

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee – 19 June 2019

Subject: Eco Schools

Report of: The Director of Neighbourhoods

Summary

To provide members further information about the Eco Schools programme and the work currently being undertaken with young people in Manchester Schools.

Recommendations

To note the contents of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable):

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The programme supports meaningful actions which will help towards becoming a sustainable city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The programme empowers young people and helps them to develop life skills.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Schools are at the heart of communities, the programme supports young people and their families to improve the neighbourhoods in which they live, work and socialise.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Eco-Schools programme provides a pathway for schools to embark on a meaningful journey towards improving the environment in both the school and the local community.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The Eco Schools programme is an internationally recognised accreditation which links young people across the world.

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Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Manchester strategy sets out the vision for Manchester to 'be in the top flight of world-class cities by 2025' and commits the city to become a liveable and low carbon city by 'playing our full part in limiting the impacts of climate change'.
- 1.2 The Eco-Schools programme is an international accreditation, which provides a pathway for schools to embark on a meaningful journey towards improving the environment in both the school and the local community. The programme is not mandatory for schools but has been developed to compliment and support themes of learning within Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The initiative has also been shown to have a life-long positive impact on the lives of young people and their families. The programme, introduced in 1994 in response to the 1992 UN Rio Earth Summit, Eco-Schools is operated globally by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and is managed in England by Keep Britain Tidy.
- 1.3 This year the city's young people have shown how passionate they are about environmental issues and their desire for society to do all it can to protect their future; and reduce the impact of climate change. Lots of Manchester Schools have already started their Eco Schools journey, harnessing young people's passion to deliver tangible changes in their school and neighbourhoods.

2.0 Eco Schools Programme

- 2.1 The Eco-Schools programme consists of three structural elements – The Seven Step Framework, the Eco-Schools Topics and assessment for the international Green Flag award. To be successful the programme requires support from school leaders and active involvement from school staff, as well as a long-term commitment and the willingness to involve students in decision-making.
- 2.2 The Eco-Schools Seven Steps methodology is a series of measures to help schools maximise the success of their Eco-School ambitions. While the Seven Steps are the most important aspect of the Eco-Schools programme, schools also work on topics to help give the programme even more structure. This includes: marine, biodiversity, energy, litter, global citizenship, healthy living, school grounds, transport, waste and water.

Seven Steps Methodology:

 - Step 1: Establish an Eco-Committee
 - Step 2: Environmental Review
 - Step 3: Action Plan
 - Step 4: Curriculum Link
 - Step 5: Informing and Involving
 - Step 6: Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Step 7: Eco Code
- 2.3 Schools progress through self-assessed Bronze and Silver Awards before applying for Green Flag status. To achieve Bronze, schools complete the first 3 of the 7 steps. For the Silver award, schools will need to implement steps 4 and 5 and cover 3 topics. Once all 7 steps are achieved and at least 3 topics

covered, the school is ready for Green Flag success. It is free for schools to register and achieve Bronze and Silver and a cost of £200 to be Green Flag Assessed.

- 2.4 Earlier this year, Keep Britain Tidy updated and re-launched the Eco Schools website making it easier for schools to access information and resources. The dedicated team at Keep Britain Tidy are also on hand to offer advice to schools. The Eco School Team from Keep Britain Tidy have provided an overview of a Manchester schools journey to becoming an Eco School - see further detail in Case Study 1. (Data source: Keep Britain Tidy). Keep Britain Tidy will also host the National Eco School Awards and Conference in Manchester in December.

3.0 Manchester Eco Schools

- 3.1 202 schools and early years providers have registered as Eco-Schools in Manchester since 2005. 111 achieved Bronze, 62 achieved Silver and 10 currently hold Green Flag. It is not clear from the data how many of these schools are still actively participating in the Eco Schools programme.
- 3.2 Prior to the austerity cuts in 2011/12, the City had two Officers dedicated to supporting schools to become Eco Schools and progress through the programme. This also included the organisation of an annual event for Manchester Eco Schools to attend – which supported education providers to share ideas, celebrate successes and bring together partner organisations who could provide assistance. This dedicated resource is no longer in place, a situation which appears to be replicated across the country - with very few Local Authorities having Officers dedicated to supporting the Eco School programme. A network of independent practitioners and charitable organisations have provided support in this field for a number of years including Manchester Educational Network (MEEN), a registered charity and membership based organisation (meen.org.uk)
- 3.3 Support is also provided by Biffa Social Value Officers, GMCA, and within the Council from services in Neighbourhoods Directorate and Education. In March this year, Keep Manchester Tidy and Neighbourhood Teams hosted an event at Beswick Library, which saw schools from across the City invited to learn about the support available to Manchester schools who want to become an Eco School. Further details of some of the initiatives and projects delivered are captured in a series of case studies below.
- 3.4 Keep Manchester Tidy has set an ambitious target for 2019/20 to encourage all schools in Manchester to renew their commitment to the Eco-Schools accreditation and progress to the next stage of the programme. Starting in September, Keep Manchester Tidy will further investigate factors that enable schools to move through the different award levels. By undertaking some work in this area, it is hoped that more schools in Manchester will be enabled to achieve Green Flag status.

Case Study 1: St Augustine's School, Monsall



St Augustine's CE Primary School

Monsall, Manchester

St Augustine's is a single-form entry primary school in Monsall, Manchester, they began their Eco-Schools journey over ten years ago in 2007. With the full support of their governing body, head teacher and senior leadership team (and a pre-existing interest in environmental issues), St Augustine's decided to use the Eco-Schools framework to consolidate and celebrate the environmental work their school was already undertaking.

The school's Eco-Committee (containing pupils, staff and governors) is very much pupil-led and is the driving force behind all Eco-Schools work. Pupils of all ages are excited and proud to join the Eco-Committee and be given the opportunity to help our planet. The Eco-Committee regularly plan environmental campaigns and always ensure their whole school are informed of and involved in their eco-work by hosting whole-school, informational assemblies. Their most recent assembly was inspired by Greta Thunberg (the Swedish teenage activist), and talked about climate change and the recycling workshops they had planned for their school to help tackle this.

Being a Green Flag school has benefitted the pupils at St Augustine's enormously. They have achieved the international Eco-Schools Green Flag award three times and pupils are proud to achieve such a prestigious, international award. The Eco-Schools programme has become embedded into both school curriculum and life.





St Augustine's journey towards Green Flag status has been extremely rewarding and they would encourage every school to embrace the Eco-Schools programme.

Ann Czerwoniuk, School Business Manager, St Augustines CE Primary School

St Augustine's is a fantastic Eco-School, the Eco-Committee are passionate, knowledgeable and fantastic ambassadors for their school: the two adult Eco-Coordinator should be applauded for implanting such a sense of passion and responsibility in their pupils.

The impact of the Eco-Schools programme is easily visible throughout every aspect of school life: enriching their school grounds, providing a context to their learning and even helping the school save money on utility bills. If you chose to visit the school you would see children at break time collecting fruit waste for their school's composter, an amazing outdoor classroom including individual planting areas for each year group and plenty of evidence of the fantastic work the school has done for local, national and global charities.

Over the past several years, St Augustine's has used the Eco-Schools programme to give their pupils ownership to improve their school environment and it is easy to see how their school grounds, curriculum and student-body have greatly benefitted from their participation in the Eco-Schools programme.

Lee Wray-Davies, Eco-Schools England Manager



Case Study 2: Hulme Schools

In Hulme, schools have played a central role in work to improve the environment.

In 2017, West Country Rivers Trust were commissioned to carry out a consultation programme on the environment in Hulme. This included scientific aspects, such as tree cover, flooding, air quality and biodiversity. It also included how residents felt about the environment emotionally and what is important to them.

Loreto College, St Phillips, Martenscroft, St Wilfrids and Webster Primary all contributed during the consultation. This included workshops with parents, focus groups with school pupils, online surveys and questionnaires.

From this work a long term vision for Hulme was created: to improve access to nature and green spaces in Hulme through community led action. Each year annual actions through the ward plan are carried out.

Schools are central to this work including:

1. Developing the Junior PCSO programme (modelled on work from Tameside). This is where pupils raise awareness of bad driving outside schools and monitor speeds on roads. This is partly about improving driver behaviour, but it is also part of trying to reduce car use and improve air quality outside schools.
2. Installation of short term air quality monitors outside schools to help develop planting and greening projects around schools
3. Holding events for parents and pupils as part of the Hulme Summer Festival Hulme Grown, aimed at getting them involved in planting, good growing, celebrating nature and seeing what they can do to improve it locally.
4. Being part of the Hulme Winter Festival which annually has an environmental focus. For example running workshops where pupils can make their own Christmas decorations instead of using plastic ones and understanding the impact that a short term disposable Christmas can have on waste
5. Running waste and recycling workshops to reduce waste.
6. Providing a network for collaboration which is both short and long term focussed. Schools are under a lot of pressure and sometimes it can be hard to develop work together. However 'Nature of Hulme' has helped create a sense of a shared goal and a network of people and organisations that will support each other. This reaches across organisations, for example 'One Manchester', the MMU and the resident led Hulme Community Forum.

There is scope to do much more. For example, cycling and walking bids which involve collaboration with schools and creating a network of nature walks which connect schools to parks and neighbourhoods within Hulme.

Case Study 3: Keep Manchester Tidy – GB Spring Clean

The Great British Spring Clean is Keep Britain Tidy's National Campaign designed to involve as many people as possible in community clean ups. The GB Spring Clean starts with a dedicated schools day 'The Great Big School Clean'. This year, the spring clean year was held over a month from the 22nd March to the 23rd April and was promoted as a key opportunity for schools to get involved with Keep Manchester Tidy and be part of our journey towards becoming the UK's first Tidy City.

Schools were invited to attend an information and networking event to find out more about Keep Manchester Tidy and the support available to schools to get involved in the Great British Spring Clean. Many schools were already familiar with the GB Spring clean from previous years, but the event enabled schools to find out more about Keep Manchester Tidy and to link with their local neighbourhood officer. Following this event, several schools arranged the loan of equipment including litter pickers, hoops, gloves and hi-viz from the City Council and were provided with details of other school resources.

All schools were provided with a banner to promote their support for Keep Manchester Tidy and these were displayed at the start of the GB Spring Clean.

The show of force from Manchester schools during the GB Spring Clean has been phenomenal. Although, data from the Keep Britain Tidy website registrations process shows that around 58 schools participated in the event, significantly more were involved who did not register or their registration details are not accessible. A link to a short survey has been sent to schools in order to gain further insights into involvement with the GB Spring Clean and this will help to inform how we support schools to participate again in the future.

At the beginning of May, Keep Manchester Tidy hosted a High Street Week as an extension to the Great British Spring Clean. This enabled efforts to be focused on shopping districts and was supported by the Government's High Street Clean Up Fund. 30 pupils from Rackhouse primary school braved the rain to collect all the litter from Sale Circle Shopping parade. The school will now go on to join other local primary schools in the area as part of a day of action to beautify and raise pride in Sale Circle.

Case Study 4: The Curriculum for Life Programme and the Great British Spring Clean

Through the National Make your Mark Ballot, young people voted on issues that are important to them. Having a curriculum for life came out as the number one issue. A project team was established in Manchester to develop the Curriculum for Life and run a pilot involving 23 schools.

The Curriculum for Life programme covers 5 skill areas which are linked to illustrative statements;

- Self-Belief and Identity: I have self confidence in who I am, belief in my actions and am willing to try new things. I can set goals and recognise my successes.

- **Self-Management:** I am able to look after my health and wellbeing and have important life skills which will enable me to be independent in the future.
- **Communication:** I can convey information clearly, simply and am able to listen to other's thoughts, ideas and opinions. I can respond effectively to different people in different settings.
- **Team Work:** I can work with others towards a shared goal and can recognise the different roles and responsibilities necessary for success.
- **Problem Solving:** I can recognise problems and have the ability to develop and act on the best course of action.

A set of age appropriate challenges have been co-designed with children and young people to enable them to learn and practice these key skills. The Great British Spring Clean has been established as one of these challenges as it clearly supports skills development across all five areas.

Case Study 5: 'Learning for Life'- North Manchester Primary Schools'

£3000 of the North Neighbourhood Team development budget 2017/2018 was allocated to support school and community trips to the resource recovery plant at Sharston. The trips are designed to increase awareness of recycling processes and ultimately support improvements in the recycling performance across North Manchester.

The trips are organised through the Education and Behaviour Change Manager at GMCA. The tours and educational input from GMCA is free. The budget covers transport costs for the schools.

For schools the trips are an ideal opportunity to influence the younger generation both to create 'lifelong recyclers' but also to act as influencers in the home. The trips additionally provide support to school based recycling/ environmental projects and curriculum topics.

Case Study 6: Dean Trust Ardwick and the Great British Spring Clean

Teacher Lucy Ribbands of Dean Trust has been working with the school's Eco Committee. Keen to find out more about Keep Manchester Tidy, Lucy attended the recent information and networking event. Following the event, Lucy loaned litter picking equipment to be able to take part in the GB Spring Clean and also connected with her local neighbourhood team. Lucy and the Eco-committee were surprised at the amount of plastic they collected during the spring clean and wanted to do something about it. The Eco-committee therefore set the school a challenge to collect all the plastic waste generated around the school in a week. The plastic was then displayed in the school yard giving all pupils a visual aid to illustrate the scale of the problem. Wendy Wastewater (one of Biffa's characterised litter trucks) later visited the school to collect the waste. The Eco-committee are now working on introducing a total ban on plastic bottles in school.

Overall, two elements have really stood out during the 2019 GB Spring Clean. Firstly, our children and young people's enthusiasm for litter picking and secondly the commitment to sustaining efforts, with many schools carrying out numerous litter

picks beyond the nominated schools day. Officers have even encountered schools reluctant to return their loaned litter picking equipment because the children have enjoyed using it so much. Manchester schools have more than proved themselves a driving force in Keeping Manchester Tidy.

Case Study 7: Education Visit's to Longley Lane Materials Recovery Centre

The GMCA Waste & Resources Team have Education Officers who work with local schools and community groups to learn about the importance of recycling. Site visits to the Longley Lane Education Centre (Sharston) can be arranged for Greater Manchester Schools.

A visit includes:

- A tour of the Materials Recovery Facility
- See how your plastic bottles are sorted using machines called Aladdin
- Find out how glass bottles and jars are given a clean using cyclones
- Watch how we turn your aluminium drinks cans and foil into biscuits (not suitable for eating)
- A selection of tailored interactive activities:
 - Right Stuff Right Bin – Which bin is which?
 - Rubbish to Resource – Where does it all go?
 - One Earth – Why does it matter?

No of visits in the last financial year 2018 – 2019:

41 primary school visits

8 secondary school visits

8 FE / HE visits

Total **57 visits** by Manchester Schools and Further Education providers
= **1645** participants across all groups.