



Cliffoney National School

Sustainability Policy Statement

All public service bodies are required under the Climate Action Plan to adhere to the Public Service Climate Action Mandate – and to develop Climate Action Roadmaps setting out how they will deliver on their energy efficiency and emission reduction targets.

The second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030 also informs the content of the following Sustainability Policy Statement template.

ESD aims to ensure that “by 2030, all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”. (Sustainable Development Goal 4.7)

The following has been prepared as part of the School Sector Climate Action Mandate, and in keeping with the principles and themes of ESD to 2030, and has been accepted by the Board of Management of our school.

Purpose

The purpose of this Sustainability Policy Statement (“the Statement”) is to outline how our school promotes sustainability and climate action, through our actions and activities. Sustainability can be defined as the ability to exist and develop without depleting natural resources for the future.

Scope

Sustainability is a community issue and applies to all students, teachers and employees of our school. Parents and guardians should note, and where possible, promote, the Statement. The Board of Management of the school will ensure that decisions made in respect of the school align with the Statement.

Vision, mission and values

Our school’s vision is to empower young minds to become responsible stewards of the planet by fostering a culture of environmental sustainability and respect for nature.

Our school’s mission is to integrate sustainable practices into every aspect of our school community. We strive to:

- 1. Educate students about environmental issues and solutions.*
- 2. Promote sustainable behaviours through hands-on learning and community projects.*
- 3. Collaborate with parents, local organisations, and stakeholders to create a greener future.*

Our school’s values:

We are committed to the following values in our pursuit of sustainability:

- 1. Respect for Nature: We encourage students to appreciate and protect the natural world.*
- 2. Responsibility: We teach students to take personal and collective responsibility for their environmental impact.*
- 3. Innovation: We foster creativity and problem-solving skills to develop new sustainable practices.*
- 4. Community: We believe in the power of working together to achieve common environmental goals.*
- 5. Lifelong Learning: We inspire a continuous quest for knowledge and improvement in sustainable living.*

By embedding these principles into our curriculum and daily activities, we aim to cultivate a generation that is knowledgeable, passionate, and proactive about sustainability. Our policy aligns with the following SDG goals : 1,2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 17. It particularly aligns with the SDG Goals of: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, Life on Land, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Climate Action, Good Health and Wellbeing, and Quality Education

Whole School Approach to Sustainability

- Our school has adopted this Sustainability Policy Statement. It clearly details the aims and objectives of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in our school, its relationship to the vision and mission of the school.
- Our school recognises Education for Sustainable Development as a cross-curricular theme, and this is co-ordinated effectively in our school through whole school planning.
- Opportunities are identified to introduce and address sustainability in the classroom, across all subjects with workshops from visiting experts for staff and students.
- Resources to assist in the teaching of sustainability are adequate and sufficient at all levels. We have used funding to purchase high quality resources for our school including a polytunnel to grow fruit and vegetables.
- Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network (www.ISSN.ie)
- Our school keeps up to date with developments in ESD including by being registered for the quarterly ESD Newsletter <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/a1d6e-education-for-sustainable-development-newsletter/>

Environmental sustainability

Green-Schools is an international environmental education programme, offering a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of their school.

- Our school is part of the Green Schools Programme. Our school was awarded the Litter and Waste, Energy, Travel flags and we are currently working on our Biodiversity flag.
- Our school has a Green Team comprising staff and students whose role is to promote sustainability and environmental awareness within the educational community. Its primary responsibilities and roles include:
 - Integrate environmental education into the school curriculum.
 - Organize workshops, seminars, and activities to raise awareness about environmental issues among students, staff, and parents.
 - Implement and manage recycling programs, waste reduction strategies, and energy-saving measures within the school.
 - Promote the use of sustainable resources and practices, such as using recycled materials and reducing plastic usage.
 - Develop and maintain green spaces in the school, such as gardens.
 - Encourage biodiversity by planting native species and creating habitats for local wildlife.
 - Formulate and enforce policies that support sustainable practices, such as reducing water and energy consumption.

- Develop guidelines for environmentally friendly behaviour and ensure compliance among the school community.
- Regularly assess the environmental impact of the school's activities and operations.
- Monitor progress towards sustainability goals and adjust strategies as needed.
- Engage with the local community and other schools to share best practices and collaborate on environmental projects.
- Establish partnerships with environmental organizations, government bodies, and businesses to support green initiatives e.g. Irish Schools Sustainability Network
- Encourage student participation in environmental projects and decision-making processes through the Green School Committee.
- Foster leadership skills among students by involving them in the planning and execution of green initiatives.
- Aim to achieve recognition and awards for the school's commitment to sustainability through Green School Flags
- Ensure that environmental practices contribute to a healthy and safe school environment.
- Promote practices that enhance the physical and mental well-being of students and staff, such as outdoor activities and access to green spaces.
- By fulfilling these roles, the Green School Committee helps create a more sustainable and environmentally responsible educational institution, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship among future generations.
- Our school engages with Heritage in Schools in the area of sustainable development
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling policy in place, and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.
- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning in our school garden and our outdoor classroom
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity through the willow dome, plants, trees, bird feeders, bug hotel etc.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport through our Walk on Wednesday activity
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education through Picker Pals

Social Sustainability

- Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity.
- Our students are provided with opportunities to develop and use their skills to participate in the solving of community problems at local level

- Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community.
- Our school engages with Global Citizenship Education programmes such as The Blue Flag initiative
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.

Economic Sustainability

- Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school. We have a student council with representatives from all classes.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles.
- Our school buildings are maintained to a high standard, with best practice in the area of sustainability in mind.

Cultural Sustainability

- Our school ethos aims to foster students' self-esteem, along with a mutual regard and respect for fellow students, and positive social interaction and relationships through our various SPHE programmes.
- Our school ethos, in tandem with the curriculum, strives to prepare students for life in an increasingly multicultural society.
- Our school demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school.
- Our school has an active role in supporting cultural diversity both within the school itself, and in the wider school community.

Teacher Competence

- Our teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD. We received CPD training on how to use our school grounds to teach children about biodiversity.

Student Competence

- Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer-to-peer learning activities
- Our school has a Student Council and Green School Committee who are involved in decisions about best sustainability practice in our school and community.
- Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community action on sustainability projects e.g. Tidy Towns

Goals

Our school will aim to achieve a Green Flag for Biodiversity by 2025. Implementation and review

This Statement was implemented on July 1st. To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed annually.

Timeframe for Implementation:

This policy was reviewed and ratified on July 1st 2024.

Time frame for Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Responsibility for Review:

- Board of Management
- Principal
- All Staff

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 01/07/2024

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on.....

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron, if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 1st July

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 1st July

Date of next review: June 2025