

Scoil Íde

Sustainability Policy

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Introductory Statement

This policy is the result of the collaboration of the Policy Committee, together with the Board of Management.

Rationale

Scoil Íde aims to become a sustainable school by reducing our ecological footprint through adopting sustainable practices in our everyday lives. We will achieve this by integrating sustainability into many areas of the curriculum, instilling a sense of ownership and pride in improving the environment and participating in Green Schools. We will aim to lead the community by demonstrating exemplary practices in waste management, water and energy usage, and develop the school grounds to promote biodiversity.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Scoil Íde is a Catholic girls' school with Infant boys (up to and including First Class) with a Catholic ethos under the patronage of the Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora.

“Catholic Ethos” in the context of a Catholic primary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church, which aims at providing:-

- (a) The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- (b) A living relationship with God and with other people; and
- (c) A philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- (d) The formation of the pupils in the Catholic faith,

And which school provides religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

In accordance with S. 15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Scoil Íde shall uphold, and be accountable to the Patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

Scoil Íde is committed to an education that fosters personal growth, self-worth and openness to the spiritual dimension of life for all its children. The Board of Management reserves its right to promote the uphold a Catholic ethos under Section 7 (3) of the Equal Status Act, while also recognising, respecting and welcoming the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions and ways of life in our society.

The policy is based on the principles of

- Inclusiveness and non-discrimination
- Equality of access and participation in the school
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment and
- Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages in the community

Sustainability and care for the environment are central to this ethos.

Aims

By introducing this policy, the school hopes:

- To become aware of the impact of air, water, waste and litter pollution on natural and manmade environments
- To develop an understanding of conservation e.g. Recycling, energy and water
- To develop a responsible ownership of the classroom and school environment
- To promote alternative methods of transport to and from school e.g. cycling, scooting and walking to school.
- To foster a sense of responsibility for the long term care of the environment and a commitment to promote the sustainable use of the Earth's resources through personal life style and participation in collective environmental decision making.
- To enable the child to live as an informed and caring member of Local, National, European and Global Communities.
- To acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes towards the environment.
- Through explanation, investigation and hands on experiences the children will acquire skills to help care for our environment immediately and have a long term impact
- To understand the actions that people can have on the environment.

Procedures and Guidelines

How to reduce the school's ecological footprint...

Energy

- Reduce the use of energy consumption within the school.
- Use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- Include students in the process of developing and maintaining an energy efficient school through participation in Green Schools.

Waste

- To minimise rubbish and recycle our waste throughout the school, as much as possible, on a daily basis.
- Students to take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate manner.

Biodiversity

- To utilise our garden area to its full extent and continue to develop it.
- To involve community members in maintenance of school garden.

Water

- To reduce the water consumption within the school.
- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.

Implementation

The school will continuously participate in Green Schools and work towards obtaining Green Flags. The whole school community will be involved in the work of the Green Schools Committee through regular updates at assembly, the school newsletter and on school notice boards.

Energy

- Promote a 'switch off and save' rule for technological equipment, lighting and heating/cooling particularly when leaving the classroom to go the yard and hall.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to energy in SESE.
- Members of the Green Schools Committee and the Click Team will act as classroom energy monitors ensuring that all appliances are completely switched off when not being used in an effort to conserve energy.
- The school delivers an annual report with energy saving plans to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

Waste

- Students are consistently reminded to dispose of waste and recycled products in the appropriate manner.
- Food waste is disposed daily and transferred to the correct bin.
- Paper into recycling bins.
- Use recycled paper for printer/photocopier where possible
- Promote the reuse of paper in classrooms, staffroom and office.
- Recycling bins provided in all classrooms and the staff room.
- A compostable waste bin is provided in the staff room.

Biodiversity

- Consult local community members on ways to improve our garden (e.g. Where to plant, what to plant).
- Involve community members in planting and maintaining our gardens.
- Engage students and staff in the maintenance of our gardens
- Improve our outdoor natural environment, by planting native trees
- Plant native plants and wild flowers that encourage and support the insect population, such as bees and butterflies
- Improve our vegetable garden by planting and harvesting more seasonal vegetables
- Use natural materials that reduce the impact on the environment
- Provide varied living conditions in the school garden (insect hotels, hedges, walls, grassy areas and trees) to offer potential food and shelter to our natural biodiversity
- Support our native birds (particularly during the winter months) by providing bird feeders and trees in the school garden.

Water

- Remind students and staff regularly the importance of turning off the tap when water is flowing.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to water conservation in SESE.

Other Initiatives

Awards/Competitions

Activities and information campaigns such as the following are currently running within the school:

We are currently working as a whole school towards obtaining the 8th Green Flag for Global Citizenship and the Marine Environment.

Recycling

Recycling Paper Recycling Bins

A recycling bin for paper is placed in the staffroom, office and in each classroom to ensure that any waste paper will be recycled.

Litter Bins -General Rubbish

A general litter bin is also placed in each classroom to cater for the disposal of normal classroom waste i.e. left over pieces of food, floor dirt, old crayons etc. and this is emptied on a daily basis.

Compost Bins

The teacher's staffroom is also equipped with compost bins.

Lunchboxes

It is encouraged that whatever comes in the child's lunchbox goes home in the lunchbox - i.e. a yoghurt pot, a wrapper as it dramatically cuts down on the school's waste. Pupils are encouraged to use a reusable drinks container or non-single use plastic bottles.

Re-Use

Children are encouraged to take their waste home with them so as to cut down on the volume that the school actually produces.

Staff will keep recyclable items for art materials and Aistear i.e. cardboard rolls, cardboard, paper, tinfoil, recycled bottle tops.

Parents are encouraged to send in recyclable materials for junk art in Aistear.

Text-A-Parent with Aladdin Connect

Parents will be texted or sent school information on Aladdin instead of sending out individual letters with each child. This cuts down greatly on the amount of paper being used by the school.

Mobility

The school community is working on improving mobility. Children are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school. The school also participates in WOW (Walk on Wednesdays).

School Garden

A school garden has been set up where children have planted vegetable and flowers throughout the year.

Green Flag

The school has been awarded seven Green Flags to date.

The school will now begin to focus on its eighth Green Flag with the theme of Global Citizenship and Marine Environment. It is the aim of the school to continue working on renewing the previous themes while simultaneously working on efforts for the new flag.

Curriculum

The school views environmental issues as being fundamental to the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to nurture a respect for the environment in their students.

Environmental / Green issues are key elements of both S.E.S.E., S.P.H.E.

The school community will work together to develop the knowledge, skills, values and world-views necessary for people to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living by teaching sustainability.

A cross curricular approach will be taken to the teaching of sustainability.

Success Criteria

The school wide implementation of this policy will ensure:

- Continuous participation in the Green Schools programme and the aspiration to be rewarded further Green Schools' flags.
- Continuous improvement, development and use of the school gardens.
- Children will participate in lessons throughout the year on areas of sustainability in the SESE.

Roles and Responsibility

The following people have particular responsibilities for aspects of this policy:

- Teaching staff
- Parents/guardians
- Principal

- Board of Management
- Students
- Student Council

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented on

Timetable for Review

The operation of the new policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended every four years.

Ratification & Communication

The policy was circulated to the members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting in at which it was formally ratified.

Notification that the policy is available for viewing will be communicated to the parents in the next School Communication, via Aladdin. It will be available for viewing on the school website.

Signed: _____
CHAIRPERSON of the BOM

Date: _____

