

# JOINT CLIMATE NEWSLETTER

St Mary's College, Naas, Ireland (SMCN, class 2j, 2019/2020)

Haags Montessori Lyceum, the Hague, the Netherlands (students of HML EU master, 2019/2020)

*The Joint Climate Newsletter is the result of our joint effort: students from an Irish school and students from a Dutch school researched the current environmental practice of their respective schools, with special focus on climate. We noted down what we do well and what we could improve. Students reacted to each other's findings; their texts are combined in this newsletter.*

## GOOD PRACTICES AT OUR SCHOOLS – What is already done at our schools to help the environment?

### Good practice at St Mary's College Naas – Ireland:

#### What we do right:

- ✓ We allow easy walkways and cycling to encourage people to cycle instead of driving.
- ✓ Our canteen plates are recyclable once removed of all dirt.
- ✓ Our canteen only sells water in 100% recyclable cardboard and taps that are accessible to everyone to encourage people to reuse bottles.
- ✓ We have a green schools committee that are very involved in getting our school to the highest standard it can achieve in climate action. They are extremely into including the entire student body in their ideas.
- ✓ We always attempt reparation of chairs, desks etc.
- ✓ We have a green school's flag that we have earned. (pictured below).
- ✓ We use biodegradable forks and knives.



Green school's flag of SMCN school in Ireland

<https://greenschoolsireland.org/>

## GOOD PRACTICES AT HAAGS MONTESSORI LYCEUM, the Netherlands:

### SOLAR PANELS

We have solar panels at our school. We have in total 21 solar panels. We create are one electricity whit the panels. In the science classroom you can see a meter and on that meter you see how much energy we have collected. Solar panels contain metal and it takes a lot of energy to extract, purify and process that metal from the earth's crust into solar panels. The factory where solar panels are made also uses a lot of energy. The transport from the factory (in China?) To the Netherlands causes extra CO2 emissions.

Even before the solar panel has generated one kilowatt hour of electricity, it has caused CO2 emissions comparable to 4000 kg of coal. But how long does it take before the CO2 emissions (which occurred during production) are recouped? You have to use solar panels for a few years before you actually save energy.



### BEES

Here on the HML we have a bee hive. The students learn how to take care of bees, they do that with a teacher who knows a lot about the bees. We have them because it is good for the environment. The bees are very important because here in the Netherlands the bees are dying out, and without bees we can't live. In the summer the bees give honey. That is very important too, because they sell the honey in the school and all the money they earn goes to a charity.



### Eco garden

We have gardens at school and there we grow plants. Flowers are also planted and they are going to put them in the school. They do this to show the pupils who follow this subject how to care for plants and that it is good for the environment. It is a nice place to be if you love nature, and for the insects because they live in the plants and otherwise they would die.

### Eco master

With the Eco-master the intention is that they re-use materials, that is very important. And that they turn these materials into houses for different animals (for example, bird houses, hedgehog houses, etc.). Examples of the materials they use are scaffolding wood, wooden benches and more. They do it because they enjoy laying out gardens and building cozy, colorful houses to lure animals. They also make tasty and cozy food for the animals. They try to install as many ecological systems as possible, to develop animal diversity and to absorb as much CO2 as possible by plants. So that they can contribute to the climate in this way.



### LAPTOPS

The HML uses laptops and tablets. Because they don't want to use as much paper as other schools. Because if you use books for everything, that means you need to cut more trees down.

# WHAT COULD WE DO BETTER?

## SMCN – Ireland:

### What we do wrong:

- ✗ We have no solar panels.
- ✗ Most of our school population drives to school daily.
- ✗ We don't have a renewable source of energy.
- ✗ We tend to use printed notes rather than books we have bought.
- ✗ Little education on what we can and cannot put in the recycling bins.
- ✗ Even though it is banned in the school many still use plastic bottles.
- ✗ We don't exploit the technology we have access too often enough.



Separating waste – SMCN, Ireland

### HML - separating waste even better?

We at the HML separate waste for the environment. Nice idea to separate that waste, but how do you do it at home? There is actually a simple solution for that : this is a trash can that consists of several compartments.

### HML – not yet sustainable canteen?

In our canteen we have food of course, but that food isn't sustainable. That is because not sustainable is cheaper than sustainable food. We thought if we go to get our food from the organic market that would help to make our canteen sustainable. Also is it important to eat with seasons, because if we eat strawberry's in the winter they need to come from the other side of the world with the plane and that is bad for the global warming.



## SOME GREAT ACTIONS AT BOTH SCHOOLS

# HML

haags montessori lyceum

### CLOTHES SWAP - HML

The idea of a clothes swap is the reusing of clothes. Fast fashion is very bad for the environment. Two teachers organized a clothes swap. The swap went like this you had to bring 5 clothing pieces, and everyone did that and the you could pick 5 new clothing items.

And then you have 5 new clothing items with you really like and its good for the environment. So it's a win win situation.



Climate day, SMCN, Ireland

RE-USE, RE-CYCLE: sustainable fashion, clothes swap..."Something old has a chance to be gold"...



Climate Day – SMCN, Ireland

# HOW CAN WE MAKE IT BETTER? – YOUR OWN IDEA...

SMCN, Ireland - What we can do to improve this:

- ★ We can invest in automatic lights in areas where they are not there.
- ★ We should reuse the plastic and cardboard in the canteen.
- ★ We should encourage more people to cycle rather than driving.
- ★ We should educate people about what they can and can't put in recycling and compost bins.
- ★ We should invest more technology rather than wasting paper on notes.
- ★ We should have rental books instead of having to buy new textbooks annually.
- ★ Get higher quality laptops that are energy efficient.

## HML – ideas

### **From plastic to plants**

The students give their plastic bottles to us and we bring the bottles to the supermarket for deposit. From that money we buy plants for our classrooms or the garden.

### **Waterfilter**

Waterfilter

This idea is about collecting rainwater. So we can use that water instead of using energy to get fresh water. This barrel would be outside, so it could collect water properly. In the meantime we could organise a Master or a Bewijs (something we use in our school) that helps organising this. This also because we think there are a lot of students that would like to help with this kind of projects. This waterfilter should make us think differently about the fact that we have unlimited wateraccess.

## Conclusion – by SMCN, Ireland

In conclusion our party thinks that although our school has a long way to go before being environmentally friendly, we are heading in the right direction.

Many changes need to be made but raising money to fund those changes isn't easy and could take a further few years. We're hopeful to get more people involved in cycling, this would be very beneficial in achieving our goal of an environmentally friendly school.

SMCN

St Marys' Climate News

By 2J

## BONUS – about transport

### HOW WE GET TO SCHOOL

We randomly chose classes from different years to take part in our survey in order to get a small sample of how Saint Mary's students get to school:

Name of Class	1T/1U	2J/2L	3D (mixed art)	5B
Drive	13/18 total 31	2/12 total 14	10	13
Walk	5/6 total 11	11/4 total 15	4	6
Bus	7/10 total 17	8/12 total 20	1	3
Other	0/0 total 0	0/0 total 0	0	0
Total in class	25/34	21/28	15	22



#### Bicycle's part I

When talking about bicycle's we don't just talk about HML, we're actually talking about the whole country. But at HML we're really focused on giving everyone this chance. Besides the streets around here have been made safe so people can come more easily!

#### Bicycle's II

At HML, our school, we have a huge bicycle stand. This is because our school contains almost 1200 students and in The Netherlands almost everybody goes by bike. With this bicycle stand the school is encouraging students not to come by car or bus, but by bike. This is also why the school is in a place where there aren't many parking lots. There live too many people to have plenty of room for all of the students' parent's cars.

Bicycle's are good for the environment because:

Bike's don't emit any gasses. They don't emit nitrogen either. You can go for long distances, even distances that you'd normally take by car.

It's good for your own physical health, which also makes you want to take it rather than your bike.

*Contributions (texts and photographs) by:*

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*Both schools are members of European Parliament Ambassador School Programme (EPAS).*



