



Brighton & Hove environmental education

## BHee Environmental Review – notes for teachers

An essential part of the Eco-Schools process is for pupils to conduct an **Environmental Review** to help them to identify the school's strengths and areas that need work. Eco-Schools ask schools to conduct this Review at least every two years, and preferably each year. Most schools find that the best time to do it is in September, with a newly selected Eco Committee.

Eco-Schools provide a Review template on their website, but schools are free to design their own, as long as they include all 9 Eco-Schools topics: Litter, Water, Waste, Energy, School Grounds, Healthy Living, Biodiversity, Transport, and Global Citizenship. See [www.eco-schools.org.uk/gettingstarted/environmentalreview](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/gettingstarted/environmentalreview) for more details.

The **BHee Environmental Review** is an alternative template, designed for primary pupils. The main questionnaire contains questions that pupils should be able to answer themselves. (They may need to do some investigation around the school first.) There are also 4 shorter questionnaires containing questions for pupils to ask key members of staff: the caretaker, the headteacher, the office staff and the kitchen staff. While the pupil questionnaire forms the core of your Environmental Review, the other questionnaires are also important. They allow pupils to find out more about their school's environmental performance, as well as involving a wide range of adults in your Eco-Schools work.



Hangleton Junior School

### Customising the BHee Environmental Review

The actual questions of the Review are not set in stone, as long as you cover all 9 Eco-Schools topics. Before using the BHee Environmental Review, read through the questions and tweak them to suit your school (the questionnaires are easily edited Word documents). If there is a particular issue you would like to draw your pupils' attention to, either a strength of your school or an area that you think needs work, feel free to add in a couple of questions about it.

### The pupil questionnaire

The pupil questionnaire is the most important part of the Review, so do it first. You could complete the questionnaire with your Eco Committee, or involve the whole school by asking class teachers and Eco Reps to lead class discussion. The questionnaire is divided into four sections to make it easy to share out the topics between small groups or classes.



### The adult questionnaires

After the pupil questionnaire, select some pupils to visit the caretaker, headteacher, kitchen staff and office staff to complete the adult questionnaires. Most schools use their Eco Committee for this, divided into groups. It is wise to forewarn your colleagues of the visit and explain its purpose. Emphasise that the point is to identify areas for the school to work on, so it's fine if they admit to less than perfect environmental practices. It is also OK if they don't know some of the answers.

## Action planning

Once you have used all five questionnaires, you are ready to put together an Action Plan. Discuss the findings of the Environmental Review with your Eco Committee, and identify several areas the school needs to work on. It is important for the pupils to have ownership of the Action Plan, so include any extra ideas they suggest, as long as they are related to the 9 Eco-Schools topics and are realistic!

Prioritise which areas you're going to focus on first and don't be tempted to try and do everything at once. It's a good idea to identify a few 'quick wins' as well as a larger project that will take longer to implement.

Your Action Plan should have plenty of tasks that are the responsibility of pupils, as well as some for adults. Pupils need to appreciate that action is being taken at different levels within the school, so make sure they know about what is happening behind the scenes. For an example Action Plan see the downloadable resources section of the BHee website.

## Baseline data

Some topics may need further investigation before you launch your project / campaign. This will help pupils to engage with specific issues and establish child-friendly baseline data which you can share with the rest of the school to motivate them to take action. For example your pupils could:

- 🗑️ carry out 'spying' to find out what % of lights and whiteboards are left on during playtime / assembly / lunchtime / after school
- 🗑️ monitor classroom temperatures at different times of the day to find out whether rooms are overheated
- 🗑️ conduct a litter pick and count / weigh the number of pieces found
- 🗑️ carry out an audit of the recycling bins to check for contamination and see what % of the paper has been used on both sides
- 🗑️ carry out an audit of your school's packed lunch waste



**Coldean Primary School**

The BHee website has a range of easy-to-use resources to support these activities. They can be used by your Eco Committee or by a class as part of numeracy / science / geography work. The latter approach has the advantage of involving more pupils and teachers in your Eco-Schools projects as well as making links between Eco-Schools and the curriculum, both essential for a Green Flag award.

For projects that do not lend themselves to numerical data (e.g., revitalising a wildlife area, improving the school grounds), take photographs to show your starting point.



**Moulsecroomb Primary School**

## Involving the whole school

It's important to share your Action Plan with the whole school community, involve them as much as possible in taking action, and keep them informed of progress. Discuss with your Eco Committee how to do this e.g., delivering regular Eco assemblies, writing articles for the school website / parents' newsletter. Don't forget to display the key points of your Action Plan on your Eco-Schools notice board, along with any baseline data and photographs.

If you have any questions about the BHee Environmental Review, or need support with any aspect of your Eco-Schools work, please email [helen.peake@resourcefutures.co.uk](mailto:helen.peake@resourcefutures.co.uk)