

Wigan Borough ECO Schools News

March 2021

Spring is in the Air!

The Snowdrops are out, the daffodils are just emerging, and the trees are showing a hint of green as the buds turn to leaves. Spring has definitely sprung!

Allison has a cuckoo in her garden and Ellen has a pair of Goldcrests in hers... What signs of spring have you noticed around school or home? Can you identify what you see? Here's a ['Signs of Spring' activity sheet](#) from the RSPB to help you out.



FREE ONLINE FARM IN A BOX experiences for those in school and learning from home

The Country Trust are there to bring food, farming and the countryside alive for disadvantaged children, sharing knowledge, igniting curiosity and broadening horizons. For qualifying schools*, Farm In A Box and the Farm Discovery programme is FREE. More information can be found on the [Country Trust Website](#) or contact your local coordinator, who happens to be our very own Allison at amcintosh@countrytrust.org.uk

**schools in deprived areas or with other special needs. Contact Allison for further info.*



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Say 'NO!' to plastic this Easter!



Did you know that of the 80 million Easter eggs we buy each year, we create a staggering **3,000 tonnes** of packaging? A significant amount of this is plastic waste.

While some materials can be recycled (foil in the brown bin, cardboard in the blue bin), plastic inserts on Easter egg boxes **CANNOT go in your brown bin**. So this year, why not look for more eco-friendly alternatives and avoid those pesky plastics!

There are some great findings and recommendations from [Friends of the Earth](#) including a link on how to [make your own chocolate eggs](#).

However you decide to have a plastic free Easter, we'd love to see your ideas.

Why not share them on Facebook or Twitter @wiganCouncil #PlasticFreeEaster or email us at enviroeducation@wigan.gov.uk.

We'll share our favourites in our next newsletter!



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Project Ignition – Eco Streets competition

This is your chance to **win £6,000** and transform an area of your community into a climate resilient green space for all to enjoy!

Transformable spaces could include Alleyways or 'Ginnels', Small Streets, Courtyards, Dis-used Allotments or Abandoned Park areas.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

#IgnitionGM



Eco-Schools application updates – Latest information

Although the pandemic has put a lot of Eco-Schools work on hold, it's been great to see that so many schools are keen to get things back up and running. Now that schools have returned, the Eco-Schools Team at Keep Britain Tidy have announced important updates for the application process. Full details can be found [here](#).

Remember, Ellen and Allison are both available should you need any extra support with your Eco-Schools applications. 😊



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Our March Eco Stars! Isla and Mia

Two sisters from Marus Bridge Primary, Mia (9yr) and Isla (7yr), have been clearing up their local environment in a bid to protect wildlife. Following in the footsteps of their dad, Tim, who has worked with animals and taught about nature conservation and sustainability, the girls enjoy spending time outdoors, appreciating nature and being as environmentally conscious as they can be. Mia is an Eco Warrior at her school and has enjoyed learning about how to help the environment, always telling her parents they should have electric cars and how people should look after the planet.

After spending a lot of time walking on Wigan Flashes Local Nature Reserve, the girls often noticed the amount of litter they found. Isla was worried about how birds and other animals could eat the litter or get trapped which would be very sad for their families! So, armed with litter pickers and gloves, they went out with their dad to clear as much rubbish as they could.

They really enjoyed litter picking and were immensely proud to receive lots of lovely comments they from passers-by! They plan to make it a regular event, saying they will take even more bags next time!

Well done to you both! 😊





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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Waste Week – March

It's not too late to join hundreds of schools across the UK, and around the world and join take part in Waste Week. This year the focus is plastic - an amazing resource, but one we all need to think more carefully about. How can people help solve the problem of plastic waste? The curriculum-linked resources explore plastic - its good points, the challenges it presents for our environment and practical ways in which everyone can help. They have everything you need to make your Waste Week fun, rewarding, measurable and easy to take part in. [Learn more here](#)

City Nature Challenge - April / May

The whole of Greater Manchester is invited to take part in the City Nature Challenge for 2021, by asking everyone to spot, identify and report all types of wildlife they see. The challenge is split into two parts:

30 April – 3 May Taking photographs of wild plants and animals.

4 May – 9 May Identifying what was found.

To provide you with more information and help you prepare for this event, Lancashire Wildlife Trust are holding a [FREE online workshop](#) on **Wednesday 21st April, 6pm – 7pm.**

Visit the City Nature Challenge [website](#) where you will find lots of information including a range of [education toolkits](#) for all ages.

Earth Day – 22nd April

Fifty years ago, the first Earth Day started an environmental revolution. Now, they are igniting an education revolution to save the planet. This formal campaign, launched Summer 2020, aims to make climate literacy a core feature of school curriculum. EarthDay.org™ believes every school in the world must have compulsory, assessed climate and environmental education with a strong civic engagement component. If you believe the same, please see the petition [here](#).

Stay well, stay safe and keep caring for our environment.

Allison and Ellen

EnviroEducation@wigan.gov.uk

