

# Monitoring and Evaluating

## Why, What, How

You've come up with lots of ideas of things within the 10 TOPIC AREAS you can make improvements through your ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW. You've discussed and decided on your favourite targets (across 3 topics) and put them into your ACTION PLAN. Now, as you put your action plan into practice, you need to see if it's working, if you're making a difference! Because that's the whole point!!

### Why?

If we didn't monitor the progress of our action plan targets, then we'll never be quite sure the extent of the good work we've achieved. It's always good to be able to back up our case with facts and figures. Armed with this information, we can celebrate our achievements and make a case for further improvements.

### What?

**Monitoring** is the act of keeping a record of something happening.

**Evaluation** is when the information collected is discussed and conclusions are reached.

Both are as important as each other and go hand in hand as part of the Eco-Schools process.



#### What monitoring and evaluation is:

- Gathering information in order to find out what is the impact of your action
- Comparing before and after
- Can be quantifiable (data, graphs, hard facts!)
- Can be subjective (questionnaires, opinions, quotes)
- Keeping a record of on-going actions to make sure they're continuing and on track



#### What it is not:

- Just photographing that something has happened
- Checking something is happening, without comparing it to how it used to happen



### How?

Monitoring is something you need to plan ahead, before starting your action/target/activity. This is key, since you need to be comparing how things used to be, with how they are now. The method you use to monitor your action plan targets will depend on what it is, and the ability of your pupils. For some actions, it will be possible to collect data, figures and create graphs. For others, it will be more a case of gathering opinions. In other instances, you will be able to project your impact by making calculations based on assumptions.

### Data Zone

For your Green Flag Application, we have provided a Data Zone to help schools with this step. We hope you will find this to be a useful monitoring tool and a good way to share the information collected with the whole school both to highlight successes and any unexpected results too!

Furthermore, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful will share the results of the data collected from all our Eco-Schools in order to show the combined impact of all the great work.

Eco-Schools Northern Ireland is operated by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and supported by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs