



Bandonbridge N.S.

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: gov.ie - [School Sector Climate Action Mandate \(www.gov.ie\)](http://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 Bandonbridge NS will ensure that decisions made in respect of the school align with the Statement.

Vision, mission and values

Our school’s vision is: To sow the seed for curiosity, creativity and exploration in a nurturing and inspiring learning environment where all children unlock their potential for a bright future.

Our school’s mission is:

- We cherish all our pupils equally, irrespective of gender, family background, religion, race or ability.
- We endeavour to create a learning environment when exploration and investigation are encouraged, where civic awareness is fostered and Christian values inform the education provided.
- We nurture mutual respect between adults and pupils as we work towards shared goals.
- We promote inclusion of all, ensuring teaching and learning is cognisant of individuality and the diverse enrolment of the school.
- We cultivate an atmosphere which ensures the wellbeing of all.
- We will provide quality teaching and learning, with additional support for those who need it.

Our schools values are reflected in our ethos:

- The school community reflects an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for religious differences. We work towards the spirit of ecumenism, inclusion and diversity as represented in local community life.
- The school is a community where all pupils are respected – irrespective of sex, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning.
- Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging, they are treated fairly, and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.
- We aspire to be a school where values such as honesty, truthfulness, justice, fairness, sensitivity to others and civic responsibility are nurtured and protected. It is a goal of the school to prepare its pupils to be responsible and active citizens.
- The school nurtures faith in its pupils while fostering freedom of thought and an individual relationship with God.
- The school enjoys a positive working relationship with parents. There is an active, supportive PA which contributes hugely to the life and running of the school. Parents are encouraged to share their time and talents in support of school activities: art activities, gardening, sports and other pastimes. Social occasions, online communication portals and parent-teacher meetings provide opportunities for parents and staff to get to know one another. These communications are central to the wellbeing of pupils and staff.
- The staff members are encouraged and facilitated, where possible, in any further professional development opportunities that arise. (e.g. OIDE/NCSE courses, external facilitators at CP meetings, summer courses etc.).

- The School reflects on the teaching and learning, the wellbeing and school environment when engaged in school self-evaluation and planning for the future.
- The Code of Behaviour centres on the value of respect for yourself and for others. Inclusion and participation of minority groups are an important part of school life. For example, the school holds intercultural events where all cultures in the community are celebrated.

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 for now. Additional resources will be made available as required.
- 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/>

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 is currently working on the 7th flag Global Citizenship: Energy. Our school has a Green Team comprising staff and students whose role is to lead teaching and learning opportunities to promote awareness of the Green Schools themes and to coordinate an annual Day of Action.
- Our school engages with SEAI Education & Youth Programme's curriculum linked energy resources, pupil workshops and teacher CPD <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 engages with cross-curricular topics and project work in the area of sustainable development i.e. the Go Green Award for JEP projects featuring sustainable projects, Water and Wellbeing project, Glanmore Foods Waste Warriors, Bandon Environmental Action Group and Bandon Tidy Towns etc.
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling policy in place, and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible; i.e. no single use drink bottles or lunch packaging, no plastic straws, recycling bins in every classroom and common space, reusable paint trays for art etc.
- Our school has practices in place in respect of water conservation, waste, food waste, single use plastics, energy.
- Our school resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment e.g. cleaning products, recycled picnic benches, composting bags etc.
- Our hot lunch supplier uses compostable packaging and all food waste is put out for compostable bin collection fortnightly.
- Our school has solar panels to produce environmentally clean electricity and to reduce the cost of energy bills. A smart meter was recently installed along with a screen to monitor savings and usage.

- Our school environment will endeavour to increase displays of information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places and on our website/blog.
- 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. our school has grounds with a variety of habitats: trees, grass areas, stone wall, garden area.
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity e.g. bug hotel, planters
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking, cycling, scooting or accessing the school bus to school. e.g. our school partakes in the Walk to School Week, Walk on Wednesdays, cycling skills.
- Our school has engaged with some initiatives from the Safe Routes to School programme: <https://greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool/>
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote environmental education Nature in the Park, Picker Pals, Agri Aware, Climate Literacy (Education for Sustainability), Scoilnet Climate Action and Sustainability Education or any other programmes working in this field.

Social Sustainability

- Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity.
- Our students are provided with opportunities, at an age-appropriate level, to develop and use their skills to participate in the solving of community problems at local level i.e. how to improve our school grounds, BEAG etc.
- Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community i.e. Team Hope Christmas Shoeboxes, Christian Aid fundraising for initiatives in developing countries, fundraising for Daffodil Day etc.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.
- School staff are provided with opportunities to engage with training programmes i.e. Emotion Coaching, 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, where relevant, through the Student Council.
- Our school uniform is generic to ease the financial burden on parents/guardians. There are opportunities at the end of the school year for parents/guardians to avail of second-hand uniform items.
- School sports tops were purchased by the Parents Association to be handed out for events and taken back afterwards so parents/guardians do not have to purchase these.
- The school engages in the free hot school lunch scheme and the free school books scheme.
- Approximately one-third of the pupils use Bus Éireann School Transport and many walk, scoot or cycle to school daily.
- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills using the Junior Entrepreneur Programme.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles e.g. Team Hope Christmas Shoeboxes, supporting Christian Aid's projects in the developing world.
- Our school buildings are maintained to the best standard we can afford, with best practise in the area of sustainability in mind. The Board of Management has applied for a Climate Action Summer Works grants to replace windows and improve ventilation and conserve energy.
- Our school educates on, and promotes the principles of, a circular economy using age-appropriate language and resources.

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 i.e. using a plurilingual approach to language acquisition, including on music and art from our student population's heritage, celebrating festivals and hosting intercultural occasions, presenting communications with parents in a variety of languages.
- Our school demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school i.e. visits to the library, church or heritage centre, visiting speakers from the local area etc.
- Our school has an active role in supporting cultural diversity both within the school itself, and in the wider school community e.g. involvement in Diocesan Schools Service, Bandon Show, Cork Choral Festival/Cór Fhéile na Scol, intercultural days.

Teacher Competence

- Our teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD through sharing of knowledge and skills within the school community, as well as engaging with CPD where appropriate.

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 i.e. Green School Day of Action, gardening, litter picking etc.
- Our school has a Student Council and a Green Schools Committee who are involved in decisions about all aspects of school life.
- Our school engages in project-based learning around real-life problems in the school and local community where appropriate

Goals

1. Bandonbridge NS will aim to achieve its 7th Green Flag in spring 2026.
2. Teachers will include references to education for sustainability in their planning for teaching and learning.
3. Teachers will have explored the resources available and shared knowledge and skills with one another.
4. Classrooms will target the 17 global goals for sustainable development in their planning for teaching and learning.
5. The Board of Management will liaise with the DEY regarding sustainability grants.

Implementation and review

This Statement was implemented on 08/10/2025. To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed every 2 years.