



Sustainability Policy

Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh

This policy outlines the organisation of our Green Schools Programme in Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh. The policy has been drawn up collaboratively by staff, students & the Parents' Council. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all and shows the way forward in our school.

Rationale

Bunscoil Rinn an Chabhlaigh N.S. 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 recycling, energy saving, water conservation, sustainable transport and promoting biodiversity.

Vision

Through our teaching and our engagement with the Green Schools programme, our vision in BSRAC is to inspire our students to become global citizens by exploring their own place in the world, their attitudes and their responsibilities to other people, to the environment and to the sustainability of the planet.

We aim to encourage our students to contribute and play a role in their communities by encouraging them to appreciate the interdependence of people, societies and the environment from local to global.

Aims

To enable students, staff, parents and the community:

- 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 lifestyle 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 students will acquire skills to help care for our environment immediately and have a long term impact.
- To understand the impact that people's actions can have on the environment.

Flags awarded to date

1. Litter and Waste
2. Energy
3. Water
4. Travel
5. Biodiversity
6. Global Citizenship – Litter and waste
7. Global Citizenship – Energy
8. Global Citizenship – Marine Environment

Implementation of procedures and guidelines

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, in the school newsletter, on school notice boards and through the school's social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram.

The following are the ways that we aim to reduce the school's ecological footprint;

Waste

- Minimise rubbish and recycle our waste as much as possible daily.
- Reminders to dispose of waste and recycled products in the appropriate manner.
- Dispose of food waste daily into the correct bin.
- Use both sides of paper for printer/photocopier where possible.
- Promote the re-use of paper in classrooms, staffroom and office.
- Dispose of paper into recycling bins.
- Place only dry recyclables in the recycle bin.
- Provide recycling bins ** in all classrooms, staff rooms and the school office.

****Recycling/Litter Bins**

- Recycling bins are plastic with Wiser stickers and can be found either in or outside classrooms.
- General waste bins for non-recyclable items are grey and black with a "general waste" sticker. They are on each floor (one upstairs and one downstairs).
- Covid bins (grey) are in every classroom and are used for masks, tissues, gloves.

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.
- Promote a 'switch off and save' rule for technological equipment, lighting and heating, particularly when leaving the classroom to go the yard and hall.
- Students will engage in units of work relating to energy in SESE.
- Members of the Green Schools Committee 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).

Travel

- Promote sustainable ways to get to school.
- Encourage our students to walk, cycle and scoot to school.
- Students are also encouraged to park 'n stride form the Eurospar carpark.
- Encourage no engine idling outside our school gate.

Water

Reduce water consumption within the school through the following measures;

- Remind students and staff regularly of the importance of turning off taps.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to water conservation in SESE.
- Caretaker to regularly monitor water usage and report wastage.
- The school harvests rainwater using tanks on the roof.

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.

Other Initiatives

The following awards and competitions are currently running in our school:

Green Flag – An Taisce

The whole school towards obtaining our 9th Green Flag for Global Citizenship Travel

Safe routes to school Initiative

Our school is participating in the initiative *Safe Routes to School*, which is a Green Schools partnership with the National Transport Authority/Department of Transport.

Cobh Tidy Towns

We have a very successful and active Tidy Towns committee in our community. BSRAC has strong links between our school and Cobh Tidy Towns.

Text-A-Parent /email a parent with Aladdin Schools

Parents are texted/emailed or sent school information on Aladdin, instead of being sent individual letters with each child. This cuts down greatly on the amount of paper used by the school.

Lunchboxes

Students are encouraged to use a reusable drinks container daily.

Encourage that whatever comes in the child's lunchbox goes home in the lunchbox i.e., a yoghurt pot, a wrapper etc. as it dramatically cuts down on the school's waste.

National Spring Clean

Our school actively engages in the National Spring clean each year and helps to litter pick on the roads around our school.

Christmas Cards

We strongly discourage the widespread sharing of Christmas cards among students each year. Alternatives to celebrate the festive season are done in class e.g., Secret Santa cards, a giant class card etc.

Printing/photocopying

Staff is encouraged to print on both sides of the paper where possible.

Energy

The school regularly engages in Low energy days and a termly *No Power Hour* to promote and create awareness about reduced energy use

Travel

- The school community is working on reducing its carbon footprint.
- Students are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school.
- We have a WOW day every Wednesday. The Green School committee records the walking scores and the winning class receives our *Golden Boot Trophy* at assembly each month.

School Garden

Our school garden is currently being re-vamped and will be used to promote the importance of growing your own. Flowers will be planted to promote the bee population

Curriculum

The school views environmental issues as being fundamental to the curriculum.

- Teachers will 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 awarded further Green Schools' flags.
- Continuous improvement, development and use of the school gardens.
- Students will participate in lessons throughout the year on areas of sustainability in the SESE curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have responsibilities for aspects of this policy:

- Principal
- Board of Management
- Teachers and Staff
- Green School Co-ordinator
- Students
- Parents/guardians
- Green Schools committee and co-ordinator Cathy O Sullivan
- Student Council

Timetable for Review

The operation of the new policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended every two years with each new theme of the Green Schools programme.

Ratification & Communication

The policy was approved by the Board of Management on the _____

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

The policy will be posted on the school website and in the policies section of the school app.