**Scoil Náisiúnta Lorcáin Naofa**

**Tynagh N.S.**

**Green Schools Policy**

**Policy Introduction**

In Tynagh N.S. we care greatly about environmental issues and as a result we are part of An Taisce's Green School Programme. This involves setting up a committee of teachers and pupils. The aim is to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of the school. These efforts are awarded through An Taisce’s Green Flags for schools.

**Aims**

• To understand the impact of the actions of people on the environment

• To explore how we can enhance our environment for future generations through energy conservation, reducing waste, composting, recycling and reuse

• Become aware of the impact of air, water, waste and litter pollution on natural and manmade environments

• Develop an understanding of conservation e.g. Recycling, energy and water

• Develop a responsible ownership of the classroom and school environment

• Promote alternative methods of transport to and from school e.g. cycling, scooting and walking to school.

• 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 life style and participation in collective environmental decision making.

• To enable the child 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 children will acquire skills to help care for our environment immediately and have a long-term impact

**Recycling**

**Paper Recycling Bins: (green)**

A recycling bin for paper is placed in each classroom to ensure that any waste paper not suitable for the scrap paper tray will be recycled.

**Litter Bins -General Rubbish: (Blue)**

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.

**Compost Bowls:**

Each classroom also has a compost bin for fruit peelings, cores and other organic waste. The content of this bin is emptied into the main compost bin everyday by members of the Greens School Committee. This bin is located in the school pitch. The teacher’s staffroom is also equipped with a compost bowl in order to set a good example to the younger members of the school and to reinforce the message that everyone is doing his/her part in caring for the environment.

**Energy**

The Green School Committee act as the classroom energy monitors ensuring that all appliances are completely switched off when not being used in an effort to conserve energy. Lighting within the school is generally cost effective and environmentally friendly fluorescent types are used in all classrooms. A child in each class is assigned the task of switching off all lights at break-time and before going home in the evening.

**Water**

We are currently working on the Water themed Green Flag. A campaign for the benefits of water conservation is being introduced by class teachers. Children will write pledges and create posters on the topic in order to advertise the benefits of saving water for the future. The school will need to investigate water conservation and water usage will be monitored. This will be graphed on a monthly chart and displayed on our Green School notice board.

**Lunchbox Policy:**

Whatever comes in the child's lunchbox goes home in the lunchbox - i.e. a yoghurt pot, a wrapper, half eaten sandwich. This policy has numerous benefits.

(1) It dramatically cuts down on the school’s waste.

(2) It encourages the parents to think of more ways to reduce their own waste

(3) The parents can see how much their child is eating. Pupils are encouraged to use a reusable drinks container daily. Each child is also encouraged to have a lunchbox and not to use clingfilm or tinfoil. Cartons, yoghurt tubs (which must be washed out), cereal bar wrappers etc. are put back into the child’s lunch box to ensure that the school’s overall waste is kept to a minimum

**Re-Use:**

Children are encouraged not to use tinfoil or cling-film in their lunches, to re-use plastic bottles for their drinks, conserve paper by writing on the back of sheets deemed “waste” etc. We also encourage the children to take their waste home with them so as to cut down on the volume that the school actually produces. Staff will keep recyclable items for art materials i.e. toilet rolls, cardboard, paper, tinfoil, recycled bottle tops. Jars are used for art materials. Lunch boxes and re-usable drink containers are reused for lunches.

**Text-A-Parent:**

Where possible parents will be texted school information instead of sending out individual letters with each child. This will cut down greatly on the amount of paper being used by the school.

**Photocopying and Scrap Paper:**

It is policy with staff 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 children to draw on/ colour in instead of using new pages.

**National Spring Clean:**

Once year the whole school will take part in the National Spring Clean initiative. This involves all the children and staff cleaning up their local area. The Junior Classes will focus on their immediate school environment and the older classes will focus more on the local community.

**Environment**

In keeping with our on-going environmental awareness, Tynagh N.S. Healthy Eating Policy will also reduce the amount of litter in the school and will give the pupils an understanding of how people affect the world around them and how they can improve it. In doing this, we will encourage the pupils to cut down on litter produced by packed lunches e.g. using resealable bottles instead of cartons or re-usable airtight containers rather than disposable wrappings. A large percentage of school waste is composed of organic material (e.g. fruit and vegetable peelings). Pupils will use special compost bins to dispose of organic material. Any packaging left over from a child’s lunch is brought home in the lunch box for disposal. Any fully uneaten lunch will be sent home so that parents can monitor how much their child is eating.

**Green Schools Committee**

The school is in the process of setting up its Water Green School Committee, which is made up of one teacher, the principal and representatives from each class

**Green Flag**

The school has been awarded the Litter and Waste Green Flag and the Energy Green Flag. The school will now begin to focus on its third Green Flag with the theme of Water. It is the aim of the school to continue working on renewing the previous themes while simultaneously working on efforts for the new flag.

**Curriculum**

The school views environmental issues as being fundamental to the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to nurture a respect for the environment in their students

Environmental / Green issues are key elements of both S.E.S.E. and S.P.H.E.

Practical issues that we aspire to:

* Turn it off campaign - e.g. water, electricity (lights, computers, smartboards etc.).
* Composting our fruit remains from lunch. Composting pencil sharpening
* Monitor the heating. Don't leave windows open if the heat is on.

**Mission Statement**

Wherever possible the school shall endeavour to place environmental / green issues at the heart of decision-making within the school.

Signed: Fr. Séamus Bohan (Chairperson Board of Management)

Date: 26th Sept. 2019