

Newport Convent Primary School



Roll number:04067F

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.

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:

<https://gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/school-sector-climate-action-mandate/>

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 on outline how our Newport Convent Primary 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 Newport Convent Primary 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

Newport Convent Primary School's Vision, Mission, and Core Values

- Our school's vision is to cultivate a nurturing environment where every student is empowered to excel academically, socially, and personally, fostering a lifelong love for learning and a commitment to making positive contributions to society.
- Our school's mission is to promote the fullest possible development of the child as a whole person and to provide a dynamic and inclusive education that celebrates diversity, promotes critical thinking, and instils a strong sense of responsibility towards oneself and others. Through innovative teaching practices and a supportive community, we aim to inspire our students to become compassionate leaders who embrace challenges with resilience and empathy. To help achieve this ideal, Newport Convent Primary School will provide a broad education in line with the curriculum Guidelines for Primary Schools allowing each child to reach the highest level of academic attainment consistent with his/her abilities and talents. Newport Convent Primary School recognises that the parents/guardians are the primary educators and that it is only through co-operation between the parents/guardians and the school that our ideal can be realised.
- Our school's values are deeply rooted in excellence in education, care, equality, community, and respect. We strive to uphold these core principles in all aspects of school life, ensuring that every member of our community feels valued, supported, and respected.
- Our commitment to sustainability, environmental awareness, and climate action aligns seamlessly with our core values. We believe that by fostering a culture of responsibility and stewardship, we can empower our students to become proactive agents of change in safeguarding our planet for future generations. Through interdisciplinary learning experiences and community partnerships, we integrate environmental education into our curriculum, promoting sustainable practices and encouraging students to explore innovative solutions to global challenges. In doing so, we reinforce our dedication to excellence, care, equality, and respect, while fostering a strong sense of community and collective responsibility towards building a more sustainable and equitable world.

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
- Our school keeps up to date with developments in ESD including by being registered for the quarterly ESD 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 has been awarded a Green Flag for Litter & Waste We are currently working on the theme of Water and will be applying for this Green Flag in 2025/2026. Our school has a Green Schools Committee comprising staff and students. The Committee meet regularly and bring back the up-to-date information to their class teachers. The Green Schools Co-Ordinators ensure that information is up to date on the school website and social media accounts.
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling procedures in place and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Our school has comprehensive procedures 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. Using recycled paper, printing back-to-back, printing using black ink, using recycled materials in Art and Engineering projects.
- Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places, (Green Schools Noticeboard).
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment

- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning e.g. growing vegetables, tree studies, bug hunts, etc.
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity e.g. bird feeders, compost bins.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school. We have a bicycle rack on the school grounds and actively encourage children to walk and cycle to school.
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education Green Schools, Curious Minds, Incredible Edibles.
- Student Voice: We have a Student Council to promote the views of students on how we can reduce waste and be more energy efficient in our school.
- Awareness campaigns through SESE/SPHE curriculum: Staff and pupils are educated on how to conserve energy efficiently. Reducing unnecessary usage by switching off lights and electrical appliances when not in use. Reduction of our waste, children bring home uneaten food, and we provide recycling bins and battery recycling.
- Solar panels have been installed in the past year in Newport Convent Primary School. The benefits are twofold. Solar panels draw their energy from the renewable resource that is our sun. Not only does installing a solar energy system reduce our reliance on fossil fuel which improves your air quality and protects the environment but it also saves the school money making us more economically sustainable.
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment. Our pupils complete a cleanup of their school environment and the church carpark as part of National Spring Clean Day and in conjunction with the local Tidy Towns Committee.

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 participates in Kindness Week and anti-bullying programmes. We have a Kindness Tree, and each class has an opportunity to put nice messages on the tree.
- We engage in Wellbeing activities each term (school disco, Wellbeing Day, Talent Show) and music in the yard on Fridays and activity breaks twice daily.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.

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. We have a Student Council consisting of two representatives from each class from 1st-6th.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles. E.g. clothes collection, Re-turn scheme.
- 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 child friendly version of our BÍ Cineálta Policy is on display in our corridors.
- 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 providers of CPD programmes in this area. A list is compiled and provided to inform teachers in our school of available CPD in the field of ESD.

Student Competence

- Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer-to-peer learning activities
- Our school has a Green Schools Committee who are involved in making decisions about maintaining/supporting previous theme of Litter & Waste and current theme, Water.

- Our school has a Student Council who are involved in decisions about sustainable projects and initiatives.
- Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community act sustainability projects e.g. Tidy Towns

Goals

Our school will aim to achieve our 2nd Flag for Water during the school year 2025/2026.

To align our school's Green Schools Committee's goals with the Looking At Our Schools framework, focus on areas like "Leadership and Management" and "Teaching and Learning." We have set the following goals:

1. Fostering student leadership by involving students in environmental decision-making.
2. Promoting active learning through hands-on sustainability projects.
3. Improving school culture by embedding eco-friendly practices.
4. Strengthening community ties by collaborating on environmental initiatives.

These align with the standards of effective practice outlined in Looking at Our Schools.

Our school will also organise a clothes collection annually in conjunction with our Parents Association. Our school will take part in the Curious Minds Awards and will focus on the themes of Water and Solar Energy in the Environmental Awareness and Care section. We will apply to take part in the Grow at School programme and Incredible Edibles and will also grow vegetables as part of our Curious Minds work in the area of Living Things. We will plant pollinator friendly flowers in our flower beds, such as crocuses, sunflowers, lilies, lavender, etc. We will participate in the Pitches for Pollinators leaving the grass in our playing field uncut during the summer months to allow wildflowers to grow providing food for pollinators like bees. We will leave a narrow strip along our boundary wall to the rear of the school uncut all year to allow the growth of wildflowers. We will install bug hotels in the school grounds.

Implementation, Communication, Monitoring and Review

This policy will be communicated to staff and the school community as appropriate and will be implemented in October of 2025. In accordance with the systematic cycle of review of policies adopted in Newport Convent Primary School, and to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, it will be reviewed every two years, unless there is a compelling reason to review it earlier.

Ratified by the Board of Management, Newport Convent Primary School.

Scheduled for review: October 2027

Signed: Patrick O'Toole Date: 6/10/25

Chairperson B.O.M.