



# Sustainable Environment Policy (ETSSW)

*School Address: The Glebe, Wicklow Town*

*Roll number: 68345R*

*School Patron/s: Educate Together*

## INTRODUCTION

At Educate Together Secondary School Wicklow (ETSS Wicklow), we encourage students and staff to think about the environment and how their actions impact upon their local communities, as well as the global environment. We aim is to make environmental awareness a central part of the life and ethos of the school and work to ensure that the school itself is as sustainable as it can be. We aim to ensure that students have the necessary skills and knowledge to understand environmental concerns and the need to take care of the environment now and in the future.

## AIMS

- To understand our impact on the environment
- To become more aware of the impact of air, water, waste and litter pollution on the environment
- To explore how we can improve our environment for future generations through energy and water conservation, reducing waste, composting, recycling and reusing
- To develop a sense of collective responsibility for ownership of the classroom and school environment
- To promote an informed and caring attitude for local, national, European and global communities
- To enable students to fully participate in debates about environmental issues
- To encourage curricular and co-curricular activity promoting a sustainable environment at the school

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Department of Education:** (a) Reviewing the school's energy use; (b) providing procurement structures that take into account sustainability and the environment;
- **Board of Management:** (a) reviewing the Sustainable Environment Policy; (b) Considering the environmental impacts of any new works for the school;
- **Principal & Deputy Principal:** (a) promoting environmental sustainability in the curriculum and co-curriculum; (b) providing training opportunities for staff to develop more knowledge on the issue of environmental sustainability; (c) linking the school with the wider community on issues of environmental concern for everyone; (d) promoting energy and water conservation in the school; (e) organising procedures for disposal of recyclable and non-recyclable waste; (f) liaising with the caretaker to ensure best practice for the environmental sustainability of the school grounds;
- **Teaching Staff:** (a) promoting the need for environmental sustainability in their lessons; (b) ensuring energy conservation in their classrooms (lights and projectors turned off when not in use);
- **SNAs:** ensuring energy conservation (lights and projectors turned off when not in use)
- **School Secretary:** Supporting sustainable practices in the school
- **Caretaker:** (a) Closing down the school at the end of the day and ensuring all lights are off; (b) overseeing waste management; (c) monitoring energy and water use; (d) ensuring cleaning staff are operating good energy practices;

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

- The use of paper to be reduced by using the Office 365 system for emailing; VSWare SMS system and the school website for communications;
- Printing and photocopying essential documents only;
- When writing, writing on both sides of pages;
- Where possible, encouraging pupils to share worksheets;
- Where possible, laminating frequently used documents, protecting them from damage and prolonging their use;
- Encouraging students to bring reusable water bottles to school, as opposed to disposable plastic bottles.
- Providing bins for general waste and for recycling;
- Organising groups of students to partake in litter picking around the school grounds from time to time;
- Paper Recycling Bins: (white) A recycling bin for paper is placed in the staffroom, office and in each classroom to ensure that any wastepaper not suitable for the scrap paper tray will be recycled.
- Litter Bins -General Rubbish: (red) 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.

## **LITTERING**

- Every member of the school community has a duty to dispose of waste properly.
- Every member of the school community is responsible for: (a) putting litter in a bin; (b) using recycling bins; (c) using resources thoughtfully; (d) reusing resources where possible.
- Bins are provided throughout the school to ensure sufficient availability for waste disposal;
- There are designated eating areas for students and staff with additional bins to help manage waste at break times;
- The school raises awareness of anti-littering amongst students and staff through school assemblies, SPHE lessons, and Tutor time.
- Any individual known to have littered the premises will be required to dispose of the litter correctly.

## **ENERGY CONSERVATION PROCEDURES (ELECTRICITY & WATER)**

- Switch off lights when they are not in use;
- Keep door and windows shut in cold weather except for ventilation purposes at break times;
- Turn off energy-draining appliances, for example, digital projectors, when they are not in use;
- Monitor the temperature and frequency of heating in the school and adjust it accordingly;
- Ensuring all systems work efficiently, and any breakages or leaks are resolved as a matter of high priority;
- Audit the amount of energy used each term;
- Display information around the school and in classrooms to ensure that pupils understand the importance of switching off lights, digital projectors and taps when they are not in use;
- Make all members of the school community aware of the link between energy use and financial costs;
- Conserve water by raising awareness of the importance of water conservation and carefully supervising areas where there are taps;
- Only fill kettles fully if needed;
- Ensure taps are never left running unnecessarily;
- Harvest rainwater for plants;

## **FOOD WASTE**

- Any food waste must go home in students lunch boxes (where possible);
- Students receive advise about the best foods to eat and the quantities needed;
- Caretaker to ensure any food waste is collected and disposed of correctly;

## **REUSE**

- Everyone is encouraged not to use tinfoil or cling-film in their lunches, to reuse plastic bottles for their drinks, conserve paper by writing on the back of sheets deemed 'waste' etc.
- Targeted Recycling Weeks throughout the year will be introduced where old phones, used batteries, ink cartridges and old clothes will be collected and sent to the relevant agencies or to the proper centre's to be recycled. Staff will keep recyclable items for art materials, i.e., toilet rolls, cardboard, paper, tinfoil, recycled bottle tops. Biscuit tins, plastic baby food containers etc. are used to store maths equipment. Jars are used for art materials;
- Lunchboxes and re-usable drink containers are reused for lunches and sent to Home Economics classes for students to use as lunchboxes for food made;

## **PHOTOCOPYING & SCRAP PAPER**

- It is policy for staff to photocopy only when essential and to photocopy on both sides of each page to reduce paper waste;
- Staff must also photocopy on black and white unless essential;
- Each classroom must have a scrap paper tray where used sheets can be put for students to use as rough paper in instead of using new pages;

## **SCHOOL GARDEN**

- A school garden has been set up where students can plant vegetables and flowers throughout the year;
- Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to contribute plants and flowers to enhance their school environment;

## **TRANSPORT**

- Reducing transport-related carbon emissions by encouraging the use of public transport;
- Take carbon emissions into consideration at the planning stage of school trips;
- Where possible, promote car-pooling;
- Poster campaigns on the impact of carbon emissions;
- Storage organised for student bicycles;

## **AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT**

- A Green Club has been formed and meets to discuss the school environment regularly;
- The school will work towards achieving a Green Flag in the future;
- The school is planning to introduce 'Green Hours' for every class where each class liaises with the Green Club on small projects to improve the school environment.

## **REVIEW & EVALUATION**

The next planned review: 2027-2028.