

# Sustainability Policy

## Naomh Mhuire N.S., Walsh Island



### Introductory Statement

Naomh Mhuire NS 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.

### 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.

### Implementation

The school will participate in Green Schools project and work towards obtaining Green Flags. The whole school community will be involved in the work of the Green Schools Committee through regular updates from the committee.

### 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.

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- 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. Recycling bins have clear bags. 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 in the staff room. Staff are informed of what to compost during staff meetings.

### Biodiversity

- Consult local community members on ways to develop 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
- Develop a 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 and Learn Together.
- Cleaners to regularly 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 the Green Flag
- 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 schools waste.
- Pupils are encouraged to use a reusable drinks container daily.
- 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 Connect: Parents will be 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.

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- Clothing Collection: The Parent Association hold clothing collection once a year to recycle clothing and fundraise for the school.
- Mobility The school community is working on improving mobility. Children are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school.
- 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 world-views necessary for people to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living by teaching sustainability.

### Roles and Responsibilities

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

- Teaching staff and Principal
- Pupils
- Green Schools Committee
- Parents/guardians
- Board of Management

### Implementation Date

This policy was implemented on 19/1/23 and 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 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: Seam Hylan  
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_