

Scoil Chóca Naofa

Sustainability Policy

Introductory Statement

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

Rationale

Scoil Chóca Naofa aims to become a sustainable school by reducing our ecological footprint through adopting sustainable practises 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.

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.
- To monitor water usage and report wastage.

Implementation

Scoil Chóca Naofa 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 website 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 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, staff rooms and the school office. Waste bins are also provided and have black bags. Children and staff are encouraged to dispose of their waste correctly, for example to wash out yoghurt cartons before placing in the recycling bin.

- A compostable waste bin is provided. Staff are informed of what to compost during staff meetings. Waste from this bin is placed in the compost bin which produces food for the school garden.

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
- 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
- Monitor water usage and report wastage.

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 our 10th green flag- Global citizenship- food and biodiversity.

- *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.
- *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 daily.
- *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. Aladdin will be used to keep parents informed of school events etc. This cuts down greatly on the amount of paper being used by the school.

- *Clothing Drive:* The Parent Association hold clothing drives to recycle clothing (uniforms mainly).
- *Mobility:* The school community is working on improving mobility. Children are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school. WOW days will be reintroduced in Term 3 2022.
- *School Garden:* children have planted vegetable and flowers throughout the year.
- *Green Flag:* The school has been awarded 9 green flags. 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. and S.P.H.E. The school community will work together to develop the knowledge, skills, values and worldviews 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
- Continuous improvement, development and use of the school gardens.
- Children will participate in lessons throughout the year on areas of sustainability in the SESE curriculum

Roles and Responsibility

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

- Teaching staff
- Parents/guardians
- Board of Management
- Students

Implementation Date

This policy was implemented on 01 June 2024.

Timetable for Review

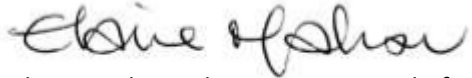
The operation of the new policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended every **four** years.

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 on the school website. It will be available for viewing on the school website

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 15th May 2024 and signed on their behalf by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Mahon', written in a cursive style.

Elaine Mahon, Chairperson, Board of Management.

Reference Section

- Green Schools website: [greenschoolsireland.org](https://www.greenschoolsireland.org)
- SESE Curriculum
- SPHE Curriculum
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website: <https://www.seai.ie/>