you may find you make improvements in other areas, as they are designed to interlink.

## Awards

There are 3 levels of Eco-Schools award you can work towards:

Award	Award focus	Assessment
 <p><b>Bronze</b> Eco-Schools Bronze Award</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting up the Eco-Schools structure so you have everything in place to tackle the eco work you have planned.</li> </ul>	Self-assessed
 <p><b>Silver</b> Eco-Schools Silver Award</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening pupil leadership and whole school involvement</li> <li>Working on at least one of the Eco-Schools topics in depth.</li> </ul>	Self-assessed
 <p><b>Green</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully-functional pupil-led Eco-Committee with support of school leadership and governors.</li> <li>Sharing good practice with other schools and the community.</li> <li>In depth work into at least 3 topics, including energy.</li> </ul>	Online application and assessment by a volunteer assessor.

## Support for Eco-Schools

There are many forms of support available to assist with your Eco-Schools journey.

- Eco-Schools website – resources, newsletters, conferences, Facebook page: [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk)
- The Pod – Edf Energy’s dedicated site supporting sustainability education: [www.jointhepod.org](http://www.jointhepod.org)
- Local resources e.g. Dorset County Council services

## Links to other awards and initiatives

### Rights Respecting Schools

Eco-Schools and Rights Respecting schools have mutually supporting themes. Work towards Rights Respecting schools can count directly towards an Eco-Schools award and vice versa. Rights Respecting themes can feed into the Global Citizenship topic and contribute to the consideration of Water, Energy and Healthy Living.

### Healthy Schools

Studying the Healthy Living, School Grounds and Transport topics can link to and support your objectives as a Healthy School.

**In both cases there is no need to duplicate your work for 2 awards, just document it as part of your Eco-Schools application.**

# What is Communities Living Sustainably?



**Communities Living Sustainably (CLS) in Dorset is 3-year partnership project supported by the Big Lottery Fund.**

Core activity partners are Bridport Energy Service Limited, Dorset Community Action, Dorset County Council, Dorset Agenda 21, Dorset Coast Forum, Dorset NHS, Transition Town Dorchester, Transition Town Bridport, Wessex Community Assets, West Dorset Partnership, WSX Enterprise Ltd.

This CLS programme aims to bring together the expertise of, community groups, local authorities and small businesses to help the community in West Dorset to tackle climate change and live more sustainably.

Communities Living Sustainably in Dorset: [www.clsdorset.org.uk](http://www.clsdorset.org.uk)

## How can CLS support Eco-Schools in West Dorset?

CLS has a designated Eco-Schools Officer based in Dorset County Council's Sustainability Team. Alison is committed to working with schools in Bridport and Dorchester until March 2016 to support work towards Eco-Schools awards and school sustainability.

Alison is able to offer:

- School visits and one-to-one support and coaching for Eco-Leaders
- Training for school staff, including budget for supply cover
- Links to other CLS staff and partners with expertise in climate change, renewable energy and local food.
- Coordinating cluster-wide curriculum activities and events that support Eco-Schools topics.
- Support shared learning between schools

## Further information:

Communities Living Sustainably Eco-Schools website: [www.clsdorset.org.uk/Eco-Schools.aspx](http://www.clsdorset.org.uk/Eco-Schools.aspx)

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