

Pobalscoil Neasáin

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 is to outline how Pobalscoil Neasáin promotes sustainability and climate action through its teaching and learning, school culture, leadership, facilities management, and engagement with the wider community.

Sustainability is understood as meeting the needs of the present while safeguarding environmental, social, cultural and economic resources for future generations

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including:

- Students
- Staff
- Board of Management
- Parents and Guardians
- Visitors and external partners

The Board of Management will seek to ensure that decisions made in respect of the school are consistent with the principles outlined in this policy.

Vision, mission, and values

Vision

Pobalscoil Neasáin strives to be an inclusive, forward-thinking learning community where every student is empowered to reach their full potential and contribute positively to a fair, sustainable and resilient society, both locally and globally. We believe that educating young people for sustainability is an essential part of preparing them for life, work and citizenship in the twenty-first century.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a caring, safe, and supportive environment in which the partnership of staff, students and parents enables all learners to achieve their full potential while nurturing respect, wellbeing and responsibility for one another and for the natural environment. Pobalscoil Neasáin recognises that sustainability is not a standalone initiative but an integral part of our commitment to educational excellence, inclusion, wellbeing and active citizenship.

Values

The work of Pobalscoil Neasáin is guided by our core values of Meas, Díograis and Dea-chroí.

Meas (Respect)

We recognise the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual and foster an inclusive, equitable and respectful school community. We encourage students to appreciate diversity, value human rights and contribute positively to society.

Díograis (Commitment and Endeavour)

We encourage students to strive for excellence, engage actively in their learning, and take responsibility for addressing social, environmental, and economic challenges at local and global level.

Dea-chroí (Kindness and Compassion)

We promote empathy, kindness and care for others while nurturing a sense of responsibility for the natural world and future generations.

Guided by these values, the school also promotes:

- Responsible citizenship and stewardship
- Collaboration and partnership
- Environmental awareness
- Community engagement
- Social justice and inclusion

Whole School Approach to Sustainability

Pobalscoil Neasáin is committed to a whole-school approach to Education for Sustainable Development. To support this commitment:

- Sustainability will be promoted across all aspects of school life.
- Education for Sustainable Development will be recognised as a cross-curricular theme.
- Opportunities to explore sustainability will be identified across all subject areas.
- Sustainability principles will inform policy development and school planning where appropriate.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to engage in action-based learning experiences relating to sustainability.
- Staff will be encouraged and supported to participate in professional learning relating to sustainability and climate action.
- The school will engage with national initiatives and resources that support sustainability education.
- Sustainability progress will form part of the school's ongoing self-evaluation processes.

Environmental sustainability

Pobalscoil Neasáin is committed to reducing its environmental impact and promoting environmentally responsible behaviours. The school will:

- Work towards active participation in the Green-Schools Programme.
- Implement and maintain a whole-school recycling system.
- Promote the responsible use of energy, water, and other resources.
- Engage with SEAI educational programmes and supports where available.
- Encourage sustainable transport, including walking, cycling, and public transport.
- Promote biodiversity through planting initiatives and habitat development where feasible.
- Explore opportunities for outdoor learning.
- Display information and educational materials that encourage sustainable practices.
- Encourage students and staff to take active roles in environmental initiatives.

Social Sustainability

Pobalscoil Neasáin recognises that sustainability includes creating a fair, inclusive, and supportive school community. The school will:

- Promote student wellbeing and positive mental health.

- Foster an inclusive environment that respects diversity and equality.
- Support the participation of all students, including those with additional educational needs.
- Encourage active citizenship and student voice.
- Support student leadership through structures such as the Student Council.
- Develop students' understanding of global citizenship and social responsibility.
- Build partnerships with parents, local organisations, and the wider community.

Economic Sustainability

The school seeks to model responsible use of resources and encourage students to understand sustainable economic practices. The school will:

- Use resources responsibly and efficiently.
- Encourage responsible decision-making in relation to resource use.
- Promote enterprise, innovation, and financial awareness through curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Support learning about ethical consumption and the circular economy.
- Ensure fundraising activities reflect ethical and sustainable principles.
- Maintain school facilities in a sustainable and cost-effective manner.

Cultural Sustainability

Pobalscoil Neasáin values the rich cultural diversity of our community and seeks to promote understanding, belonging and participation. The school will:

- Foster positive relationships and mutual respect.
- Celebrate cultural diversity within our school community.
- Promote awareness and appreciation of local, national, and global cultures.
- Encourage participation in cultural, artistic and community activities.
- Strengthen links between the school and the wider community.

Existing Strengths

The school recognises and builds upon existing practices that contribute to sustainability, including:

- Strong student leadership structures.
- Inclusive educational practices and supports.
- Wellbeing initiatives that promote positive relationships and resilience.
- Community partnerships and charitable activities.
- The effective use of digital technologies to support communication and reduce unnecessary paper use.
- Co-curricular and extracurricular programmes that encourage responsibility, leadership, and active citizenship.

Teacher Competence

Pobalscoil Neasáin will support staff in developing knowledge, skills, and confidence in the area of sustainability through:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Sharing of good practice.
- Participation in relevant networks and initiatives.
- Access to ESD resources and supports.

Student Competence

Students will be encouraged to:

- Participate in peer learning opportunities.
- Undertake action-oriented sustainability projects.
- Contribute to decision-making through student leadership structures.
- Engage in community-based initiatives.
- Develop the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to contribute to a sustainable future.

Sustainability Leadership and Governance

The Board of Management will oversee the implementation of this policy.

A Sustainability Team, including student representation where appropriate, will:

- Coordinate sustainability initiatives.
- Monitor progress towards school sustainability goals.
- Promote awareness and participation throughout the school.
- Review priorities annually.
- Provide an annual update to the Board of Management.

Sustainability Goals 2026-2028

Pobalscoil Neasáin aims to:

Goal 1

Establish and successfully implement a whole-school recycling programme by June 2027.

Goal 2

Develop a student-led Sustainability Committee or Green Team by December 2026.

Goal 3

Conduct an annual sustainability audit and present findings and recommendations to the Board of Management.

Goal 4

Work towards participation in the Green-Schools Programme and identify a suitable Green-Schools theme for implementation.

Implementation and review

This policy will be implemented through ongoing collaboration between students, staff, parents, school leadership, and the Board of Management.

Progress towards the school's sustainability goals will be reviewed annually.

The policy itself shall be reviewed every year, or earlier if required by changes in legislation, Department of Education guidance, school priorities, or emerging best practice.

Signed:

Tom O'Hare

Chairperson, Board of Management

Date ratified: 28/09/2026