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Gurraneasig N.S.
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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://www.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 the school will ensure that decisions made in respect of the school align with the Statement.

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.
- 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 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.

- Gurraneasig's Green School Committee is made up of students from classes throughout the school, who meet regularly to work towards making our school a cleaner, greener place. This year, we also have a parent from the school community on our committee. Gurraneasig NS was awarded a green flag in May 2023, following two years of work on the theme of Litter and Waste. In September 2023, we began to work towards our next flag, which is under the theme of water, which we are still working towards.
- Last year, we were involved in a particularly special project, which the entire school community participated in. This project was done as part of the Creative Clusters initiative, in collaboration with five other schools. The title of the project was *Vitamin Sea*, and the focus was on celebrating and caring for the sea, and recognising the ways in which it enhances our wellbeing. We set about using these concepts, to create an Art installation, which is now a permanent feature in our outdoor space. The project involved us collecting lots of rubbish from Howe Strand, over a period of months, and using this rubbish to create an Art project, in which we wove the rubbish into a fishing net. We then combined this project with an out-of-use currach, which we received from Meitheal Mara, and upcycled. This art installation has given us a place for play, shelter, and chats, which is enjoyed by all students on a daily basis. We are incredibly proud of this project, and we have learned so much from the process of engaging with it. It has combined environmental awareness and care with creativity, in a most impactful way. This year, our Creative Clusters project has again seen us working with Wise Water,

exploring the joy of water, and of living near the sea, and using creativity to celebrate this.

- For our continued work on the Litter and Waste theme, we engage in regular clean ups, both on the school grounds, on the surrounding roads, and on our local beach, Howe Strand. We also have created, engaged in, and shared many initiatives to help our school community to become more aware of, and reduce their waste. We were particularly proud of our campaign called 'Little Things', which encouraged everyone in our school community to make small changes to reduce their litter and waste. We have worked extensively on our school grounds this year, making our area safer, cleaner, and more accessible to all, by upgrading our fence, and doing some landscaping work. We have installed information posters on birds in our local area, to increase awareness for all children.
- We also make a big effort to travel consciously in Gurraneasig. Two years ago, with the Support of Green Schools Ireland, we installed a bicycle shelter. This has encouraged lots of our pupils to cycle to school.
- Our school engages with the [SEAI Energy in Education](#) resources and energy management tools in order to monitor and report energy consumption.
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling policy in place, and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Our school resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment. Eg compostable bin bags
- Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places - made and maintained by our Green Schools Committee.
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment. - central to everything we do. The school have regular experts visit to share about the coast line and most recently we facilitated a visit from Inland Fisheries.
- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning; through our sensory garden, vegetable garden and regular visits to the local beach; Howe Strand.

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 ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.
- All school staff have completed training in the area of Restorative Practice, in order to support and affect positive student behaviour.

Economic Sustainability

- Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school through our Student Council.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles. We recently made decorated Wooden Christmas Decorations for a Christmas Fayre and also completed a 5km sponsored walk.
- Our school buildings are maintained to a high standard, with best practise in the area of sustainability in mind.

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 demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school. We have a celebration night annually where all of the school community gathers.

Teacher Competence

- Our Teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD. One of our Teachers has completed a course in Forest School Leadership.

Student Competence

- Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer to peer learning activities
- Our school has a Student Council/ Green Team who are involved in decisions about saving energy, recycling, organising ACTIVE Week and Bike Day.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 08/06/26.

Signed: [Signature], (Chairperson, BOM)

The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through our school website.

