**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW GUIDANCE**

An Environmental Review is an audit of your setting, covering the nine Eco-Schools topics in reasonable depth, plus a number of other areas. Your Environmental Review is designed to give a realistic picture of your setting’s current environmental performance. It should tell you what you’re doing well and what you might need to work on.

The Green Procurement section will ask you to look at the products and services you use in Setting and investigate their environmental impact. From this you will be asked to develop a 'Green Procurement Policy' based upon your findings. The Environmental Review informs your Action Plan, helping your setting to decide what changes are necessary and how urgently the changes are required.

This activity must be completed at least once every two years, but ideally should be completed every year, to enable the Eco-Committee to do follow-up reviews to see the progress your setting has made.

**Who carries out the Environmental Review?**

The Environmental Review must be carried out by the Eco-Committee. An example template is enclosed in this guide. You can adapt this to suit the members of the Eco-Committee. It is up to a setting whether they wish to design their own Environmental Review or use the template attached.

**What should the Environmental Review include?**

It must include all of the nine topics: Energy, Litter, Waste/Recycling, Water, Transport, Healthy Living, Biodiversity, School Grounds and Global Citizenship. You should also answer questions on Green Procurement, and child Participation (to demonstrate how the Environmental Review is discussed during at all levels). Some of these areas will need support from a practitioner or senior member of staff.

An Environmental Review should include a series of simple questions. Simple yes/no answers to each question may provide sufficient information but you may wish to use the Environmental Review to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing the setting or include recommendations for action.

If you do wish to create your own Environmental Review, here is a list of suggested questions (remember that each area needs to be covered in reasonable depth):

**ENERGY**

• Are the lights and whiteboards left on in the rooms when people aren’t in them?

• Are low-energy light bulbs and fluorescent tubes used throughout the setting?

• Are computers turned off when not in use?

• If it gets too hot in the rooms, is the heating thermostat turned down before opening a window?

• Is there someone in your setting who has special responsibility for monitoring the consumption of energy (electricity, heating etc.)? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the team?

**LITTER**

• Is there too much litter around the premises?

• Are there enough bins inside and outside the setting?

• Does your setting have a clear anti-litter policy?

• Is the amount of litter collected monitored and weighed? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with staff, families, management etc?

**RECYCLING**

• Is paper, inkjet cartridges, plastics, cardboard or other materials recycled?

• Is your food waste composted?

• Where possible, does the setting buy paper, pens, pencils etc made from a recycled source?

• Has the setting considered buying uniforms made from recycled plastic bottles?

• Is the reusing of materials e.g. Water bottles encouraged?

• Is the amount of waste collected monitored and weighed? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with everyone?

**WATER**

• Is there a water meter to record water use in the setting?

• Are there push-on or self stopping taps in the toilets?

• Are there water saving devices in the toilets?

• How often does the setting run water-saving campaigns?

• Are children involved in taking and displaying readings? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the setting?

**TRANSPORT**

• Does the setting have dry and secure cycle storage?

• Does the setting organise regular ‘walk to setting’ or ‘cycle to setting’ events?

• Does the setting have a travel plan?

• Do you monitor how children travel to setting? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the setting?

**HEALTHY LIVING**

• Does the setting provide and promote healthier food throughout the day?

• Is drinking water available in each room?

• Do the children take part in daily exercise?

• Do you monitor whether children eat a balanced lunchtime diet over the week? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the team?

**BIODIVERSITY**

• Does the setting have any plants in containers, pots or beds in the settings’ grounds?

• Does the grounds of the setting have a wildlife or conservation area?

• Do you monitor how many different types of wildlife visit your premises? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the setting?

**PREMISES AND GROUNDS**

• Are lessons or part of lessons ever held outside?

• Does the setting recycle garden or fruit/vegetable waste in a composter or wormery?

• Are there seating areas in your play ground?

• Is the amount of time spent outside in the playground doing curriculum and non-curriculum activities monitored? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the setting?

**GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

• Do children consider how actions taken within the setting affect people and the environment locally and globally?

• Have the children considered other issues, such as Fair Trade?

• Are the amount of Fair Trade products that the setting uses monitored and evaluated? And if so, are the results recorded on graphs and shared with the rest of the setting?

**Green Procurement**

• Does the setting have a green procurement policy?

(NB: There is a requirement to develop a green procurement policy from Jan 2013 for ECO – School Award consideration)

• Does the setting ensure that all products and services purchased have a minimal impact on the environment (i.e. Green Procurement)?

• Does the setting buy local products?

• Does the setting buy products that are recycled or that can be recycled?

• Does the setting buy products that use less chemicals?

• Does the setting buy products that are energy saving?

**PLEASE CONSIDER THE USE OF BABY WIPES AND DISPOSABLE NAPPIES ND THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Child Participation**

• Do any environmental issues feature in setting assemblies?

• Are there special environment-related lessons or visits undertaken by groups?

• Are children involved with local environmental projects outside of the setting?

**Linking your Environmental Review to the curriculum**

Whether you’re devising your own Environmental Review or using an off-the-peg form, there are many opportunities to link this activity with the curriculum, particularly with maths, science and IT. Measuring, recording, estimating, displaying data, etc. can all be developed to meet national educational targets, as well as contributing to Eco-Schools.

**Linking to the Eco-Schools award levels**

At Bronze, Silver and Green Flag level: A school has to complete a formal review. This can be devised by the setting but must cover all nine Eco-Schools topics. The results must also be documented. An Environmental Review should be completed every twelve months by the Eco-Committee.

**We've conducted our Environmental Review...what next?**

Once the Eco-Committee has carried out an Environmental Review of the setting, it is time to develop an Action Plan based on its findings.