

What is Sustainable Schools Leicester?

Leicester City Council has a dedicated Sustainable Schools team based in the Energy & Sustainability team who provide *free* support to schools to help them become more sustainable in all that they do.

As well as one-to-one support and environmentally linked projects, schools can engage through EcoTeachMeets, staff training, resource planning & workshops, assemblies, Eco-Schools roadshows & celebration events and through dedicated social media, monthly eBulletins and termly newsletters.

The Eco-Schools Green Flag award provides opportunities for students to take an active role in their school community and work on environmentally minded projects that matter to them. Each schools' journey with Eco-Schools will be unique but the Sustainable Schools team are here to support you in any way that we can!

Secondary students took part in the Good Life Schools Celebration at the Space Park, in Leicester, in June.



How to find out more Sustainable Schools Team

City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

✉ SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk

🌐 [SustainableSchoolsExtranet](https://www.sustainable-schools-leicester.gov.uk)

✕ [EcoSchoolsLCC](https://twitter.com/EcoSchoolsLCC)

📷 [sustainable-schools-leicester](https://www.instagram.com/sustainable-schools-leicester)

📺 [SustainableSchoolsLeicester](https://www.facebook.com/SustainableSchoolsLeicester)

☎ 0116 454 6746



Welcome to the September 2026 Sustainable Schools Leicester newsletter.

We hope you had a lovely summer break and are feeling refreshed and ready to get back to a new academic year.

We are very much looking forward to working with you all again this year and have lots of news, events, workshops, training and projects to tell you about!

Sadly, over the summer Marc left the team and whilst he will be greatly missed in our team, we wish him well in his new role. Laura is also going on maternity leave again in September. We wish them both good luck!

Vicky will therefore be taking the reins, running the projects, events and training this year, until a replacement for Marc is in place and Laura returns.

As always, get in touch if you need any support.

Newsletters and Ebulletins

If you would like to submit an article for the next ebulletin, the deadline is **Friday 25 September 2026**. We ask for around 200 words, at least 1 photo, and contact details e.g. name and email address. Email: SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk

Dates for your diary – Upcoming Eco events 2026/27

Event Details	Date	Month
<u>Organic September</u>	All month	September
<u>Second Hand September</u>	All month	September
<u>Zero Waste Week</u>	7 – 11	September
<u>Recycle Week</u>	14 - 20	September
<u>World Cleanup Day (Litter)</u>	Sunday 20	September
<u>World Car Free Day</u>	Tuesday 22	September
<u>Start of Seed Gathering Season - Tree Council</u>	Monday 21	September
<u>Fair Trade Fortnight</u>	21 Sept – 4 Oct	Sept / Oct
<u>FSC Forest Week</u>	21 – 27	Sept
<u>Eco-Schools Training Session 1, 4-5:15pm on Teams</u>	Tuesday 22	September
<u>International Walk to School Month</u>	All month	October
<u>Carbon literacy training (in person, City Hall)</u>	Friday 2	October
<u>Eco-Schools Training Session 1 , 4-5:15pm on Teams</u> (for those who can't make the Sept one)	Thursday 8	October
<u>World Animal Day</u>	Saturday 4	October
<u>World Teacher Day</u>	Sunday 5	October
<u>Just One Tree Day (see below)</u>	Friday 16	October
<u>World Food Day</u>	Friday 16	October
<u>World Sustainability Day</u>	Wednesday 30	October
Eco-Schools Roadshows taking place throughout month (dates and venues TBC)	Various	November
<u>Outdoor Classroom Day</u>	Thursday 5	November
<u>National Tree Week starts</u>	Saturday 21	November
<u>Switch off Fortnight</u>	9 - 22	December
<u>World Soil Day</u>	Saturday 5	December
<u>Deadline for January Newsletter submissions</u>	Wednesday 16	December

- [Leicester - staff training/information](#)
- [Leicester - student activities/events](#)
- [National / International events](#)

Dates for your diary – Upcoming Eco events 2026/27

Event Details	Date	Month
<u>Energy Saving Week</u>	19 - 25	January
<u>RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch</u>	29 - 31	January
Eco-Schools training session 2, 1-3pm on Teams	Wednesday 20	January
<u>World Wetlands Day</u>	Tuesday 2	February
<u>RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch</u>	5 - 12	February
<u>National Nest Box Week</u>	14 - 21	February
<u>World Wildlife Day</u>	Monday 8	March
<u>International Women's Day</u>	Sunday 8	March
<u>Global Recycling Day</u>	Thursday 18	March
<u>Earth Hour (8.30pm – 9:30pm)</u>	Saturday 20	March
<u>World Water Day</u>	Monday 22	March
<u>Big Walk and Wheel 2027</u>	15 - 26	March
Deadline for April Newsletter submissions	Wednesday 31	March
<u>Earth Day</u>	Thursday 22	April
Carbon literacy training (1 day training at City Hall)	Friday 23	April
Eco-Schools training session 3 (1-3.30pm, venue tbc)	Friday 30	April
<u>Outdoor Classroom Day</u>	Thursday 20	May
<u>World Bee Day</u>	Thursday 20	May
<u>World Environment Day</u>	Saturday 5	June
<u>Great Big Green Week</u>	5 - 13	June
<u>World Ocean Day</u>	Tuesday 8	June
Eco-Schools Celebration Day (all day)	Thursday 17	June
<u>Clean Air Day</u>	Thursday 17	June
Deadline for July Newsletter submissions	Friday 25	June
<u>Plastic Free July</u>	All month	July

- **Leicester - staff training/information**
- **Leicester - student activities/events**
- **National / International events**

Goodbye from Marc

As some of you will know, I left my role as Sustainable Schools Manager over the summer holidays to take on a new role at Bradgate Park, and I wanted to leave you all a little message.

I wanted to say what a privilege it has been to work with so many teachers, business managers, premises officers, governors and other school staff. You all work so tirelessly to improve our environment and enrich the lives of pupils across Leicester, often going above and beyond what you do in your “day job”.

Looking back at my time here, I started on a 12-month, two-day-a-week, term-time-only contract as an Education Officer and somehow ended up leading the team! Along the way, I’ve been involved in so many different projects: Tiny Forests, SuDS, Our Schools Our World, Good Life Schools, Wildlife Friendly Schools, Litter Less Leicester, Polli, Grow Your Own Grub, Carbon Literacy... the list goes on! Not to mention the many Eco-Schools celebrations and roadshows.

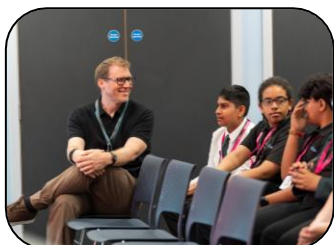
None of these projects would have been possible without the support of the many wonderful people from different organisations, colleagues within Leicester City Council, and of course all the school staff who give so much of their time and energy to making a difference.

Thank you all for making my time here so enjoyable and for everything you’ve taught me along the way. I’ve met some fantastic people, been involved in some brilliant projects and made some great memories.

I’m sure our paths will cross again, and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Thank you!

Marc



Vicky and Laura would like to take the opportunity to thank Marc for his outstanding work and for all his support. We look forward to continuing the team’s work with schools and partners. Good luck Marc!

Other updates

Laura will soon be heading off on maternity leave to welcome her new arrival. This means Vicky will be running the Sustainable Schools team on her own, and so her time and availability will be more limited. Please be patient if she does not reply straight away. However, please do still get in touch if you need any help and support!

Sustainable Schools new Instagram page

The Sustainable Schools team now has a new Instagram page so please do follow us and share to keep up to date with Eco Schools news, as well as projects and information about sustainability and environmental action - [@SustainableSchoolsLCC](https://www.instagram.com/SustainableSchoolsLCC)



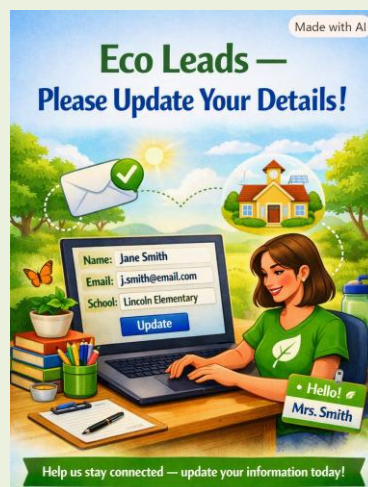
Don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [X](#) too!

Eco and Sustainability Lead contact info

Have you taken on the role of Eco / Sustainability Lead? Do you run the Eco Schools Award in your school? Please let us know so we can update our records and make sure you are kept up to date with the latest Eco Schools and Sustainability news, projects and more.

Email sustainableschools@leicester.gov.uk

Or if an Eco Lead, please fill out our [eform here](#).



If you have any updates, great stories and news that you would like to share, then email us on SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk and we will put it into the next ebulletin or newsletter!

Eco-Schools Award Achievements 2025-2026

A massive congratulations and well done to all schools, staff and students who achieved their Eco Schools Award. This is a fantastic achievement that shows the high levels of dedication and environmental awareness of schools in Leicester.

A total of 44 schools achieved their award - our highest ever number!

Green Flag Award

Babington Academy
Doveland's Primary School
Granby Primary School
Overdale Infant School
Parks Primary School
Uplands Infant School
Woodstock Primary Academy

Green Flag Award with Merit

Avanti Fields Secondary School
Barley Croft Primary School
Braunstone Frith Primary School
Lancaster Academy
Mellor Community Primary School
Sparkenhoe Community Primary School
Tudor Grange Samworth Academy
Wolsey House Primary School

Green Flag Award with Distinction

Bridge Junior School
Brook Mead Academy
Buswells Lodge Primary School
Castle mead Academy
Catherine Infant School
Charnwood Primary School
Ellesmere College
Evington Valley Primary School
Forest Lodge Academy
Hazel Community Primary School
Highfields Primary School
Hope Hamilton CE Primary School
Inglehurst Junior School
Leicester Islamic Academy
Millgate School
Montrose School
Netherhall Mead Academy
Overdale Junior School
Rushey Mead Academy
Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
Scraptoft Valley Primary School
Shaftesbury Junior School
Sir Jonathan North Girls' College
Soar Valley College
St John the Baptist CofE Primary School
St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy
Stokes Wood Primary School
Whitehall Primary School
Wyvern Primary School



We are excited to announce that our annual Eco-Schools Roadshow is back for another year, with some new and exciting workshops taking place – [Book now](#) to avoid disappointment!

Thursday 29 October 2026*	Brook Mead Academy
Friday 6 November 2026*	Sir Jonathan North College
Thursday 19 November 2026	The City of Leicester College
Friday 27 November 2026	Rushey Mead Academy



Each event will last for most of the school day. Each event will run from approx. 9.15am-2pm and will consist of a carousel of 3 interactive and informative workshops, related to the Eco-Schools topics.

Why attend?

- Gain a greater understanding of **Eco-Schools** topics
- Opportunity to network with other schools and learn about their **environmental projects**
- Develop new **campaigns** and identify ways of promoting sustainability in school
- Find out about local and national **projects** and how to get involved



These **free events** are open to all registered Eco-Schools in Leicester and schools in the Lionheart Trust. Schools are invited to bring up to **15 students from KS1, KS2 or KS3** to attend. Further details will be provided on booking.

To book your place, please complete the [eForm](#). For more information, please contact Victoria.brown@leicester.gov.uk



Save the date:

9:30am -2:15pm, Thursday 17th June 2027, at City Hall, Leicester

We are thrilled to say that our Eco-Schools Celebration will be returning this year to celebrate the outstanding work and achievements by schools in Leicester City.

Come along to display and showcase the amazing environmental and Eco Schools projects you have been doing and see what other schools have been up to, whilst enjoying a rare opportunity to come to City Hall, home of Leicester City Council. There will also be some wonderful prizes on offer too for the three judges' awards. Will you be our Eco School of the Year? Or do you have the Eco factor?

More information will be shared later in the year, so keep an eye out!

Carbon Literacy Training for School Staff and Governors



Leicester is working on the 'Climate Ready Leicester' action plan, setting out the council's strategy for responding to the climate emergency and our latest set of actions to implement the strategy.

Schools can support this effort by ensuring they have at least one member of staff Carbon Literacy Accredited – could that be you?



What is covered in our Carbon Literacy training?

- Climate change and greenhouse gases
- Carbon footprints linked with daily life
- Individual and school-based actions to take

In Person:

Friday 2 October 2026, 9am – 4pm
Or Friday 23 April 2027, 9am – 4pm
at City Hall, Charles Street, Leicester.
Complete the [eForm](#) to sign up.



Carbon literacy training is an accredited educational program that teaches people about climate science, carbon footprints, and practical ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at work and at home. We welcome all school staff, including premises officers, governors and office staff.



Did you know?

Since 2025, the DfE have said that each school should have a sustainability lead who will have taken part in Carbon Literacy Training. By joining us, you will help keep your school to join the wider movement!

Carbon Literacy Training - 2026/27



The cost of the training course is £50 for school staff/governors or £70 for non-school staff and staff outside of Leicester City. This includes the individual and course accreditation fees from the Carbon Literacy Project.

For more information, contact Victoria.Brown@leicester.gov.uk.



Eco-Schools Award

register now for 2026/27!



As we start a new academic year, it is time to start thinking about your Eco Schools team and what you want to achieve this year.

The start of the academic year is a great time to get ahead with your Green Flag work. **See page 6 for details of training.**

We can also come in to your school and meet your Eco-Team, help with the environmental review or run another session for your students. I can also come in to do an assembly. Get in touch and let us know how we can help!

Register now for 2026/27

Whether a new school to Eco Schools, or a renewal, register today at: www.eco-schools.org.uk

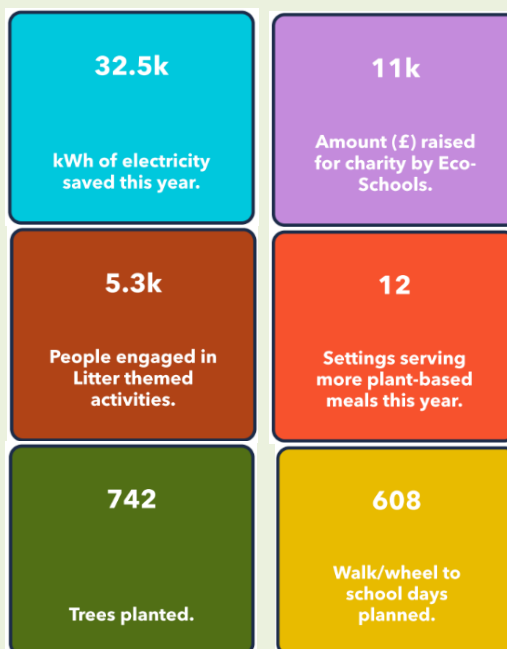
Topic ideas and projects

On the following pages are a wide range of possible ideas and projects for you to have a go at as part of your Eco-Schools topic actions.

This is just a list of some suggestions, but feel free to come with your own!



Leicester City schools did a fantastic job last year. Here are some key figures about what they achieved:



You can see more figures from 2025/26 on the project pages.



Support for Eco-Schools

If you need any support with your registration, or any step of the Eco Schools Award, including going for Merit and Distinction, please do contact Vicky at victoria.brown@leicester.gov.uk

Eco-Schools Training Session 1

What is Eco-Schools and how do we gain or renew our Green Flag Award?

FREE Online Training course:

Tuesday 22 September OR

Thursday 8 October 2026

Both from 4-5.15pm via Teams (only need to attend one)

Sign up using the [eForm](#)

- Are you wanting to find out about Eco-Schools and how your school can gain their Green Flag Award?
- Do you want to find out about national and local environmental events and projects to help you achieve the award?
- Are you wanting to connect with other school staff in Leicester schools and support each other to gain your Eco-Schools Green Flag Award?

If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes”, then come along and find out more!

This training, delivered by the Sustainable Schools team at Leicester City Council, will explain the Green Flag Award process including the 7 steps, provide top tips for working on Eco-Schools, and ideas for new projects

Save the date! Upcoming Eco-Schools training

Session 2 – Wednesday 20 January 2027, 1:00-3:00pm (Teams) – Next steps and Going for Merit or Distinction

Session 3 – Friday 30 April 2027 1:00-3:30pm (venue TBC) – Completing the application and planning for next year



**Sustainable
Schools**

LEICESTER

In Leicester over two thirds of schools have achieved their Green Flag in the last few years. It's a fantastic programme that helps schools to focus their environmental work – join this group of schools and start working on your award this year!

For more information, please email Vicky Brown at Victoria.brown@leicester.gov.uk



 
**CLIMATE
READY** →
LEICESTER



Biodiversity



Maintaining a high level of plant, insect and animal life locally and globally

Ways to help wildlife

- Bird feeders
- Bird boxes
- Bug hotels
- Hedgehog Home
- Wildflower meadow
- Pollinator garden
- Log piles
- Hibernaculum
- Pond
- Bat boxes
- Plant trees, hedges and shrubs
- Create a biodiversity action plan

5.4k

People participating in Biodiversity themed activities.

209

Habitats created/installed/maintained for animal and insect life.

27

Young people given the opportunity to observe or record wildlife.

Hedgehog Highways

Could you help your school or community to become a hedgehog highway?

Hedgehog Street provides lots of resources for your school to become a haven for hedgehogs.

Find out more at:

[Toolkit for schools - Hedgehog Street](#)



Managing School Grounds For Biodiversity – Free Online Course

The National Biodiversity Data Centre are offering a free online course about Managing School Grounds For Biodiversity. The course takes approximately 1 to 1.5 hours to complete and provides a practical guide to enhancing and maintaining biodiversity on your school site. You can complete the 23 short lessons in your own time, and answer quizzes after each section. Go to [Managing school grounds for biodiversity](#) to find out more.

Wilder Schools Advice Pack

Avon Wildlife Trust and BathScape have created a fantastic resource for schools to use to create wilder school grounds. It has lots of ideas on how to create a better space for wildlife and ways to improve biodiversity on your school site., such as ponds, homes and growing advice.

The pack can be found at: [220113-Wilder-School-Advice-Pack-SS.pdf](#)



Resources:

There are many resources available online to help you carry out biodiversity surveys, create new habitats and homes for wildlife, and to learn more about what lives in your area. Here are some example websites to get you started:

- Buglife hotel making information and resources: [Gardening for Bugs - Buglife](#)
- Natural Nations resources: <https://itl.org.uk/project/natural-nations/>
- Woodland Trust's Tree Tools for Schools: <https://treetoolsforschools.org.uk/menu/>

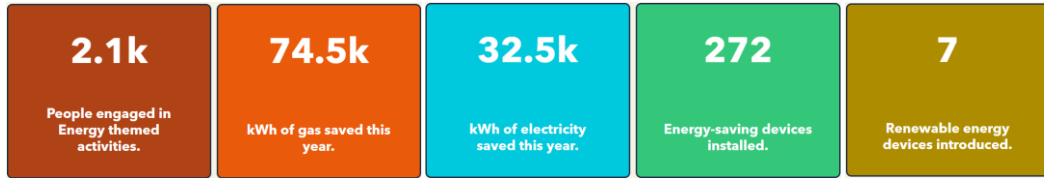




Energy



Reducing energy use and investigating greener energy sources



BESS Energy - Energy Sparks

We offer BESS Energy Core or Enhanced support for schools across the city. It is a paid for service supporting schools in monitoring their energy use. We offer tailored support including assemblies or workshops with students or working directly with business managers and site managers to find ways to save energy.



As part of BESS Core or Enhanced, your school receives access to Energy Sparks, an online platform which monitors gas and electricity consumption. The platform includes an educational programme which can be used with classes or small groups of children, such as your eco-committee. Energy Sparks can help to reduce carbon emissions and work towards addressing the climate emergency. For more information, contact us on

SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk



Switch-Off Fortnight

Taking place in November every year, Switch-Off Fortnight encourages students to take an active role in saving energy. They are asked to deliver an energy-saving campaign to reduce energy waste, energy costs and protect the planet.



Find out more and get access to lots of resources at: [Switch Off Fortnight 2026](#)

Earth Hour – Saturday 20 March 2027

On Saturday 20th March 2027 from 8:30-9:30pm. Every March, millions of people around the world join Earth Hour to show they care about the future of our planet. From iconic landmarks like Big Ben and the Sydney Opera House, to other iconic landmarks in cities across the globe, lights go out in a powerful display of global solidarity for our natural world.

This year, we'll come together for the 20th Earth Hour, a milestone moment since the very first switch off in 2007. Since it began, Earth Hour has always been more than just an hour. It's a chance to connect with what matters most - nature and each other.

Find out more at: [Earth Hour: switch off for our world | WWF](#)





Global Citizenship



Taking an active role in your community and making our planet more peaceful, sustainable and fair

11k

Amount (£) raised for charity by Eco-Schools.

7

Settings contacting local decision makers about climate action.

8

Settings using more ethically sourced products.

5.2k

People engaged in Global Citizenship themed activities.

28

Fundraisers or climate pledge drives delivered.



JUST ONE TREE.

Just ONE Tree Day

There's still time to sign up for JUST ONE Tree Day – Friday 16th October 2026 (or hold your event at any time of the year to suit your school calendar). Last year 33 schools across Leicester took part!

Inspire your pupils to tackle climate action and grow a greener future with JUST ONE Tree Day – a fun, educational non-uniform day where every £1 raised plants a tree in a reforestation project in Africa, Asia & South America.

It's **free** for schools to take part, comes with **curriculum-linked resources**, and helps children feel empowered rather than anxious about the planet.

Run by non-profit JUST ONE Tree – proud partner of the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** and **Eco-Schools England** – the initiative tackles climate change head-on by growing forests, regenerating oceans and educating future generations. Over 250,000 pupils have already taken part, helping plant **475,000+** trees.

Unite with schools across the world and make sure your school is part of this growing movement. Sign up today at www.justonetree.life/schools-sustainability



Project ideas

- [Crisp packet project](#) – How to Make a crisp packet emergency blanket for the homeless
- Organise your own Eco conference with other schools
- Whole community litter pick
- Help a local food bank, or charity, through collections, or funding
- Raise money for environmental or local charities, through your own ideas, such as plant sales, cake sales, non-uniform days, etc.
- Work with a charity on a community project, such as an open space, information boards, leaflets, etc.
- Write a letter to your local MP, or someone who could help to make a difference





Addressing your, and our planet's health



Young Marketeers – Growing Food, Skills and Confidence

"That box isn't big enough for all the things we've learnt! Shall I talk about planting seeds or customer service or watering...?" – Leicester child giving feedback on Young Marketeers.

From planting seeds to serving customers, [Young Marketeers](#) brings together a wide range of learning. The food education programme from national charity [School Food Matters](#) helps children develop practical gardening skills while nurturing a life-long positive relationship with food and the environment. Through hands-on outdoor learning, it spreads the joy of food growing while helping children learn more about nutritious food, sustainability and food waste.



Eight Leicester schools took part last year, with children growing fruit and vegetables from seed before putting their new skills into practice on Market Day at Leicester Market. The programme is fully funded, with schools supported throughout by a local project officer, including guided gardening sessions, practical advice and resources. No previous gardening experience is needed.

One Leicester teacher said: "We were all a bit nervous about trying to grow things from scratch but she gave us lots of practical tips... Once we started harvesting our own beetroots and lettuces we were really excited by the outcomes."

School Food Matters is inviting Leicester primary schools to express their interest in taking part in Young Marketeers in 2026/27. The programme can complement curriculum learning and Eco Schools work. [Find out more about Young Marketeers and express your interest.](#)

Grow Your Own Grub Competition 2026-27



We will once again be running our very popular Grow Your Own Grub Competition this academic year. Last year, it was won by Inglehurst Junior School!

For the competition, each school is asked to design a menu based on the theme set that year (this year's is TBC) and then you have to grow at least 5 of the ingredients in a wheelbarrow (or as we call it 'mealbarrow') and then write a short and simple report on how you found the process.

The mealbarrows are then collected and taken to Abbey Pumping Station, for our Community Showcase day, where members of the public can come along and see them and vote for their favourite! There are prizes for the winning schools!

Sign ups will open in November – look out for more info in future ebulletins!





Litter



Reducing litter, which harms wildlife and costs millions to clear every year

Borrow Litter Picking Equipment

Litter picking is always a fantastic way of engaging students in environmental work and can be a particularly good way of working alongside the local community. Last year, schools in Leicester hosted 752 litter picks, with over 2,000 young people involved! As with last year, we have 7 litter picking kits that we can lend out to schools who would like to borrow them. These include litter pickers, bag hoops and some gloves. This is a FREE service for schools in Leicester city.

To register for a kit, simply sign up through the [eForm](#).

1.4k

Kg of waste diverted from landfill.

2.2k

Young people participating in a litter pick.

5.3k

People engaged in Litter themed activities.

540

Bags of litter collected.

23

Settings who feel there is now less litter around their site.

752

Litter picks delivered.



Free Lithium Battery, Vape & WEEE Awareness Session for Young People

CJS Recycling are offering local schools and youth projects a **free pilot awareness session** focused on lithium-ion batteries, vapes, WEEE and recycling safety.

The session is designed to be practical and engaging for young people and covers:

- 📱 Where lithium-ion batteries are found in everyday items and 🔥 why damaged lithium batteries can cause serious fires
- 💨 Vapes - the battery, fire and environmental risks and ♻️ how vapes, batteries and electrical waste should be disposed of and recycled safely
- 📱 Phones, laptops, e-scooters and other common battery-powered items
- ⚠️ What to do if a battery becomes damaged, swollen or starts showing signs of failure
- 🌍 The environmental impact of WEEE, batteries and incorrectly disposed vapes
- 💼 Careers and opportunities within the recycling and environmental sector
- 🗑️ Why batteries and vapes should never be put into general waste or recycling bins unless the system specifically accepts them.

The session can be tailored to the age group and delivered as a **30–60 minute interactive workshop**, including questions and a short quiz.

The training is based around real-world situations rather than just theory, helping young people understand the risks they may encounter in everyday life.

We're currently looking for schools and youth organisations in the local area to take part in a few **free pilot sessions** and provide feedback

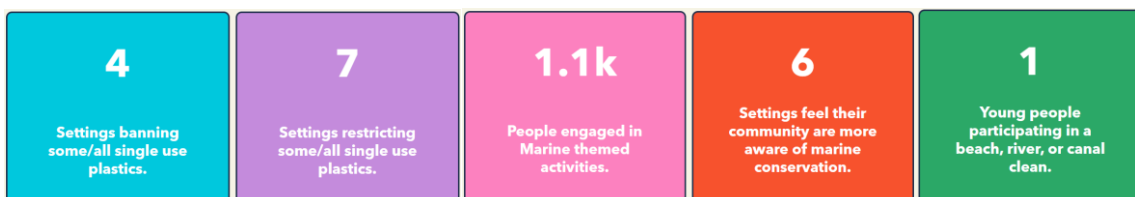
Please email Jason Corrall at cjsrecycle@gmail.com to enquire about the session.



Marine



Protecting and conserving water-based ecosystems



Autumn Great UK WaterBlitz Registration Open Now

Earthwatch's biannual, water testing, citizen science project is now open for September sign ups.



Running over the weekend of **Sept 18-21st**, the Great UK WaterBlitz is a national water testing event. By registering you'll be sent a testing kit to identify common nutrient pollutants Nitrate and Phosphates in a freshwater body of interest.

We have plenty of school resource that link to this water testing event, find them here - [Water](#)

We often run a water focused live lesson around the Blitz, so watch this space.

But for now... visit the link here [Great UK WaterBlitz - Earthwatch Europe](#) to register for your kit, whilst stocks last!

Plastic Clever Schools – Day of Action

Plastic Clever Schools' International Day of Action is back on 6th November 2026 with a special theme – climate connection!

Last year, 38,630 students from 541 schools across 32 countries came together to tackle plastic pollution. We would love to see schools from across Leicester joining in with the challenge.

The International Day of Action is a global event for collective action that brings together schools, teachers and young people from around the world to tackle plastic pollution.

For more information and to get your school registered, visit the [Plastic Clever Schools website](#).



Common Seas





School grounds



Improving school grounds for students, staff, plants, insects and animals



Project ideas

Tree / hedgerow planting	Wildflower planting	Bird watching / feeding area
Allotment / growing space	Bug hotels, Bird Boxes, Bat boxes, hibernacula	Carry out a Bioblitz
Rewilding		
Create an outdoor learning space	Information boards / trails	Sensory / Wellbeing garden

3.2k

People engaged in Grounds themed activities.

2.4k

Young people taking part in hands-on growing activities.

286

Indoor plants have been nurtured by young people.

19

Settings now delivering more outdoor learning.

742

Trees planted.

209

Habitats created/installed/maintained for animal and insect life.

Woodland Trust – Free Trees for Schools and Communities

Woodland Trust wants everybody in the UK to have the chance to plant a tree! They are giving away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools and communities. All schools, colleges and nurseries in the UK can apply.

The UK needs millions more trees to reach its 2050 carbon net-zero target!



WOODLAND TRUST

Choose your pack(s) from the list [here](#) and fill out the application form. Applications for tree packs close mid January. [Apply here - Free Tree Packs Application Form](#)



RHS

RHS School Gardening – information, courses and awards

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) offers a wide range of school gardening advice, training, information and [resources](#) on its website: [School gardening / RHS](#)



[School gardening training courses / RHS](#)

Free courses offered online.

Course 1: Getting Started with School Gardening

Course 2: Basic Horticulture Skills for School Gardening

Course 3: Planet-friendly gardening

[RHS School Gardening Awards / RHS](#). Free to take part in. Starts at Level 1 and you can progress to Level 5



Transport



Promoting and encouraging sustainable transport

11

Settings that feel their people are more likely to commute actively.

3.2k

People engaged in Transport themed activities.

608

Walk/wheel to school days planned.

1.6k

Young people participating in active travel training.

46

Active travel awareness activities delivered.

WOW Walk to School Challenge – funded places available

Did you know that thanks to Active Travel England, your school could be eligible to take part in WOW - the walk to school challenge - for free?



[WOW – the walk to school challenge](#) is a pupil-led initiative from UK charity, Living Streets. Pupils self-report how they get to school every day on the WOW Travel Tracker. Those who walk, wheel, cycle, scoot, or Park and Stride at least once a week each month are awarded collectible WOW badges.

WOW has been helping to reduce congestion and pollution at thousands of schools for 20 years. Last academic year, the Walk to School Outreach project helped create 17.8 million new walking journeys and removed over 3.4 million car km from the roads at peak times.

Visit our enquiry page [Join WOW](#) to find out more about WOW during 2026-2027. *(We can check eligibility for funding when you get in touch. Spaces on this funding stream are limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis so do get in touch at the earliest opportunity if you are interested to find out more)*



Project ideas

- Carry out travel surveys, create commuting graphs and maps, monitor air quality, or calculate the carbon footprint of travel, or lobby your local council or government.
- **Modeshift Stars** - [Modeshift STARS Education - Delivery of Effective Travel Plans](#) The STARS Education scheme recognises schools that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel.
- **Clean Air Day** – Thursday 17th June 2027, [Clean Air Day | Leicester | Choose How You Move](#). Reduce emissions and air pollution and learn about cleaner travel.
- **Bikeability** – (used to be ‘cycling proficiency’) sign up to receive cycling awareness and safety training for your students to learn how to cycle safely. Scootability is available too.
- **Bike repair workshops** – ask local bike shops if they would consider coming in and teaching basic bicycle repair to students and staff, supporting safer cycling.
- **No car days** – close your staff car park and use it as a bike or scooter park instead
- Walk to School weeks, set up a Park and Stride, ‘Pimp my ride’ bicycle displays or catwalks. Teach parents about active travel. Do and assembly. There is so much to do!



Waste



Refusing, reducing, reusing, repairing, recycling



FREE assemblies and workshops on waste management, reduction and recycling for Leicester schools

Did you know Leicester City Council's Waste Management team offer FREE assemblies and bespoke workshops on waste reduction and recycling for Leicester Schools. We offer a range of activities tailored to your school for all things recycling and waste related, including assemblies, workshops and classroom presentations, tailored to your needs and covering a range of topics.



For example, we present "The life of a Plastic Bottle" and discuss the choices that you have and what would happen depending on your choices. Our workshops involve fun and interactive activities, such as designing a recycling poster or spotting the wrong items in recycling, or emulating a sorting line and the young people are the workforce, preparing them for the future.

For further information on the FREE activities we can provide please contact Kimberley Tilley, Service Development Officer (Waste Management), Leicester City Council -

kimberley.tilley@leicester.gov.uk or [0116 454 6742](tel:01164546742)

The Pod – Free resources for schools

There is a wonderful website absolutely packed with resources for teachers and students of all ages to use, including assemblies, activities, games, lesson plans, and project ideas about waste, transport, energy, water, climate and biodiversity!

Go to [The Pod | Welcome to the Pod](#) to find out more and sign up for free!



TerraCycle's Green School Project

Supplies, new uniforms or school activities—fundraising for your school can be tough, but it doesn't have to be. You can earn money for your school simply by recycling and raising funds with TerraCycle! When you recycle with us, you earn points for each shipment of hard-to-recycle rubbish you send in. These points can then be redeemed as a monetary donation to your school! And better yet—you'll help inspire the next generation of recyclers. Find out more at: [The Green School Project · TerraCycle](#)



- Education, Recycling and Reward Initiative

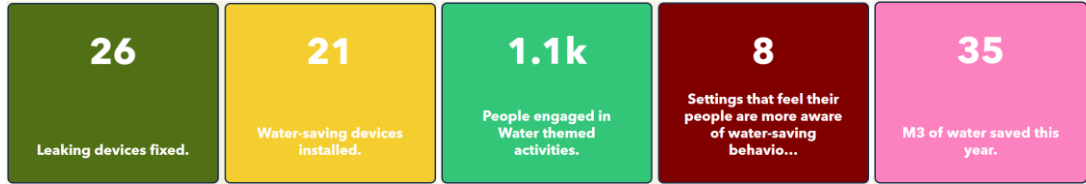
SchoolCycled is an initiative designed to educate the next generation about recycling, ecosystems and sustainability. Our aim is to inspire, reward and educate through the scheme; participating schools will have full access to our teaching materials and will be sent an induction pack. Schools collect plastic bottle caps, and trade them with us for lots of various school items made from their own recycled waste to reward the children's participation. Find out more at: [SchoolCycled - MYGroup](#)



Water



Valuing and preserving our most important natural resource



SEVERN

TRENT

Bring Water to Life with Severn Trent

Looking for engaging ways to support the Eco-Schools Water topic? Severn Trent offers free assemblies, workshops and interactive learning experiences for primary schools.

Our whole-school assemblies introduce pupils to the wonderful world of water, exploring the water cycle, where drinking water comes from, what happens to wastewater and how we can all help protect this precious resource.

For Year 4 pupils, we provide curriculum-linked workshops that bring water and wastewater learning to life through hands-on activities, investigations and discussion. Children discover how water travels from source to tap, why only the "3 Ps" should be flushed and how simple actions at home can help protect rivers and reduce pollution.

Schools can also book our exciting Education Van Experience, which provides an immersive learning environment and a memorable way for pupils to explore the journey of water. All activities are free of charge and designed to inspire young people to become future water champions while supporting science, geography and sustainability learning.

To find out more or book a visit, visit the Severn Trent Education website:

[Workshops and visits](#) | [Education Zone](#) | [About Us](#) | [Severn Trent Water](#)



Project ideas

Conduct a leak hunt: Inspect school bathrooms and classrooms to find dripping taps or running toilets, then report them to the site manager or caretaker.

Map water usage: Gather data on how much water the school uses and present the findings to staff, other classes, or in an assembly.

Design reminder signs: Create signs to put near sinks reminding pupils to turn taps off fully.

Launch a refillable bottle drive: Encourage everyone to switch from single-use plastic bottles to reusable water bottles.

Make water pledges: Write personal saving promises on paper raindrops and display them on a central school notice board

Install rainwater harvesting: Set up water butts to collect rainwater from roofs, which can then be used to water school plants instead of using tap water.

Plant drought-tolerant gardens: Design and plant garden areas with native species that require minimal watering.



Other projects and awards to get involved in



Ashden Less CO2 Schools Climate Programme - [LESS CO2 Schools Climate Programme](#)

Award Place Environment and Sustainability Award - [Environment and Sustainability Award](#)

CREST Awards (STEM) - [CREST: Impactful projects in STEM that engage and reward young people](#)

Fairtrade Schools Award - [School Awards](#)

Food for Life Schools Award - [Schools | Food for Life](#)

Green Education Green School Award - [Green School Award - Green Education](#)

John Muir Award - [Engagement Initiative | John Muir Award](#)

Learning About Forests (LEAF) via Eco Schools - [LEAF - Eco Schools](#)

Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) - [About Us | LEAF \(Linking Environment And Farming\)](#)

Plastic Clever Schools - [Plastic Clever Schools - Reduce Plastic Waste in Schools](#)

RSPB Wild Challenge for Schools - [Wild Challenge for schools](#)

RCSPA Young Photographer Awards (coming in 2027) - [Young Photographer Awards Competition](#)

UNICEF Right respecting Schools Award - [The Rights Respecting Schools Award](#)

Wildlife Trusts Wild Schools Award (coming soon) - [Wild School Award](#)

Woodland Trust's Green Tree Schools Award - [Take part in the Green Tree Schools Award](#)

Natural History Museum Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year Award - [Wildlife Photographer of the Year](#)

If you know of any we have missed, please do let us know!



Supporting nature and biodiversity in education – we need your help!

For many of our local education settings, now is the time to think about making improvements to support nature across their sites. But they cannot do it alone!

If you are passionate about nature, biodiversity and helping people to connect to the world around them, joining the [Climate Ambassadors Scheme](#) as a **nature and biodiversity champion** is the perfect opportunity for you to share your knowledge and skills this spring.

Through tailored training sessions delivered by the team at [National Education Nature Park](#), you will receive ready-made activity guides and resources to use with your local education settings, whether it is mapping/creating habitats, aiding planting schemes, or rejuvenating a pond!

Please complete the [expression of interest form](#) to receive further information and training dates. If you have any questions or would like to know more, please email ca-eastmidlands@nottingham.ac.uk.





School Visits to Lanterns of the Wild at Twycross Zoo

Thank you for your interest in a school visit to our fabulous, bigger and better, Lanterns of the Wild event for 2026/2027.

For school groups of 10 or more paying guests, we can offer the following reduced prices on any available date, subject to availability:

Lanterns of the Wild – from 4.30pm	
Child (3 to 17 years)	£10.00
Additional Teachers / Adults (over and above free ratio below)	£12.00
Add On One Day Zoo Admission (if required) – Education Rates	
Child (3 to 17 years)	£9.00
Additional Teachers / Adults (over and above free ratio below)	£12.00

Free Teacher Ratio:

EYFS 1:5 / Primary 1:7 / Secondary-FE-HE 1:10

Essential Companions are free of charge on presentation of a valid Nimbus Access card showing a +1 or +2 logo.

Important Information

Pre booking is essential – we will not be able to accommodate unexpected arrivals.

Day time zoo admission is not mandatory – you can choose to just visit Lanterns of the Wild after 4.30pm.

On Lanterns of the Wild days the zoo will close at 3.30pm and reopen at 4.30pm for the event. A festive waiting area will be available with food stalls and rides (not included in the price).

One Day Zoo Admissions

One day zoo admissions are valid for the day of your visit only and are not eligible for our 12-month free return offer.

Payment

Bookings will be invoiced for post-visit based on your actual attendees.

Once booked, failure to notify us of non-attendance will result in your being invoiced as booked. We require at least 3 days notice of your intended visit date to process your booking / add on additional guests or make any changes to your booking.

If you would like to book, please email us at bookings@twycrosszoo.org

Dates

November 2026

Monday	–
Tuesday	–
Wednesday	–
Thursday	26 th
Friday	6 th , 13 th , 20 th , 27 th
Saturday	7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th
Sunday	8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th

December 2026

Monday	14 th , 21 st , 28 th
Tuesday	15 th , 22 nd , 29 th
Wednesday	16 th , 23 rd , 30 th
Thursday	3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 24 th , 31 st
Friday	4 th , 11 th , 18 th
Saturday	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th
Sunday	6 th , 13 th , 20 th , 27 th

January 2026

Monday	–
Tuesday	–
Wednesday	–
Thursday	–
Friday	1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th
Saturday	2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th
Sunday	3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 24 th , 31 st

February 2026

Monday	15 th
Tuesday	16 th
Wednesday	17 th
Thursday	18 th
Friday	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th
Saturday	6 th , 13 th , 20 th , 27 th
Sunday	7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th

