

Annagh NS, Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare

Annagh NS is a small rural school of 80 pupils located in Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare. The school received their first Green Flag for the Litter and Waste theme in 2008.

In Annagh NS, the Green schools committee is comprised of pupils from 2nd to 6th class, the principal, teachers, parents, special needs assistants, and the school caretaker.

When conducting their environmental review, the Green Schools committee found that there was litter inside the school as well as outside in the school's environs. In response to the findings of the environmental review, the school established a number of goals for their Litter and Waste Action Plan. Some of the targets laid out in the Action Plan included; 90% reduction in yard litter; 90% increase in waste separation; 20% reduction in A4 paper consumption; Collect stamps, batteries and Christmas cards for recycling; and improve school grounds by landscaping and planting.

To ensure that the school achieved the targets set out in the action plan, Annagh NS began a number of activities aimed at reducing litter and waste in the school. Each week the school held a tidiest classroom competition, encouraging students to keep their classrooms clean and tidy. Students began to conduct bin audits on a monthly basis to ensure waste was being separated correctly and that all bins were clearly labelled. Paper boxes were placed in every classroom and offices where teachers and students could put scrap paper that could then be used for rough work and during art activities. Students even used recycled materials to make brilliant Easter baskets!



The school also introduced a "2-sided photocopying" policy which led to a massive reduction in the amount of paper being used for notes etc in the classroom. The school also began adding "Green Tips" to any letters that were being sent home to parents, which offer valuable environmental tips to parents.

As well as reducing their paper usage and separating their waste correctly, Annagh NS reduced the amount of waste they were sending to landfill even further by setting up a composting system and using this compost in the school garden. To gain some helpful advice and tips about composting, some pupils, parents and teachers attended a composting workshop held locally.



As lunches can be a prime producer of waste in schools, Annagh NS introduced a lunch policy which specifies that any unrecyclable waste is to go home with the children and also that children are to eat inside only, therefore reducing the occurrence of waste in the yard areas.

Students from Annagh N.S. made Easter Baskets, Christmas Snow Globes and decorations from recycled materials. Pupils also entered a “Recycling for the Future” art competition hosted by Clare County Council.

To ensure the whole school community was informed about the Green Schools programme and aware of Annagh’s N.S. efforts to reduce their litter and waste, the school set up a Green Schools notice board where results and planned activities were posted. Green school talks were given at school assemblies and Green Schools Flyers and letters were sent home to parents. The Board of Management are also kept informed about the Green School programme through regular updates.

For their Day of Action the students and teachers cleaned and brightened up the school, inside and out. They also landscaped the outdoor areas surrounding the school and planted flowers. Students also received an introduction to composting.



Through their participation in the Green Schools programme, Annagh NS made many useful and valuable contacts in the local community including the local plant nursery, Brownies Group, Local environmentalist, Hedgehog Rescue, Rockmount School, ENFO, REPAK, Clare co. Co., An Taisce, and the Mullagh Horticultural Society.