

**Ours to Protect, 23<sup>RD</sup> May: Carlow Educate Together have won the 2024 Nature Hero Award.**

**The Nature Hero Award is Ireland's largest outdoor learning award across the education sector.** It is a mark of excellence for a school that recognises exceptional work by young people and teachers to help nature.

The aim of the achievement is to create an educational space that nurtures a love of nature, develops a knowledge of our biodiversity and encourages action to help it locally. It covers many topics from nature conservation to school gardening, ecoliteracy to responsible citizenship as well as physical and mental wellbeing. While it is primarily an award of participation, there's also some great prizes to be won too!

The award is open to preschools, primary schools, secondary schools within the Republic of Ireland.

WHAT DO WE ACHIEVE? Every successful school will receive a sustainably-made, Irish, wooden **Nature Hero Award plaque** - the mark of excellence for schools in outdoor learning.

One lucky school will win an overall prize of a school garden upgrade worth up to **€10,000**, courtesy of Glenveagh Homes. This will be awarded to a school demonstrating an outstanding contribution to outdoor learning.

Renewal schools will receive smaller, satellite plaques to recognise the maintenance of standards each year.

HOW DO WE GET INVOLVED? It's very simple! Just follow the steps below and start completing tasks in your own time. Projects include tasks such as hanging bird nest boxes to ensuring outdoor teaching time each week. You might have done some already, that's ok! You can do it as quickly or as slowly as you like. The process launches each September and closes each March. Schools will be awarded before the summer break. We have space for 300 schools this year.

Find more information here:

<https://www.biodiversityinschools.com/nature-hero-awards.html>