

Sustainability Policy Statement



Ardee Community School
2024 - 2025

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://gov.ie - School Sector Climate Action Mandate (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 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.

Our vision

We have a vision of a School Community where equality, harmony and friendship exist. We accept and welcome that we are a community of diverse individuals. We work to ensure that each individual in our community may fulfil their purpose in life.

Our mission

Ardee Community School is a partnership of Trustees, Board of Management, Parents, Students, Staff and our local Community. We value the on-going input of all our partners in the life of our School.

- We aim to provide the best educational environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. We aim to manage this with fairness and firmness.
- We recognise the individuality of our Students. We provide a broad curriculum designed to meet their individual needs and to help them to maximise their potential.
- We help our Students to have a healthy, wholesome and confident self-image and to develop positive relationships through our curriculum and our extra-curricular programme.
- We endeavour to co-operate with parents and religious leaders of all denominations to encourage the development of religious, moral and spiritual values in each Student.

Our Ethos

The school is a co-educational, multi denominational one which caters for students of all abilities under the characteristic spirit (included in the admissions policy) determined by our Trustees. There are currently over 1,300 students enrolled in the school.

Our school's vision, mission and ethos already align Sustainable development goals 3,4,5,10 & 16. Our aim will be to incorporate as many of the SDG's into the vision and mission statements of our school as possible.



Whole School Approach to Sustainability



Our school aims to adopt this Sustainability Policy Statement which clearly details the aims and objectives of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in our school, its relationship to the vision and mission of the school.

- Our school is beginning to recognise Education for Sustainable Development as a cross-curricular theme, and we aim for this to be co-ordinated effectively in our school.
- Opportunities to introduce and address sustainability in the classroom, across all subjects will be introduced and increased.
- All our school policies are aligned to some of the principles of sustainable development.
- We have begun to compile resources to assist in the teaching of sustainability and we aim to develop these to ensure they are sufficient at all levels and are relevant to our curriculum.
- Our school will endeavour to carry out self-evaluation of our teaching practices in the area of sustainable development.
- Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network.
- Our school keeps up to date with developments in ESD including by being registered for the quarterly ESD 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 and have been awarded green flags in the areas of litter and waste, energy, water and travel. We are currently working towards achieving a green flag award for biodiversity.
- Our school has a Green Team comprising staff and students whose role is to engage in activities that promote awareness of Green School initiatives in the school. These include our cleanest base competition promoting proper recycling and waste management in our classrooms as well as peer led awareness campaigns where students deliver classes to younger groups about correcting recycling practice and single use plastics. They also are involved in litter picking, gardening on the school grounds, planting trees and flowers, sewing seeds and creating signage highlighting native flora and fauna. We run an energy waste awareness initiative called 'Flip the Switch' where students and teachers monitor and aim to increase our energy saving habits in the school. Some of our senior cycle students engaged with the YEA programme this year designing a mural on the theme of biodiversity.
- We aim to be engaging with the SEAI Education & Youth Programme's curriculum linked energy Resources, pupil Workshops and teacher CPD in the 2025-2026 school year.
- Our school engages with the [SEAI Energy in Education](#) resources and energy management tools in order to monitor and report energy consumption.
- Our school engages with Take 1 programme, Education for sustainability climate literacy programme and their resources, YEA (Young environmentalist awards), Nature heroes, TY community project on climate action, Shared Education for Positive Education programme (SEPI) and Junk Kouture in the area of sustainable development.
- Our school has a recycling policy in place which we aim to expand to make it more comprehensive and cohesive. We use some recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible but aim to increase this to a higher level aiming to ensure our resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment.
- Our school has policies in place in respect of water conservation, waste and recycling practices and energy.

- We are currently developing and improving our information displays on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places.
- Our school promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.
- Our school garden is a small enclosed area connected to the ASD suite that is used for outdoor learning by our ASD students. In the future we would like to promote and facilitate more outdoor learning for the wider school population.
- Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity on our grounds, we have a number of bug hotels, student have made and decorated bird boxes and are working on making bat boxes. Swift boxes were installed on our school sports hall last year. We also have designated wild areas, a variety of native hedge rows and trees and pollinator friendly planted areas.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school partaking in the green school bike week.
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education, Take 1 programme, Education for Sustainability climate literacy programme and ECO UNESCO. We are aiming to engage with the World Wise Global Schools programme next year.

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 community, we would like to expand on this to prepare them to be part of a global community.
- Our school engages with ECO UNESCO on the YEA programme, Education for Sustainability climate literacy programme and SEPI on the cross border programme. We hope to include Global Citizenship Education programmes such as World Wise Global Schools or other programmes working in this area in the near future.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.

Economic Sustainability

- A non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources is modelled in our school's allocation of its resources.
- Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school. We have a very active student council and our school facilitates student voice assemblies.
- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills including the TY mini company.
- Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles.
- Our school buildings are maintained to a high standard, with best practise in the area of sustainability in mind.
- Our school educates on, and promotes the principles of, a circular economy.

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 ethos, in tandem with the curriculum, strives to prepare students for life in an increasingly multicultural society.
- Our school demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school.
- Our school has an active role in supporting cultural diversity both within the school itself, and in the wider school community.

Teacher Competence

- Our Teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD, undertaking CPD in the Take 1 programme and we aim to engage with WWGS in the next academic year for further CPD. Relevant CPD opportunities are shared with staff.

Student Competence

- Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer to peer learning activities

- Our students are encouraged and supported to undertake action orientated projects such as the YEA and Nature Hero awards, as well as the TY community project, Gaisce and the TY Enterprise programme.
- Our school has a Student Council, a Sustainability Committee and a Green Team who are involved in decisions about biodiversity, litter and waste management, energy usage and water conservation in our school, Packaging options and single use plastic usage in our canteen, and policy making in our school.
- Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community action on sustainability projects including the DEE Hub which is a local not for profit community resource.

Goals

The self-assessment tool questionnaire highlighted specific areas where immediate focus was needed and so we have included these areas in our goals below.

We would also like to achieve our Green Flag for biodiversity by 2027.

Whole School	
1. Adopting a whole school approach to sustainability using this policy.	
2. Encourage more cross-curricular connections with ESD.	
3. Include the principles of sustainable development in our school policies.	

Environmental Sustainability	
1. Create prominent and accessible displays on information on sustainability and sustainable practices in our school.	
2. Engage with the SEAI's education and youth programme	
3. Review and improve our procurement practices to ensure consideration of their impact on the environment.	
4. Expand our outdoor learning possibilities with a dedicated area on the grounds - this will be a long term goal.	

Social Sustainability - we scored quite well in this area.	
1. Engage with Global Citizenship education programme like World Wise Global Schools.	

Economic Sustainability - we scored quite well in this area.	
1. Aim to improve the circular economy of our school with particular emphasis on the uniform and books.	

Cultural Sustainability -- we scored quite well in this area and so our aim is to maintain our current trend.	
--	--

Teacher Competence - This was our lowest scoring area,.	
1. Increase awareness of sustainability within our current curriculum.	
2. Expand and highlight resources for all subjects to encourage and improve on embedding sustainability in our teaching practice.	

Student Competence	
1. Increase the global aspect of our students actions linking to more international projects/programmes.	

Implementation and review

This Statement was implemented on 12/05/2025. To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed every 2 years.

This policy was presented to the Board of Management on 13th May 2025 for ratification at their next meeting in June 2025.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the BOM

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____