



## **Sustainability Policy Statement**

### **Introduction**

Our Lady of Mercy College is a Catholic, all girls voluntary secondary school which caters for students of all religions and backgrounds in accordance with current equal status legislation.

### **Mission Statement**

The core values of Our Lady of Mercy College are respect for all and the nurturing of individual potential, academically, spiritually, and culturally as a member of the school community and in the spirit of Mercy Ethos.

### **The Mercy Ethos**

Mercy Education is committed to ongoing whole-school development in collaboration and partnership with the Board of Management, Staff, Pupils, Parents and the wider community. Our school was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1967 and became part of CEIST in 2007. Our current student population is approx 380



CEIST (Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust) was established by five Catholic Religious Congregations – Daughters of Charity, Presentation Sisters, Sisters of the Christian Retreat, Sisters of Mercy, and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart – to provide a sustainable moral and legal trustee framework for post-primary Catholic education in Ireland. Rooted in the founding vision of its Congregations, CEIST emphasises the dignity and rights of individuals, empowers the vulnerable, and prepares young people to be agents of social transformation. The Trust is dedicated to fostering inclusive, hospitable, excellent, and compassionate learning environments inspired by Gospel values and the wisdom of its Founders. CEIST promotes collaborative school faith communities, supports staff in their essential roles, and addresses the evolving needs of youth. Engaging in ecumenical dialogue, CEIST values its Catholic identity while working with other Christian traditions and all people of goodwill to advocate for the poor, justice, and environmental stewardship, respecting diversity.

## Our Lady of Mercy College Beaumont



- Promoting spiritual and human development.
- Achieving quality in teaching and learning.
- Showing respect for every person.
- Creating community.
- Being just and responsible

Inspired by the vision of Catherine McAuley, Our Lady of Mercy College provides the conditions and experiences which will promote the development of the full potential of each person including their spiritual, moral, physical, social, aesthetic, intellectual and vocational development.

We strive to ensure that every member of the school community is held in very high regard and their dignity, worth and individuality is respected. We aim to build a sense of community based on Christian values as outlined in the Ceist charter.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Sustainability Policy Statement is to outline how our school promotes sustainability and climate action, through our actions and activities. Sustainability can be defined as the ability to exist and develop without depleting natural resources for the future.

### **Scope**

Sustainability is a community issue and applies to all students, teachers and employees of our school. Parents and guardians should note, and where possible, promote, the Statement. The Board of Management of the school will ensure that decisions made in respect of the school align with the Statement.



## Whole School Approach to Sustainability

Our school has adopted this Sustainability Policy Statement. It clearly details the aims and objectives of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in our school, its relationship to the vision and mission of the school.

Our school recognises Education for Sustainable Development as a cross-curricular theme.

Opportunities are identified to introduce and address sustainability in the classroom, across all subjects e.g. Transition Year module Sustainable Technology, CSPE and Politics and Society.

Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network ([www.ISSN.ie](http://www.ISSN.ie))

Our school keeps up to date with developments in ESD including by being registered for the quarterly ESD Newsletter-<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/a1d6e-education-for-sustainable-development-newsletter/>

## Environmental sustainability

Green-Schools is an international environmental education programme, offering a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of their school.

Our school Our Lady of Mercy College is part of the Green Schools Programme.

Our school was awarded a Green Flag award in Litter and Waste in 2018.

Our school is currently working towards achieving awards in various environmental and sustainability programmes including Green Flag award in water, participation in ECO- UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards.

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*Our school has an Eco Committee comprising staff and students whose role is to promote and monitor sustainability in the school.”*

Our school engages with various programmes in the area of sustainable development e.g. the recent solar panel instalment.

Our school promotes recycling where possible. Bins are available in areas and classrooms for recycling.

Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places.

Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.

Our school promotes and facilitates biodiversity e.g. polytunnel, planters, bug hotels, bird feeders and fruit trees.

Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school.

Our school promotes sustainable actions through our designated social media accounts.

### **Social Sustainability**

Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity.

Our students are provided with opportunities to develop and use their skills to participate in the solving of community problems at the local level.



Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community.

The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.

### **Economic Sustainability**

A non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources is modelled in our school's allocation of its resources.

Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school e.g. student council involvement.

Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills e.g. TY World of Business.

Our school buildings are maintained to a high standard, with best practice in the area of sustainability in mind.

Our school educates on, and promotes the principles of, a circular economy.



## **Cultural Sustainability**

Our school ethos aims to foster students' self-esteem, along with a mutual regard and respect for fellow students, and positive social interaction and relationships.

Our school ethos, in tandem with the curriculum, strives to prepare students for life in an increasingly multicultural society.

Our school demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school.

Our school has an active role in supporting cultural diversity both within the school itself, and in the wider school community.

## **Teacher Competence**

Our teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD e.g. opportunities to engage in CPD for Junior Cycle CSPE, Leaving Certificate Geography and other subject areas.

## **Student Competence**

Our students are encouraged and supported to undertake action orientated projects e.g. Challenge to Change.

Our school has a Student Council/ Eco Committee who are involved in decisions about sustainability.

Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community action on sustainability projects e.g. Beaumont Garden and Beaumont Tidy towns.

Our schools are involved in project-based learning around real-life problems in the local community.



## Goals

Our school will aim to maintain a Green Flag for Litter and Waste. We are committed to achieving a Green Flag in Water. We are committed to increasing participation in the ECO- UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards and maintaining our outdoor biodiversity projects.

## Implementation and review

This Statement was ratified on September 20th 2024

To ensure our school strives to improve its work within sustainability and climate action, the Statement will be reviewed every 2 years.