

Carrigaline Community School Sustainability Policy Statement



Purpose

The purpose of this Sustainability Policy Statement, 'Carrigaline Community School Sustainability Policy Statement' is to outline how our school promotes sustainability and climate action, through our actions and activities.

Definition of Sustainability

We in CCS define sustainability for students and staff as '*the ability to live our lives today in a way that protects the lives of future generations*'.

Scope

Sustainability is a community issue and applies to all students, teachers and employees of our school.

Climate Action Mandate

This policy is informed by the government's School Sector Climate Action Mandate.

[gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [School Sector Climate Action Mandate \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

We aim to

- raise awareness and promote sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including Goal 13 – (Climate Action) through the range of curricular subjects
- integrate where feasible elements of the 17 SDGs into school life, e.g., food waste, bio-diversity, water consumption, recycling, reusing, transport to and from school, inclusive practices which give voice and agency to all students and the promotion and development of sustainable economics.
- Our school recognises the SEAI target to reduce Greenhouse gases in the school sector by 50% by 2030.
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Vision, mission and values

Carrigaline Community School Mission Statement

"We at Carrigaline Community School aim to promote the holistic development of our students in a happy, caring, ordered and inclusive environment. We promote personal and academic excellence, together with a strong sense of social responsibility based on the principle of mutual respect."

Carrigaline Community School Sustainability Policy Statement

“In keeping with the values of our mission statement, we aim to continue to promote the holistic development of our students by including values that respect nature in our school and the global environment. An environment that is based on the principle of mutual respect will be enhanced by practices that further a sustainable future for all.

We aim to promote personal and academic excellence in such a way that has due regard for environmental, social and economic sustainability. In doing so, we aim to make sustainable development a key aspect of personal and social responsibility for all members of our school community.”

Whole School Approach to Sustainability

- This Sustainability Policy 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 staff presentations, newsletter notices and posters, and the adoption of sustainability as an aspect of curriculum planning in all subjects.
- 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. Online resources are shared with teachers as are classroom displays on SDGs and our sustainability statement.
- 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)
- 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/>

The Three Pillars of Sustainability

1. Environmental Sustainability

- Our school has achieved three Green Flags for Recycling, Water and Energy.
- Our school has engaged with the SEAI Teacher CPD programme and was selected for a follow up SEAI audit of energy use in the school.
- Our school engages with the [SEAI Energy in Education](#) resources and energy management tools in order to monitor and report (M&R) energy consumption.

- Our school has comprehensive policies in place in respect of water conservation, waste, food waste, single use plastics, energy and biodiversity

Water conservation

- Taps have been replaced with push taps & an audit has been done to check for leaks

Waste

- Brown bins have been introduced in both Staff Canteens and Home Economics rooms
- The number of plastic water bottles has been significantly reduced with the introduction of three filtered water stations for the student population.
- Plastic cutlery is no longer used by the school canteen.
- Teachers are encouraged to minimise the use of photocopying.
- Recycling bins are available throughout the school for plastic, paper and cardboard.
- Every effort is made to separate materials, e.g., metal and wood, before disposing of waste in skips.
- Teachers and staff are encouraged to recycle materials and to reduce waste where possible

Energy

- T8 fluorescent light bulbs in the old school have been replaced with energy saving LED (as a follow on from recommendations in the SEAI audit).
- We are currently in the process of installing light sensors in the old school and hope to have all areas in the old school upgraded with light sensors.
- Staff are reminded to shut down electrical equipment at the end of the day.
- Staff are encouraged to turn off lights in classrooms and corridors when possible.
- Photocopiers and computers have been set to low energy mode when not in use.
- Notices have been put on all exit doors to remind staff and students to keep doors closed.

Biodiversity

- We have planted a tiny forest of 670 native trees on our school grounds.
- We have 'wild' areas where the grass isn't cut to promote biodiversity.
- The amount of weed killer used has been significantly reduced in recent years.
- We have erected six nest boxes for swifts, birds which are on the red list of endangered species.

- Biodiversity is addressed in environmental studies and gardening class in 4th year and across the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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 within classes, in school displays and announcements, through social media and through presentations to staff.
- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning. Students engage in sports and P.E. on our outdoor sport's facilities. We will shortly install an outdoor classroom next to our school's tiny forest.

2. Social Sustainability

- Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity through curricular planning, provision of facilities such as gender neutral toilet and staff and student awareness presentations. There is a LGBTQ+ awareness week with visible promotion of gender equity.
- Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community by teaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals across the curriculum and in Environmental Studies in 4th year. The SDGs and our Sustainability Definition are displayed in corridors and classrooms.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated. We have a strong level of support through the SEN department and our ASD unit. There is a high level of integration of students from the ASD unit in mainstream classes and activities. We provide physical access and accommodation for students who require this support, e.g., wheelchair users.
- Regular teaching training on differentiated learning aims to provide the best learning experiences for students of all abilities.
- Teachers are provided with training in the area of conflict resolution in order to support and affect positive student behaviour.
- Regular CPD provides teachers with the teaching skills that promote active and collaborative learning and a positive and enjoyable learning environment.
- Positive behaviours in all areas of school life are recognised and celebrated through *The Principal's Awards* (twice a year) and our annual *Awards Night*.

3. Economic Sustainability

- We practice a fair and equal, non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources in our school.

- Students are involved in the decision-making process, where appropriate, on resource allocation within our school through our school's Student Council and through Politics & Society classes.
- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills in 4th year (Enterprise mini company) and in LCA classes (Enterprise-VPG). They study and do project work on sustainable development, global consumerism, fair trade and enterprise in the community in Leaving Certificate Economics classes.
- Our school buildings are maintained to as high a standard as possible, within limited resources, and with best practise in the area of sustainability in mind.
- Our school educates on, and promotes the principles of, a circular economy in Business, Economics and Politics & Society classes.

Teacher Competence

- Our teachers are provided with information on available CPD in the area of sustainability. All relevant information received from the Irish Schools Sustainability Network (www.ISSN.ie) and the quarterly ESD Newsletter are shared with staff.

Student Competence

- Through regular staff training we prioritise the practice of peer to peer and cooperative learning activities in class, e.g., *The Instructional Leadership Programme* (etbi).
- Our students are encouraged and supported to undertake action orientated projects, e.g., the Gaisce and Meitheal programmes, LCA programmes, through The Citizens Project in Politics & Society classes and in Curriculum based assessments in CSPE where they do community/civic project work.
- Our school has a Student Council who are involved in a range of school decisions and activities including, equal and inclusive practices, the raising of student queries and issues and community links with other local school councils.
- All 4th year students have the opportunity to participate in local community action on sustainability projects:-
 - Tidy Towns
 - the *log on learn* programme with the elderly
 - performances in the local care home
 - sports coaching with local primary schools
 - linking activities with The Men's Shed initiative

- Our schools are involved in project based learning around real-life problems in the local community such as in-school and community based fund raising for local charities, e.g., *Penny Dinners* and *St. Vincent de Paul*.

Goal

For 2024-2025

- Our school will minimise waste in all areas as much as possible

Implementation and review

This statement was formally adopted by the Board of Management on October 15th_ 2024. To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed every 2 years.