

## Laudato Si' Schools Scotland

**Laudato Si' Schools Scotland** aims to meet the Holy Father's goal of creating an *Ecological Education* within our schools. It is being launched as part of the Scottish Catholic Education Service, SCIAF and Justice & Peace Scotland's response to the special anniversary year marking the 5th anniversary of the encyclical.

**Laudato Si' Schools** is an invitation to all schools to respond to the call to be stewards of God's creation. The Holy Father challenges us to do this in his encyclical and his global compact on education during 2020.

**Part three: CHANGE FOR GOOD** involves schools sharing how schools are meeting Pope Francis' challenge, including the ways in which schools are creating good habits (making the changes sustainable). As a school you will identify your current practice; create a plan to build upon and sustain your commitment; grow the capacity of your school community; share your story and celebrate the impact you are having.

Schools move through the "CHANGE FOR GOOD" steps of **Laudato Si' Schools** at their own pace. As this is a pledge and not an award, you are not trying to 'finish', but rather change the culture of your school. Schools should plan to work through the steps of **Laudato Si' Schools** over a number of years.

**Laudato Si' Schools** will use the 5 challenge questions as a guide. The pages that follow give ideas and suggestions of how to record and report on your progress.



As you work through each step, you will be able to mark your progress and build your **Laudato Si' Schools** wall display, covering the questions with a quote from the Pope each time that you move on to the next step.

When you have explored a question, you are asked to send an update to SCES. This will be used to share ideas and good practice with other **Laudato Si' Schools**. Being a **Laudato Si' School** is a commitment to change the culture and habits within your school, therefore the update to SCES is not to 'assess' if you have successfully "changed for good", but to share your progress with the Catholic education community in Scotland.

## Ideas for working through the “Change for Good” steps:

### EXAMPLE 1. WHOLE SCHOOL – STEP BY STEP (OVER 7 YEARS)

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We took one step per year over a 5 year period. We first looked at the school holistically, thinking of all that we currently do. Each year we would pose the “step question” to classes and year groups, to the pupil and parent council, to teachers and staff and to community partners. We recorded our answers and collated them to show what we discovered. We then used these answers as the spring board and evidence for the next step. We sent an update to SCES each year. (From year three onward -see below the update that we sent).

#### YEAR ONE:

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We registered for Laudato Si' Schools and held our prayer service of commitment in November.

We then chose three of the placemat activities from part two: Learn, Pray, Act, to introduce the message of Laudato Si' to the school.

#### YEAR TWO:

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In year two we chose one of the quotes and every class completed some learning, prayer and action linked to this quote. We chose another placemat activity for our school and also one to consider at cluster level. Pupils and staff were now familiar with being a Laudato Si' School and were aware of some of the reasons it was important for us as a Catholic school to learn, pray and act.

#### YEAR THREE: STEP ONE – WHAT ARE WE DOING?

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We re-made our commitment to be a Laudato Si' School during Catholic Education Week. We asked every member of our school community to make a list of all the things we are already doing through our learning, prayer times and faith action to love God, love our neighbour and love our world.

Once we had the lists our pupil council created a #ChangeForGood chart, listing all we were doing. We listed these according to how many times it had been mentioned. We put our chart up in the gym hall during Lent. For the rest of the school year, whenever we did something linked to our chart, we took a photo, or wrote a note and added it to the wall.

In June we looked at everything we had said and done and celebrated our success during our school award ceremony.

## YEAR FOUR: STEP TWO – WHAT MORE CAN WE DO?

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Our new pupil council looked at all of the things we had been doing to see if there were any things that everyone COULD do, but not everyone WAS doing. They then looked at the items at the bottom of our chart, that had been identified as going on in the school, but very few were doing them.

The pupil council made a plan based on the things that everyone could do. They identified two things – daily prayer and daily good habits – and challenged the whole school to do them. Now, our morning prayer always ends with an adapted version of Pope Francis' prayer from *Laudato Si'*:

God, thank you for being with us each day  
 help us remember you are present in the whole universe,  
 help us protect life,  
 help us live as brothers and sisters, harming no one,  
 help us look after the poor,  
 help us create beauty not pollution,  
 help us care for every creature,  
 Teach us to be thankful for your creation and to build a world of justice, peace  
 love and beauty

The pupil council also thought that reducing food and water waste were two daily good habits everyone could do. We made posters of the most common ways to stop wasting food and water and put these around the school, on our social media platforms and in our newsletter.

We used the SCIAF resources on water to help focus our learning during Lent. At an assembly our school community made a pledge to stop wasting food and water.

## YEAR FIVE: STEP THREE - HOW CAN WE MAINTAIN THIS?

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We invited in a guest from the council to talk about sustainability and asked for advice on ways to keep our commitment to not waste food and water. We decided to buy water butts, to collect rain water, to use on our school garden. We also looked at reducing portions in the school dinner hall, giving pupils the chance to go for a second helping if they were still hungry, rather than giving everyone a big portion that they may not finish.

### YEAR SIX: STEP FOUR – HOW CAN WE SHARE THIS?

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During each step we always shared our progress with the school community using social media platforms and the school newsletter. To add to this sharing we decided to work as a cluster as our cluster schools are all Laudato Si' Schools too. We have all been working on different ideas and actions so we decided to dedicate one of the twilight CLPL sessions to sharing good practice. Each school made a presentation of their progress across the 3 steps, so far. In groups we then talked through the positives we had gained and the challenges we had faced. Each school then decided which ideas they would want to take on board.

We decided that it would also be important to share the good news of what we were doing with the local community. During Catholic Education Week we used our time with our local parishes to tell them what we had been doing. Our pupils also wrote articles for the local press – these told the story of how they had been learning, praying and acting on the Pope's words and also of how we were slowly changing our habits in school.

### YEAR SEVEN: STEP FIVE – WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

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We looked at the measurable aspects of what we had done but also talked to pupils and staff about how the changes had made them feel. We have decreased the food waste in the dinner hall by 60% and we are working on ways to reduce that further. We now only use recycled water for our school garden. Our parent council helped us to buy reusable water bottles for every pupil in the school and we no longer have single use water bottles anywhere on school grounds. Pupils only fill their water bottles half way now too, as we found that many were emptying water out when they wanted to refresh their water to cold water.

Our pupil council did a survey to find out how people felt about the changes. There was an overwhelmingly positive response with pupils, parents and staff saying they felt "happier" "responsible", "positive change" and "just part of the school now".

## EXAMPLE TWO: WHOLE SCHOOL – HOLISTIC APPROACH (ACTIVITY)

We chose one quote each year and looked at all 5 steps holistically.

### EXAMPLE YEAR:

We chose quote 10 from the Pope's letter as the focus for the whole school.

**"Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to create larger strategies to stop environmental poverty and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society." (#231)**

PSE and RE classes used the resource cards to learn, pray and act on this quote.

We made a list of what already happens within the school (the "little everyday gestures"). We used the tag line #CultureOfCare and asked each PSE class to take one school activity that is already working and use the 5 steps to think about how well the action is working and ways to make it sustainable. Our aim was to put the Pope's words into action and create larger strategies for each of the small everyday gestures so that we could share them with others and permeate our whole school, our parish and local community.

An example from one of our classes was school fundraising and charity work.

### Step 1. What are we doing?

They noticed that we do a lot of charity work in a year, especially during Lent. They made a calendar of all the activities that happened in the school year and noticed that some were about bringing in money, like the sponsored walk and the SCIAF wee box. Others were about collecting or re-distributing things, like the shoebox appeal and food bank donations. Then there were other things that were about using gifts and talents, like singing in the old folks homes and making Christmas cards to send to the P7s who would be coming to the school next year.

Their calendar showed that there were almost 100 different charity events in the one year and that most of the work was to benefit the poorest people in our world.

### Step 2. What more can we do?

The class didn't want to add more "events" to the charity calendar and thought that it would be better to think about what more the school could do with what was already there.

They realised that for some pupils taking part in charity events was difficult, because they didn't have a lot themselves. They also saw that there were some activities that were repeated a lot, some that took a lot of effort but did not have much impact and some that only certain groups could join in with. On the other hand, there were some charitable activities that were more about building community and having fun than raising cash, some that had a big impact but cost nothing – like the monthly litter pick, and some that might seem boring to pupils but were loved by the community – like the parish advent service.

The class decided to make a proposal that all ideas for charitable events should link to one of the Laudato Si' goals set out by the Pope.

**Step 3. How can we maintain this?**

The class created a short questionnaire and gave it to all of the teachers, pupils or parents that organised each charitable activity in their year group. The questionnaire asked which of the Laudato Si' goals the event helped the school achieve. From the returns they were able to collate good ideas to share with other year groups.

**Step 4. How can we share this?**

They took this to the whole school pupil council and made a presentation. It was agreed that from now on, all school charitable activities should use this questionnaire as part of the planning to make sure that they were all helping us be a Laudato Si' School.

**Step 5. What is the impact?**

Now all of our school community have a better understanding of why we have certain charity events, and everyone knows how they link to our pledge to love God, look after others and care for our planet.

*Remember the examples above and the blank template tables that follow are illustrations. You can use one of those examples, some, all or none when creating a format that best fits your school .*

Samples, Ideas for recording and reporting table format/proformas:

	Pupils	Teachers	Parents	Whole School Community	Parish and wider Community
1	What are we doing?				
2	What more will we do?				
3	How will we maintain this?				
4	How will we share this?				
5	What is the impact?				

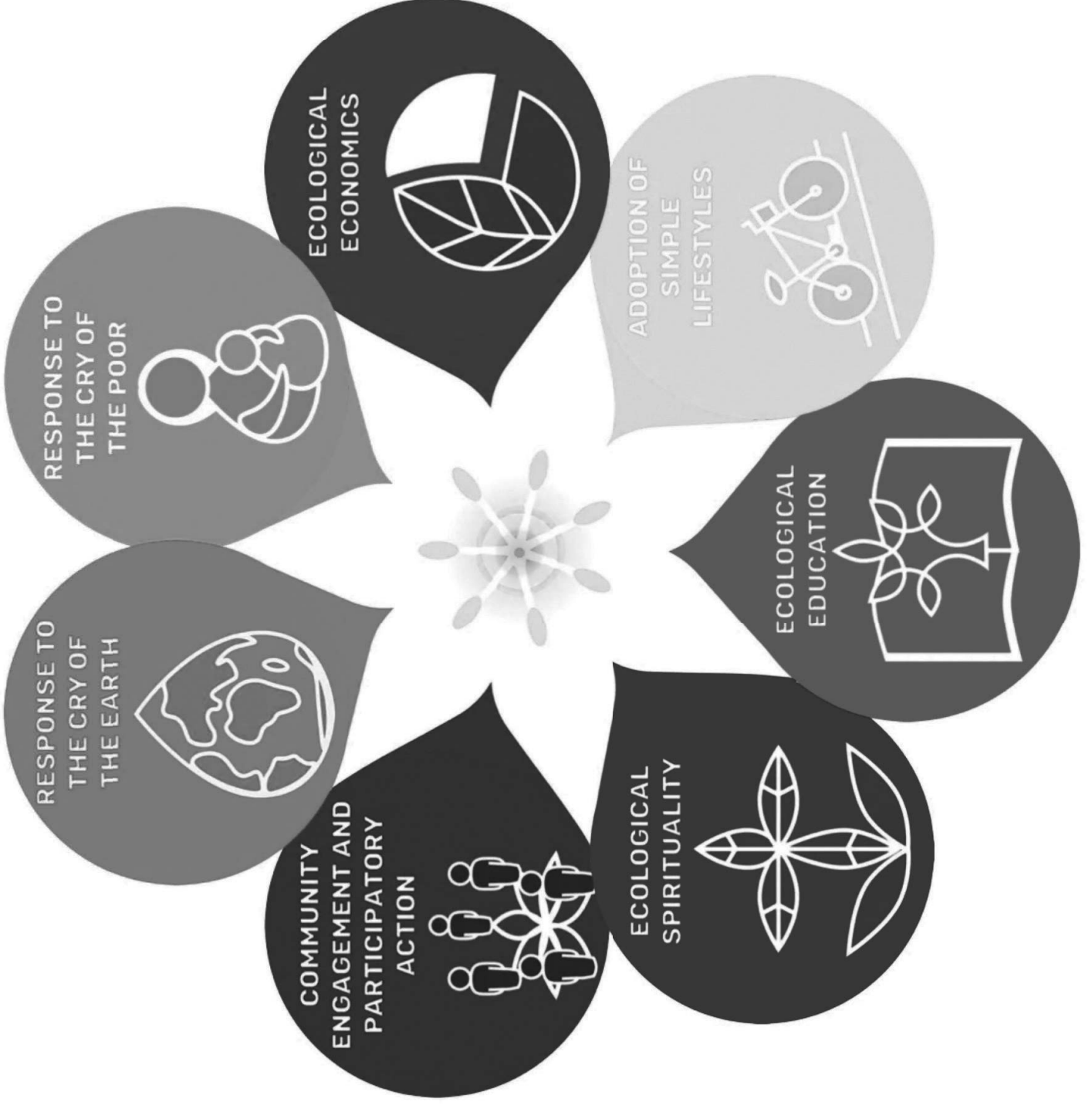
What are we doing?

What more will we do?

How will we maintain this?

How will we share this?

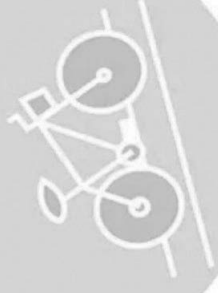
What is the impact?



ECOLOGICAL  
ECONOMICS



ADOPTION OF  
SIMPLE  
LIFESTYLES



ECOLOGICAL  
EDUCATION



ECOLOGICAL  
SPIRITUALITY



COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT AND  
PARTICIPATORY  
ACTION



RESPONSE TO  
THE CRY OF  
THE POOR



RESPONSE TO  
THE CRY OF  
THE EARTH





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