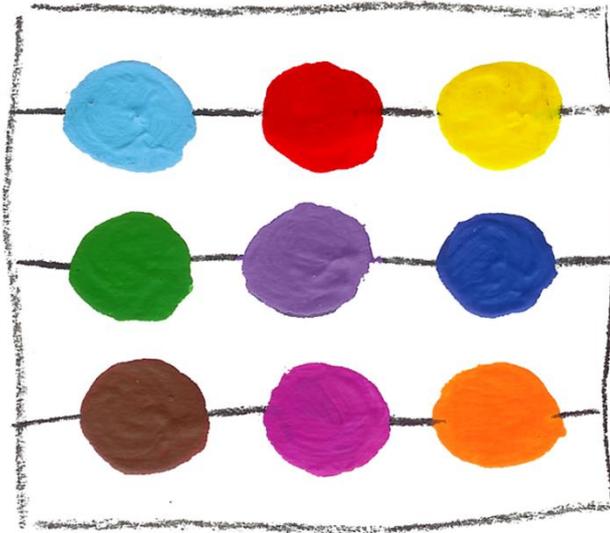


# Sustainability Policy



*Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.*

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS) relating to Assessment. It is intended to help the school community, including staff, parents, guardians and other relevant parties to understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Authors</b>
May 2021	First version of policy	Board of Management

**School Contact Details**

**Principal:** Mel Thornton

**Board of Management Chairperson:** Eric Hurley

**School Phone Number:** 021-4375616 or 087-7453659

**Address:** Carrigaline Educate Together National School  
Kilnagleary, Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

# Sustainability Policy

## Introductory Statement

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

## Rationale

Carrigaline Educate Together NS 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.

## Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

Sustainability is central to the ethos of Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. and the ethos of Educate Together through the teaching of Ethics and Environment in the Learn Together programme.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Skills and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- **Equality based** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

*Information taken from the Educate Together website [www.educatetogether.ie](http://www.educatetogether.ie)*

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: *Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.*

## **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**

The school will continuously participate in Green Schools and work towards obtaining Green Flags. Furthermore, every class will participate in regular Ethics and the Environment lessons from the Learn Together. The whole school community will be involved in the work of the Green Schools Committee through regular updates at assembly, the school newsletter 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 and Learn Together.
- 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. 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. Waste from this bin is placed in the wormery in 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
- 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
- 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 and Learn Together.
- Caretaker to regularly monitor water usage and report wastage.
- The school harvests rainwater using tanks that are underneath the basketball courts.

## **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 for Water.

We take part in the Carrigaline Tidy Schools Art Competition which all classes take part in.

## **Recycling**

### *Recycling Paper 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.

### *Compost Bins*

The teacher's staffroom is also equipped with compost bins in order to set a good example to the younger members of the school and to reinforce the message that everyone is doing his/her part in caring for the environment.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Text-A-Parent with Aladdin Schools**

Parents will be texted or 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.

## **Clothing Drive**

The Parent Association regularly hold clothing drives 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. The school's Active Team Partnership (ATP) committee are working on this.

## **School Garden**

A school garden has been set up where children have planted vegetable and flowers throughout the year.

## **Green Flag**

The school has been awarded its first and second Green Flag for the themes of Litter and Waste and Energy.

The school will now begin to focus on its third Green Flag with the theme of Water. 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., S.P.H.E. and the 'Ethics and the Environment' strand of the Learn Together Ethics Curriculum.

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.

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 and the aspiration to be rewarded further Green Schools' flags.
- Continuous improvement, development and use of the school gardens.
- Children will participate in lessons throughout the year on areas of sustainability in the SESE and Learn Together curriculum.

## **Roles and Responsibility**

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

- Teaching staff
- Parents/guardians
- Principal

- Board of Management
- Students
- Student Council

### **Implementation Date**

This policy was implemented on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May.

### **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 in the next School Communication, via Aladdin. It will be available for viewing on the school website and a copy will be available to all staff on Google Drive.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRPERSON of the BOM

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

## **Reference Section**

Green Schools website: [greenschoolsireland.org](https://greenschoolsireland.org)

Learn Together curriculum

SESE Curriculum

SPHE Curriculum

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland website: <https://www.seai.ie/>