



## Eco-Schools Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Venue: Geography Room 2

3:45pm –4:45pm



**Present:** Mr H. McSorley & Miss McCay

**Minutes:** Mr H. McSorley

### **Eco-Schools Committee**

- Both Miss McCay and Mr McSorley agreed that to ensure the school could work towards the Silver Award and Green Flag Award in Eco-Schools that it would be important to get representation of the Board of Governors and the Senior Leadership Team in the Eco-Schools Committee. Mr McSorley agreed to approach Mr Douglas to see if he would be willing to join the committee. Miss McCay noted that a wider group of staff had also volunteered their services to be proactive members of the Eco-Schools Committee for the year ahead which is very encouraging as members of staff would be able to take devolved responsibility for different strands of the schools promotion of Eco-Schools.

### **Year 13 Enrichment**

- Miss McCay noted she would continue to run the Year 13 enrichment programme on Eco-Schools this year given the success of the venture last year. She noted however that it may be a better idea to keep 1 group of students working on this project through the year as opposed to rotating the group of students every few weeks (as was done last year) as it means students would be able to see their project work through to the end of the year.

### **KS3 Eco-School Prefects**

- It was agreed the work the KS3 Eco-School Prefects was invaluable last year in our promotion of the Eco-Schools ethos within the school and in our work / bid towards the Bronze Award. Therefore it is hoped that this can be maintained in the year ahead.

### **Priorities**

- It was agreed that the committee should be working towards the Silver Award and Green Flag Award in Eco-Schools in the year ahead and towards securing the Fair-Active Award from the Fairtrade Foundation as this would demonstrate progression from the FairAware Award attained last year.

- Mr McSorley and the Year 13 Geography students have also taken over the long term running of the Fair Trade Tuck Shop each Friday within the school. Mr McSorley has had storage facilities built over the summer in an area of space in the Geography corridor, which the tuck shop could now be run from.

- Miss McCay updated Mr McSorley on a priority for the committee this year regarding a zero waste project. Miss McCay has secured funding of £5,000 from the Department of the Environment to further promote waste management strategies (like the recycling scheme started last year) within the school in the year ahead. Mr Mark

Durkan Minister for the Environment will be coming to school to make the official announcement and press release about the funding secured by Thornhill College and other schools and communities in the weeks ahead. This will be a great opportunity to promote and recognise the Eco-Schools work currently being undertaken in the school in the local community and press. Miss McCay and Mr McSorley discussed the priorities for the year ahead with the zero waste project in the school (some strategies for this project were already piloted last year in the Music & Geography Department classrooms):

#### *November*

- A waste audit (questionnaire / survey) needs to be completed with pupils and staff.
- An assembly needs to be held to inform staff and students about the project.
- A detailed email / staff briefing announcement needs to be sent to all members of staff about the project to keep them informed.

#### *December*

- New bins need to be ordered for the scheme.
- The school needs to enter into dialogue with the council about the project.
- Waste management strategies / procedures and responsibilities need to be firmed up.

#### *January*

- Notices need to be produced for each classroom outlining the agreed waste management schedule.
- A further assembly needs to be held to inform staff and student about the beginning of the implementation of the scheme.
- Green metal bins to stay in each classroom for general waste (non-recyclable) – it is hoped this should be kept to a minimum and thus cleaning staff should be able to empty these bins only once at the end of the week.
- Green paper bins in each classroom should remain the responsibility of students to empty once a week along with blue bins in the resource rooms etc.
- Red bins will be ordered for hard plastics for each classroom this will also become the responsibility of students to empty once a week on the same day as the paper / card bins.
- Brown caddies will be ordered for each classroom this will be the responsibility of the cleaning staff to empty (if this can be negotiated). It needs to be discussed further how often these should be emptied. Should it be every day or once a week? There is also the issue of getting the supply of bags needed for these caddies.
- Consideration also needs to be given to the possibility of having these waste collection points in place at key areas of use in the school such as the: 1) Canteen 2) Assembly 3) Junior Study 4) Sixth Form Study 4) School Kitchen and 5) Canteen.
- Mrs Deery will be consulted to see if the above procedures can be agreed with the cleaning staff and if biodegradable bags could be used by the cleaning staff instead of black bags and if a strategy could be put in place to reduce the current heavy use of green paper towels (for example like having hand dryers in all staff toilets etc).
- Other areas for consideration include the possibility of developing a recycling point for batteries / mobile phones and used stationary (pens etc) by having a Terracycle collection point. Mr McSorley agreed to investigate the possibility of ordering bins for this to create a recycling point for this within the Geography corridor.
- Miss McCay proposed having a communal collection point for packaging resources. This could be a point where staff store materials which have been used in packaging resources delivered to the school which could be re-used again.
- It was also agreed that staff training would be an essential component of the roll out of the aforementioned scheme to ensure everyone within the school community buys

into the concept and ethos in order to make its implementation successful like it was with the paper recycling scheme last year.

*February*

- A second waste audit needs to be completed.
- The school would develop a waste management policy.
- A exemplar guide and video of the zero waste management journey of the school could be made as good practice to share with other schools so the project could be rolled out further.