

## What Makes Footprinting Work in a School?



### School Profile

Markethill PS is in a medium sized town with a roll of 550 pupils (2009). There are two classes in each year group. Alison Bremner, the teacher leading on footprinting, was a P7 teacher who took on footprinting at the request of the Head. She also took responsibility for linking the footprinting work to the Eco-Schools work.

### Approach to Footprinting

*Schools Global Footprint* has been used in the school for the last two years. The focus of

this case study is the approach taken in year one when it was used as the basis of a term's work for the P7 classes. Alison and the other P7 teacher devised the programme together to ensure that outcomes for all areas of the curriculum were being met. All six components of the school's Ecological Footprint (i.e. energy, transport, waste, food, water and buildings) were taught to both classes, and each class took responsibility for three of the components when it came to measurement of data, which took place over a week at the end of the term. The results were used to make recommendations of the areas in which the school should reduce its footprint.

### Key Points Ensuring Success

1. Footprinting is well integrated into P7 teaching
2. The lead teacher has a personal commitment to the work and confidence in the topic
3. The lead teacher is given adequate time
4. The lead teacher has a motivating and persuasive personality
5. The lead teacher is well supported by other staff, non-teaching staff and adults

[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. Footprinting is well integrated into P7 teaching

Using the *Schools Global Footprint teachers' handbook* Alison devised a term's worth of work that met outcomes for Science, Languages, Maths, ICT and other curricula areas. The term's work was designed to lead up to a week of collecting the readings needed for the online footprint calculator, so there was a sense of purpose and excitement about finally getting to the readings. It became the focus of the term's work and the merging of the traditional distinctions between Maths/Science/Language improved the pupils' engagement as they felt their days were more varied and interesting than when taught in distinct curricula blocks.

### 2. The lead teacher has a personal commitment to the work and confidence in the topic

Alison had already been incorporating a lot of sustainable development education topics into her teaching before the Head teacher asked her to take on footprinting. She attended the Introduction to Footprinting and Follow On courses and used the learning gained from these, plus the teachers' handbook to develop the term's work. Her personal commitment to environmental issues meant that she had the motivation to drive the footprinting work forward.

### 3. The lead teacher is given adequate time

Alison and the other P7 teacher were given free rein to devote a term's teaching to footprinting, providing they demonstrated that all core subjects were being covered.

### 4. The lead teacher has a motivating and persuasive personality

The level of enthusiasm required to organise the week of taking readings was high. Alison has good relationships with teaching staff and janitorial and kitchen staff, this made taking measurements and getting information for the food area much easier. Alison also organised talks from the Council's Waste Aware team and an organic farmer.

### 5. The lead teacher is well supported by other staff and non-teaching staff

Alison had the full support of the Head teacher, the other P7 teacher, the kitchen staff and the janitor. She provided a CPD session for other staff about the calculator and used twilight meetings to prepare them for their involvement in the week of data collection at the end of term, primarily in terms of ensuring waste was sorted for weighing. The majority of staff were supportive and interested in finding out the size of the school's Ecological Footprint.