



# **Bush Post Primary School**

## **Sustainability Policy**

February 2026



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## **1. Introduction**

Bush Post Primary School is proud to play an active role in addressing the challenges of sustainability and climate action. Guided by our motto "Ar Thrial Na Tuiscine" (In Search of Understanding), the school focuses on developing the whole person—academically, personally, socially, and spiritually—with core values of care, community, equality, and respect. We are committed to equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Bush Post Primary School recognises its responsibility to contribute positively to environmental protection, climate action, and sustainable development. As a post-primary school under the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB), the school is committed to embedding sustainability into all aspects of school life, including teaching and learning, school operations, and engagement with the wider community.

This policy supports the development of environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviours among students and staff, while ensuring compliance with national policy, LMETB guidance, and the Green-Schools Programme.

Through student-led projects such as Green Schools' Sustainability Team and Re-love Fashion and initiatives such as Green Schools' week, our school fosters a culture of responsibility, innovation, and care for the environment, the community, and future generations.

## **2. Bush Post Primary - Vision and statement of commitment to Sustainability**

Bush Post Primary School is committed to fostering a culture of sustainability where students are empowered to become informed, responsible, and active citizens who contribute to a more sustainable future. Sustainability is viewed as a shared responsibility and a key component of whole-school improvement.

Sustainability can be defined as *the ability to exist and develop without depleting natural resources for the future*. This Sustainability Policy outlines the school's commitment to advancing sustainability and climate action. Through a whole-school approach, we aim to prepare students for active roles as global citizens who can contribute to environmental, social, and economic sustainability. ESD aims to ensure that *"by 2030, all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace, global citizenship, and cultural diversity."* (UNESCO Sustainable Development Goal 4.7)

## **3. Legislative, Policy and LMETB Context**

This policy is informed by: - LMETB policies and guidance on sustainability and climate action - The Green-Schools Programme (An Taisce) - National education and environmental policy - The Climate Action Plan and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) principles.

Bush Post Primary School is committed to working with LMETB to support one of the five strategic goals set out in LMETB's Strategy 2022–2026, namely, to act sustainably in a manner consistent with a sustainable future and Ireland's Climate Action Plan.

## **4. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including students, staff, parents, and guardians. Decisions made by the school align with the principles outlined in this policy, and all stakeholders are encouraged to actively support its implementation.

## **5. Guiding Principles of Sustainability**

Bush Post Primary School's approach to sustainability is underpinned by the following principles: - A whole-school approach - Student participation and leadership - Continuous improvement - Environmental responsibility - Partnership with parents and the wider community.

Bush Post Primary School aims to:

- Create awareness: Use campaign materials and training to promote energy saving actions among staff and students thus embed sustainability into the culture and ethos of the school.
- Behavioural Change: Encourage staff/students to turn off lights and equipment when not in use thus promote respect for the environment and for others.
- Operational controls: Adjust heating schedules, turn down thermostats (19 degrees).
- Operate the school in an environmentally responsible and resource-efficient manner – for example, use of low-cost investments: LED lighting.
- Monitor and Report: Track progress, measure savings and report on achievements.
- Encourage student voice and leadership in sustainability initiatives.

### **Bush Post Primary School commits to being guided by the six actions that will support the strategy:**

1. To develop a Bush PP sustainability policy consistent with UN targets and Ireland's Climate Action Plan, including the specific targets set under that plan for LMETB.
2. Engage with staff on implementation of Bush Post Primary School's Sustainability Policy to enable them to contribute to LMETB's sustainability objectives.
3. Engage with learners on implementation of Bush Post Primary School's Sustainability Policy to enable them to contribute to LMETB's sustainability objectives.
4. Develop partnerships, including with SEAI, which can contribute to both Bush PP's and LMETB's sustainability objectives.
5. Ensure that Bush PP property is managed in a sustainable manner in line with LMETB's Sustainability Policy.
6. Reduce Bush Post Primary School's environmental impact in line with LMETB's Sustainability Policy.

## **6. Whole School Approach to Sustainability**

Sustainability and environmental awareness are integrated across subject areas where appropriate, supporting active learning and critical thinking.

Students are encouraged to take an active role in sustainability initiatives through the Green-Schools Committee and other leadership opportunities.

Staff are supported in promoting sustainable practices and engaging in relevant professional learning.

The school values collaboration with parents, local organisations, and community partners in advancing sustainability goals.

## **7. Green schools Programme integration**

The Green-Schools programme is a global environmental education initiative that empowers schools to integrate environmental issues from the curriculum into their daily operations, fostering sustainable practices throughout the school community.

- Bush Post Primary is proud to be a participant in the Green-Schools Programme. Having achieved four Green Flags – Litter and Waste, Energy, Water and Travel - the school is now working towards the

Biodiversity Theme Green Flag for 2026. Two dedicated Green School Sustainability Team's – Junior and Senior - comprising both staff and students' leads the way in promoting long-term, whole-school environmental action.

- Bush Post Primary School actively fosters a culture of care and responsibility for the natural environment with outside flower beds managed by students.
- Biodiversity is promoted through initiatives like the bug hotel and the adoption of a No Mow May policy.
- Where practical, learning and teaching is paper free.

This multifaceted approach ensures that sustainability is woven into the fabric of Bush PP equipping students and staff to lead by example in caring for the environment.

Bush Post Primary school have secured four Green Flags – Litter and Waste, Energy, Water and Travel. The school is now working towards the Biodiversity Theme Green Flag for 2026.

## **8. Key Sustainable areas in Bush Post Primary**

### **Economic Sustainability**

Economic sustainability at Bush Post Primary School focuses on promoting ethical practices, responsible resource management, and practical learning opportunities. We strive to ensure students are prepared for the future with an understanding of financial and environmental responsibility.

- Students are actively involved in decision-making processes through platforms such as the Student Council.
- The TY Mini-Company module provides students with practical experience in entrepreneurship, teaching them to develop and market products or services with an emphasis on ethical and sustainable principles.
- Fundraising activities reflect the school's commitment to ethical practices, ensuring alignment with its core values.
- The school buildings are maintained to a high standard, incorporating best practices in sustainability to optimize energy efficiency and environmental performance.

### **Cultural Sustainability**

Bush Post Primary School celebrates cultural diversity and promotes a sense of belonging for all members of the school community. Through our ethos and policies, we encourage students to embrace multiculturalism, foster respect, and build strong social connections.

- The school promotes mutual respect and positive social interaction, helping students build self-esteem and develop meaningful relationships with their peers.
- Through SPHE (Social, Personal, and Health Education) and RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education), students learn to navigate relationships, develop empathy, and communicate effectively in a diverse society.
- Community engagement is encouraged, with students actively participating in initiatives such as Return cans collection with Cooley Parish Council and partnerships with our local nursing home strengthening ties between the school and the wider community.

## **Energy**

The school will support whole-school sustainability goals for energy by promoting efficient energy use across all areas of school life. This includes reducing unnecessary electricity and heating use, maintaining buildings and equipment to maximise energy efficiency, and prioritising energy-efficient appliances and lighting. The school will encourage staff and students to adopt energy-saving behaviours, such as switching off lights and devices when not in use and will integrate energy awareness into teaching and learning where appropriate. Through regular monitoring of energy consumption and engagement with guidance from Louth Meath Education and Training Board, the school will work towards reducing its carbon footprint and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Bush Post Primary School is committed to sustainability. Rainwater is harvested and used in our toilet facilities, while solar panels generate renewable energy for the school. Smart meters are used to monitor and manage energy consumption, and there are plans to install a biomass heating system as a further step towards reducing our carbon footprint.

## **Waste and recycling**

Bush Post Primary school will support whole-school sustainability goals for waste and recycling by promoting responsible waste management practices throughout the school community. This includes reducing waste at source and encouraging reuse of materials. The school will promote correct waste segregation, support initiatives to minimise single-use items, and encourage sustainable purchasing practices. Awareness of waste reduction and recycling will be integrated into school activities and learning where appropriate. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will regularly review waste management practices to reduce environmental impact and foster a culture of sustainability.

The Green Schools Sustainability Team has built strong relationships with two local organisations, Glenmore AC and the Cooley Parish Committee. We have been provided with Re-turn bins and actively encourage students to place their bottles and cans in these bins. Representatives from the committee attend a collection on the first Saturday of every month to collect Re-turn bottles from the local community. All monies raised are donated to those in need within the community. In addition, we have run a battery collection campaign, with all collected batteries sent to Barretstown in support of their charity work.

## **Water conservation**

Bush Post Primary school will support whole-school sustainability goals for water conservation by promoting the responsible and efficient use of water across all areas of school life. This includes maintaining plumbing and facilities to prevent leaks, installing water-efficient fixtures where possible, and encouraging staff and students to use water thoughtfully. Water conservation awareness will be promoted through school activities and integrated into teaching and learning where appropriate. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will regularly review water usage and practices to reduce waste and support environmental sustainability.

Bush Post Primary school harvests rainwater from our roofs to use in our toilet facilities. Students are encouraged to bring in their own bottle and fill it from water filtering systems provided.

## **Biodiversity**

Bush Post Primary school will support whole-school sustainability goals for biodiversity by protecting, enhancing, and celebrating biodiversity within the school grounds and local environment. The school will encourage actions that support native plants and wildlife, including the creation and maintenance of habitats such as pollinator-friendly areas. Awareness of biodiversity will be promoted through school initiatives and integrated into teaching and learning where appropriate, fostering respect for nature and an understanding of

ecosystems. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school community will be encouraged to take shared responsibility for caring for and enhancing biodiversity.

The Green School Sustainability Team has successfully secured funding for a new reading garden. Funding has been approved for new planters and shrubs, with the permanent garden set to take shape in spring 2026.

The aim of the project is to encourage biodiversity in what was previously a barren space. In autumn 2025, temporary planters were installed along with a garden bench to begin transforming the area. Bulbs were planted, and the team also cleared and planted existing beds during the same period, laying the groundwork for future development. Funding was secured through ESD for a composter for the staff room. This will reduce food waste by 85% and provide compost for our school flower beds.

The Green Schools Committee carried out a survey to assess students' knowledge of biodiversity and based on the results, delivered biodiversity classes to all junior CSPE students.

### **Travel and transport**

Bush Post Primary school will support whole-school sustainability goals for travel and transport by promoting safe, active, and sustainable travel choices within the school community. This includes encouraging walking, cycling, carpooling, and the use of public transport where feasible, as well as supporting initiatives that reduce unnecessary car journeys. The school will promote road safety and travel awareness through school activities and integrate sustainable travel themes into teaching and learning where appropriate. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will work to reduce the environmental impact of school-related travel while supporting student and staff wellbeing. Bush Post Primary School arranges for speakers such as local counsellors to speak to students about the link between travel, transport and sustainability. On campus we have an EV charger for staff use.

### **Climate Action**

Bush Post Primary school will support whole-school sustainability goals for climate action by promoting practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase awareness of climate change across the school community. This includes reducing energy and resource use, supporting sustainable travel choices, and encouraging responsible consumption and waste reduction. Climate action awareness will be promoted through school initiatives and integrated into teaching and learning where appropriate. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will work collectively to reduce its environmental impact and empower students and staff to take positive action for the climate. In Bush Post Primary, the subject of climate action is taught, promoted and discussed in all subjects.

## **9. Curriculum links and learning opportunities**

The school recognises that sustainability is supported across the curriculum and will promote opportunities for learning that develop students' knowledge, skills, values, and responsibility in relation to environmental, social, and economic sustainability. These include:

### **Junior Cycle Science**

Sustainability is a core and recurring theme within Junior Cycle Science and is explicitly embedded across the three strands:

- **Earth and Space**
  - Climate systems, weather patterns and climate change.
  - Human impacts on Earth systems, including resource use and environmental change.
  - Understanding the evidence base for climate and environmental trends.
- **Chemical World**
  - Materials, their sources and life cycles.
  - Waste, pollution, and the environmental impact of chemical processes.

- Development and use of more sustainable materials and processes.
- **Biological World**
  - Ecosystems, biodiversity and interdependence.
  - Human activity and its impact on habitats and species.
  - The importance of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Students also develop sustainability-related skills through:

- Investigations and data analysis relating to environmental issues.
- Classroom discussions around scientific evidence, decision-making and responsible citizenship.
- The Nature of Science strand, which promotes informed and critical engagement with socio-scientific issues such as climate change and environmental policy.

### **Leaving Certificate Chemistry**

Sustainability is addressed through both content knowledge and applied scientific decision-making, including:

- The use, sourcing and environmental impact of fuels and energy resources.
- Green chemistry principles, including reducing waste, improving efficiency and minimising hazardous substances.
- Industrial and laboratory processes with a focus on:
  - safer chemicals,
  - reduced environmental impact,
  - and improved sustainability of chemical manufacture.
- Atmospheric chemistry and pollution, including the chemical basis of air quality issues.

Students also engage with sustainability through investigative work and data handling in relation to chemical processes and environmental effects.

### **Leaving Certificate Biology**

Sustainability is strongly embedded throughout the course, particularly in:

- Ecology and ecosystems, including:
  - energy flow,
  - nutrient cycles,
  - population dynamics,
  - and biodiversity.
- Human impacts on ecosystems, including habitat destruction, pollution and climate change.
- Conservation biology and sustainable management of natural resources.
- Food production systems and the biological implications of intensive versus sustainable practices.
- Public health and environmental health links, including water quality and environmental hazards.

Students are encouraged to evaluate scientific evidence and ethical considerations related to environmental protection and sustainable development.

### **Leaving Certificate Physics**

Sustainability is primarily addressed through the study of energy and applied physics, including:

- Energy resources and electricity generation.
- Renewable and non-renewable energy technologies.
- Efficiency, energy transfer and energy losses in real systems.
- The scientific principles underpinning climate-related technologies and monitoring systems.

Students analyse the physical limitations, benefits and trade-offs of different energy technologies and their role in addressing climate and sustainability challenges.

### **Leaving Certificate Agricultural Science**

In Agricultural Science (5th and 6<sup>th</sup> year LC curriculum) sustainability is pretty much the foundation of the course (from thriving biodiversity, to planting clover for nitrogen fixation, to organic fertilisers to L.E.S.S methods) Their Leaving Cert IIS project is also fundamentally based on carrying out sustainable practises that befit Irish Agriculture.

LCA Agricultural Science /Horticultural Science also has foundations in sustainability. Carrying out practises and planting that shows students are sustainable (composting and using the greenhouse for best practise).

### **Junior Cycle Geography**

Junior Cycle Geography supports sustainability by helping students understand how people and environments are connected. It raises awareness of issues like climate change and resource use, develops skills through fieldwork and investigation, and encourages responsible decision-making. Overall, it helps students become informed, active citizens who can contribute to a more sustainable future.

### **Junior Cycle CSPE**

Junior Cycle CSPE (Civic, Social and Political Education) contributes to sustainability by: Developing awareness of social, environmental, and economic issues such as climate change, equality, and responsible consumption. Encouraging active citizenship, where students take action on sustainability issues through projects and community involvement. Promoting critical thinking and ethical decision-making about how personal and collective choices affect the planet and society. Supporting the idea of sustainable development by linking rights, responsibilities, and global citizenship.

### **Cross-curricular and whole-school initiatives**

Including participation in programmes such as Green-Schools, Re-love fashion, Re-turn bins initiative and LMETB Inaugural Interschool's Sustainability Event.

In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will support inclusive, cross-curricular approaches that embed sustainability into teaching, learning, and school culture.

## **10. Roles and responsibilities**

### **Board of Management / Louth and Meath Education and Training Board**

The Board of Management / LMETB has responsibility for approving the Sustainability Policy and supporting its implementation in line with relevant legislation, national guidance, and organisational requirements.

- Provides governance, oversight, and strategic direction.
- Supports sustainability through ETB policies, guidance, and shared services.
- Ensures compliance with statutory, financial, and reporting requirements.

### **School Leadership**

School leadership is responsible for leading and coordinating the implementation of the Sustainability Policy, supporting whole-school engagement, and ensuring sustainability practices are embedded in school planning and review processes.

- Promotes and supports sustainability initiatives in line with ETB policy.
- Ensures alignment with school policies, SSE, and school improvement planning.

### **Teachers and Staff**

Teachers and staff are responsible for supporting the Sustainability Policy through daily practice, promoting sustainable behaviours, and integrating sustainability themes into teaching, learning, and school activities where appropriate.

- Integrate sustainability into teaching and daily practice.
- Model sustainable behaviours in line with ETB values and guidance.

### **Students**

Students are encouraged to take an active role in supporting sustainability initiatives, adopting responsible behaviours, and contributing to student-led actions that promote environmental awareness and responsibility.

- Engage positively with sustainability initiatives.
- Take responsibility for their actions and environment.
- Participate through Student Council and sustainability committees.

### **Parents and Guardians**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to support the Sustainability Policy by promoting sustainable practices at home, engaging with school initiatives, and supporting the school's sustainability goals.

- Support school sustainability initiatives
- Engage with communication and awareness activities

## **12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting**

The implementation of this Sustainability Policy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure progress towards whole-school sustainability goals. Responsibility for monitoring will be shared between school management, relevant committees, and the wider school community, with actions and initiatives reviewed annually. Data such as energy and water usage, waste reduction measures, and participation in sustainability initiatives will inform evaluation. Progress and outcomes will be reported to the school community through appropriate channels and will be used to guide future planning and improvement. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as required.

## **13. Communication of the Policy**

The Sustainability Policy will be communicated clearly and effectively to the entire school community to ensure shared understanding and collective responsibility. The policy will be made available to staff, students, parents/guardians, and relevant stakeholders through the school website and other appropriate communication channels.

Key aspects of the policy will be promoted through school assemblies, staff meetings, student leadership structures, and sustainability-related initiatives. Awareness of the policy will be supported through teaching and learning, whole-school activities, and visual displays within the school. In line with guidance from Louth and Meath Education and Training Board, the school will encourage ongoing engagement with the policy and promote active participation in sustainability actions across the school community.

## 14. Policy Review and Development Cycle

This Sustainability Policy will be developed and implemented in consultation with the school community and in line with national guidelines and Louth and Meath Education and Training Board requirements. The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, and at least every three years, or sooner where necessary due to legislative, curricular, or operational changes. The review process will consider feedback from staff, students, parents/guardians, and relevant stakeholders, as well as evidence from monitoring and evaluation of sustainability actions. Any amendments will be approved by school management and communicated to the school community. The policy will support continuous improvement in sustainability practices and will remain a living document, responsive to the evolving needs of the school.

## 15. Related Policies and Documents

This Sustainability Policy is informed by, and should be read in conjunction with, the following policies, strategies, guidance documents, and circulars:

- Louth and Meath Education and Training Board policies and procedures, including Health and Safety, Energy Management, Procurement, and Environmental policies
- Department of Education policies, circulars, and guidance, including:
  - *Climate Action Plan 2023 – Education Sector Actions*
  - *Circular 0015/2019* – Implementation of SPHE at post-primary level
  - *Circular 0038/2019* – Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice
  - *Junior Cycle Framework (2015)* – including Key Skills such as Being Creative, Being Literate, Working with Others, and Managing Myself
  - *Senior Cycle Programme Statements* where sustainability, citizenship, and environmental awareness are addressed
- Green-Schools Programme guidelines and thematic frameworks (Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity, Travel, Climate Action)
- Wellbeing Policy and Framework for Post-Primary Schools
- Health and Safety Statement and associated risk assessments
- School Development Plan / School Improvement Plan
- SPHE, CSPE, and Wellbeing plans
- Subject department plans supporting sustainability and environmental learning
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement
- Digital Learning / ICT Policy
- Admissions Policy and Inclusion / SEN Policy
- Local authority climate and environmental strategies, where relevant

## Board of Management Policy Consultation


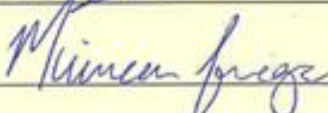
Please present this form to your BOM when considering the policy at BOM level for ratification

School:	Bush Post Primary School
Policy:	Sustainability Policy

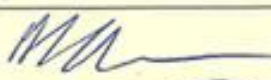
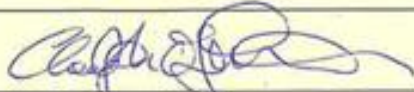
### Staff Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	
Proposed By:	Patrice Walsh
Seconded By:	Janet Woods

### Student Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	18.3.26
Proposed By:	(Student Council) 
Seconded By:	(Student Council) 

### Parents Consultation:

Date of Final Consultation:	18.3.26
Proposed By: MOC	(Parents Association Member) 
Seconded By:	(Parents Association Member) 

Signed  Date 24/3/2026

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Date 24/3/2026

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management