

Our Eco Hub Newsletter Autumn 2012

WELCOME

1, 2

Dear All

Welcome to the fourth edition of our Eco Hub Newsletter.

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I am extremely grateful to Hugh McCahon for his continued hard work and dedication to the continuing challenge of sustaining our vibrant hub. Thank you to everyone who has joined to support our collective efforts to help make our schools a better place to be.

Hugh and I have 'behind the scenes' been discussing potential course, ideas, conferences and links to other groups or organisations to build on the success we all achieved last year. This year to date we have 28 schools who have joined the hub. A super result! If you know of anyone in other schools who might like to join please ask them to get in touch with us. Likewise if you have any ideas for meetings or contributions whether articles or photographs then please send them to me at head@edwalton.notts.sch.uk

FEATURE

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With only 28 members we have generated £700 to support Hugh's release time over the year and so we have approached various groups seeking help to sponsor our endeavours and attract funding. Here at Edwalton on 23rd November 2012 we are running a workshop which is designed to help generate ideas for your Eco Team (details within this newsletter) and will be holding other events during the year. Provisional dates for these so far are

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'Our Eco Hub'
Edwalton Primary School
Wellin Lane
Edwalton
Nottingham
NG12 4AS
0115 9144221

Friday 25th January: Introduction to Eco School
Friday 8th February: Eco Schools - Applying for the Green Flag
Friday 7th June: Energy Saving in Schools

The next Eco Hub Network meeting is planned for Wednesday 27th February. More details of all these will be sent out in due course.

Finally amongst the tsunami of mail, articles, television programmes and the conversations we all have on the 'Green Agenda', I came across a gem of an article in the TES Pro on 19th November 2012 called "Why the grass should be greener" by Aric Sigman. This short article reports evidence that the natural environment has a positive impact on children and young people.

It follows on from a paper "Can Nature Make Us More Caring?" 2009 by the University of Rochester which categorically found "young people immersed in natural environments" were judged to express "greater generosity and concerns for others"

Research by the University of Essex Biology Department proved in a study that "green environments improved both self-esteem and mood and the presence of water generated greater effects" I wonder if they went into Year 1 or Foundation! All of this substantiates our values and views.

Children from an early age need to be encouraged to begin a love affair with nature, the great outdoors, gardening, trips and eco / forest school work.

I rest my case!

Yours sincerely,

Brian Owens
Head Teacher

NEWS

Eco Schools Awards – New Requirement for Green Flag

From September 2012 Eco Schools have introduced a new element into the Environmental Review. The Green Procurement section asks you to look at the products and services you use in School and investigate their environmental impact. From this you will be asked to develop a 'Green Procurement Policy' based upon your findings. The Policy will become a mandatory requirement for all Eco-Schools from January 2013.



Green Procurement considers the environmental aspects, potential impacts and costs, associated with the life cycle assessment of goods and services being acquired. It focuses on the practice of procuring products and services that are less harmful to the environment (land, air and water). Green products purchased should be those that are made with less harmful materials or which when produced or used or consumed would have a minimal impact on the environment. This includes buying local and reducing your carbon footprint.

To help, Eco Schools have provided a webpage with some useful tips and a downloadable [Green Procurement Policy document](#) with information for each topic. Use this to help you with your environmental review and in creating a Green Procurement Policy statement.

http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/ecoschools/gettingstarted/Green_Procurement

NEWS

Discover new resources to enhance your Eco-Schools work

Waste Watch provide a range of [resources, fact sheets and lesson plans](#) can help make your back to school planning a little easier. Whether you are just registering or are a Green Flag school, these resources will be sure to inspire and excite.



[Waste Watch](#), a charity which inspires and helps people to waste less and live more sustainably, is now part of [Keep Britain Tidy](#). They have been working with schools and communities for the past twenty-five years. They have used this experience and expertise to create a suite of teaching and learning resources.

Waste Watch's approach

Waste Watch's resources use innovative approaches to teaching and learning that build pupils' knowledge and understanding, and engage them in meaningful practical work. The resources are based on the [action learning cycle](#), which has five stages: **excite**, **expand**, **explore**, **engage** and **evaluate**.

Through the cycle of activities, pupils work individually and collaboratively to build knowledge, values, attitudes, understanding and self-confidence to take action on a range of sustainability issues. The resources are designed to support the delivery of the National Curriculum and GCSE and A-level assessment objectives. They have been developed with specialist teachers and trialled in classrooms.

Take a look at how Waste Watch's approach to communicating sustainability involves [embedding the 3R's within all aspects of school life](#).

How Waste Watch resources can help with your Eco-Schools work

The Waste Watch resources link with the Eco-Schools [waste topic](#). They are also useful in your wider Eco-Schools work, for all age groups.

There are also a range of [fact sheets and resources](#) specifically for teachers, including

- Data facts and figures at your fingertips
- Guidance on the whole school approach
- Further information on Waste Watch's approach

Tetra Pak wallet

Materials

- Tetra Pak (Cleaned with warm soapy water and both ends cut off)
- Velcro
- Scissors
- Double sided tape



Also you can download their activity sheets to make your own [origami heart from waste paper](#) or a [new wallet from old tetrapacks](#).

Teaching the 3R's

The problem of waste; managing it, removing it and financing its removal - is one that all schools face and one that can be approached in many different ways. It's estimated that English schools generate around 258,300 tonnes of waste every year.

This equates to around 45kg per primary pupil and 22kg per secondary pupil each academic year (National statistics 2006). As you may appreciate, that is more than some students even weigh!



As one of the [nine topics](#), within the Eco-Schools program, waste is an area where a school can make many positive changes. By addressing this issue you can help reduce the vast amount of waste that gets sent to UK landfill each year, reduce your carbon output and are likely save some money!

[Waste](#) is everybody's problem, so if you would like to tackle the waste issue in your school take a look at the Eco-Schools website. Any work you do on the 3R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) can be used to evidence your progress when applying for the Green Flag Award.

You might also consider taking part in a national campaign, this will help highlight the issue of waste to the whole school and ensure everyone is engaged in becoming part of the solution.

Waste Week 11-17th March 2013

The Pod's [Waste Week](#) is returning this year and is a great way to get the whole school to look at how they can cut down the amount of waste they produce as well as how they can ensure that what they do produce is reused or recycled. **You can [sign up to the campaign now!](#)** So sign up as soon as possible to ensure you receive your free campaign pack, filled with posters stickers and badges that will help you run a successful campaign.

You must be registered with the Pod to take part so, [sign up here](#) if you haven't already.

Ebug – 'Now wash your hands!'

e-Bug is a free, educational resource for classroom and home use that aims to make learning about micro-organisms, and the spread, prevention and treatment of infection, fun and accessible for all students. There are useful modules on hand washing and farm hygiene.

Throughout the teacher sections you will find; lesson plans, student worksheets, extension activities and presentations to assist with the more difficult aspects of microbiology. The student pages complement the teacher resources by providing online games, revision pages and lots more to continue the learning experience at home.



WWF's Blue Mile

WWF is calling all schools to jump in to help save our rivers and oceans and get involved with the Ecover Blue Mile this autumn. Taking part is easy; all you have to do is complete a mile on, or near, water!

The Ecover Blue Mile aims to get adults and children all across the UK immersed in our water environment to highlight the threats faced by some of our beautiful marine species such as turtles and dolphins. Did you know that every year billions of unwanted animals like dolphins, turtles, seabirds, sharks, juvenile fish and corals are accidentally caught as 'bycatch' in fishing equipment? WWF is working on bycatch as a priority conservation issue.

WWF are asking all schools in the UK to get involved and help raise vital funds in an exciting and fun way around water.

Ideas for possible Blue Mile events could include:

- organising a sponsored swimming event at your local or school pool
- arranging a group nature walk by a river - the children could walk dressed up as their favourite marine animal
- or how about organising a paper boat or duck race competition to raise funds?

It's really easy to get involved, just register on the official website - <http://link.wwf.org.uk/inxmail?i4712uywv000b2cegg0bid000d7q010>, download fundraising materials and start planning your activity. They also have some fantastic resources, focusing on turtles and dolphins, to help link your fundraising to your classroom activities.

If your pupils raise £30 or more, WWF will send them a turtle poster as a special thank you for helping protect these beautiful animals.

All the funds raised will go towards helping WWF's work protecting our seas on which both people and nature depend.



Farming and Countryside Education - FACE

Farming and Countryside Education (FACE) work supporting teachers and children working in the countryside. There are many ways in which you can be involved:

For Free!

Access our range of quality free learning resources on the FACE website. They will help inspire teachers to bring the countryside into the classroom and help farmers enrich their educational Farm Visits. You can also sign up for our free e-newsletter which will provide you with the latest news, views and resources in the world of food and farming education. Our Facebook and Twitter accounts are also bursting with the latest news from FACE. Our full range of resources can be found at: <http://face-online.org.uk/resources-all>

For just £20

Become a 'Friend of FACE'. Your money will help train farmers and others to host visits and to communicate their passion for food and farming. It will also help to enthuse teachers make the most of learning outside the classroom. <http://face-online.org.uk/membership>

From £40

Attend a FACE seminar. These idea sharing seminars are a great way to become inspired whilst in the company of others who have a passion for outdoor learning. The seminars occur all across England and Wales. Topics range from general outdoor learning tips and advice to teaching Maths, History and Cookery on a farm!

<http://face-online.org.uk/face-seminars>

For just £60

'Farm Memberships' and 'School Memberships' allows you access to; the full range of FACE learning resources, expert advice and help on curriculum matters, hard copy resources such as posters and wall planners, discounted rates on FACE seminars, and much, much more....

<http://face-online.org.uk/membership>

FACE Farming & Countryside Education

Home News Partners Resources Teachers Farmers Membership About FACE Contacts

Supported by **NFU** Working in partnership with:

REAP Workshops
FACE, in conjunction with Harper Adams University College, is offering a series of free food and farming awareness workshops for teachers and teaching assistants.

FACE Seminars
A great way to be inspired and share ideas for everyone involved with the outdoor classroom. See the up and coming FACE Seminars

Geography
In this section you will find resources for teaching Geography produced by FACE and their partner organisations.

Business
A Business at the Farm is an educational resource for AS and GCSE Business studies students.

Browse Teachers
Art
Business
Curriculum
Debating
Diversification
Environment and Land based resources

Become a FACE School Member
Learn more about the benefits of FACE School membership.

FEATURE

How to Compost

Several Hub members have asked for advice on composting and how to overcome problems in their heap, the following is intended to answer these questions and is based on information from the RHS.

The site and container

It is important that the site is not subjected to extremes of temperature and moisture, as the micro-organisms (bacteria and fungi) that convert the waste to compost work best in constant conditions. Position the bin in light shade or shade; it is often more convenient to use a shady area of the garden.

An earth base allows drainage and access to soil organisms, but if you have to compost on a hard surface, then add a spadeful of soil to the compost bin.

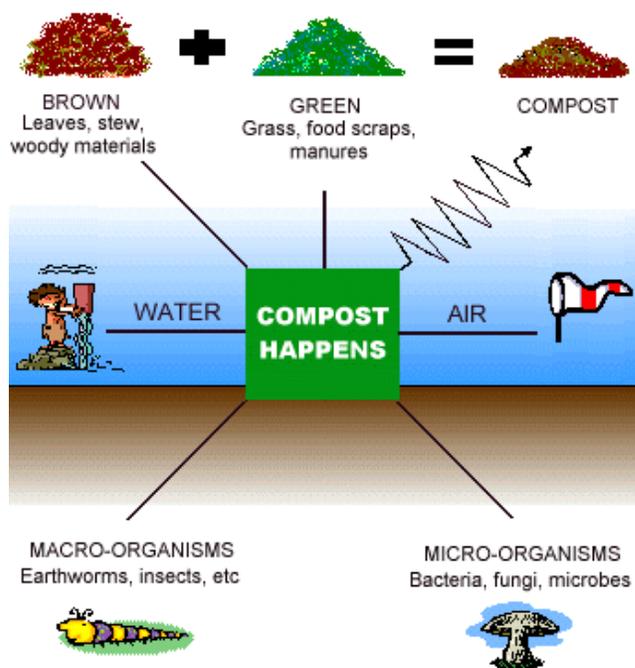
Bins retain some warmth and moisture and make better compost more quickly, but even an open heap (not enclosed in a bin) will compost eventually. Any of the compost bins on the market should produce compost as long as they exclude rain, retain some warmth, allow drainage and let in air.

Bins less than 1 cubic m (1.3 cubic yd) in size are much less effective than larger ones.

Getting the right balance of composting materials

Aim for between 25 and 50 percent soft green materials (e.g. grass clippings, annual weeds, vegetable kitchen waste, or manure) to feed the micro-organisms.

The remainder should be woody brown material (e.g. prunings, wood chippings, paper, cardboard, straw or dead leaves). The bacteria and micro-organisms that produce the compost function best when the balance of green and brown materials is correct. Avoid letting any one material dominate the heap - especially grass clippings, as these can become a slimy, smelly mess on their own. Vegetable and fruit waste and grass clippings are best mixed with brown woody material, as they tend to be wet and easily compacted, excluding air.



Some common composting materials

- **Green:** Grass clippings; soft, leafy plants including annual weeds; fruit and vegetables, uncooked vegetable and fruit waste; selected pet waste/bedding.
- **Brown:** prunings and hedge trimmings (ideally shredded), woodchip, leaves, paper and card (torn up or shredded), straw, plant stems.
- **Accelerators and activators:** Products such as 'Garotta' are sometimes added where green waste is in short supply. They contain high levels of nitrogen (a nutrient found in green waste), but should not be necessary if green waste is plentiful. It is also possible to purchase activators containing carbon (a nutrient found in brown woody waste); these are aimed at composting grass clippings or other green waste where there is insufficient brown waste.
- **Lime:** People sometimes think you need to add lime to the compost heap, but there is no need to do so.

Turning the heap

Turning the heap adds air; air is necessary for composting to occur. If the heap is too wet or becomes compacted, then the composting process is slower as less air is available.

Ideally, place a lot of composting materials on the heap in one go, and turn it periodically (perhaps every month) to introduce air. Failure to turn the heap is probably the main cause of poor results.

Remember to keep the heap moist in dry weather – turning will give you an opportunity to assess the moisture level.



When is the compost ready?

Garden compost can take between six months and two years to reach maturity. Mature compost will be dark brown, with a crumbly soil-like texture and a smell resembling damp woodland. It is unlikely that all the material in the heap will be like this, but any remaining un-rotted material can be added to the next batch of composting materials.

Problems

Sometimes the results of composting are not as expected.

- **Wet, slimy and strong-smelling compost:** Too little air and too much water are often to blame. Cover the heap to protect against rain and add more brown waste, such as chopped woody material, shredded woodchip, straw or paper.
- **Dry and fibrous with little rotting:** Usually caused by too little moisture and too much brown material. Add more green waste, or try a commercial activator or accelerator such as 'Garotta'.
- **Flies:** Well-run compost bins don't produce swarms of flies, but if you do see these, then make sure you cover vegetable and fruit waste with garden waste after adding it to the heap and check that moisture levels are not too high, causing insufficient air in the heap.

FREE RESOURCES

What's coming up on 'The Pod?'

Switch-Off Fortnight - 19 November to 2 December 2012.

Switch-Off Fortnight is the Pod's ever popular annual energy awareness campaign that runs from 19th November to 2nd December. It aims to highlight and reduce unnecessary energy use in your school.



So if you are looking for a simple way to incorporate energy topics within lessons and hopefully save the school some money, signing up to Switch-Off Fortnight is the perfect way to do it.

There are plenty of [free classroom resources](#) including lesson plans, assembly ideas and information packs. These provide easy to use cross curricular activities that will guide you through the campaign and ensure the whole school gets involved! The Pod's **Switch On to Switching Off** and **Goodbye Standby** are just two of the great activities available that aim to raise pupil's awareness of appliances that are using energy unnecessarily.

Taking part not only covers the energy topic, it also fits in well with your Eco-Schools journey no matter where you are along the process. The themes of monitoring, evaluation and whole school involvement are key to **supporting your application for Eco-Schools awards**. The Pod's [Pod-o-meter](#) can help you keep track of all your potential energy savings and by updating everyone on your progress you can ensure the entire school gets behind the project.

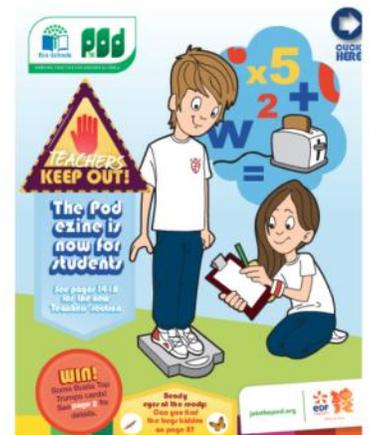
To find out more about Switch-Off Fortnight and to sign your school up for the campaign, visit [the Pod](#).

New Climate Science activity set

Last year 'The Pod' produced an activity and resource pack, written for them by Climate Scientists at the Met Office, it was well received and they are now planning on launching a second activity in the autumn.

Interactive Magazine for your Pupils

The Pod sent out their first Pod magazine for children. If you didn't get a copy you can download it [here](#). They will be sending the next edition out before Switch Off Fortnight 2012.



Waste Week - 11 March to 17 March 2013

After the success of the 2012 campaign, the Pod will be running Waste Week again in 2013. As with all Pod campaigns there will be free campaign packs up for grabs, as well as a range of new resources and activities.

Don't forget...

You can download the [Year Planner](#) – a great tool to use when planning for next term.

Many Pod activities have '[take it home](#)' sheets for pupils to extend their classroom learning, at home with their families. There are plenty more quick activities in the Pod's online magazine which should give plenty of ideas for activities.

FREE RESOURCES

LEAF'S Virtual Farm Walk

This is a great opportunity to find out all about farming and the environment. Two of LEAF's farmers, Sally and David, are ready to show you around the virtual farm.

There are lots of fun things to do on this walk, with lots of fascinating facts about farms and the animals and plants that live on them. You can visit many different parts of the farm, meet the animals and look at the machinery. You can even go pond dipping!

Whatever the weather, children can still experience the sights, sounds and smells of the farm without leaving the classroom, through LEAF's Virtual Farm Walk. An added attraction is that visitors can feel the warmth of African sunshine with two African fields to visit. Farmers from Ghana and Kenya are on hand to explain how they grow delicious pineapples and green beans.

www.virtualfarmwalk.org/



Co-op - Green Schools Revolution

Co-op's Green Schools Revolution has many resources for teachers and children. One of the latest is 'Habitat Heroes in Schools'. It's brand new and you'll find lesson plans, guides on how to build habitats in your school to attract all sorts of creatures – there's even a game for the IWB to play with your class – can you match all the creatures to their habitats? Download the teachers' notes to see which of the resources you would like to use – it could be building a home for hedgehogs or planting some flowers to attract pollinators in to your garden.



Sustainability Guide for Schools

Co-op have also teamed up with the experts at SEEd to create a guide for helping your school become more sustainable. You'll find ten top tips to help you embed an ethos of sustainability in your school, no matter how far along the journey you are at the moment, along with two of our Green Schools Revolution teachers to give you some ideas and inspiration!

The Guide is in the pack you get when you register or you can download a version on the homepage once you're logged in to the website

To see the resources you log on to www.greenschools.coop and go straight to the primary resource page for all the new Biodiversity resources.

YOUR GUIDE TO BECOMING A MORE SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL

Sharing best practice, top tips, sector expertise and examples of Green Schools Revolution in action to inspire sustainability in your school

www.greenschools.coop

**GREEN SCHOOLS
REVOLUTION**
from The Co-operative

FREE RESOURCES

Grow Your Own Potatoes

Once again Potato Council would like to invite you to take part in Grow Your Own Potatoes, a fantastic, FREE hands on project for Primary schools. Following yet another very successful year with schools across the country planting and harvesting their free seed potatoes, Potato Council have decided to run the activity yet again.

All schools that register to take part will receive a free Growing box containing everything they need to produce a crop of potatoes to harvest and then cook with the class. As well as containing seed potatoes and grow bags the pack will include valuable resources to help teachers educate children about how things grow, where their food comes from and a healthy balanced diet.

This year's kit is even better as they have also incorporated a chitting tray in the box to enable you to chit your seed potatoes easily.

Don't delay as kits are limited so to register your school and take advantage of everything Potato Council have to offer go to www.gyop.potato.org.uk

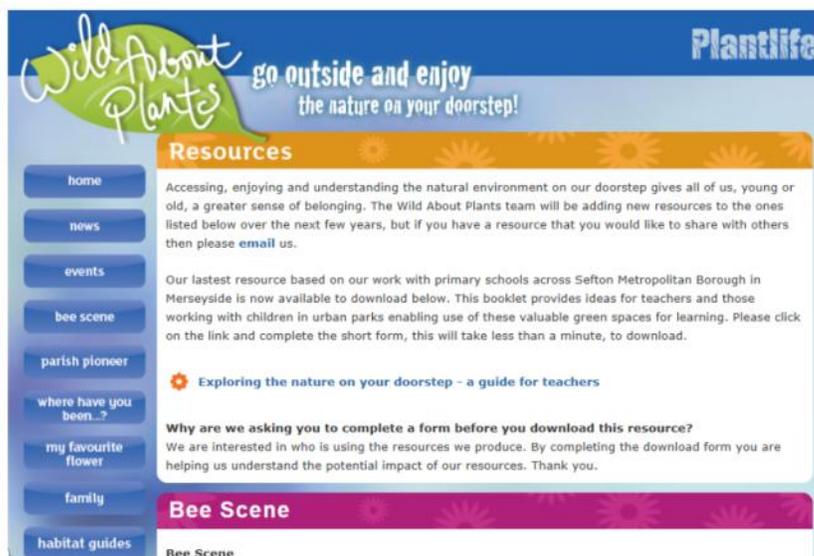


Exploring the Nature on your Doorstep

Wild About Plants have produced a new booklet which provides ideas on working with schools and children in urban parks.

It is available to download for FREE from www.wildaboutplants.org.uk/resources

The booklet results from work with primary schools in Sefton, Merseyside over the last two years and may be of interest for anyone taking classes outside into woods or parks.



TRAINING

Funding for Schools Workshop at 'Our Eco Hub' Edwalton Primary School

Friday 23rd November, 1pm -3pm

This event will be of interest and use to teachers and schools looking for money to fund environmental, ground improvement and sustainable energy projects.

During the 2hr participative session participants will:

- Be supported to develop a project idea into a fundable proposal
- Be given details of suitable funding sources for school projects
- Share good practice in pupil and community engagement
- Leave with an action plan

Participants should be encouraged to bring along:

- A project idea
- Example funding bids (successful and unsuccessful)

Attendees will also have the opportunity to tour the school grounds, woods and farm if they wish.

The event is free for members of 'Our Eco Hub' 2012-13.

A £25 cancellation fee will be charged in the event of non-attendance.

Non members are welcome but will be charged a £25 fee, which will also include Hub membership for 2012-13.

The workshop will be facilitated by Debs Clark.

Debs has worked in both the voluntary and statutory sector, raising and distributing funding for nearly 20 years. Most recently she is responsible for giving funding advice to a UK youth charity with 400 local branches, attracting funds from grants, trusts, corporate sponsorship, Government contracts and individual donors. During her career she has also worked for the Heritage Lottery Fund, BBC Children in Need and the Department for Education.

To reserve a place email mhugh@edwalton.notts.sch.uk.

Our Eco Hub' Members 2012 - 13

School	Eco Coordinator	Phone No.
Albany Junior, Stapleford, Nottingham	Sue Ellis	0115 9176550
Alderman Pounder Infant, Chilwell, Nottingham	Rosemarie Hardman	0115 9252928
Archbishop Cranmer Primary, Aslockton	Sue Jackson	01949 850627
Bentinck Primary School, Nottingham	Sophie Chambers	0115 9151567
Berridge Junior School, Nottingham	Louise Mercer	0115 9155813
Buckminster Primary School, Grantham	Rebecca Longley	01476 860315
Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery, Hucknall	Johanna Castle,	0115 9525904
Carnarvon Primary School, Bingham	Rose Pigula	01949 838246
Cobden Primary School, Loughborough	Maira Rayment	01509 263485
Edwalton Primary School, Nottingham	Hugh McCahon	0115 9144221
Fernwood Infant School, Nottingham	Jo McLaughlin	0115 9155727
Hawthorne Primary, Bestwood Village	Nicola O'Regan	0115 9271544
Henry Whipple Primary, Nottingham	Lorna Weightman	0115 9155723
Heymann Primary, West Bridgford	Sue Jenkins	0115 9145035
Horsendale Primary School, Nuthall	Karen Jagger	0115 9132331
Jesse Gray Primary, West Bridgford	Sarah Law	0115 9748002
Larkfields Junior, Nuthall, Nottingham	Karen Rea	0115 9194343
Pinewood Infant, Arnold, Nottingham	Jane Chambers	0115 9521717
Priory Junior, Gedling, Nottingham	Liz Slade	0115 9526100
Radcliffe-on-Trent Junior, Nottingham	Julie Ward	0115 9110193
Redlands Primary and Nursery, Worksop	Kathryn Dodd	01909 473655
Richard Bonington Primary, Arnold, Nottingham	Katie Wilson	0115 9558831
Round Hill Primary School, Beeston	Emily Flavell	0115 9179262
Scalford C of E Primary, Melton Mowbray	Kerry Hill	01664 444282
Seagrave Primary, Strelley, Nottingham	Paul Blyth	0115 8845913
St Mary's C of E Primary, Melton Mowbray	Katie Ford	01664 562500
St Peter's C of E Primary, East Bridgford	Jo Archer	01949 20226
St Peter's C of E Primary, Farndon, Newark	Lynn Sedgwick	01636 680360
The Grove Primary, Melton Mowbray	Cath McGrath	01664 56554
The Priory Catholic Academy, Eastwood	Katherine Poulson	01773 535154
West Bridgford Junior School, Nottingham	James Cunningham	0115 9140201