

What Makes Footprinting Work in a School?



School Profile

West Kilbride PS is in a rural setting with a roll of 390 pupils (2009). Alison Ward, the teacher who is leading on footprinting, is a Principal Teacher and has been the Eco-Schools coordinator for three and a half years. She had been in the school for six years at the point of taking on Eco-Schools.

Approach to Footprinting

Schools Global Footprint work is being undertaken by the Eco-Schools committees as part of their work towards a fourth green flag. They are focusing on the energy and water components of the school's Ecological Footprint. Readings are taken by the different committees with the help of the janitor. The school makes strong efforts to integrate all Eco-Schools work into the curriculum.

Key Points Ensuring Success

1. Eco-Schools work has high status in the school
2. Motivation comes from a desire to progress in the Eco-Schools programme
3. The school has a strong commitment to Sustainable Development Education
4. The lead teacher is well supported by other staff, non-teaching staff and adults
5. The lead teacher is given adequate time
6. The lead teacher has a motivating and persuasive personality

Download [Schools Global Footprint Resources](#)

Use the [Schools Footprint Calculator](#)

For more information and support contact:

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Detail on the Key Points

1. Eco-Schools work has high status in the school

All teachers appreciate the benefits of the green flags already achieved by the school. There is a special notice board dedicated to the Eco-Schools topic 'Sustaining Our World' in the hall where it is regularly referred to as part of assemblies.

2. Motivation comes from a desire to progress in the Eco-Schools programme

Having attended the Intro to Footprinting and Footprinting Follow On courses school sees footprinting as something that is vital to achieving the fourth green flag therefore it is being taken very seriously as part of their work.

3. The school has a strong commitment to Sustainable Development Education

Alison did a mapping exercise of topics already being taught, to see how they related to the Eco-Schools topics and to record when in the year they were taught. It showed that all classes were getting at least one Eco-Schools topic a year; for example P7s cover electricity and the seaside and P3s do a waste topic.

This had the impact of showing teachers that Eco-Schools isn't 'just another thing' to add on to their curriculum, but that it was already integrated through environmental studies. Alison uses the information on when topics are taught to co-ordinate a programme of visiting speakers and to link teachers with each other.

Staff meetings and in-service days are used to promote links between Eco-Schools work and the curriculum, for example there is a current push on numeracy in the school and Alison is demonstrating how data-handling skills can be developed through Eco-Schools work.

4. The lead teacher is well supported by other staff, non-teaching staff and adults

An enthusiastic classroom assistant works with Alison on Eco-Schools work. Up to 6 other teachers in the school are active in supporting the Eco-Schools work. The janitor is very supportive and attends meetings and helps the pupils take the gas, electricity and water readings. A parent leads one of the Eco-Schools sub committees. The Head teacher is very supportive of the work.

5. The leader teacher is given adequate time

Alison has one day a week non-teaching time. She uses this for Eco-Schools work as well as other work.

6. The lead teacher has a motivating and persuasive personality

Alison is skilled at communicating the benefits of Eco-Schools to other teachers and at raising enthusiasm. She is also very good at persuading people to get involved in projects, at developing partnerships and at raising funds and support for free.