

## **PRESS RELEASE –The Green-Schools Success Story Continues**

14<sup>th</sup> March, 2011

The Green-Schools success story continues this year as the coveted Green Flag Award was presented to 38 schools from across the county, at an awards ceremony held at Hotel Kilkenny on the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. 15 schools were awarded Green Flags for the first time and a further 23 schools successfully renewed their Flags. The programme, now in its fourteenth year, is operated by An Taisce, in partnership with Local Authorities.

The Green Flag is a recognised international symbol of a school's outstanding efforts at environmental management and is awarded to schools for tackling litter and waste, conserving energy and water, promoting sustainable travel, biodiversity and citizenship, and combating climate change.

Congratulating schools at the awards ceremony, Rachel Boyle, Green-Schools Officer with An Taisce said, "At an exciting time of change in Ireland, schools participating in the Green-Schools programme are leading the way in the effective environmental management of our schools and local communities. Through the implementation of the Green-Schools seven step methodology, students involved in the programme are acting as decision-makers, and are playing a significant role in successfully disseminating the Green-Schools message to their families and the wider community."

Rachel also acknowledged the significant role that North Tipperary County Council plays in the operation of the programme on a local level and praised the fantastic work of parents and local communities in working together with schools to reduce their environmental impacts.

There are currently over 3,500 schools taking part in the programme across Ireland, and the programme continues to grow at an exceptional rate, with 150 schools having registered with Green-Schools since the beginning of this academic year alone. Schools who partake in the programme have the opportunity to improve their environmental performance along with making financial savings through the reduction of waste disposal charges, energy bills and water charges.

The Green-Schools programme is coordinated in Ireland by An Taisce, operated in partnership with Local Authorities and is supported by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Department of Transport and the National Transport Authority. The programme is sponsored by Repak, ESB Independent Energy and the Wrigley Company Limited.

Repak are the lead sponsor of Green-Schools in Ireland. Commenting Dr Andrew Hetherington, CEO, Repak said "Since we announced our 5 year sponsorship of the Green-Schools Programme in 2008 we have helped to grow the number of participating schools by 35% or 1272 additional educational institutions. Growing the number of students who are given access to lifelong environmental education is crucial to protecting our future. However achieving real measureable results is where the programme has

excelled with up to €3 million saved annually across waste, energy and water. It is also very heartening to see students bringing the philosophy of Green-Schools with them as they move upwards through the education system, something that is reflected in the growing number of Universities and Colleges registered. We look forward to seeing these recycling and the environment skills and habits translating into the workplace as students graduate.”

Deirdre Cox, Environmental Awareness Officer, who represented North Tipperary County Council at the ceremony, stated

“It was a pleasure to work with all of the schools, from the teachers, children, caretakers and parents . It was clear to see everyone wanted to do their bit for the environment while achieving the Green Flag at the same time. Today you can collect your green flags and return to Tipperary very proud knowing you’ve finally achieved your goal”

**3 schools received their first Green Flag (for litter and waste):**

**St. Mary’s Junior Boys National School –**

This school showed huge commitment to reducing their waste. The school had a very colourful display of posters aimed at tackling litter.

### **Scoil Mhuire, Portroe –**

Scoil Mhuire has a very hard working committee and co-ordinator. The children take their role on the committee very seriously and if the teachers forget about recycling, the children remind them!

### **Scoil Chill an Daingain, Puckane**

As well as recycling and cleaning inside and outside the school, the pupils did a big clean up of Puckane village. Everyone had a good interest in environmental issues – even the school rabbit agrees with this!

### **5 schools received their Second Green Flag (for energy reduction)**

#### **Birdhill National School**

Birdhill had a very extensive low energy day, where they turned off all the appliances and noticed a huge decrease in energy usage. The school carried out lots of practical experiments about energy.

#### **CBS Primary School**

This school has a very serious and hardworking committee who carried out a very comprehensive green schools programme. The school does lots of energy monitoring which is very important when measuring the success of the energy theme. They have monitored all electricity usage making sure lights were off and doors were closed when the children were out playing.

### **Burgess National School**

This school did one of the strictest low energy days I have ever come across!

I would like to commend them on their commitment to reducing energy wherever they can.

### **Kilcommon National School**

This school continued with their Green Flag programme, despite building works in the school. I enjoyed my visit to Kilcommon, everyone knew lots about the environment.

### **Moycarkey National School –**

There was a very visible presence of the Green School programme. I think all of the children really enjoyed working for their energy flag in this school they had posters and slogan competitions, which were displayed throughout the school.

### **2 schools received their 3<sup>rd</sup> Green Flag (for water conservation)**

#### **Killeen (Birr) National School**

The Green-Schools committee went to great lengths to spread the word about water in their school. Water readings were incorporated into maths lessons, whole school action days were held to promote water conservation. Other themes are also being well looked after where they continue to collect batteries, old clothes and ensure that energy is not wasted in the school.

A Green-Committee Quote: 'We have brought all of what we learned in school to our families and the wider community'

### **Cloughjordan National School**

As part of their environmental review, Cloughjordan NS realised that their urinals were using 432 litres of water a day. They quickly set about replacing these and as a result they are saving 192 litres a day! They also have checklists in place to make sure everyone remembers to recycle, turn off lights and taps and be Green!.

The Green-Schools committee of Cloughjordan NS constitutes the entire school where everyone has role to play in their Green-Schools programme.