Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool for Schools – V1 August 2023

Overview

The following is a self-assessment tool which can be used to inform your school's **Sustainability Policy Statement**.

The completion of this self-assessment should be a whole school activity, including for example the views of students (green team/ sustainability team/ student council) and all staff including non-teaching staff. This is an internal school document only i.e. not for inspection or for submission to the Department.

Add together the subtotals from each of the all sections below - Whole School Approach to Sustainability; Environmental Sustainability; Cultural Sustainability; Social Sustainability; and Economic Sustainability – calculate a total score.

It is recognised that individual schools are at different places in their sustainability journey. Therefore, lower scores (and lower section scores) should serve as guide as to what changes can be introduced, and should serve to inform future action plans and school priorities.

The accompanying Sustainability Guidelines include definitions of some of the terminology used in the self-assessment and provide links to resources.

The suggested organisations and programmes are just some of the broad range of engagement available. It is not suggested that you need to participate in or engage with any or all organisations referenced**.**

Section A – Summary

Complete this table with the data from the tables in Section B.

	Self-Assessment Subsection	Subtotal	Maximum Possible
1.	Whole School Approach to Sustainability		40
2.	Environmental Sustainability		48
3.	Social Sustainability		32
4.	Economic Sustainability		24
5.	Cultural Sustainability		16
6.	Teacher Competence		16
	Student Competence		24
TOTAL			**200**

Section B – Self-Evaluation Tables

Instructions:

For each of the statements in the six tables below, pick the box in the column which best reflects how aligned your school is with the statement, from most aligned (**Excelling**), to least aligned (**Emergent**). Fill the box with its corresponding point value from 1 to 4 points. **Excelling** column is worth 4 points, **Embedded** 3, **Established** 2, and **Emergent** 1 point.

For example, if your school is fully aligned with a statement you would put "4" in the box under **Excelling**. When the table is filled, count up the individual scores to get the Subtotal.

Table 1: Whole School Approach (WSA) – A Whole School Approach helps to embed sustainable development in all educational processes that affect learning

	Whole School Approach to Sustainability	Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
1.	We have adopted a whole school approach to sustainability.				
2.	Our school has adopted a Sustainability Policy Statement that (a) clearly details the aims and objectives of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in our school, and (b) its relationship to the vision and mission of the school.				
3.	ESD is recognised as a cross-curricular theme, and is co-ordinated effectively in our school.				
4.	Opportunities to introduce and address issues involving sustainability in all subjects are identified.				
5.	All our school policies are aligned to the principles of Sustainable Development.				
6.	All our School Policies are aligned to the principles of Sustainable Development.				
7.	There are adequate and sufficient resources for the teaching of sustainability at all class levels.				
8.	Regular self-evaluation of our teaching practises surrounding sustainable development takes place.				
9.	Our school is a member of the Irish Schools Sustainability Network https://www.issn.ie/				
10.	Our school keeps up to date with developments in ESD including by being registered for the quarterly ESD Newsletter				
	Subtotal				

Table 2: Environmental Sustainability – Using our resources efficiently

	Environmental Sustainability	Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
11.	We are a green flag school. https://greenschoolsireland.org/				
12.	Our school has a comprehensive and cohesive recycling policy in place, and uses recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.				
13.	Our school has energy efficiency measures in place, and actively promotes energy conservation and the improvement of energy use in our school.				
14	Our school engages with the SEAI's Energy in Education resources and energy management tools in order to monitor and report energy consumption.				
15	Our school engages with the SEAI's Education and Youth Programme resources and pupil workshops and teacher CPD Schools | Community Energy | SEAI				
16.	School resources are procured and utilised taking into consideration their impact on the environment.				
17.	Our school environment clearly displays information on sustainability and sustainable practices in prominent and accessible places.				
18.	Our school actively promotes and fosters an attitude of care and responsibility towards the natural environment.				
19	Our school promotes and facilitates outdoor learning				
20.	Our school promotes sustainable transport including where possible, walking and cycling to school.				
21.	Our school engages with the Safe Routes to School programme: https://greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool/				
22.	Our school engages with programmes that support and promote Environmental education e.g. ECO UNESCO, Picker Pals, Take 1 programme, Heritage in Schools or any of the other programmes working in this area.				
	Subtotal				

Table 3: Social Sustainability – Promote wellbeing by understanding what people need from the places they live and work

Social Sustainability		Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
23.	Our school ethos recognises the importance of and is sensitive to issues surrounding gender equity.				
24.	Our students are provided with opportunities to develop and use their skills to participate in the solving of community problems at local level.				
25.	Our school ethos strives to prepare students for life as citizens of a global community including building awareness and understanding of issues such as fair trade, migration, global hunger, human rights, development co-operation etc.				
26.	Our school engages with Global Citizenship Education programmes such as World Wise Global Schools https://www.worldwiseschools.ie/ or any of the other programmes working in this area.				
27.	The needs of all students in recognition of differentiated physical or learning abilities, are taken into consideration and accommodated.				
28.	All school staff are provided with the training in the area of conflict resolution, in order to support and affect positive student behaviour.				
29	The school fosters a spirit of peace and also examines this in the context of the wider world				
30	Our school supports extra-curricular activities around sustainability				
Subtotal					

Table 4: Economic Sustainability – Monitoring the impact our activities and use of resources

	E. Economic Sustainability	Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
31.	A non-competitive ethos of co-operation and sharing of resources is modelled in our school's allocation of its resources.				
32.	Students are involved in the decision-making process on resource allocation within our school.				
33.	Students are provided with opportunities to learn small business skills.				
34.	Our school's fund-raising activities reflect and actively demonstrate ethical and sustainable principles.				
35.	Our school buildings are maintained to a high standard, with best practise in the area of sustainability in mind.				
36.	We promote the circular economy and have a reuse/ repair/ recycle ethos e.g. for school uniforms and books.				
Subtotal					

Table 5: Cultural Sustainability – Protecting and supporting our school culture to thrive

Cultural Sustainability		Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
37.	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.				
38.	Our school ethos, in tandem with the curriculum, strives to prepare students for life in an increasingly multicultural society.				
39.	Our school demonstrates a commitment to community engagement, and encourages the community's involvement with the school.				
40.	Our school has an active role in supporting cultural diversity both within the school itself, and in the wider school community.				
Subtotal					

Table 6: Competencies – Building the sustainability competencies of our school community

Teacher Competence		Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
41.	Our teachers are supported in building their own capacity in the area of ESD.				
42.	Our school leadership team are committed to sustainability through a whole school approach.				
43.	Our staff are familiar with the 17 SDGs and linkages across the curriculum				
44	Our staff appreciate the three equal strands of sustainability: Environmental, Social and Economic				
Subtotal					

Student Competence		Excelling 4	Embedded 3	Established 2	Emergent 1
45.	Our students are knowledgeable about the 17 SDGs.				
46.	Our students are encouraged and supported to participate in peer-to-peer learning activities.				
47.	Our students are encouraged and supported to undertake action-orientated projects e.g. BTYSTE, YEA, Junk Kouture, or other such programmes.				
48.	Our school has a Student Council/ Green Team Committee/ Sustainability Committee who are involved in decision-making.				
49.	Our students are encouraged to volunteer for local community action on sustainability projects e.g. Tidy Towns or other community organisations.				
50.	Our students understand the global implications of their individual actions.				
Subtotal					

Section C

Transfer the sub-scores to the table below and calculate a total score out of **200**.

Higher scores indicate where the school is performing well in terms of sustainable development. Lower scores indicate what changes can be made, and might be useful to inform future action plans and priorities.

When you have completed the table below, transfer your scores to the summary table in at the beginning of this document in **Section A**.

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