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ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Cambridge City Council is committed to a cleaner, greener city and by working with our residents, local businesses, schools, colleges, and universities you can help us make a difference. Schools play a vital role in communicating messages to children, their families and throughout our wider community, and our aims are to enable children to learn about the environment whilst having fun.

With our experienced and engaging team, children can take part in practical and fun activities within and outside the classroom that have developmental, educational and health benefits. We deliver educational classroom talks and fun interactive activities to promote key messages to schools based in Cambridge.

Our classroom-based activities are aimed at smaller groups (ideally individual classes), although we can deliver assemblies if time is a limiting factor.

The programme is funded by the Council and should you have specific needs or on-going projects as part of the curriculum, our programme can be tailored to your needs and student age groups.

If you would like further information or would be interested in booking a session in 2022/23 please contact us: sosvolunteers@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 458084.

The sessions that we deliver can form part of the **Eco-Schools** programme, which is an international award programme that guides schools on their sustainable journey.

Any school can join the Eco-Schools programme, which is free to join and participate in, and is designed to be flexible to make tackling sustainable issues manageable and easy for any school.

To find out about the range of benefits the Eco-Schools programme can offer visit the website: <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk>

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Environmental Crime

Classroom-based learning

We will provide a short presentation to KS1 and KS2 children to cover environmental crime, including litter, graffiti, and dog fouling, and then lead discussion groups around the topics.

Session lengths are tailored to the different age groups:

- Years 1-2 – 20 minutes
- Years 3-4 – 30 minutes
- Years 5-6 – 40 minutes

Hands-on practical learning

We can organise sessions for classes to undertake environmental related activities either at school grounds or local parks and open spaces. We can provide sessions to undertake the following:

- Litter picking
- Litter surveying

Eco-schools Green Flag Topic – Litter

We can work with you to help you demonstrate the litter topic within the Eco-Schools framework by supporting a Great Big School Clean and litter picks with equipment and resources. We can also help promote anti-littering messages through use of litter picking posters on council social media accounts.



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Biodiversity

To deliver our biodiversity related activities we work in partnership with 'On The Verge Cambridge' (onthevergecambridge.org.uk) and Pesticide-Free Cambridge (pesticidefreecambridge.org).

Classroom-based learning

We will provide a short presentation to KS1 and KS2 children to cover the basic topics of biodiversity, and then lead discussion groups around the topics.

Session lengths are tailored to the different age groups:

- Years 1-2 – 20 minutes
- Years 3-4 – 30 minutes
- Years 5-6 – 40 minutes

Hands-on practical learning

We can organise sessions for classes to undertake biodiversity related activities either in school grounds (including meadows/wild areas) or local parks and open spaces. We can provide sessions to undertake the following:

- Building of insect habitats or hotels;
- Creation of bee banks;
- Producing bat/bird boxes, ant farms or wormeries;
- Creation of wild-flower areas;
- Surveying sessions for insects and wildlife
- Wildlife sessions such as pond dipping; or
- How to go pesticide-free (also see below)

The council has a **community moth trap**.

It is a phenomenal way to demonstrate biodiversity and just look at nature up closely.

We can bring this along and run a session on these wonderful insects!

Eco-schools Green Flag Topic – Biodiversity

We can work with you to help you demonstrate the biodiversity topic within the Eco-Schools framework by supporting you to build, maintain and install insect, bird and animal habitats. We can also help with monitoring of areas for insects, plants and pollinators including providing materials and resources on a regular basis.



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Trees

Classroom-based learning

We will provide a short presentation to KS1 and KS2 children to cover the basic topics of trees, and then lead discussion groups around the topics.

Session lengths are tailored to the different age groups:

- Years 1-2 – 20 minutes
- Years 3-4 – 30 minutes
- Years 5-6 – 40 minutes

Hands-on practical learning

We can organise sessions for classes to attend local parks and open spaces to undertake the following:

- identify the trees in the parks;
- assessing what trees can do for us;
- measure and assess the condition of the trees;
- learn about the care we provide trees (watering, mulching, coppicing) and have a go at undertaking this for young trees in the park
- help to plant new trees¹; or
- benefits of pesticide-free practices (also see below)

Eco-schools Green Flag Topic – School Grounds

We can work with you to help you demonstrate the school ground topic within the Eco-Schools framework by supporting you to undertake tree building events (both in school grounds and local parks and open spaces).



¹ Limited to November-February and dependent on location

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Other areas of learning:

Waste

In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, Thalia delivers a dedicated service for schools and community groups. These groups can visit an on-site education centre at the Waterbeach Waste Management Park or tour the site.

The Waterbeach Waste Management Park has an on-site education centre, which is run as part of the partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council. The centre offers fun and interactive sessions for schools and is managed by a trained and experienced education team. In addition to the education centre, the council can arrange for one of the education centre team to visit schools to give talks or presentations. They can also lead a classroom workshop session or assembly about recycling, reuse and waste topics.

For more information visit the webpage here: cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-education-service or contact the Waste Education Service on 07887 387 977 or email Jonathan.Crisp@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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Other areas of learning:

Pesticide-Free Schools

Cambridge City Council is working together with Pesticide-Free Cambridge (PFC) and supports their current Pesticide-Free Schools campaign (www.pesticidefreecambridge.org).

Through our work with PFC, Cambridge City Council has agreed to phase out the use of glyphosate-based herbicides across the city because they are very harmful to the environment - to people and wildlife.

But many schools still use the very same herbicides that we are phasing out, as well as other harmful pesticides such as insecticides, including sprays, gels and powders, both on playgrounds and sports fields, and within school buildings themselves. We can provide training and guidance on the following topics:

- What are pesticides?
- Why are they harmful to the environment and human health?
- How can you find out what kinds of pest-control your school is using?
- Which kinds of safer and more wildlife-friendly alternatives can your school use to deal with unwanted plants and insects?
- What are the benefits of a pesticide-free school?
- How do pesticides impact on biodiversity, public health and disability accessibility?
- How can staff and pupils engage with pesticide-free practices in ways that support wider school curricula on biodiversity, climate-change, and public health?

A pesticide-free school is an eco-friendly and healthy school. It is better for wildlife, flowers, and insects, and better for the children and staff alike.

To find out more and/or arrange a visit please email info@pesticidefreecambridge.org



Open Spaces
Management Team
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