

# Eco Challenge News

Eco Challenge is funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund. Over the three years of the project Eco Challenge will support 7500 young people from 250 schools in England.



Autumn 09

To find out more visit:

[www.fsc-eco-challenge.org](http://www.fsc-eco-challenge.org)

Contact your project officer Jen Maywhort for more info and your password

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**Don't miss the chance to receive funding as part of this nationwide project.** Eco Challenge is entering its third and final year and there is still funding available in your region. 151 schools from 22 local authorities in England have received funding enabling around 3775 KS3 students to experience a residential course and follow up work in their local community. This newsletter gives examples of how students in your area have benefitted from the funding – why not get involved?

Find out more on the Eco Challenge website [www.fsc-eco-challenge.org](http://www.fsc-eco-challenge.org) including course dates for the residential. Your special school password and contact details for your project officer are on the letter accompanying this newsletter.

**Eco Challenge provides funding for a short residential course and three follow up sessions in the school grounds or local community space to help KS3 students**

- Improve personal and social development skills including increased self confidence, awareness of self and others, team skills and improved communication skills
- Increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of the natural environment
- Increase pride in local green spaces
- Increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of environmental and sustainable issues

Make sure your students don't miss out. Residential courses are available on a first come first served basis so don't hesitate - visit the website and book your course.

## HOW IS BLACKPOOL INVOLVED?

**BLACKPOOL is one of 22 local authorities Eco Challenge is working with and we are delighted that 50% of secondary schools are actively involved.** This newsletter gives you a snapshot of what they have been doing. We hope it will encourage your school to join in.

### Sitting on the opposite side of the bay...

Several schools ventured across Morecambe Bay for their residential trip to Castle Head Field Centre near Grange-over-Sands, where on a clear day you can see Blackpool Tower from the local hillside.

Students and staff alike from Bispham, Highfield and Collegiate High Schools had a memorable 3 days at Castle Head. Students were faced with personal challenges including mountain walks in the central Lake District fells to explore how humans have influenced the landscape over the centuries or splashing through a rushing mountain river to negotiate their way to the top while investigating how freshwater invertebrates survive in this hostile habitat.



Bispham students – fire lighting in the shelter of the veranda on a stormy day!

Students also worked with Centre staff to implement the Site Habitat Management Plan getting stuck into a variety of tasks including coppicing, tree planting, fencing and footpath building. The finale was a team challenge with survival tasks to 'win' kit to make their own shelters and to build and light a fire from scratch to make a brew.

### Roaming Blackpool with the Rangers...

On return to school, students will be working with the Blackpool Council Ranger team to transform community areas into wildlife havens and improve the schools' sustainability practices. Students from Bispham High are the first to complete their sessions thoroughly enjoying planting over 100 trees in Moor Park and then back at school learning about composting and building their own bins where you can watch the stages of decomposition!



Bispham students – very proud of their compost bin!

*'I have really enjoyed working with the Rangers – especially the tree planting. They have all been really helpful and friendly and have taught us a lot about the environment. It is important to make people aware of the environmental threats faced by people on earth.'*

Y9 student, Bispham High

## Still not convinced? – here's what people who have taken part say



*'Some students were convinced at the beginning that they would not survive until the end, but were proved wrong and were very proud of their achievement'* Tutors commenting about students participating in the adventure challenge



*'I liked the tree planting because it makes you feel like you're doing your part for the local community. It was quite fun running around Moor Park – I think planting 105 trees in about an hour is a school record, don't you? Having an Eco-Group is critically important because school can be a quite wasteful place and I think its up to us to sort it out. It makes you feel like you're giving the polar bear a helping hand – what more could a 14 year old want?'*  
Y9 student, Bispham High School



*'We have set up an 'Eco-group' within school made up of students who came on the course. Students are far more cooperative and excellent relationships have been built between students and staff'*  
Lead teacher, Bispham High School



*The group was made up of a mixture of boys and girls, and for the first time, a mixture of year groups. This, I feel was one of the trips greatest successes, as older pupils looked out for the more vulnerable younger ones and this led to a supportive, relaxed and hard-working ethos'.*

Teacher, Newall Green High School, Manchester

### North West

**There are 151 schools currently involved in the Eco Challenge project. These schools are involved in your region – why not join them?**

**Blackpool:** Collegiate High School, St Mary's Catholic High School, Bispham High School, Highfield High School

**Halton:** Fairfield High School, Wade Deacon High

**Knowsley:** Halewood College, Kirby Sports College, Knowsley Park Centre for Learning, Knowsley Hey School, Ruffwood Community School, St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

**Liverpool:** Calderstones School, Croxteth Community Comprehensive School, Fazakerley High School, New Heys Comprehensive School, North Liverpool Academy, Notre Dame Catholic High School, Parklands High School, St Julies Catholic High School, St Margaret's C of E High School, The Academy of St Francis of Assisi, The Alsop High School, Archbishop Blanch Church of England (V A) High School, Broadgreen High School, Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, Childwall Sports College, De La Salle Catholic High School, Holly Lodge Girl's School, St Benedict's College, St John Bosco High School, West Derby School

**Manchester:** Loreto High School, Parklands High School, St Matthew's RC High School Manchester, St Paul's Catholic High School, St Peter's RC High School, Burnage Media Arts College, Chorlton High School, Levenshulme High School, Newall Green High School, Whalley Range 11-18 High School

**Salford:** Harrop Fold School, Wentworth High School, Hope High School, Irlam and Cadishead Community High School

### Get involved...

Our website has all the information you need [www.fsc-eco-challenge.org](http://www.fsc-eco-challenge.org) or alternatively contact one of the Eco Challenge team for more information on 01743 852108 or email [ecochallenge@field-studies-council.org](mailto:ecochallenge@field-studies-council.org).

*Remember to contact your Project Officer – Jen Maywhort for your school's unique password to log on to the website*

**[www.fsc-eco-challenge.org](http://www.fsc-eco-challenge.org)**

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