

Case study:

## Secondary schools: bringing together all the key elements to succeed in an energy saving project.

### Summary of the project/activity

The SEACS project aims to test and experiment with new ways to engage and raise awareness of saving energy among schoolchildren.

The Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor is responsible for 47 secondary schools. It only manages the buildings. The people in charge of management and maintenance are employed by the Conseil Général. The teaching staff, on the other hand, are a matter of the state, and there is no hierarchical link between the headteacher and the teachers. The Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor has a long-term investment programme for secondary schools. To work on energy saving within the framework of the SEACS project, the decision was made to work with secondary schools undergoing building work during the 2012-2013 academic year (to avoid frustration among the teaching staff) and to call for a show of interest from these secondary schools. 9 establishments were contacted and attended the presentation meeting. 6 completed an application and 4 were selected based on objective and political criteria (territorial equity).

### Project objectives

#### General objectives

- To raise awareness of energy issues among the pupils.
- To measure the energy consumption of the buildings.
- To organise exchanges between English and French secondary schools.

### Methodology/approach

An initial meeting took place with the teams of teaching staff involved in the project. During this meeting, they were shown a presentation on the energy consumption of their building and they were provided with small items of equipment (power meters, recording thermometers, hygrometers, luxmeters, small power meters, etc.) to enable the pupils to carry out an initial survey.

The audiences from the 4 secondary schools were very different:

- Collège de Belle Isle en Terre: science club run by a mathematics teacher, 12 pupils, weekly meetings between noon and 2pm, pupils aged 13-15 years. Newly renovated secondary school.

- Collège de Callac: time set aside for the two classes of 13-14 year olds (40 pupils) on Monday mornings. Secondary school undergoing building work

- Collège de Saint Briec (Léonard de Vinci): no time set aside, Year 9 class for the first phase. SEGPA (*Section d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel Adapté* - Adapted General and Vocational Education Sections) class: 20 pupils for the second phase. Secondary school undergoing building work.

- Collège de Plouagat: science club run by a mathematics teacher, 12 pupils, weekly meetings, pupils aged 11-12 years. New secondary school.

In November 2012, some secondary schools signed up to the Switch Off week. The teachers met regularly with the Climate-Energy Ambassador to discuss the progress of the work with the pupils.



During the first term of 2012, the SEACS partners developed an educational toolkit based on the Energy House. At the end of 2013, a training session was held to get a feel for this tool. Only two secondary schools participated in this session. Following this, the kit was delivered to the four secondary schools.

These two secondary schools presented their work to the general public and to other classes during the sustainable development week in April 2013.

In June, pupils from these same two secondary schools travelled to England where they were able to meet their English counterparts.



In October 2013, a teachers' seminar took place in Devon to present the work and tools, and to forge links. Only the two secondary schools that were fully engaged in the project travelled to this seminar. Following on from this, some teachers who had moved schools wanted to set up a project in their new secondary schools.

For Saint Briec secondary school, which is situated in an area undergoing urban renewal, the pupils chose to raise awareness by producing a short film, which was shown during open days in February 2014.

Finally, to ensure that the kit will continue to be used following the project, a training course has been planned for representatives of the Sustainable Development Establishments.

#### Tools used:

Secondary schools were recruited by means of a questionnaire which enables the objective selection criteria to be identified. The two secondary schools which scored the most points on this questionnaire were actually the ones who became the most involved in the project.

Small measurement instruments were provided, such as power meters, recording thermometers/hygrometers, luxmeters and small power meters.

Tools such as questionnaires for auditing, for evaluating awareness among pupils and for measuring the commitment of the whole establishment towards energy issues (matrix) were not used by the teaching staff, as they preferred to use their own tools.

The Energy House toolkit was used by technology teachers.

The film was made in collaboration with a neighbourhood association which specialises in raising awareness among children through video.

#### How was the project managed?

The Climate and Energy Ambassador acted as a facilitator for the completion of projects within the secondary schools: visits, provision of tools, trips to England, etc.

The project was entirely managed by the teachers. For one secondary school, the headteacher offered strong support

and was present at all of the different meetings.

#### How much did the project cost and how was it financed?

As part of the SEACS project, 50% of the project was financed by the ERDF and 50% by the Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor.

Design and production of four Energy House toolkits: model, insulation toolkit, games toolkit, creation of educational worksheets (modifiable), design of the worksheets: €5,800

Small items of equipment for the four secondary schools: €3,000.

Production of the film with an association: €1,700

Trip to England for two groups of 16 children: 2 x €1,200.

#### What have we learned from this project?

The selection of the secondary schools is essential for the success of a project. It must be based on subjective criteria: teaching time set aside for the project and commitment of all the staff, such as the headteacher, teachers, and administrative staff.

The French teachers found it difficult to report back on their teaching activities, which cause problems for the management of a notably European project.

The materials that were loaned out were not returned.

It was difficult to forge links with English secondary schools. Arranging a meeting between teachers from the two countries right at the start could be a way to initiate the partnership.

If the teaching staff are motivated, and if teaching time is set aside to work on the projects, this could be truly successful.



#### Contact details for further information.

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