



## BORRISOKANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



## SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION POLICY

### *Borrisokane Community College Mission Statement*

*We seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being.  
"Is ar saáth a chéile a mhairimid"*



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## SUSTAINABILITY POLICY STATEMENT 2024

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.

Schools now have a separate Climate Action Mandate under which they are required to adopt a Sustainability Policy Statement. The School Sector Climate Action Mandate can be read in full here: [gov.ie - School Sector Climate Action Mandate \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

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 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 mission is to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the sustainable education of our students, where each individual is valued as a unique human being.

At Borrisokane Community School, we are committed to realising our school's vision by integrating sustainable development principles into every aspect of our educational practices. Our commitment aligns closely with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by the United Nations. With our core values of care, equality, community, excellence in education, and respect as our guiding principles, we strive to empower our students to become informed global citizens capable of shaping a sustainable future.

Our implementation plan includes:

1. Curriculum Integration: We incorporate key sustainable development issues, such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption, across various subjects and grade levels. By infusing these topics into our curriculum, we ensure that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the interconnected challenges facing our world today.
2. Participatory Teaching and Learning: Our teaching methods prioritise active participation, collaboration, and hands-on learning experiences. Through projects, discussions, and interactive activities, we inspire students to engage critically with sustainability issues and develop the skills and confidence needed to take meaningful action.
3. Promotion of Competencies: We foster essential competencies, including critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration. These skills enable students to analyse complex issues, envision future scenarios, and make informed decisions in a collaborative manner.
4. Community Engagement: We actively involve our school community, including students, staff, parents, and local stakeholders, in sustainability initiatives. By organising community events, workshops, and partnerships, we foster a sense of shared responsibility and collective action towards achieving the SDGs.

5. Student Leadership: We empower students to lead sustainability efforts within our school and beyond. Through student-led projects, clubs, and initiatives, we provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, advocate for change, and inspire others to join the movement for sustainability.

By implementing our school's vision in alignment with the SDGs, we contribute to a more just, equitable, and sustainable world for present and future generations. Together, we work towards achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, striving for a future where every individual can thrive in harmony with the planet.

### 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.
- Opportunities are identified to introduce and address sustainability in the classroom, across all subjects.
- All our school policies are aligned to the principles of sustainable development.
- Resources to assist in the teaching of sustainability are adequate and sufficient at all levels.
- Our school carries out regular self-evaluation of our teaching practices in the area of sustainable development.
- Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network ([www.ISSN.ie](http://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/>.

## 2024

### 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 has been part of the Green Schools Programme since 2012. During this time a Green Team comprised of staff and students have been awarded four flags; Litter and waste, Energy, Water and Travel. We are currently working towards obtaining the Biodiversity flag and have been developing spaces dedicated to wildflowers and natural habitats including an insect hotel created with sustainable materials.
- Our school engages with SEAI Education & Youth Programme's curriculum linked energy Resources, pupil Workshops and teacher CPD [Schools | Community Energy | SEAI](https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/schools/)<https://www.seai.ie/community-energy/schools/>
- Our school engages with the [SEAI Energy in Education](#) resources and energy management tools in order to monitor and report energy consumption. Our school has implemented

strategies to reduce electricity consumption, such as utilising sensor-activated lighting and promoting vigilant usage practices; to recycle and conserve various materials with designated bins across campus and to conserve paper by adopting digital communication platforms/electronic documentation to reduce paper consumption.

- Our school engages with various programmes/CPD in the area of sustainable development such as ECO UNESCO workshops, Worldwide Global Schools CPD, the ETB Take 1 Programme and staff polytunnel training with an organic farmer.
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling policy in place and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Our school has policies in place in respect of water conservation, waste, food waste, single use plastics, and energy.
- Our school resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment, e.g. recycled fish tokens for our annual “Clothes Swap” event and we grow resources in our poly tunnel for use in the Home Economics classrooms.
- Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places.
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.
- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning, for example planting and prepping our polytunnel, lesson on the walkway (e.g. language classes).
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity through our wildflower spaces, insect hotels and bird feeders.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school, e.g. our school partakes in the Walk to School Week and we have mapped bus routes to encourage students to make use of public transport and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Our school engages with the Safe Routes to School programme: <https://greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool/>.
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education e.g. ECO UNESCO, Take 1 Programme and “Junk Kouture”.

## 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 World Wise Global Schools <https://www.worldwiseschools.ie/> or other programmes working in this area.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.
- All school staff are provided with the training in the area of conflict resolution, in order to support and affect positive student behaviour.

## Economic Sustainability

- A non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources is modelled in our school's allocation of its resources.
- Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school e.g. "Clothes Swap" & "Junk Kouture".
- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills. For example, the running of our annual "Swap Shop" and TY involvement with "Junk Kouture".
- 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 practise in the area of sustainability in mind.
- Our school educates on, and promotes the principles of, a circular economy.

## 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.
- 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, e.g. engagement with WWGS, Take 1 programme and other areas of CPD.

## Student Competence

- Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer-to-peer learning activities
- Our students are encouraged and supported to undertake action orientated projects, e.g. BTYSE among other initiatives.
- Our school has a Student Council / Sustainability Committee / Green Team who are involved in decisions about sustainability as well as new initiatives or changes in practice.
- Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community action on sustainability projects e.g. Cleaning up the town park.
- Our schools are involved in project-based learning around real-life problems in the local community.

## Goals

Our school's objectives are to:

- Foster a comprehensive understanding among students and staff regarding the environmental impact of individual actions at local, national, and global levels.
- Cultivate a culture of excellence in caring for our school, local community, and the broader world.
- Promote behavioural shifts, increase engagement in, and communication of environmental responsibility.
- Minimise the adverse environmental impact of our school operations.
- Establish clearly defined sustainable development goals and targets.
- Achieve a biodiversity flag by 2026.

## Implementation and Review

This Statement was implemented on 10/10/24. To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed every two years.