



St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School



Sustainability Policy

1. Introduction

St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School is committed to promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility as part of its wider mission to educate, care for, and empower young people. Sustainability is understood as caring for our environment, our community, and future generations through responsible actions, informed choices, and shared responsibility. This policy outlines how sustainability is supported and promoted across school life — through learning and teaching, daily practice, student leadership, and community engagement.

2. Rationale

All schools are required to adopt a Sustainability Policy under the School Sector Climate Action Mandate and in line with Ireland's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to 2030 Strategy.

Education for Sustainable Development supports students to develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of environmental and social challenges
- Skills to make responsible, informed choices
- A sense of agency and care for their local and global communities

Sustainability at St. Michael's Holy Faith is approached in a practical, inclusive and student-centred way, building on existing strengths such as the Green-Schools programme, SPHE, CSPE, wellbeing initiatives and student leadership structures.

3. Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the School

St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School places care, respect, inclusion and community at the heart of school life. Sustainability aligns naturally with this ethos by encouraging students to:

- Care for their environment and surroundings
- Respect shared spaces and resources
- Act responsibly within their community
- Develop confidence and leadership through positive action

Sustainable practices support student wellbeing, inclusion and pride in their school environment.

4. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

1. Promote awareness of environmental, social and economic sustainability
2. Encourage responsible use of resources within the school
3. Support student voice and leadership through sustainability initiatives
4. Embed sustainability across learning, teaching and everyday school life
5. Foster a sense of responsibility for the local and global community
6. Support positive environmental action in ways that are practical and achievable

5. Key Areas of Focus

5.1 Environmental Sustainability

Energy

- Encourage energy-saving practices (switching off lights, equipment, ICT)
- Promote awareness of energy use through Green-Schools activities
- Support energy efficiency in future upgrades where feasible

Waste & Recycling

- Promote correct use of recycling and general waste bins
- Encourage waste reduction and reuse of materials where possible
- Support initiatives such as uniform swaps, recycling drives and creative reuse in Art and TY projects

Water

- Encourage responsible water use throughout the school
- Promote awareness of water conservation through curriculum links

Biodiversity

- Support care for school grounds and local environment
- Encourage participation in biodiversity-related Green-Schools actions
- Promote respect for nature and outdoor spaces

Travel

- Encourage walking, cycling and public transport where feasible
- Promote sustainable travel awareness through Green-Schools campaigns

5.2 Social Sustainability

- Promote inclusion, respect and equality through SPHE, CSPE and wellbeing programmes
- Support student voice through the Student Council and Green-Schools Committee
- Encourage participation in community-based and charitable initiatives
- Recognise and support diverse student needs through inclusive practices

5.3 Economic & Cultural Sustainability

- Promote responsible use and sharing of resources
- Encourage ethical and sustainable practices in school activities and fundraising
- Support cultural awareness, respect and community engagement
- Encourage creativity and innovation through student-led projects

5.4 Creative & Community Sustainability

St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School recognises that sustainability extends beyond environmental responsibility to include social justice, cultural identity, creativity and community connection.

The school actively supports student participation in creative and community-based initiatives, including Junk Kouture and local projects that celebrate and support Traveller heritage and identity. These initiatives reflect the school's commitment to inclusive, student-centred and culturally responsive education.

Through engagement in these activities, students are supported to:

- Explore sustainability through creative reuse, design thinking and innovation
- Develop confidence, teamwork and leadership skills
- Celebrate identity, heritage and diversity within the school community
- Engage positively with their local community and wider society
- Understand sustainability as a balance between environmental care, social responsibility and economic awareness

The school values student voice and recognises that creative and community-based projects can be powerful vehicles for learning, wellbeing and inclusion. These initiatives help students to see sustainability as relevant, meaningful and connected to their own lives, while fostering pride, belonging and agency.

6. Implementation

Sustainability is implemented through:

- Ongoing participation in the **Green-Schools Programme**
- Curriculum links across subjects including SPHE, CSPE, Geography, Science, Art and TY
- Student leadership through the Green-Schools Committee
- Whole-school awareness initiatives and campaigns
- Staff collaboration and modelling of sustainable practices

The policy is designed to support **continuous improvement rather than perfection**, recognising the realities of school life and resources.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board of Management:** Ratification and periodic review of the policy
- **Principal & Senior Leadership:** Oversight and support for implementation
- **Green-Schools Committee:** Student-led sustainability actions and awareness
- **Staff:** Embedding sustainability in teaching and daily practice
- **Students:** Active participation and responsible behaviour
- **Parents/Guardians:** Support for sustainability initiatives where appropriate

8. Communication

This policy will be:

- Available on the school website
- Shared with staff and students
- Reviewed as part of Green-Schools and whole-school planning

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed **every 2–3 years**, or earlier if required, in line with:

- School Sector Climate Action updates
- Green-Schools themes and progress
- School development planning

Review Procedures:

This policy will be reviewed every three years. Practices and procedures, however, will be continually considered to ensure compliance and best practice.

Signed: John Berry
Chairperson

Date: 11/05/2026

Signed: Paul DeRo
Principal

Date: 11/05/2026