



Killina Presentation Secondary School

Sustainability Policy

Introductory statement

Killina Presentation Secondary School is a co-educational, voluntary secondary school formerly under the trusteeship of the Presentation Order, currently under the trusteeship of CEIST.

The school is an inclusive Christian community aimed at the holistic development of each individual. This commitment is understood within the terms of the CEIST charter which states that: "The educational needs of the students are identified and suitable programmes and curricula are provided to meet the breadth of needs identified so that all students can participate with dignity and confidence." As well as the mainstream classes, the school incorporates 3 classes of students with Moderate General Learning Disabilities (ModGLD), referred to as 4th year students, and 2 classes of students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Killina Presentation Secondary School is committed to providing an education for its students in a caring and supportive environment. In all cases, it is the school's aim to integrate all students socially and academically.

The school is based in a rural setting in Rahan, Co. Offaly, surrounded by farmland and adjacent to the Grand Canal Greenway. Such surroundings support the efforts of the school community to promote responsible citizenship, respect for the environment and good stewardship of the earth.

Aims

By introducing this sustainability policy, the school aims for the students, staff and all those in our school community:

- 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 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 lifestyle and participation in collective environmental decision making;
- to enable our students 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 students will acquire skills to help care for our environment immediately and have a long term impact; and
- to understand the actions that people can have on the environment.

Procedures and Guidelines to Reduce the School's Ecological Footprint

Overview

Our school keeps up to date with developments in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) including by being registered for the quarterly ESD Newsletter from the Department of Education.

Energy

- Reduce the use of energy consumption within the school by using resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
 - Majority of classrooms have lights on a sensor switch.
 - Promote a 'switch off and save' rule for technological equipment.
- Move to using solar panels.
- Include students in the process of developing and maintaining an energy efficient school through participation in Green Schools.

Waste

- Minimise rubbish and recycle waste throughout the school, as much as possible.
 - Students are consistently reminded to take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate manner.
 - Cardboard, paper and empty plastic bottles to go into recycling bins.
 - Recycling bins are provided in all classrooms, staff rooms and the school office.
 - Students and staff are encouraged to dispose of their waste correctly, for example to wash out yoghurt cartons before placing in the recycling bin.
 - Compostable waste caddies are provided for kitchens in the school. Waste from these caddies is placed in the large compost bin which generates compost for the school garden.

Biodiversity

- Continue to involve students in the planting, maintenance and development of the school garden areas, including the polytunnel.
- Provision of wheelchair accessible raised beds.
- Plant native plants and wild flowers that encourage and support the insect population, such as bees and butterflies
- Support our native birds (particularly during the winter months) by providing bird feeders on trees in the school garden areas.
- Plant vegetables and herbs that can be used for cookery in school and also brought home.

Water

- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
 - Use of 'push' taps that turn themselves off.
 - Use of water saving mechanisms in cisterns of school toilets.

Awards/Competitions/Initiatives

Green Schools

We are currently working as a whole school towards obtaining the Green Flag for Litter and Waste.

The aim of Green-Schools is to increase students' awareness of environmental issues through classroom studies and to transfer this knowledge into positive environmental action in the school and in the wider community. A seven-step process sees schools tackling the issues of waste and litter, water, energy, transport and more. Student involvement is a priority, and the award must be re-applied for every two years.

The Green Schools 7 step programme is outlined below:

1. **Green-Schools Committee:** The Green-Schools Committee aims to direct and address all phases of the Green-Schools Programme. It is the driving force of the programme and should ensure that all of the Seven Steps are carried out
2. **Completing Environmental Reviews:** The aim of the review is to identify the initial situation within the school regarding the current environmental theme.
3. **Implementing Action Plans:** The Action Plan aims to identify goals and provide a structured timetable for the reduction of the environmental impacts identified in the review.
4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Monitoring your Green-Schools programme will ensure that progress towards targets is checked, amendments made where necessary and success celebrated.
5. **Curriculum Work:** The aim is to link the theme of Litter and Waste to the curriculum work going on in the school.
6. **Informing and Involving:** To spread the Green-Schools message throughout the whole school and the wider community through ongoing publicity and 'Days of Action'.
7. **Green Code:** To state the objectives that demonstrate the school's commitment to environmentally friendly actions.

Sustainable Development Goals

Ireland's National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (2014-2020) aims to ensure that our education system contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future.

The Department of Education is committed to contributing to the national effort to implement the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals and sees Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as key to achieving these. Over the lifetime of this Statement of Strategy the department will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all through the SDG National Implementation Plan.

Killina Presentation Secondary School is committed to embedding the SDGs into curriculum planning across all departments throughout the school with particular focus on the Junior Cycle framework principles with explicit ESD relevance. We aim to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding in biodiversity and sustainability, by embedding the topics within many areas of our curriculum. Individual department curriculums will outline how the topics are embedded into the school's curriculum

All kitchens within the school (staffroom, resource centre and Home Economics rooms) have a compost caddy for food waste such as tea bags, apple butts, banana skins, peelings from potatoes and other vegetables and fruit.

Social Inclusion Initiative

This initiative involves TY students and 4th year (ModGLD) students in collaborative projects that promote learning for both groups.

- Benefits to 4th year students:
 - Communication and language skills are enhanced.
 - Peer to peer tutoring
 - Involved in an inclusive project.
- Benefits to TY students:
 - Gain a greater understanding of disability
 - See the 'individual' not the disability
 - Skill for life that filters out in to the wider community.

Collaborative projects include those with a focus on sustainability such as gardening and recycling. The school has purchased wheelchair accessible raised beds so that all students in the school can participate in gardening.

WorldWise Global Schools

Irish Aid's *WorldWise Global Schools (WWGS)* is Ireland's national Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme for post-primary settings. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of post-primary settings engaging in quality global citizenship education by providing a comprehensive range of supports.

Killina Presentation Secondary School has participated in The Global Passport Award. This is an EU recognised quality mark, acknowledging and celebrating the great work happening in schools in GCE. It offers schools a framework to integrate GCE into their whole-school community. It is a **self-assessed** and externally-audited accreditation and it is open to post-primary schools in Ireland. Schools rate their level of Global Citizenship activity under **6 categories** or passport 'stamps':

1. Curriculum
2. Extra-Curricular activities
3. Teacher Capacity & Engagement
4. Student Capacity & Engagement
5. School Leadership & Policies
6. Community Engagement

The total score achieved in all 6 categories/stamps will determine which of the three Global Passport Awards are awarded.

The school has achieved 2 awards:

- **The Citizen's Passport Award** - for school's emerging engagement with GCE (Bronze).
- **The Diplomatic Passport Award**- for school's established engagement with GCE (Silver)

TY Module on Global Citizenship

Transition year students complete this module over eight weeks. It includes topics such as the impacts of 'fast fashion'.

Junk Couture

Junk Kouture offers schools and students a creative way to become involved in active climate change initiatives, empowering them to lasting behavioural change. We are constantly evolving the educational materials available to both educators and students on issues of sustainability and circular economies to help them look beyond their Junk Kouture project and begin to apply the knowledge learned to all aspects of their lives.

Zambia Immersion Project

Killina Presentation Secondary School participates in a global schools partnership with Mahilo School in Kaoma, Zambia. This was initially set up by the Presentation Sisters, with whom both schools are affiliated.

Students in each school choose a common project topic to work on. Every two years, students from Killina visit the partnership school in Zambia where both groups of students present their topics to each other. In the past, project topics have included recycling.

Student Council

The Education Act, 1998 provided for the establishment of student councils, intending them to play an integral and important role in the school community. Student councils provide a representative structure through which students can debate issues of concern and undertake initiatives of benefit to the school and the wider community.

These issues may include those around sustainability. There are lines of communication between the Student Council and the Green Schools Committee, especially as some students are involved in both.

Amber Flag

The Pieta Amber Flag Initiative recognises the individual efforts to create healthy, inclusive environments that support the mental well-being of students at school.

Initiatives such as walks in nature and gardening can help to support positive mental health.

TY Enterprise

Sustainability is one of the factors students have to consider in completing their enterprise projects. Marks are awarded for products that are sustainable and have minimum impact on the environment in terms of both production and the kind of waste produced, as well as products that have a direct link to the environment such as wooden bird houses.

Clothing Drive

The Parents Association regularly hold clothing drives to recycle clothing and fundraise for the school.

Curriculum

The school views environmental issues as being fundamental to the curriculum. Environmental / Green issues are addressed throughout the school curriculum but particularly in CSPE, Science, Geography, Biology, Home Economics and Agricultural Science.

Reference Section

Green Schools website: www.greenschoolsireland.org

WorldWise Global Schools: www.worldwiseschools.ie

Amber Flag: <https://www.pieta.ie/how-we-can-help/education-training/amber-flag-initiative/>

Junk Kouture: www.junkkouture.com

Ceist: <https://www.ceist.ie/about-us/values/>

Department of Education: [ESD newsletter](#)