



# Climate Action Schools Impact Report

2024/2025



# Climate Action Schools

**Climate Action Schools offers a strong, relevant and helpful framework for educational settings and local authorities to deliver on national and local climate change and Learning for Sustainability targets, while making sure that children and young people are accessing the opportunities and developing the skills, attitudes and values needed for a changing world. This report is a celebration of the achievements of all those involved across Scotland during 2024/2025.**

*"The Climate Action Schools Impact Report gives us an opportunity to reflect on the success of children, young people and educators across Scotland over the past 12 months. It also covers our celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the international Eco-Schools and Young Reporters for the Environment programmes.*

*"As your charity inspiring action for our environment, our main aims are combatting climate change, tackling litter and waste, restoring nature and biodiversity, and improving places. All our Climate Action Schools activities provide young people across the country with tools to contribute to these aims and build relevant skills for the future.*

*"We have been delivering Eco-Schools in Scotland for 30 years and have seen remarkable achievements from schools in that time, showing their dedication to the programme and their desire to keep Scotland beautiful.*

*"Thanks to continued funding from the Scottish Government we will be able to develop and improve our output throughout 2025/2026, so let's use this report not only as a celebration of the previous 12 months but also as inspiration to keep improving and supporting the needs and desire of Scotland's young people."*

**Barry Fisher**  
Chief Executive

Climate Action Schools is funded by the  
Scottish Government



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

**Every Scottish local authority  
engaged in activities**

**68**

hours of online Live  
Lessons, workshops and  
training sessions delivered

**15,700**

pupils taking action  
as part of their Eco-  
Committee

**5,500**

young people attended  
in-person events

**27,500**

pupils taught directly

**1,700**

educators reached  
through training

**1,160**

schools involved in  
Climate Action Schools

**7,700**

primary-aged pupils  
trained on the climate  
emergency

**877**

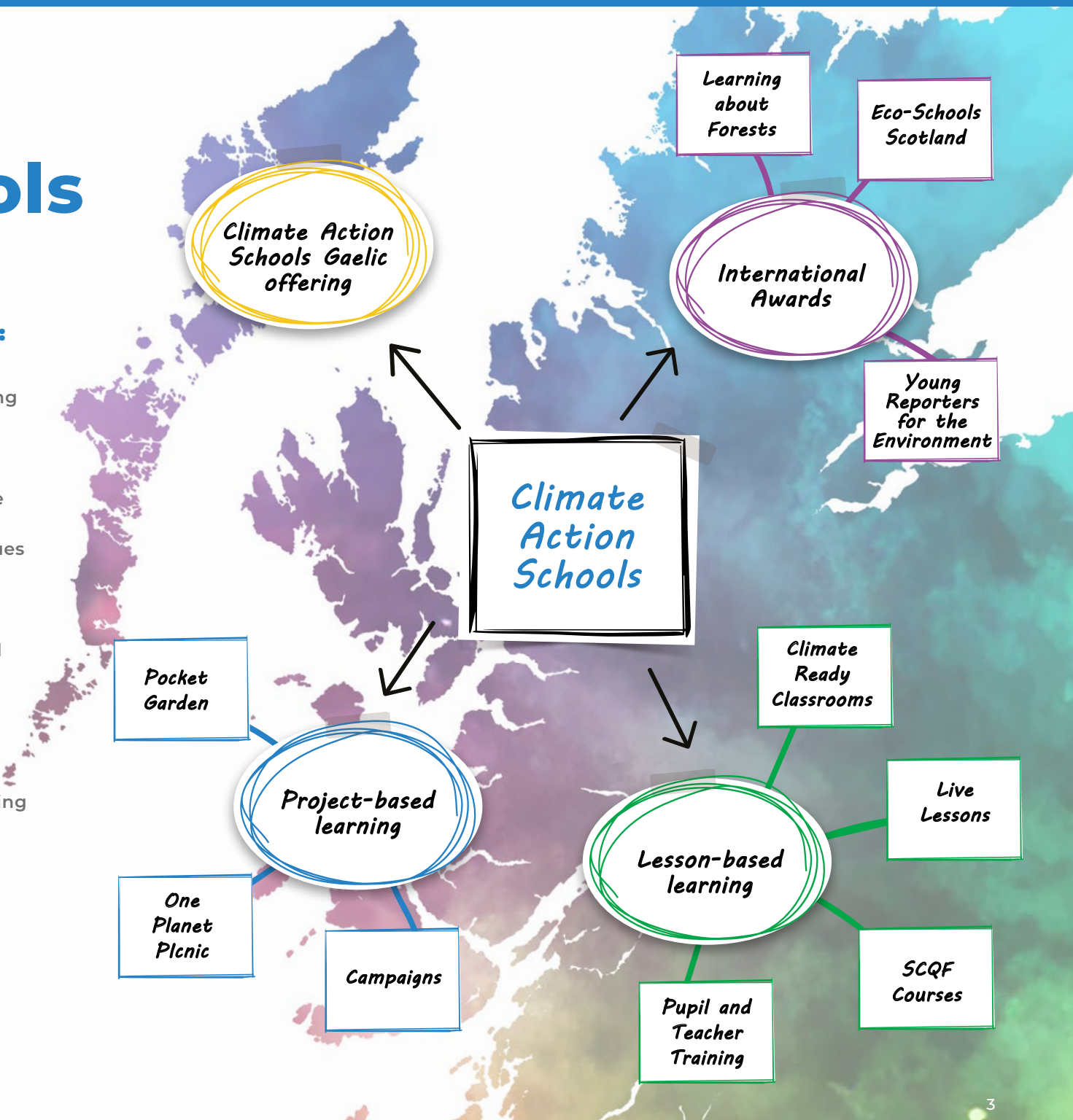
current Eco-Schools



# The Climate Action Schools framework

Our framework offers a combination of:

- ✓ **International awards programmes** including Eco-Schools, a global sustainable schools programme supporting classroom, school and community-based action, and Young Reporters for the Environment, giving more than 500,000 young people worldwide the opportunity to speak on environmental issues they feel strongly about through writing, photography, and videos.
- ✓ **High quality lessons and training** delivered directly to pupils and educators, often in collaboration with local authorities and partners, and through SCQF accredited courses delivered by educators in schools.
- ✓ **Project-based learning** opportunities offering clearly structured and focussed ways of carrying out positive action.
- ✓ **Gaelic** resources, support and teaching available across all programmes.



# Helping establishments deliver Learning for Sustainability opportunities

**Climate Action Schools continues to provide opportunities and frameworks for educators to deliver on all pupils' entitlement to quality environmental education with 1,160 schools involved in one or more initiatives this year.**

In the 30th year of Eco-Schools we have been celebrating the success of schools across Scotland who have shown a long-term commitment to Learning for Sustainability by visiting 27 schools who have achieved multiple Green Flag Awards or received a commendation.

**3**

new teacher training sessions developed exploring Learning for Sustainability

**4,000**

pupils visited in-person at celebration events

**8**

local authority contacts brought together in-person to network and share ideas



THE WHOLE SCHOOL IS WORKING HARD

"Since making the application for Flag 8 two years ago, I have noticed a big shift in staff and pupils' attitudes and actions taken towards sustainability. It is no longer seen as something that the Eco-Committee do. Instead, it's seen as something the whole school is working hard at. It also permeates the curriculum more fully. I think this momentum will continue to help the school further develop in its role towards a more sustainable future."

Educator, Edinburgh

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

"J has grown in confidence from being in the Eco-Committee. He has been able to stand up and talk in front of assembly. He has liked having the added responsibility and has taken those leadership skills into other areas of the classroom."

Educator, Renfrewshire



## Case Study: Troqueer Primary School

**Troqueer Primary School in Dumfries & Galloway were awarded an Eco-Schools commendation this year for their excellent whole-school approach to Learning for Sustainability. This is exemplified through their cross-curricular topic work with their local foodbank which had the overall aim of “taking an active role in the local community and making our planet more peaceful, sustainable and fair.”**

The project involved multiple curricular areas and introduced the young people to many new skills including making phone calls and using email to communicate with local people and businesses, creating posters with emotive language, presentation skills, research skills, understanding the needs of the community and how local organisations meet those needs, using maths to calculate how many people their donations could help, using statistics, interpreting data and even drama techniques in creating adverts asking for food donations.

This project truly inspired pupils and as a result was a huge success with 89 bags and one box of food collected and given to the local church foodbank.

“The support from the local community, families and pupils was extraordinary. We have never collected as much before and the IDL topic which came from it was wonderful.”

This was just one of many activities that the pupils at Troqueer carried out covering topics from climate change, to biodiversity, to waste reduction, to health and wellbeing and most importantly they made the learning fun.

### HAVING THE CONFIDENCE

“I have loved seeing the skills which the pupils gain from being in an eco council and leading other classes – communicating, leading, integrity, collaborating, curiosity, creativity & more! A couple of months in and the children are running [the work] themselves; having the confidence to raise ideas, giving feedback to others, behaviour managing (!), communicating well with each other... The empathy & passion shown by my pupils in the Foodbank Project especially was wonderful.”

“I like doing the food bank topic because we are taking care of people all around Dumfries.”

“I loved doing the foodbank because I loved helping people that are in poverty. I also really loved making the flyers on the computer.”

“I loved making phone calls to parent helpers.”

# Understanding and combatting climate change

**This year has seen us teach over 16,000 young people and educators on the climate emergency, offering practical solutions and frameworks for positive action that can be taken.**

This has included a focus on sustainable homes of the future for Climate Action Week and has seen two climate change workshops developed and delivered in Gaelic making environmental education accessible to a wider audience.

## 7,600

pupils and 211 educators from 16 local authorities taught through Climate Ready Classrooms primary programme

### CLIMATE JUSTICE

"We had all heard about climate change but did not all know about the effects of climate change, climate justice or about greenhouse gases – and now we do."

Primary pupil, East Renfrewshire

## 2

schools awarded commendations for their excellent work on Eco-Schools' mandatory Climate Action topic



## 8,000

pupils joined Climate Action Week lessons

### INSPIRED IMMEDIATELY

"Our class were inspired immediately. They set up our plan and have already researched energy waste also putting up posters around the school promoting energy saving ideas."

Educator, West Dunbartonshire



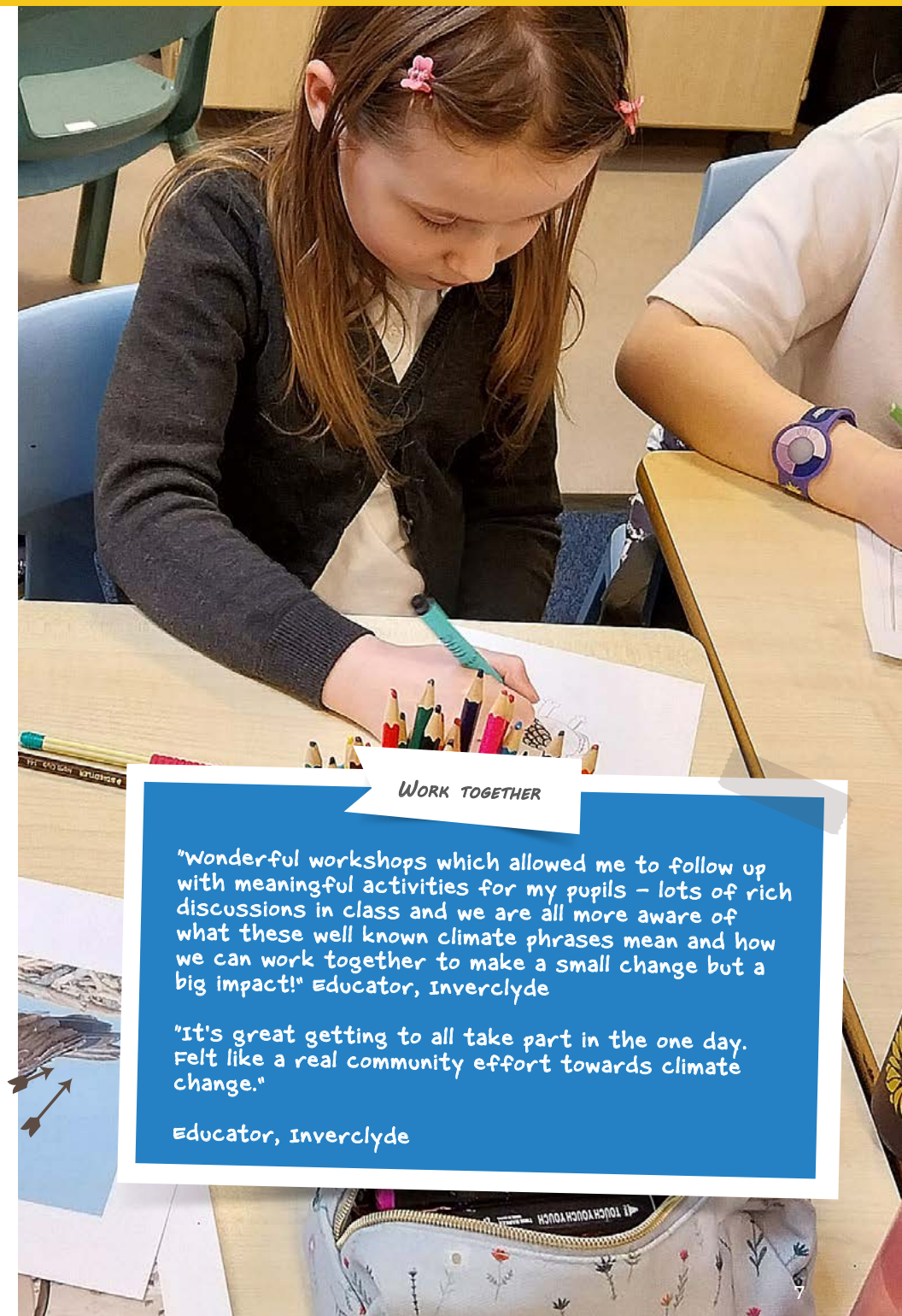


## Case study: Climate Ready Classrooms in Inverclyde

**All primary schools in Inverclyde were invited by their local authority to take part in the Climate Ready Classrooms for Primary programme for the first time this year, bringing pupils from P5-P7 from across the region together to learn about the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, focussing on meaningful and practical ways to take action.**

The day saw Keep Scotland Beautiful deliver three online workshops which included examples of climate change happening in the local area and referenced Inverclyde's climate change priorities. Activities were given to carry out after each workshop, leading to action plans being written by pupils. In advance of the day, teachers took part in a training session to support them to take the children's learning further.

As a result of the sessions schools came up with many actionable ideas for making their environments greener and more sustainable. They expressed a desire to create more green areas to replace their concrete playgrounds and to reduce energy waste by switching off unused lights and technology more frequently. Other proposed actions included getting bins with lids to prevent rubbish from spilling out, planting more trees and plants, encouraging local shopping, picking up litter, and building additional bug hotels to support biodiversity.



### WORK TOGETHER

"Wonderful workshops which allowed me to follow up with meaningful activities for my pupils – lots of rich discussions in class and we are all more aware of what these well known climate phrases mean and how we can work together to make a small change but a big impact!" Educator, Inverclyde

"It's great getting to all take part in the one day. Felt like a real community effort towards climate change."

Educator, Inverclyde

# Tackling litter and waste

**Issues around litter and waste continue to be an important focus for schools and communities and a gateway topic to taking environmental action with many settings choosing to work on this topic through litter picks and campaigns, and by requesting support from local authorities.**

Highlights this year include developing a new teacher training session focussing on litter from a global citizenship perspective as well as an art competition, live lesson and workshop on Campaigning Through Art delivered to support the Upstream Battle® campaign.



Mallaig Primary School was awarded an Eco-Schools commendation for their inspiring work

*MALLAIG PRIMARY  
SCHOOL*

"I have learnt how to write letters to the Highland Council. We used persuasive words to try and get more bins in Mallaig. Setting up the charity was a lot of work and I learnt that there are lots of steps to it. I learnt how to fill in a tally chart when finding how many bins there are in Mallaig. In the band stand there were loads but there weren't many in other places."

"I learnt what a grant is and some bits were very confusing to fill out. I learnt that asking for a grant was a way to get more money."

P6 Pupils, Mallaig Primary School

## 22,000

litter picks carried out in schools and nurseries

## 80%

of Eco-Schools have run swap shops or worked to reduce single use plastic

## 2,800

attended Spring Clean Week Live Lessons



## Case Study: Treetop Family Nurture

**Addressing issues of litter and waste have become embedded within the culture of Treetop Family Nurture Centre in Rosyth. Children, staff and families are regularly reminded and encouraged to recycle a wide variety of items, including donating household items that can be used to encourage imaginative play.**

A focus on reducing single-use plastic has seen less plastic packaging involved in producing snacks and lunches, a direct result of children and staff sharing concerns with the catering department.

However, the children noticed a problem with litter within the community. To help combat this, parents and carers were invited to join litter picks during the nursery's Eco Week.

These sessions included talks about what items can be recycled and what ends up in landfill, providing an excellent opportunity to raise awareness among families on the importance of reducing waste. The children also contacted their local councillor to ask about installing a bin along the lane running between the nursery and their feeder school.

Children at the centre continue to recycle all fruit and vegetable peelings as well as any suitable food leftovers in the brown bin which is collected weekly. The children are fascinated and inquisitive about the waste truck and the way it empties their brown bin and love talking to the driver!

WONDERFUL TO  
WATCH

"I took a group litter picking and the parents were amazed at how well the children could work the litter pickers and how engaged they were in the activity. One parents said "my husband and I thought that there was no way children would want to pick up litter but they are loving it" Another parent and her husband had never done litter picking before and became so involved they started to lead the group. The enthusiasm for such a simple but worthwhile activity was wonderful to watch."

Educator, Treetop Family Nurture Centre





# Creating better places for nature, biodiversity and people

## 300+

entries received for our Gaelic place names competition as part of World Gaelic Week



## 29

winners from 18 local authorities were invited to grow Pocket Gardens with 'Our Heritage' as an additional theme

**The core delivery of biodiversity education takes place via the annual Pocket Garden Design Competition, Natural Scotland Week Live Lessons and our SCQF accredited Biodiversity Action course. All of these opportunities promote action and behavioural change.**

Live Lessons delivered in 2024/25 have focussed on nature connections, autumn meadow sowing, bats and the RSPB Birdwatch with storytellers, artists and other partners involved in inspiring children and young people of all ages.



*TOTALLY INSPIRED*

What a fabulous idea [World Gaelic Week workshops and competition], we really enjoyed the online session and the topic has totally inspired the children in the class. We have loved learning about Gaelic in our landscape and spent [time] pouring over local maps... to find out about different places with Gaelic names. We are very lucky to have such a Gaelic-rich heritage here in north Sutherland and the maps reflect this and help us build a picture of what the landscape was like for our ancestors up here. We are going to continue with our voyage of discovery on Gaelic names in our landscape as a result of the activities this week."

Educator, Highland

## 109

pupils from 7 local authorities accredited through our Biodiversity Action course at SCQF level 4





## Case Study: Firpark Secondary School

**This year saw our SQA accredited Biodiversity Action course presented at Firpark Secondary School to a group of 37 pupils from across five different year groups, led by teacher Katie McGuckin. All students were successful in achieving the course certificate and associated SCQF credits.**

This was the first presentation of the course at Firpark Secondary, a school purpose built to accommodate pupils with additional support needs, but Katie had previously presented the course as a probationer teacher at another school.

One of the learning outcomes must be delivered outdoors in a natural environment and Katie used natural spaces local to the school to do this. Pupils' reflections on this learning included:

'I liked the sounds of nature and finding a tree along with just being in nature all together.'

'I enjoyed out door learning and its something I want to continue.'

The course was presented over 15 weeks within the Health and Wellbeing curriculum covering aspects of living things, nurture and personal contribution to positive change at school and in the wider community. At the end of the course the pupils identified what they will do to support biodiversity through behaviour change, campaigning or practical action.

### IMPACT ON BIODIVERSITY

"The pupils engaged really well with the course and have tried really hard...There have been some brilliant discussions around the issues. We've spent whole periods debating and talking about different choices and their impact on biodiversity. They can see this learning is relevant to their lives and they're keen to put it into practice."

Educator, Firpark Secondary School

# Enabling young people to have their voices heard

**This year has seen us increase our support for pupil voice, offering and promoting opportunities for children and young people to speak up and have their opinions heard on the issues that concern them.**

This has included our first in person youth forum networking session, enabling young people from six local authorities to meet and support each other by sharing their ideas and experiences, and our highest number of entries to date for the Young Reporters for the Environment competition.

**200**  
young people viewed  
Disinformation Live Lesson

**2**  
new training sessions  
developed

**3**  
Eco-Schools commendations  
awarded to schools that clearly  
encourage pupil voice

*WE CAN ALL LEARN  
FROM EACH OTHER*

"I have improved my social skills by speaking to teachers and other teenagers about our eco needs."

Secondary pupil, Scottish Borders

"We really feel that we are leading our own learning and are able to have our voices heard and make changes to the school that we want to make to ensure it is as eco friendly as possible. We also love working with different ages of pupils to get the chance to spend time with other year groups which is really fun and we can all learn from each other."



Thanks to Global and HP for their sponsorship of the Video and Photo categories for the Young Reporters for the Environment competition





## Case Study: East Renfrewshire Learning for Sustainability conference

**We had the privilege of running a session at East Renfrewshire's 'Learning for a Better World' Learning for Sustainability conference, where we worked directly with pupils to help them identify the environmental messages they most wanted to share.**

Using decision trees as a framework, we explored the issues they cared deeply about, what actions they could take, who they needed to involve, and who their messages should be aimed at. This structured process really helped the pupils clarify their thinking and focus their creativity in meaningful ways.

They were passionate about a wide range of topics—from tackling litter and waste, to protecting habitats and the animals that live there, safeguarding our oceans, and raising awareness of climate change and global warming. The decision trees helped them break down these complex topics into clear, targeted messages which were then brought to life through short films and placard art, created with purpose and emotion. The pupils' work was powerful—some pieces were bold and visually striking, others more reflective and moving. Every piece carried a message born from our session together, and it was clear how much the pupils valued having the chance to be heard.

Members of the council were present and took time to listen to what the pupils had to say, which really reinforced the value of their voices.

### AMAZING OPPORTUNITY

"I have enjoyed all of the excellent activities we were given. I think the message I'm taking back is the young people can always change the world."

"Learners enjoyed sharing ideas and working with other schools. They have become more passionate about Learning for Sustainability."

"It was an amazing opportunity for the learners and an opportunity for them to see how their voices can be heard when they are part of a collective action programme."

# Some of our partners this year





# Looking forward

**In the coming year we are excited to develop further opportunities for pupil and teacher learning and action by:**



Highlighting the Eco-Schools programme as a framework for schools and nurseries to become sustainable settings and have a whole-setting approach to Learning for Sustainability, in line with Scottish Government Target 2030 goals.



Encouraging pupil voice and continuing to create spaces for young people who care for the climate and the planet to meet each other and support them to become advocates and take action, contributing to the delivery of the Scottish Government Public Engagement Strategy for Climate Change.



Consulting with young people, educators and local authority contacts to gauge their understanding of Learning for Sustainability and climate education and ensuring the right kinds of support are available to them.



Refreshing our approach to key programmes and Live Lessons keeping them relevant, informative and engaging for learners and educators.



For more information on all of our programmes please visit [www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/cas](http://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/cas)





We support the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is your charity for Scotland's environment. We work with you to help combat climate change, reduce litter and waste, restore nature and biodiversity and improve places. We aim to inspire changes in behaviour to improve our environment, the quality of people's lives, their wellbeing and the places that they care for.



**Keep Scotland  
Beautiful**

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