

Schools News

January 2023



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 termly #EcoTeachMeets, staff training, resource planning & workshops, assemblies, Eco-Schools conferences & celebration events and can keep up to date through dedicated social media, monthly eBulletins and termly newsletters. The Eco-Schools programme provides exciting opportunities for students in curriculum time as well as outside the classroom. Learning outside the classroom (LOTC) has been identified as 'memorable activities leading to memorable learning and positively contributing to pupil safety'. LOTC provides positive benefits to all groups of young people and supports a rich, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum.

Welcome to the January 2023 Leicester Schools newsletter. We hope you all had a relaxing Christmas break and Happy New Year! January is always a time when people make new year's resolutions, and we are no different. We have lots of ideas, activities and opportunities to participate in over this term. We are also planning our celebration event in July (yes – already!)

Last term we were busy with our roadshow, workshops on carbon literacy and this term we have 9 Tiny Forests to plant – we are very much looking forward to being outdoors! As always, get in touch if you need any support - Lee, Marc, Molly & Laura.



How to find out more Sustainable Schools Team

City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ

✉ Eco-Schools@leicester.gov.uk

🌐 schools.leicester.gov.uk/eco-schools

🐦 [EcoSchoolsLCC](#)

📷 [EcoSchoolsLCC](#)

📘 [EnvEducationLeicester](#)

☎ 0116 454 2271



Tiny Forest planting at
Fullhurst College – December 2022

Finished reading? Pass on to a colleague

Eco-School Awards

Schools can register for Eco-Schools for free at www.eco-schools.org.uk/register

Since September 2021, there have been a number of changes in the Eco-Schools Awards. There is no longer a Bronze and Silver accreditation – schools go direct to the Eco-Schools Green Flag.

Green Flags will now be renewed on an **annual basis with an application window open from 1 May until 31 July every year.**

Applications will be **completely done online** to showcase your environmental efforts. There are more questions and an opportunity to achieve Eco-Schools Green Flag with Merit or Distinction.

The new Eco-Schools application online has a **progress bar** which you can see as you complete the application over the year with the students.

The cost will remain at £200+VAT but on an annual basis. More information available online at www.eco-schools.org.uk/the-eco-schools-programme-is-changing

Newsletter

Our newsletters are published 4 times per year. If you would like to submit an article for the next newsletter, the deadline is **Friday 31 March 2023**. We ask for around 200 words, at least 1 photo and contact details e.g. name and email address to: Eco-Schools@leicester.gov.uk

Hollie leaves the team

At the end of December last year, Hollie made the very exciting decision to leave Leicester and move to the USA, and is therefore no longer working with us in the team. Hollie has been an amazing asset to the team taking on BESS Energy reports, Botanica and Roots and Shoots. Hollie was selected to be part of this year's Leicester Open 33 at Leicester Museum. You can see her photo there until the middle of January.

We wish her the very best in her future career and look forward to hearing about her adventures!



Bottle Top Mosaic



Take a look at this fantastic recycled artwork made by pupils at **Catherine Junior School**. This is a fantastic example of upcycling using bottle caps and other single use plastics – well done team!

Dates for your diary – Eco events

We now have an annual calendar with all the date for the academic year on. This will be updated on a bi-monthly basis. It will be emailed with the eBulletin.



Event Details	Date	Month
ASE Conference Sheffield (Primary Science)	Thursday 5	January
ASE Conference Sheffield (Primary Science)	Friday 6	January
ASE Conference Sheffield (Primary Science)	Saturday 7	January
Sustainable Schools Celebration evening - by invite (from 5pm)	Tuesday 10	January
Eco-Schools training session 2 (1-3.30-pm)	Friday 3	February
Discovery of the Rutland Sea Dragon Virtual Assembly (9.30am)	Monday 13	February
Fairtrade Assembly (virtual (1.30-2pm)	Friday 17	February
Governor Training (Environmental Education) (4.30-6pm)	Thursday 2	March
World Wildlife Day	Friday 3	March
Roots and Shoots Awards (London)	Friday 3	March
International Womens Day	Wednesday 8	March
Global Recycling Day	Saturday 18	March
Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel starts	Monday 20	March
World Water Day	Wednesday 22	March
Earth Hour 8:30-9:30pm	Saturday 25	March
Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel ends	Friday 31	March
Earth Day Assembly (virtual 1.30-2pm)	Friday 21	April
Earth Day	Saturday 22	April
Eco-Schools training session 3 (1-3.30pm)	Monday 24	April
World Environment Day	Monday 5	June
World Oceans Day	Thursday 8	June
World Oceans Day Assembly (virtual - 1.30-2pm)	Thursday 8	June
Clean Air Day	Thursday 15	June
Plastic bag-free day	Monday 3	July
Eco-Schools Celebration (all day)	Thursday 6	July

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

Eco-Schools Training Session 2

Best practice, ideas for projects, curriculum links, informing and involving , monitoring and evaluation

FREE Training course:

Friday 3 February 2023, 1.30-3.30 pm

Castle Mead Academy, LE3 5QT

Sign up [here](#)

This training is open to both attendees of the first training session and those who did not attend. There will be another in-person follow up on Monday 24 April 2023

- Are you wanting to find out about best practices for incorporating Eco-Schools into a busy school environment?
- Do you want to learn about successful environmental actions and projects in other Leicester schools?
- Are you wanting to connect with other school staff in Leicester schools and support each other to gain or renew your Eco-Schools Green Flag Award?

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



In Leicester there are now 65 schools with the prestigious Green Flag Award putting us at number one in England! This training, delivered by the Sustainable Schools team at Leicester City Council, will provide top tips for working on Eco-Schools, ideas for new projects, and a chance to team up with colleagues. There will also be a focus on Steps 4, 5, 6, and 7 – curriculum links, informing and involving, monitoring and evaluation and Eco-code

Who would benefit from this course?

Eco-leads and all school staff with an interest in environmental education - heads, deputy heads, assistant heads, classroom teachers, TAs, support staff, premises officers, business managers and governors/trustees.

For more information please contact:

Marc at Marc.Tench@Leicester.gov.uk
or

Sustainable Schools Team

✉ SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk

🌐 schools.leicester.gov.uk/eco-schools

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

📷 [EcoSchoolsLCC](https://www.instagram.com/EcoSchoolsLCC)

📘 [EnvEducationLeicester](https://www.facebook.com/EnvEducationLeicester)

☎ 0116 454 2271



Sustainable Schools & Climate Change Governor & Trustee Training March 2023

In Leicester there are 65 schools that have achieved the prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag Award. This training, delivered by Leicester City Council, will support your understanding the award as well your role in the recently published government policy 'Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education'. We'll also discuss how to declare a climate emergency in school and how as a Governor or Trustee you can support your school or MAT to reduce their carbon footprint.

Thursday 2 March 2023 Online via Microsoft Teams
4.30pm – 6.00pm (link will be sent the week before)

Open to all schools in Leicester City

Eco-Schools is a global programme which provides a framework for learning and action around 10 environmental topics. It is free to register for Eco-Schools. A cost applies for Green Flag accreditation, however there are several sponsorship schemes in Leicester.



Why attend?

- Gain a greater understanding of the **national Sustainability and Climate Change strategy**, updated **Eco-Schools** criteria and **how to declare a climate emergency in school**
- Understand the role of the **Sustainable Schools/Eco-Schools link governor/trustee**
- Find out how your school can link with **Eco-Schools and similar environmental programmes** local and nationally
- Learn more about the **Let's Go Zero 2030 campaign** to make schools carbon zero

Who would benefit from this course?

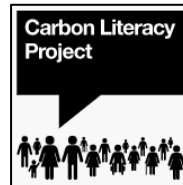
Any governors or trustees who have taken on the responsibility as Environmental Education/Eco-Schools Environment link as well as those who are interested to find out more.

Cost: £20 per governor (the school will be invoiced, not individual governors/trustees)



To book your place please complete this [eForm](#)
For questions please email SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk

Virtual Carbon Literacy Training for School Staff, Governors & Trustees



In February 2019, Leicester City Council declared a climate emergency. We are working to develop a climate emergency programme of action to reduce carbon with the aim of the city becoming zero carbon.

In order to raise awareness of the climate emergency, we are using the Carbon Literacy Project as a way of accrediting school staff in becoming Carbon Literate. By 2025, the DfE have said that each school will have a sustainability lead who will have taken part in Carbon Literacy Training. By joining us, you will help put your school ahead of the rest!

Training: Mondays 27 February, 6 & 13 March 2023

4.30-6.30pm each day (you need to attend all 3 sessions to pass)

Training delivered online via Microsoft Teams

Who would benefit from this project: All school staff, including premises officers, and governors with an interest in becoming carbon literate, especially those involved in teaching about climate change and the climate emergency.



Why participate?

- Gain a **better understanding of how climate change will affect you and those around you**
- **Become an accredited Carbon Literate individual**
- Acquire knowledge and skills to develop your own responses to lowering your carbon footprint, and the carbon footprint of others
- Gain knowledge of delivering a course about basic climate change science to your students. Help to enable students to become **carbon literate**

Your commitments

- Attend all three **online training events** in Spring 2023
- Create at least **one significant action, as an individual**, to reduce your own personal carbon footprint
- Create at **least one significant action involving other people** to reduce the collective footprint of your workplace, community or place of education
- **Encourage your school to participate in carbon literacy** either by delivering training yourself or arranging for Leicester City Council to deliver in-house (at a future date to be confirmed)

Visit the link below to sign up through the eForm to secure your place!



The cost of the three sessions is £20.

This includes the £10 accreditation fee from the Carbon Literacy Project.

This training is open to all staff in Leicester City schools and schools within our traded services.

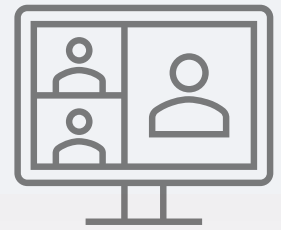
To book your place please complete the [eForm](#). For more information, contact Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk

Sustainable Schools Virtual Assemblies

The Sustainable Schools team will be holding another series of virtual assemblies to coincide with environmental events throughout the school year!

Our virtual assemblies will all be held at **1:30pm via Microsoft Teams** on the following dates:

- [Discovery of the Rutland Sea Dragon](#) – Monday 13 February (9.30am)
- [Fairtrade Fortnight](#) – Friday 17 February 2023
- [Earth Day](#) – Friday 21 April 2023
- [World Ocean Day](#) – Thursday 8 June 2023



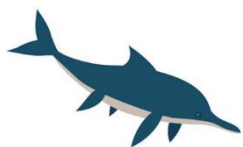
We will cover the meaning behind each event and how students can get involved at school and at home.

There is no need to sign up – just use the links above to join at the time!



If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at SustainableSchools@leicester.gov.uk

Virtual Assembly - The Discovery of the Rutland 'Sea Dragon'



Monday 13 February – 9.30am

Via Microsoft Teams – [Use this link on the day](#)

Join Joe Davis from Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust as he describes what it was like to discover the biggest and most complete fossilised ichthyosaur skeleton ever found in the UK! You will learn about this 10.5 metre long animal that lived 183 million years ago, how it was dug up and what will happen next.

Just join on the day, no need to sign up in advance



**Supports the Eco-Schools
biodiversity topic**



**Leicestershire
& Rutland
Wildlife Trust**



Big Schools' Birdwatch 2023

Participate between 6 January to 20 February 2023

Register today at the [RSPB](#) today



Eco-Schools Celebration 2023



**Deadline for
school entry
22 June 2023**

Thursday 6 July 2023 • City Hall, Leicester

Celebrate the work that your school has completed this year by attending the now annual Eco-Schools. Bring along up to 6 students to display your Eco-Schools project and celebrate your Eco-Schools Green Flag.



Schools can display 2 Eco-Schools topics. As a reminder, the Eco-Schools topics are:

- Biodiversity
- Energy
- Litter
- Waste
- Transport
- Water
- School Grounds
- Healthy Living
- Global Citizenship
- Marine



All schools will also be entered into the:

- Judge's Special Award
- Eco-factor Award (voted by students)

The event will run from 9.30am – 2.15pm.

Lunch will be provided on the day (TBC)



Approximate timing of the day

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 09.30-10.00 | Students/staff set up stalls |
| 10.00-12.00 | Judges visit stalls and speak to students |
| 12.00-13.00 | Lunch and activities |
| 13.00-14.00 | Presentations |
| 14.00-14.15 | Stalls dismantled and students/staff leave |

Schools will be asked to provide brief information about their display before the day.

Book your place now via our [eForm](#) or scan the QR code.

For more information contact:
Lee Jowett, Leicester City Council
lee.jowett@leicester.gov.uk
0116 454 2271



Climate Change Home Learning Packs

Throughout October 2022, over 900 students from across the city took part in a home learning activity pack. The packs were designed to teach KS2 students all about climate change. For 28 days during the month, students were given a new task or activity to complete, all with a focus on sustainability and protecting the environment. Activities presented in the pack included learning about how to save energy in the home, creating a bird feeder out of recycled materials and calculating a carbon footprint. There were also three competitions to enter as part of the pack with opportunities to win different prizes.

We want to say a huge well done to the all of the students who took part, and to the parents for supporting with the activities!



Supports many of the Eco-Schools topics



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Carbon Literacy Project



Carbon Literacy Project Update



We have now trained a further 31 staff members on our Carbon Literacy Course for staff and governors, taking the total number of school staff being trained as Carbon Literate in Leicester to over 100! We have also worked with more student groups, taking the number of students who have taken part in our carbon awareness course to over 700. We have thoroughly enjoyed working with the young people to create fun and exciting ways to share their learning about carbon emissions with others and can't wait to see what they do next.

The Carbon Literacy Project was referenced in the new Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy as being something that all sustainability leads should have taken part in by 2025. Why not stay ahead of this aim by taking part in our next staff and governor course, starting in Spring 2023. See the flyer for more information.

For any queries relating to Carbon Literacy, please contact laura.barke@leicester.gov.uk.

Grow Your Own Grub Celebration



During 2022, 23 local schools joined an annual Grow Your Own Grub competition, organised by the city council's Sustainable Schools and Public Health teams, The Conservation Volunteers (TCV), and Food for Life. They were tasked with coming up with a healthy, nutritious and creative menu idea for a three-course meal and then growing at least five of the ingredients they'd need – whether fruit, vegetables, salad crops, herbs or cereals.

Their efforts – grown in portable 'mealbarrows' - were [judged earlier this year](#), with Taylor Road Primary School, in St Matthews, named as overall winners. To celebrate, Taylor Road invited fellow participants to come and try their winning menu at a celebration lunch and assembly. Pupils and staff from Stokes Wood Primary, Queensmead Primary Academy, Merrydale Infants School and the Nurturing Roots home school group sampled a potato and courgette curry served with rice, roti & yogurt. For dessert, there was a choice of a rhubarb & ginger crumble or an Arabic fruit salad Fattoush.

Ranjit Allen, a class teacher from Taylor Road Primary said: "We're so pleased to have won the Grow Your Own Grub competition. Taking part has started classroom conversations about food miles, healthy eating and sustainability, as well as teaching our children gardening skills and introducing them to the physical and mental health benefits that can come from growing your own grub, even if you only have a windowsill to spare. "It's been lovely to see children from nursery to year six, staff, parents and carers all 'grow' together. Hopefully, we have sown the seed for self-sufficiency (a nod to The Good Life, for those of you who remember!) - which has never been more important!"

After lunch, the visiting school groups toured Taylor Road's growing area, before a prize-giving assembly. The city council's Sustainable Schools team also announced Queensmead Primary Academy as winners of their recent Pumpkin Garden competition, where schools were asked to grow a selection of pumpkin and squash plants in their school grounds, starting from seeds. They then had to harvest, cook with and dispose of the pumpkins in a sustainable manner.

City council public health funding has been used to support the competitions. Cllr Vi Dempster, assistant city mayor for public health, said: "We know that children have a better understanding of their food, and are more likely to try new and healthier options, if they've had a hand in growing it. "Promoting nutritional, sustainable food options like these can help to combat obesity as well as demonstrating that growing your own grub is easy - and fun. It's a message that children can then take home to their families."

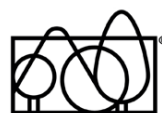
More information about community 'get growing' schemes and other sustainable food projects in Leicester, is available at: www.leicester.gov.uk/foodplan. You can see all the photos on our [Facebook](#) page.



Supports the Eco-Schools healthy living, waste and energy topics



Tiny Forests



tinyforest
earthwatch
EUROPE

We are really pleased to be working with Earthwatch on planting 10 Tiny Forests in Leicester over the winter months, taking our total to 20 Tiny Forests in Leicester! The forests for this year are funded by the Local Authority Treescapes Fund and will bring a further 6000 trees into Leicester City Schools.

Tiny Forests are densely packed native forests, which fit into the size of a tennis court. The forest is not just a pleasant spot for butterflies, birds, bees and small mammals; it is a great place for people too. In the outdoor classroom, children learn about nature and it also serves as a meeting place for the local community.

Tiny Forests act as a catalyst for change in many ways, from promoting strong and lasting connections to nature among the next generation, to building teachers skills and confidence in leading inspiring outdoor learning beyond the confines of desk-based lessons.

By spending more time in the natural environment through Tiny Forests, pupils will grow their curiosity of the natural world and as a result, can participate in critical discussions about wider issues like climate change, sustainability and plastic pollution, and drive positive action for the planet.



The schools that will have a Tiny Forest following this planting season include:

Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School, Barley Croft Primary School, Beaumont Leys Specialist Science School, Braunstone Frith Primary School, Buswells Lodge Primary School, Ellesmere College, English Martyrs Catholic School, Fullhurst Community College, Hope Hamilton CE Primary School, Linden Primary School, Mowmacre Hill Primary School, Nether Hall School, New College Leicester, Queensmead Primary School, Rolleston Primary School, Rushey Mead Primary School, Scraptoft Valley Primary School, St Mary's Fields Primary School, West Gate School & Whitehall Primary School.

If you are interested in registering your school for a future Tiny Forest, or feel like your school does not have the space but would still like to be involved with the project, please contact: Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk.



Supports the Eco-Schools School grounds and biodiversity topics

Cut Your Carbon with Eco-Schools

February 2023



'Cut Your Carbon.' is running from the **6 to 10 of February 2023**. Cut Your Carbon is a national week of action, challenging Eco-Committees to raise awareness and cut the carbon footprint of their school – delivered by Eco-Schools England.

The Cut Your Carbon Campaign connects to 3 areas of everyday life that are having a devastating impact on our planet: clothing, energy-use, and food. Eco-Schools has produced a series of resources and activity guides that will help young people to raise awareness about carbon-emissions and start reducing the carbon-footprint of their school. All activities are free and practical to deliver in school. They're hands-on, fun, and give pupils the power to make a difference.



Project 1: (Re)LoveOurStuff

The clothing industry is responsible for almost 10% of global carbon emissions, it's time we changed our fashion habits and learned to **(Re)LoveOurStuff!**

This project supports Eco-Committees to plan, advertise, and deliver a special one-off event in school - a pop-up, second-hand clothes shop! This activity will generate a buzz, engage your whole school, save parents and pupils money, divert clothing from landfill and raise awareness about the environmental costs of the fashion industry. A perfect project for our **Marine, Waste,** and **Global Citizenship** topics!



Project 2: Energy Investigators

More than 20% of the UK's carbon footprint comes from generating energy. For schools in 2022, this will result in a whopping £1 billion of energy bills. It's time to reduce our carbon emissions, it's time to save money, it's time to become **Energy Investigators!**

This project supports pupils to review energy-usage in their school before stepping up and delivering 5 energy-reducing activities across the campaign week. Each activity is designed to raise awareness, change behaviours, and cut carbon emissions. A perfect project for our **Energy** and **School Grounds** topics!



Project 3: Plant-Based Portions

Food Production is responsible for more than 33% of global greenhouse gas emissions, something has to give - it's time we eat more **Plant-Based Portions.**

This project encourages pupils to raise awareness about the environmental and health benefits of plant-based foods, before delivering 5 'plant-based actions' across the campaign week. Actions are designed to inspire change in three key groups: schoolmates, parents/guardians, and school caterers. A perfect project for our **Healthy Living** and **Biodiversity** topics!

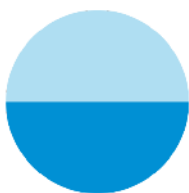


Supports many of the Eco-Schools topics





BY



Common
Seas

x



Join us in our bid to becoming the first ever Plastic Clever City!



We are pleased to introduce Plastic Clever Schools, a project new for the Sustainable Schools team which started in September 2022. Plastic Clever Schools is a programme developed by Kids Against Plastic and Common Seas, with the aim of reducing single use plastics in schools.

Our aim is to become the first ever Plastic Clever City. To achieve this, we need at least 60 schools in Leicester actively taking part in the programme during the academic year 2022/2023.

What does Plastic Clever Schools involve?

- There are three stages to the programme:
 - **Inspire** – hold a litter pick and share why YOU want to be a Plastic Clever School
 - **Investigate** – look at the use of plastic in your school and create an action plan
 - **Act** – take steps to reduce 2 problem plastics in your school and celebrate YOUR success!
- The online platform has workbooks for students, resources for teachers and a display board showing success stories from schools across the countries.
- New for Autumn 2022, there will be a set of resources for secondary schools meaning everyone can be involved!



Why participate?

- Young people are encouraged to take the lead in the project
- Ideal for eco teams, individual classes or even year groups to take ownership of
- Join a network of schools all working towards the same aim
- Work for your Plastic Clever Schools award will also support your Eco-Schools Green Flag award application

How can you join?

Simply sign up online through the [Plastic Clever Schools website](#). Work through the stages and start reducing your schools plastic waste now!



For more information, please contact Laura on Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk



Air Wick: Pollinators for Schools

Over the first part of term, students and teachers got to work re-seeding their pollinator patches to overwinter. With a second sprinkling of wildflower seeds and some very wet weather (the opposite of last summer!), we are hoping to see some colourful and diverse blooms pop up in spring 2023.

The remaining schools also got to work building their bug hotels. Students learned about the importance of shelters for native insects and other animals, and how they can come in many different shapes and sizes – as you can see from our pictures!

The project isn't over yet - we will check up on the bug hotels again early next year to make sure they can stand the test of time, and then have another round of BioBlitz surveys next summer.



**Supports school grounds
Eco-Schools topic**



Slow the Flow



Environment
Agency



In partnership with the Environment Agency, Cumbria Wildlife Trust have released a series of four short films explaining how we can slow the flow of water and protect communities from flooding due to excess storm water.

Although focusing mainly on rural communities, the films explain several key concepts such as the importance of biodiversity and natural solutions to flooding and climate change.

The films are designed for a range of audiences, with charming stop motion animated characters and hand painted scenes. If you want to use them in your lessons, check out the videos on [the Cumbria Wildlife Trust website!](https://www.cumbriawildlifetrusts.org.uk/)



**Supports the Eco-Schools
water and school grounds
topics**



Eco-Schools Roadshows

In November the Sustainable Schools team delivered 4 roadshows across Leicester City. Our events were kindly supported by our host schools: St Paul's Catholic School, Gateway College, Rushey Mead Academy, and Martin High School.

The roadshows involved 26 schools (including 7 secondary schools). This year our Roadshow events took place over a full day, meaning workshops lasted 1 hour and pupils (and staff) were able to learn more ideas for sustainability to take back to their schools.

A big thank you to all involved including our workshop providers – Food for Life, Save Soil, Living Streets, Sustrans, National Space Centre, The BeanMeals Project and Central England Co-op.



Supports many Eco-Schools topics



Dig Trees & From the Ground Up

Free trees for schools (including fruit)



Programme 1 - Get involved in I Dig Trees – TCV's tree planting programme that supports OVO Energy's Planting Promise. I Dig Trees is now in its eighth year and OVO Energy members with carbon-cutting upgrades have pledged another 1,000,000 carbon-busting trees for local green spaces – the most trees pledged to date! Sign up for free trees today on their [website](#)

Programme 2 - Courtesy of [ICAP](#), TCV have **1125 free fruit tree packs** available – each pack of 4 fruit trees can create your very own mini fruit orchard in your school. If you are a primary school you can order your free pack containing 2 apple and 2 pear trees. All our fruit trees are grown in the UK and will be dispatched between the 6th and 17th March 2023. Sign up [today](#).



Supports the Eco-Schools school grounds topics and biodiversity topics



Eco-Schools Update



Leicester is leading the way when it comes to environmental education and wider support for schools that contributes to the city's net zero carbon ambition. In total, 65 schools in the city, including primary, secondary and special schools, now have an Eco-Schools Green Flag – the highest number in any local authority area in England. The award – which is accredited by Keep Britain Tidy – recognises excellence in schools across a wide range of environmental activity. For example, projects that reduce waste or promote energy efficiency in schools, help pupils learn more about living sustainably, or examine environmentally-friendly ways of travelling to school could all contribute towards a Green Flag.

Deputy city mayor Cllr Adam Clarke, who leads on transport, clean air and climate emergency, said: "The council's sustainable schools team has helped more than 65 city schools gain their Green Flag status. This is just one part of the wide range of support they offer schools.

"Other really important schemes include the Tiny Forests initiative, which has seen ten new climate resilient habitats that double up as outdoor classrooms created on school grounds; and our pioneering work to reduce the carbon footprint and energy bills for schools, with massive investment in measures such as new windows, energy efficient lighting, solar panels and heat pumps and advice and guidance provided for school staff."

Alongside an impressive haul of Green Flag awards, over 20 schools have signed up to Let's Go Zero 2030 and developed their own climate action plans; 10 schools have developed new wildflower patches to promote biodiversity and even more are now growing their own healthy food on site; and dozens of teachers and hundreds of pupils have received special training in the carbon cost of everyday activities through Carbon Literacy and carbon awareness.

Schools are seeing major investment in energy efficiency measures. Fifty-five schools in the city are benefiting from a share of £25million to pay for carbon-cutting improvements ranging from replacing old-style boilers with energy efficient air source heat pumps to LED lighting, modern insulation, new double-glazed windows, and the installation of solar photo-voltaic panels.

A growing community of Leicester schools are also signing to Plastic Clever, a scheme to help reduce the use of single use plastic, and Leicester hopes to become the first Plastic Clever Schools city later this academic year.

More recently, over 900 pupils from 14 primary schools have taken part in a new climate change learning challenge developed by the sustainable schools team and the city council's arts and museums service. The activity packs feature daily challenges to help children and their families better understand climate change and how we can all make small changes to reduce our carbon footprint. The project was supported by Arts Council England.



*Supports all the
Eco-Schools topics*

**Students from Avenue Primary School
celebrate their Green Flag**



Saving the Saffron Brook update

Over the past few months our team, along with some fantastic volunteers, have been working hard at our key sites; clearing woodland, planting bulbs and putting down wildflower seeds!



The diggers are out!

Our partners *Trent Rivers Trust* and *Trees and Woodland* have started work at the Wash brook nature reserve, Golf course and Overdale School. They have been removing concrete from the brook and coppicing some of the trees, to provide better access.

We have some exciting events coming up so sign up on our events page to be the first to find out what's happening!

[Saving the Saffron Brook Events | Eventbrite](#)

To find out more please contact:

Molly Laycock, Education Project Officer

Email: Molly.Laycock@Leicester.gov.uk Tel: 0116 454 3187

Wildlife on your Walk

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

We love our local wildlife! We want to see your favourite part of nature, whether it's a flower, tree or animal!

There are exciting nature-related prizes to be won!

Remember, this is about celebrating local wildlife – so no giraffes or tigers please!

Terms and conditions

1. All schools in Leicester and Leicestershire are eligible to enter.
2. Schools can submit as many entries as they wish from Key Stages 2 and 3.
3. Only one entry per child.
3. Entries can be submitted by schools or individuals.
4. Entries to be emailed to Molly.Laycock@leicester.gov.uk with the reference '**100 species competition**' or can be handed in person
5. Email attachments can be either .pdf, .jpg or .doc format. Maximum size 5mb.
6. **Deadline for entries is 4pm on Friday 3 February 2023.**
7. Judging will take place in early February by representatives from Leicester City Council.
8. Entries after the deadline will not be accepted. The judges' decision is final.
9. Winners will be announced in mid-February.
10. There are 4 categories : KS2 Drawing, KS3 Drawing, KS2 Photography, KS3 Photography, with exciting wildlife-themed prizes for each category!

Schools in Leicester and Leicestershire are signing up for the 100 Species Challenge

A new way for students and staff to take part in citizen science as you learn.

- NatureSpot are a local group who collect wildlife sightings for the national database. This information helps scientists, and anyone working to understand and protect wildlife. And they need YOUR help!
- They are challenging schools, colleges and individuals to spot 100 different species of any wildlife. Sound simple? Your records must be from at least ten different wildlife categories – from birds to bugs, flowers to fungi.

You could sign up as a whole school, or why not race between classes to reach 100?

- Using an app on your phone, it takes a few moments to upload a wildlife record. Choose from a list of species, take a picture and you're done. The record will be verified by a team of local experts and then added to the NatureSpot website and the national biodiversity network.

To find out more see <https://www.naturespot.org.uk/100-species> or contact

Molly.Laycock@leicester.gov.uk

Send us a picture or photo of your favourite UK wildlife!
What plants or animals do you see outside?

I have drawn a ...

Because ...

Name.....

Year group.....

School.....

Green Recovery Challenge Fund





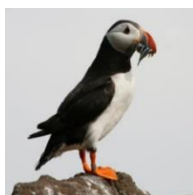
WWF Update



We're proud to be delivering work for the Air Wick and WWF partnership to restore 20 million square feet of wildflower habitats across the UK. Together, let's #BringNatureBack.

As part of this work, the Sustainable Schools team are working on 'Leicester's Urban Nature Project' where we are aiming to improve and create access to green space within urban areas of the city. We are working with six local schools, five within the Highfields area who each have limited access to green spaces. Within the school grounds we are looking at habitat creation and restoration through work with the young people, helping to increase connections with nature.

We are also looking to work with community groups to help create new, and improving existing, greens spaces. If you know of local community groups within the Highfields area, please get in touch with Laura.Barke@leicester.gov.uk.



Supports the Eco-Schools biodiversity topic

Fairtrade Fortnight 2023

This Fairtrade Fortnight, join us in spreading a simple message: choose Fairtrade now and help save our favourite foods. Did you know cocoa, bananas and coffee could soon be much more difficult to find on our shelves? Climate change is making crops like these harder and harder to grow. Combined with deeply unfair trade, communities growing these crops are being pushed to the brink.

- **Teach about Fairtrade and the climate crisis** If you're new to the topic of Fairtrade and the climate, check out our '[Climate, Fairtrade and You](#)' topic packs.
- **Join our Big Fairtrade Get Together** - This year we are running free online Big Fairtrade Get Togethers. Sign up to these exciting live events to hear from Fairtrade farmers and other experts on what needs to change so we can have a sustainable future for our favourite foods. These free events will run throughout Fairtrade Fortnight and are open to everyone.

Fairtrade Fortnight runs 27 February – 12 March 2023. More information on their website.



Supports the Eco-Schools global learning topic

GREEN FOOTBALL WEEKEND

Green Football Weekend



Between 3-6 February 2023, millions of football fans and their clubs will gather for a weekend of football fun and competitive activities to help protect our world.

On Green Football Weekend, fans will support their clubs and unleash the power of football to tackle climate change. The footballing community has achieved amazing things already.

Take green actions to score goals for your club. Every green goal you score helps your club compete for the coveted Green Football Cup and gives you a chance of winning some amazing prizes. The more goals you score, the higher your team's chance of winning.

80 of the UK's top clubs will participate and many of them will hold their own greener games. Live action from fans will be broadcast around the country by Sky and BT Sports.

Find out more on their website at
www.greenfootballweekend.com



*Supports many of the
Eco-Schools topics*



The3Engineers - Live School Author Talk



The3Engineers

'Stop Dropping Litter' by The3Engineers'

Fri 20th Jan 2023 | 9.15 – 9.45am | Cost: FREE

Virtual Talk – Platform: MS Teams Live | Aim: Primary KS2

Join The3Engineers team to hear about its series of engaging books which raise awareness of environmental issues and inspire the next generation to take small positive action to better the world.

Register for the FREE event here:

3engineersstopdroppinglitter.eventbrite.co.uk



*Supports the Eco-Schools
litter topic*

Lower Carbon Lunches



Supports the Eco-Schools healthy living, waste and energy topics

The Lower Carbon Lunches project got children to think about the impact their food choices have on the environment, focusing on the carbon emissions linked to energy use, packaging waste, food waste and meat-based meals.

Workshops led by the city council's Sustainable Schools team earlier this year introduced the children to the four key greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases – and helped them to identify the carbon footprint of various foods, giving them the knowledge they need to choose lower-carbon meal options.

Games, videos and other activities were used to encourage learning and help the children draw up their own action plan for reducing energy use or food waste at their school.

Around 160 youngsters were then invited to try some healthy new planet-friendly meals developed by school meals provider City Catering – including Moroccan Rainbow Tagine, Traffic-Light Couscous and Vegetable Ball Curry – before the new dishes that passed the taste test were added to the lunchtime menu.

Yoshi, a Year 5 student at Stokes Wood Primary in Leicester, said: "We played a fun game which helped us understand about recycling and which bin we should throw which packaging in. All the food we tasted was plant-based so it is healthier for us and better for the environment as when it is produced there is less carbon dioxide put into the air."

Colette Fox, programme manager for ProVeg UK, said: "We are delighted to be supporting City Catering and Leicester City Council to make school food in Leicester both healthier and more sustainable by reducing meat and increasing plant-based options for all children."

"It is really encouraging to see such positive climate leadership from Leicester City Council and we look forward to continuing to partner together to bring about positive change for our children and our planet."

Diets high in plant-based foods and lower in animal products are proven to be less damaging to the climate, with the Climate Change Committee recommending a 20% shift away from all meat and dairy by 2030 – rising to 35% by 2050 – in order to put the UK on the path to net zero.

The Lower Carbon Lunches project also aimed to reduce gas and electricity use in school kitchens by improving efficiency, recognising that energy consumption accounts for around 40% of a school's carbon footprint. It targeted food waste too, ensuring that any waste was composted or processed correctly, and aimed to reduce the amount of food packaging that ends up as waste.

In total, 12 Leicester schools, and around 280 students, were involved in the Lower Carbon Lunches project. They were: Avenue; Buswells Lodge; Catherine Juniors; Charnwood Primary; Doveland; Hazel Community Primary; Krishna Avanti; Lancaster Academy; Mayflower Primary; Sandfield Close; Stokes Wood; Wyvern Primary.

The Lower Carbon Lunches project is one of the initiatives in the city council's Climate Emergency Action Plan. Copies of City Catering's menus can be found on the [website](#).

Great Big Green Week



SCHOOLS from across Leicester took part in a conference exploring the action needed to tackle the **global climate emergency**. Pupils from 10 city schools took part in the Secondary School and College Climate Conference, held at Leicester's City Hall, as one of the highlights of the national Great Big Green Week campaign. The conference was designed as a way for young people to engage with the build up to the COP27 climate summit in November. It gave students the opportunity to reflect on the issues around climate change, to discuss the environment and the policies put in place to protect it across Leicester. It was also a chance to engage in questions, debates and discussions on matters such as responsibility for climate action, the perspectives of young people and vulnerable nations, and the collective effort needed to bring about meaningful change.

Students worked together to look at some of the key issues around energy use, emissions, the natural world and the Earth's oceans, before selecting one vital climate action to post on the conference display board. The afternoon session focused more locally on how the actions set out in Leicester City Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan will impact the lives and businesses of city residents, and included a chance for students to question directly the senior councillors and council officers about the action plan.

Schools taking part included Madani Girls School, Leicester High School for Girls, Cedars Academy, Martin High School, Avanti Fields School, Jameah Girls Academy, Rushey Mead Academy, Lancaster Academy, Moat Community College and WQE College.

The conference was part of the wider programme of Great Big Green Week events. A further 15 schools across the city were also given £100 each for schemes involving activities such as cutting plastic use, growing fruit and vegetables in their school grounds, community litter picking, seed bomb making and bike repairs.



Leicester's Deputy City Mayor for Transport, Clean Air and Climate Emergency, Cllr Adam Clarke, said: "The challenges presented by the climate emergency facing all of us require global collaboration and innovative thinking, and events like this are an opportunity for our young people to play their part in that, by discussing and putting forward ideas of how things can and should be done better to safeguard all our futures. I'm very proud of the students for taking part in this event and bringing their own perspectives and ideas to such a vitally important topic.

"With the COP27 climate summit taking place next month, it's a timely reminder of the significant steps we can all take, locally or globally, to limit the impact of climate change."

Leicester's Climate Emergency Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for how the city needs to change to move towards becoming carbon-neutral and adapting to the effects of global heating by 2030, or sooner.



*Supports many
Eco-Schools topics*

13 CLIMATE
ACTION



4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Next 3-5 February 2023, millions of football fans and their clubs will gather for Green Football Weekend - a weekend of football fun and competitive activities to help protect our world...imagine millions of us, in play for our world, what a difference we would make.

The competition opens a fortnight before the big weekend with clubs, big name players and communities kicking off their campaigns to get fans scoring green goals to win the Green Football Cup.

Online, fans of all ages can score green goals by pledging action or by sharing a photo of the green actions they've taken.

GREEN FOOTBALL WEEKEND

SHARE THE TEACHING PACKS

The Green Football Weekend KS1, KS2 and KS3 educational resources available on greenfootballweekend.com feature cross-curricular activities combining learning with football and climate action.

GET YOUR PUPILS INVOLVED

Download these ideas to make the most of Green Football Weekend at school and get your student community excited to take climate action while having fun.

INVITE PARENTS TO JOIN TOO!

Use our parent communications templates to encourage at-home engagement, and get parents scoring green goals for their club.

GREENFOOTBALLWEEKEND.COM



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