



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.

Vision, mission and values

We are committed to the inclusive and equality-based values laid down in the Educate Together Charter and Mission Statement, and the Louth Meath ETB core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect. Ballymakenny College is learner-centred, equality-based and democratically run. This means that all members of the school community, whatever their social, cultural or belief background, work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

Our vision is for an equality-based model of second-level school; one that places the student at its centre and is run as a participatory democracy, with respectful partnership between parents, students, staff and school management. We aim to create a vibrant, welcoming school community with positive teacher-student relationships, in which every student feels a real sense of belonging. Each student is encouraged to explore their full range of abilities and supported to reach their full academic and social potential, whatever their background and identity.

Our equality-based and multi-denominational ethos provides a strong moral, ethical and spiritual framework for the whole school community that informs teaching and learning and all policies and practices in the daily life of the school.

Students follow an ethical education curriculum, which includes learning about different religions and belief systems, equality and justice issues and an ethical approach to the environment. In line with our equality-based, ethical and democratic ethos, our school is committed to embedding and modeling sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Ballymakenny College aims to provide an education that will enable all students to contribute meaningfully

to their communities, embrace the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society and develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to live, learn and work in the 21st century.

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, its relationship to the vision and mission of the 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 carries out regular self-evaluation of our teaching practices in the area of sustainable development.

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 takes an active part in the Green Schools Programme. Our school was awarded a Green Flag award in 2019, and another in 2024. We are currently working towards a third Green Flag award. The Team consists of staff and students. The team's role is to promote sustainable practices within the school, and to identify areas for improvement.
- Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling system in place, and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Our school has systems in place in respect of water conservation, waste, food waste, single use plastics, and energy use.

- Our school resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment where possible.
- Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places.
- Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.
- Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning and biodiversity in our school garden.
- Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school.
- Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education through our Sustainability Week every 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 addressing and raising awareness of community problems at local level.
- Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community.
- Our school engages with Global Citizenship Education programmes such as World Wise Global Schools.
- The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.
- The school behaviour system supports and cultivates positive student behaviour, and respectful relationships between staff and students.

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 through the student council.

- Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills, through 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. E.g., the purchase of solar panels
- 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.

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
- Our school has a Student Council and Green Schools committee
- Our students are encouraged to take part in volunteering opportunities.
- Our students are involved in project-based learning around real-life problems in the local community

Goals

Ballymakenny College's sustainability goals are outlined below:

- Reduce general waste production, paper consumption, and rainwater pooling.
- Increase use of renewable energy
- Incorporate the 17 SDGs into Junior Cycle Schemes of work
- Introduce a uniform swap initiative to recycle clothing
- Increase staff/student awareness of the 17 SDGs
- Achieve 3 Green Flag Awards
- Establish and run a volunteering trip abroad
- Explore the possibility of introducing Climate Action and Sustainable Development as an LC subject.

Availability of Policy

This policy is available on the school website at www.ballymakennycollege.ie

Success Criteria & Monitoring

The Statement was devised in consultation with the students, parents, staff, management and Board of Management of Ballymakenny College. It will be reviewed regularly as part of the normal Whole School Development Planning review cycle. If necessary, it may be reviewed at any time considering changing circumstances and/or changing legislation. Any amendments which need to be made will be in keeping with the general philosophy of the school. Any suggested amendments/improvements will be communicated to the Principal or Deputy Principals who will consult with all partners.

Signed: *Brid Rocks*

Date: 19th of June 2025

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Alan Mynes*

Date: 19th of June 2025

(Principal)