



St Patrick's Comprehensive School  
Sustainability Policy  
September 2022

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# 1. Introducing the guidelines

This policy covers the following areas:

- The commitment of St Patrick's Comprehensive School to be proactive in identifying and implementing opportunities for greater energy efficiency.
- The promotion of Green Schools in our school community.
- The promotion of greater awareness among all in our school community of the importance of a sustainability policy.

## 1.1 Aims

The Sustainability Policy of St Patrick's Comprehensive School aims to: -

- Reduce energy inefficiencies in school.
- Promote greater awareness of sustainability in all members of our school community.
- Encourage promotion of a single use plastic free school.
- Engage the support of parents, students and staff in delivering our sustainability policy.
- Engage with external agencies e.g. SEAI to identify sustainability opportunities for our school community.
- Engage with the DES Buildings Unit to source funding for sustainability projects.
- To give clear direction for sustainability projects in the school.
- To complement and inform our School Improvement Planning – Bealach 1 & 2.
- To engage with local community groups e.g. Shannon Tidy Towns.
- Promote Green School initiatives in our school community.

## 1.2 Scope

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management, staff, students and parents and in the context of the school's aims and values. This policy applies to all students of St. Patrick's Comprehensive School, to their parents/guardians and to all members of the school staff and management; and relates to all school activities both during and outside of normal school hours.

This policy recognises that there are many diverse sustainability needs in the school that are informed by the structural history of the school. The most recent extension (2017) incorporates many positive environmental attributes. The oldest section of the building (1966) requires significant structural investment to improve its negative impact on our environment. The 1977 section of the building also requires significant investment, however, it is scheduled to be demolished and rebuilt. It would be wasteful to invest in the 1977 section with a scheduled refurbishment. Furthermore, the refurbishment of the 1977 section may present opportunities for more economic investment in the 1966 section of the building.

Notwithstanding the infrastructural challenges, the school still has scope within this Sustainability Policy to make significant improvements in our engagement with and impact on our environment.

### **1.3 Relationship to school's mission, vision, aims.**

***Mission Statement:***

*St Patrick's Comprehensive School is committed to excellence.*

*We provide equality of opportunity for all students in a disciplined and caring environment.*

*We encourage individual students to achieve their full potential and to relate positively to one another and to the community in which they live.*

This policy has been developed in line with our mission statement which has the care of students at its core. The school believes that respect for the individual is essential to the smooth and efficient running of a school however the school also believes that as individuals we all have a collective responsibility to one another, the community in which we live, our local environment and the rest of the world. This policy is our school community's commitment to preserve and protect our environment for our current, past and future students, their families and communities.

### **1.4 Rationale**

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School values the rights and responsibilities of all staff and students. Our philosophy is that effective teaching and learning should take place in a school that both protects, preserves and promotes the environment.

### **1.5 Goals**

- To create a safe and sustainable learning environment.
- To identify opportunities for greater energy efficiencies.
- To make short term investments for long term savings.
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the importance of sustainability and the environment.

## 2. Policy Content

### 2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board of Management, in ratifying this policy, demonstrates its commitment to the school's sustainability policy. The Board of Management is also committed to promoting sustainability in school development projects. The Board of Management supports and encourages the work of the Green Schools and Sustainability/Infrastructure Committee in the school.
- Management is expected to facilitate and encourage GreenSchool and Sustainability initiatives that are in line with the Sustainability Policy.
- Students are expected to engage willingly with this Sustainability Policy in recognition that they have a vital role to play in preserving and protecting their environment.
- Staff are expected to lead by example and to promote this Sustainability Policy both in and out of class.
- Parents/guardians are expected to support the principles of the school's Sustainability Policy and to encourage their students to act in a manner that demonstrates an awareness of the importance of sustainability for us all.
- The Green Schools Committee will continue to promote student voice in implementing this Sustainability Policy.

### 2.2 Identified needs

- Reliance on oil boilers in the older sections of the buildings. (SEAI)
- Insufficient roof insulation in older sections of the building. (SEAI)
- Absence of electrical monitoring and measurement systems. (SEAI)
- Determine if maximum Import Capacity for the school (MIC) is appropriate. (SEAI)
- Publish an updated Display Energy Certificate. (SEAI)
- Review utility rates secured by the school. (SEAI)
- Lighting upgrades throughout the older sections of the school. (SEAI)
- Reduce electricity consumption during holiday periods and weekends. (SEAI)
- External wall insulation. (SEAI)
- Thermostats in various zones. (SEAI)
- Lighting in new building needs attention as automatic switch on/off not functioning in all rooms.
- Eliminate single use plastic in school. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)
- Reduce paper by reducing printing and photocopying. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)
- Reduce energy use by turning off lights/computers. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)

- More effective recycling – separation of waste. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)
- Use more environmentally friendly resources eg white board markers. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)
- Development of ‘green spaces’ around the school. (Green Schools & Bealach Infrastructure Committee)

## 2.3 Action Items

Ref	Identified Need	Proposed Action	Opportunity	Budget Cost	Responsibility
01	Absence of electrical monitoring and measurement systems.	Install low cost electrical monitoring and measurement system	Savings of up to 10% possible	A clamp on meter can cost €200-€400	Principal, Caretakers, AP II
02	Publish an updated Display Energy Certificate	Action project for TY/Green Schools	Gives a good benchmark which the school can improve from.	No/Low	TY coordinator/ Green Schools coordinator. Supported by AP II
03	Determine if maximum Import Capacity for the school (MIC) is appropriate	Monitor and record from Action 01 & 02. Engage with electricity supplier.	Potential cost savings of €2500-€3000 per year.	No/Low	Principal, Caretakers, AP II
04	Reduce electricity consumption during holiday periods and weekends. Reduce energy use by turning off lights/	Awareness campaign. Signage. Engage with IT support team automatic switch off. Energy Leaders in Teaghlaachs.	Reduce electricity usage by 10%	No/Low	Whole school.

	computers.				
05	Thermostats in various zones.	Engage with SEAI for advice and support. Source 3 quotations. Identify areas for zoning and priority.	10% savings in thermal energy use in older sections.	Medium	Board of Management, Principal, Sustainability/ Infrastructure Committee, Caretakers, AP II
06	Insufficient roof insulation in older sections of the building.	Engage with SEAI & Buildings Unit re roof insulation for 1966 section.	Reduce oil consumption by 15%	€10-€15 per m2	Board of Management, Principal, Sustainability/ Infrastructure Committee, Caretakers, AP II
07	External wall insulation	Engage with SEAI & Buildings Unit re wall insulation for 1966 section.	20% reduction in thermal energy use.	€10-€15 per m2	Board of Management, Principal, Sustainability/ Infrastructure Committee, Caretakers, AP II
08	Reliance on oil boilers in the older sections of the buildings.	Opportunity to engage with Buildings Unit & Design Team during planning for 1966 refurbishment.	Cost savings and CO2 emissions savings.		Board of Management, Principal
09	Review utility rates secured by the school	School already reviews utility bills and will continue to try to secure best rates.			Principal
10	Lighting upgrades throughout the older sections of the school.	1966 ground floor electrical issues to be reviewed as part of 1977 refurb.	Up to 75% reduction in lighting energy.		Board of Management, Principal
11	Reduce paper by reducing printing and photocopying.	Greater use of Teams to share notes and resources with students.			Whole School Principal IT AP II

		<p>Investigate Communication Tool with VSware to eliminate printing and posting.</p> <p>Engage with printing and photocopying service providers for monitoring and measurement tools for staff &amp; students.</p>			
12	Development of 'green spaces' around the school.	Engage with Tidy Towns Sustainability Project.			Green Schools Infrastructure Committee Principal
11	Eliminate single use plastic in school.	Water fountains available. Alternative to plastic bottled water sourced. Awareness campaign for Comptastic Water Bottles.			Green Schools Canteen
12	More effective recycling – separation of waste.	Alternative bins? Awareness campaign.			Caretakers Green Schools Whole School

### 3. Review

- Sustainability Policy Actions to be identified and reviewed by Bealach Infrastructure Committee at scheduled School Improvement Planning Meetings.
- Green Schools to engage with Principal when proposing action.
- Principal to liaise with Buildings Unit, Design team and Board of Management.
- Sustainability Policy to be reviewed every two years.



## **4. Appendix**

**4.1** SEAI Report.

**4.2** Action Plan Template.

This policy was ratified by our school's Board of Management on 26th September 2022.

Chairperson: Sean T Ruane \*

Date: 25/9/22

*\*Actual signed version is available in the Principal's Office*