



Monkstown Educate Together
National School

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Sustainability Policy

2026



Context

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 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

Monkstown Educate Together National School strives to create a happy, friendly, inclusive, educational environment where each child is unique and valued. We are a welcoming school where diverse talents are appreciated and the school community works together respectfully. Our school values are equality based and multi denominational, child centred, co-educational, democratically run. This supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. For Ireland, achieving SDG 4 means ensuring that every individual, regardless of their background, gender, or socio-economic status, has access to quality education at all stages of life.

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.
- In line with Priority Action Area 2 in the ESD to 2030 policy, METNS has been transforming learning environments by fostering a whole school approach to ESD through its Forest School program for the last five years.
- METNS recognises Education for Sustainable Development as a cross-curricular theme.
- Opportunities are identified to introduce and address sustainability in the classroom, across all subjects.
- We have engaged with outside agencies to promote Sustainable Development Goals.



- Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network. <https://www.issn.ie/joinus>
- 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

- Our school is part of the Green Schools Programme. 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 was awarded a Green Flag award for Global Energy Citizenship award in May 2023.
- Our school will continue to engage in the Green Schools programme.
- Our school has a Green School's committee comprising of staff and students whose role it is to: implement green school's initiatives; communicate between the committee and the rest of the school community; ensure signage is up to date and clear; organise initiatives such as Cycle on Wednesdays 'COW' & Walk on Wednesdays 'WOW' and Green School poster competitions; create informative Green School Assembly; runs regular litter picking sessions & we are a community hub for battery recycling.
- Our school is at the forefront of environmental education in the provision of Forest School sessions for every child throughout primary school. This helps develop connection with and empathy for our natural world and has ripple effects far into the community and into the future.
- 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 resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment. We use scrap paper throughout the classes where possible. We limit laminating resources where possible
- The Green Team children run an Eco Shop selling recycled pencils, pen, & other stationary. This runs once a month.
- 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, through gardening and Forest School sessions and we have an outdoor classroom.
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity through wild flower spaces which are uncut, tree planting and a biodiversity garden.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school.
- Our school installed bicycle shelters and scooter racks in the last 5 years to promote sustainable transport.
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education such as Trocaire Game Changers programme which works with the Sustainability Goals.
- Our school harvests rain water which is used in all toilets throughout the school building and we have water butt which we use in our school garden.
- Our school has installed solar panels as a sustainable source of energy.
- Our school promotes the use of reusable water bottles. Following our 'Plastic is not Fantastic' campaign.



- All our hot school lunches are composted and we promote composting in our staff room. Children are encouraged to bring home their waste.
- Our school has a comprehensive recycling culture in place and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.

Social Sustainability

- Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity.
- We were awarded the Pieta Amber Flag which recognises the individual efforts to create healthy, inclusive environments that support mental well being
- Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration. We celebrate Neuro Diversity week annually and have recently opened an Autism Class.
- We have a sensory room and other sensory spaces throughout the school building which are available to all the school children.
- Our Behaviour policy is in line with a restorative practice approach.

Economic Sustainability

- A non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources is modelled in our school's allocation of its resources. Maths resources; Art supplies; PE equipment; Class readers; Ethical Education resources are all stored in communal and accessible areas.
- Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school. We have an active Student Council in place in our school.
- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills such as at our Winter Fair where 5th and 6th class students have the opportunity to sell products in order to fundraise for chosen charities.



- Every year 6th class pupils take part in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles. Each year many charities are supported through our fundraisers.
- 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.
- 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.
- We have an active Parents association who work with the school to regularly enhance the school life of all pupils, family and staff.
- 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.
- Our Teachers engage in Professional development regarding ESD, including courses related to Forest School, Restorative practice, Sustainability in the Classroom Teacher, Sustainable Maths Teacher, Development Education in the Primary Classroom.
- Our staff are familiar with the 17 SDGs and linkages across the curriculum.



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 oriented projects through garden club and Trocaire Game Changers and Forest School.
- Our school has a Student Council and a Green Team who are actively involved in decisions aimed at reducing the school's environmental footprint, promoting eco-friendly practices, implementing effective recycling programs, and fostering a more inclusive and socially responsible school community.

Goals for 2025 - 2027

General School Goals

- Organise CPD for staff on actions that can be taken to create a more sustainable classroom.
- Organise workshops for the Green Schools Committee. This newfound information can then be passed from the Committee Members to their schoolmates, fostering whole-school involvement in sustainability within the school community, and allowing for peer-to-peer learning.
- Continue to move towards more to more reusable and recyclable resources within the school, including procuring recycled paper, refillable whiteboard markers, etc.
- Reduce use of blue roll by 50%.
- Improve signage around the school to encourage our school community to 'Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle'
- Organise and engage in regular litter picks of the school grounds, and local community.
- Complete an audit of waste disposal within school e.g. availability of compost bins etc.
- Assess the impact of our transition to Hot School Lunches on waste production, and on the health of our students.



- Appoint waste, energy and water monitors in each classroom to regularly monitor wastage of all forms.
- Eco monitors in each class to turn off lights and interactive screens when no one in the class.
- Conduct a self-evaluation of school activities and sustainability, establish a benchmark, and identify target areas of need.

Implementation and review

This Statement will be implemented in June 2026.

This policy will be reviewed regularly according to the ongoing schedule of review of school policies.