



St. Mac Dara's Community College

Sustainability Policy

St. Mac Dara's Community College through a comprehensive education programme, provides as far as possible, educational opportunities to meet the needs of each individual student. It is a multi-denominational, co-educational college. The following is the Mission Statement of St. Mac Dara's CC.

Mission Statement

"We, the community of this College, through a caring and collective approach, aspire to provide a broad-based education for all, to foster respect and dignity and to promote a safe and just environment by positively encouraging all to realise their potential."

School Ethos

As part of the DDLETB schools we also proudly endorse our school ethos which is underpinned by the core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Equality and Community. St Mac Dara's is a multi-denominational, co-educational school under the aegis of the Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education Training Board. The college recognises its obligation to all its students and its positive ethos is based on the quality of its relationships, both the professional relationships between teachers, the relationships between teachers and students and the relationships between teachers and parents/ guardian(s). This collaborative approach is reflected in the college's mission statement.

Introduction and Legislative Framework

Through cooperation and mutual respect between the partners in education, the students, teaching staff, parents/guardians and the Board of Management, we strive to ensure that each student achieves his/her full potential. The school reserves the right to adapt or modify this policy in response to emerging patterns of behaviour among students, reflective of society

This policy applies to students of the school from academic year 2026/2027 onwards.

This policy relates to the following legislation:

Sustainable Development Goal 4.7

“By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote 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”

This policy relates to, and should be read in conjunction with, other school policies including:

Child Protection Policy

Bí Cineálta Policy

Code of Positive Behaviour

School litter policy

Inclusion policy

This is not an exhaustive list of related policies.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice (RP) is about building positive relationships and taking a positive and solution-focused approach. St. Mac Dara’s CC have engaged at whole-staff level in an RP professional learning programme, in association with NUIM 2021 – 2024 and new members to the team are supported to develop the skills of RP. At all times the school, as a community endeavours to employ a restorative approach to promote positive behaviour and restore relationships when the need arises. RP is at the core of our school’s Code of Positive Behaviour. It creates an ethos of respect and inclusion in line with our core values and presents an opportunity for all involved to be accountable and responsible for their behaviour.

Inclusion of all students

St. Mac Dara’s Community College places a high value on respect and on embracing diversity which is central to the practices in the school. Our activities endeavour to meet the diverse needs of all our students.

Sustainability Policy Statement

Purpose

The purpose of this Sustainability Policy Statement is to outline how St Mac Dara’s Community College promotes sustainability and climate action through its teaching, daily practices and engagement with the wider community. Sustainability is understood as meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The 17 United Nations sustainable development goals guide our work. To achieve a better and more sustainable future for all, the goals help to understand what ESD is and their aim is to create a fairer better world. The focus includes global justice, climate breakdown, inequality and environmental issues.

Scope

Sustainability is a whole-school responsibility, applying to students, staff and the wider school community. Parents and guardians are encouraged to support this approach. The Board of Management ensures that decision-making aligns with sustainability and climate action principles.

Vision for Sustainability

St MacDara's Community College strives to be an inclusive, forward-thinking school where sustainability is embedded in learning, behaviour and community engagement. The school seeks to empower students to take informed and responsible action for a more sustainable future.

Whole School Approach to Sustainability

The school adopts a whole-school approach to sustainability, aligned with the School Sector Climate Action Mandate and the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

- Sustainability is embedded across the curriculum through cross-curricular teaching and learning
- Staff engage in Continuous Professional Development in Global Citizenship Education
- Participation in initiatives such as WorldWise Global Schools and the wider WWGS network
- Engagement in programmes such as the ISSN's Biodiversity Champions Programme
- Transition Year students participate in Development Education, including exploration of the 17 SDGs and visits to the Irish Aid Centre and workshops with external charities such as Trocaire
- Sustainability principles are reflected in planning, policy and daily practice
- Teachers are supported in accessing ESD and WorldWise Global Schools CPD and training opportunities

Environmental Sustainability

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to environmental sustainability through both practical action and student engagement.

- Participation in the Green Schools Programme, with support from South Dublin County Council
- A colour-coded recycling and waste management system across the school
- Ongoing development of effective waste management systems
- Composting areas and use of water butts to promote water conservation
- Refill water stations encouraging reusable bottle use
- Development of biodiversity initiatives, including rewilding areas and pesticide-free grounds
- Planting initiatives including native hawthorn planting, willow planting and use in weaving projects, and orchard development in partnership with the local Men's Shed
- A horticulture programme supporting hands-on environmental learning
- Biodiversity in Schools workshops and participation in initiatives such as the Nature Hero competition
- A sensory garden and outdoor classrooms used as active learning environments
- Promotion of sustainable transport, including walking and cycling

- Hens: We have introduced a sustainable small farmhold area for hens, with a foster home in place for the hens during the summer
- Bug hotels: A 'Grand Bugapest Hotel' is in place with more planned around the school environs

The school environment reinforces sustainability through visible initiatives such as an anti-waste mural, which acts as a stimulus for discussion and outdoor learning.

Students actively engage in environmental action through:

- Young Environmentalist Awards
- Let's Fix Fashion and Reloved fashion workshops promoting sustainable consumption.
- Partnership with Change Clothes to encourage circular fashion habits

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability is reflected in the school's inclusive, caring and community-focused ethos.

- Active engagement with community partners including Cheeverstown and the local Men's Shed through the Transition Year Community Care Programme
- Student participation in decision-making through the Student Council
- Promotion of global citizenship through programmes such as WorldWide Global Schools
- Inclusion initiatives including LGBTQIA+ awareness events, Stand Up to Bullying, and Show Racism the Red Card
- Provision of inclusive spaces such as the Suaimhneas room for reflection, meditation and prayer
- Wellbeing supports including a Soft Start programme
- Nurture space (opening September 2026)
- Emphasis on equality, respect and student wellbeing across all aspects of school life

Economic Sustainability

The school promotes responsible and sustainable use of resources.

- Practical learning opportunities help students understand sustainability in real-world contexts
- School initiatives encourage reuse, repair and reduction of waste
- Ethical and sustainable approaches are reflected in school activities and projects, including circular economy awareness through initiatives such as Reloved fashion and fair trade

Cultural Sustainability

The school promotes a culture of respect, inclusion and community engagement.

- Students are supported to develop confidence, respect and positive relationships
- The school prepares students for life in a diverse and multicultural society
- Strong connections with the local community are actively encouraged and sustained
- 2025/2026 was our first Culture fair celebrating diversity within our school community

Teacher Competence

Teachers are supported in developing their knowledge and skills in sustainability and ESD through ongoing professional learning opportunities, including Global Citizenship Education CPD.

Student Competence

Students are supported and encouraged to:

- Participate in peer learning and collaborative sustainability projects
- Engage in action-orientated initiatives and competitions
- Take leadership roles in sustainability through school structures such as the Student Council and participation in whole-school initiatives

Goals

The school is committed to ongoing development in sustainability. Key areas of focus include:

- Continued progress within the Green Schools Programme
- Further integration of sustainability across all subject areas
- Expansion of student leadership and participation in sustainability initiatives
- Strengthening of community partnerships
- Promotion of positive behavioural change in areas such as waste reduction and energy use

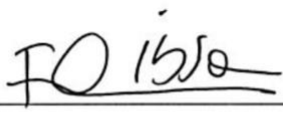
Implementation and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management in

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure continued development and alignment with best practice in sustainability and climate action.

Signed: 
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 10-09-26

Signed: 
Secretary of the Board of Management / Principal

Date: 10/09/26