



Scoil Naomh Bríd Green Flag History

2020

Scoil Naomh Bríd registered for the Green Flag programme in 2003, and since then we got 7 Green Flags for our school. We got a Green Flag for Litter, Water, Energy, Travel, Biodiversity, Global Citizenship Litter and Waste, and Global Citizenship Energy. We have been working on our Global Citizenship Marine Environment flag since 2018.



Litter and Waste

Litter & Waste is the first theme. It focuses on litter and waste issues, encouraging a sense of responsibility

1. For our Litter Project we set up a recycling programme in our school to cut down on waste being sent to the dump. This programme is still in use in our school every day. We've been recycling card, paper, plastic and tetra packs for 16 years now. We also recycle batteries with The W. E. E. E. and postage stamps for missions.



Energy

Energy looks at the steps which can be taken at school to reduce energy consumption and raise awareness of climate change

2. Our Energy project involved fitting lights with sensors, so lights only come on when needed, and switch off automatically when it is bright. We also put committee members in charge of checking doors are kept closed in winter to keep in the heat. We carried out science experiments to investigate wind energy, water energy and solar energy.



Water

This theme develops awareness around water conservation and how to effectively manage this important resource in schools

3. Our Water Project involved placing a bottle of water in the cistern of each toilet to reduce the flush by one litre. We also had a switch placed on the urinals so the water could be turned on each morning and off each evening. The taps in our basins have been set to turn off automatically, so there are no drips. We have a water meter now to monitor how much water we use.



Travel

This theme aims to increase the number of students walking, cycling, scooting, using public transport or carpooling to school

4. Our Travel project was about getting people to get fit and walk to school. Now lots of people walk and cycle to school especially when the weather is fine. The travel project also involved learning to be safe on the road. We did a walkability audit and Senior classes did a Cycle Safety course where they took their bikes to school. To update our road safety awareness, The RSA (Road Safety Authority) were invited to help us with a Road Safety Project and they gave free safety stuff like high viz vests, hats and armbands to all the children who took part in the project.



Biodiversity

Biodiversity looks at increasing awareness in schools of the importance of native plants, animals and habitats

5. The biodiversity theme was about planting apple trees, vegetables, herbs, wheatgrass and the harvesting and tasting of herbs and vegetables. Biodiversity means all types of plants and animals helping each other to survive. We built a willow dome, which is a little house that is alive. We had never before seen or heard of a house that's actually alive. Unfortunately, we no longer have a willow dome because we got a new classroom in its place. We made a nature trail around the school. The whole school walked the nature trail studying the plants and animals as we went. We grew vegetables and we ate the potatoes and some people got to eat a purple flower called chives. We never knew we could eat flowers. The committee went to a Concern biodiversity workshop called 'Thinking Seeds' run by Patsy Toland. He brought us seeds and compost from Living Green our local Wheatgrass company in Quigleys Point. We got to grow wheatgrass for juicing and drinking. We sowed oats for making porridge and muesli. Patsy told us how important the bee is. Without the bee the whole earth would die in 2 years. He asked us to do 3 things to help the bee.

1. Make a bee B&B by drilling holes in a timber post,
2. Don't use weed killer, pull weeds instead.
3. Plant lots of flowers to attract bees.

So the first 5 green flags were all about **us** here in Muff doing our best to keep our place and ourselves clean and healthy and eco-friendly.

Then we had the global flags. For these we had to learn about and care about people and places all over the world.



Global Citizenship – Litter & Waste

This theme enables schools to discover how work on Green-Schools has positively influenced our global community

6. For our Global Citizenship Litter flag we revisited our Litter and Waste programme to check and improve it and to explore and discuss litter throughout the world. We worked with a school in Limavady to make a greenhouse for growing grapes, strawberries and tomatoes. The greenhouse was made of used plastic water bottles that we saved and collected at Scoil Naomh Bríd. We did a whole school project on Fairtrade.



Global Citizenship – Energy

This theme gives schools the chance to revise Energy and look at issues surrounding energy use globally

7. For our Global citizenship Energy flag we had to check the gas and electricity bills and learn about clean energy from water, wind and sun. We learned about fair trade helping farmers in poor countries to get a fair wage for their work and the GESI who make sure big tech companies don't buy battery metals got using child workers. WEEE battery recycling is done by every class in the school from to save energy and help the Laura Lynn Children's hospital. All classes Collect used stamps for the missions in Africa and Mrs Faulkner told us about her visit to Tanzania to give a solar powered pump to the farmers to water their sunflowers. All classes helped the parents recycle bottle tops to get wheelchairs for Inishowen people.

Every Green flag has a code that we made up in our school:

Our Litter code is

Don't refuse to re-use.

Our Water code is

Every little drop means an awful lot.

Our Energy code is

When it is bright turn off the light.

Our Travel code is

Get off your seat and use your feet.

Our Biodiversity code is

We plant a flower, we plant a seed,
We work together for the earth we need.

Our global citizenship Litter and Waste code is

Don't refuse to reuse

We work together to make the world better

Our Global Citizenship Energy code is

When it's bright switch off the light

We work together to make the world better



Global Citizenship – Marine Environment

This theme focuses on raising awareness of marine eco-systems and the work being done to save them

8. We are now working on the Global Citizenship Marine Environment.

For our Global citizenship Marine Environment flag we had to

1. Form a committee and look at our old themes.
2. Do the marine survey and check the results.
3. Learn how citizenship means rich people and poor people, old people and young people, country people and city people all helping each other. Global concern means caring about people and problems all over the world.

6th class came up with a code:

Clean Seas? Yes please

We work together to make the world better

We had to plan our action days which included:

- Concern Schools programme for Senior classes
- Leave No Trace programme for Senior classes
- Trócaire Lenten campaign for all classes
- Christmas shoebox campaign for all classes
- Goal global school programme for senior classes
- Goal annual jersey day for all classes
- Irish wheelchair angel badge appeal
- The Annual National Spring Clean
- The Irish Marine Project involving a walk to the local shore to study biodiversity & pick up litter
- The *Something Fishy* visit of Heritage schools to 4th and 5th classes
- National Poster Competitions with great prizes.

We have to ensure that our parents and community are kept up to date with Green flag news in our school newsletter, our Green flag board and our Facebook page.

Our thoughts on Green Flag

- We should use Sun and wind energy to dry our clothes on the line instead of using electricity in the tumble drier. It's cheaper and cleaner.
- Recycling batteries is good for the earth, for the children's hospital and for phones.
- I think Apple and other phone companies should care about the world and about how their batteries are made.
- We were shocked to learn that children as young as 7 work in African mines digging for metals to make batteries for electric cars and phones.
- The mines in Africa need to be made safe and wages should be fair like the Fair trade for farmers.
- We should not be wasting food by buying too much and throwing half of it out. Just buy what you need.
- We need to buy fresh local food not processed as it tastes better. It's better for you and takes less energy to produce e.g. potatoes are better than crisps. Fresh fish is better than frozen or tinned.
- We can buy local food in a local shop like Spar, Centra, Donaghy's, Tank and Skinny's, or Mc Carron's, farm shop in Quigley's Point and the fish van from Greencastle. This saves diesel and it saves the farmers and fishermen from going to markets far away to sell their stuff. We can get Daniel Doherty bread and cakes from Merville. We can get Spring hill farm potatoes, onions, carrots from Quigleys Point. We can get ham and bacon from Grants in Culmore and Doherty's sausages, and mince meat from Letterkenny.
- Buy stuff with less wrapping, especially plastic. Paper, tin and glass containers are much better. You can buy little tins of sweets in Borderland Muff.
- It's good to see North Korea and South Korea getting together for Sports. Peace is good for the earth and money gets spent on education and health instead of guns and war.
- It's great that Pope Francis is working to save the planet and is helping to slow down climate change by using a little Fiat car instead of a big Mercedes.
- We love going to the beach for a picnic but we need to take our rubbish home. Donegal has the best beaches in the world and it's up to us to keep them beautiful by picking up plastic and putting it in the bin.
- It's very sad and scary that plastic kills fish and sea creatures like dolphins.
- It's amazing that the Foyle has the biggest oyster farm in Europe.
- I think it is class that the **Red Bull** Storm Chase took place in Donegal with Windsurfers riding huge waves caused by Storm winds. I'd really love to try it.

To Conclude:

It's good to know that past pupils who once served on our Green flag committee work on energy, transport and marine projects all over the world, in the UK, Canada, the US, Western Sahara, Australia, Dubai, Isle of Skye & Shetlands bringing the Green flag message with them wherever they go.

We are very proud of our past pupils:

- Conal O'Boyle who is working hard to tell the whole world about Green issues, and has appeared on RTÉ
- Jamie A who won a prize in the National Green Flag poster competition
- Emma who won a prize in the National Someone like Me, writing and Art competition to encourage inclusivity of kids who are different

Pope Francis wrote a book about care for our common home.

He says Creation is a gift from the hand of the God our Father.

How do we show respect for Creation?

We all have a common home here on this earth. We are called to take care of God's creation. Together we must learn about our planet and every living thing that dwells on it, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

The earth and all life on it are part of God's creation.

We are called to respect this gift.

We are responsible for taking **care** of the world we live in and for sharing all the wonders and resources the earth gives us.

Our changing environment makes us stop and think about how we live on our planet.

We are called to adopt new ways of cleaner greener living. It is the world's poorest people who are affected most by changes to our planet. So we must be attentive to environmental concerns and seek to promote care for the earth and all its resources.

We must Hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor then we can be true global citizens.

So we pray that we will continue to learn about, care about and tell our friends about our wonderful living planet, Earth. Amen.