

## Berrings National School Scoops Top Prize in Nationwide Water Conservation Challenge



Berrings National School from Berrings County Cork has been announced as the National Water Explorer Programme Winner 2016 in an innovative online water conservation initiative organised by the charity **Global Action Plan**. The **Water Explorer programme** focuses on pupils aged **8-14 years** in developing their understanding of how water affects lives, and how they can develop practical ideas to protect and save water in school communities. **Pupils from Berrings National School took home a €300 cash prize and a specially-commissioned trophy and framed certificate following an awards ceremony held at the Axis Theatre in Ballymun, Dublin.** The award honours the pupils for their outstanding efforts across the whole programme in taking action to protect and conserve our fresh water and for excelling in the areas of awareness raising and community outreach. Last school year, Berrings National School saved a total of 1858 litres of water through their activities—an outstanding achievement. Global Action Plan is Ireland's leading environmental charity spearheading education for sustainable development in communities across the country. The Water Explorer project, supported by the HSBC Water Programme, is part of an international initiative involving 11 countries.



Pupils from Berrings National School in Cork, receiving their award with Alan Duffy, CEO of HSBC and Duncan Stewart, Water Explorer Ambassador.

**Teacher Maryellen O'Driscoll, from Berrings National School, says the pupils are thrilled to receive the accolade.**

*"Our Water Explorer Journey has been action packed and the students have learnt a huge amount about water conservation and global water issues. By taking part in the programme, not only have we found ways to reduce our water footprint at school, but pupils have also spread that knowledge far and wide into their homes and the local community. The programme is a great balance of project based learning, competition and fun, and we would highly recommend it to other schools in the area."*

**Leading environmentalist and ambassador for Global Action Plan's Water Explorer programme, Duncan Stewart, congratulated the pupils:**

*"I want to say a big 'well done' to the pupils of Berrings National School and their teacher Maryellen O'Driscoll on their fantastic achievement. They have set a wonderful example for all of us to follow in recognising the importance of water conservation and taking personal responsibility in making every drop count. The truth is that, without water, there is no life. Millions of poor people's health are now being severely impacted by water-stress, air and water pollution. Worse still, is the millions of most vulnerable in the Developing World, who are now being severely stressed or dying each year, caused by us in the Rich World, in our burning of coal, peat, oil and gas for our energy use in power, heat and transport. That is why we need to act now. By each of us making our own small but vital contribution, together we can make a big difference to the world in which we live."*

**Vanessa Moore, Chief Executive, Global Action Plan, praised the pupils in becoming a new generation of water-conscious citizens:**

*"Access to clean water is one of the most urgent problems of our time. As water explorers, pupils at Berrings National School have seen for themselves the importance and value of water and have undergone a process of personal discovery around this precious resource. We are so proud for what they have achieved and for being leaders among their peers in championing the importance of water to life as we know it and the need to preserve it for future generations. Of course schools can get involved next year in our Water Explorer 2016/17 programme and I would strongly encourage schools who want to follow in their footsteps, to sign up today at [www.waterexplorer.ie](http://www.waterexplorer.ie)."*

The Water Explorer project sees schools actively engaging with local communities and collaborating with other schools both nationally and internationally—as far as Bermuda and South Africa. Schools have the opportunity to host Water Festivals as well as undertake activities such as producing water fashion shows and performing raps about water conservation. Leading schools will also have the opportunity to win digital cameras and receive water workshops from experts, with the top five schools shortlisted to attend an award ceremony in Dublin where a national winner will be announced.

## Did You Know? Some Fascinating Water Facts!

- **Addicted to fashion?** It takes 2,700 litres to make 1 cotton shirt, 8,000 litres to make 1 pair of shoes and a whopping 10,850 litres of water to make 1 pair of jeans
- **Not so tasty burger?** It takes 2,400 litres of water to make just 1 burger
- **More than a caffeine hit?** Incredibly, it takes 130 litres to make a cup of coffee and 30 litres a cup of tea. Even a glass of drinking water takes up to 2 litres to treat before it comes through a tap
- **Boss wants a paperless office?** No wonder with every 1 sheet of A4 paper costing 10 litres of water to make
- **Smiling not so brightly?** Brushing your teeth with the tap on uses approximately 6 litres of water a minute
- **Feeling flush?** Every time you utilise the toilet, you use approximately 10 litres of water
- **Not so revitalising?** Spending a long 8 minutes in the shower? That's 62 litres trickling away. Prefer to soak in a bath? That's 80 litres down the drain.

