

Scottish autism

WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED

New Struan School

Learning for Sustainability Policy

Director Responsible

Director of Autism Services

Author

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Learning for Sustainability is about knowing and understanding the world as it is and equipping young people with the confidence, values, knowledge, attitudes, capabilities and skills that will enable us to contribute to making a better world. This requires a balance between economic prosperity, social equity and care for the environment.

New Struan School is acutely aware of its responsibility to embed Learning for Sustainability in our practice. In Scotland, it is an entitlement of all learners and in response to teacher's professional Standards, all educators are expected to demonstrate it in their professional practice.

The purpose of this policy is to help all our staff understand their responsibility to motivate and inspire learners to address the challenges of learning to live within the environmental limits of our planet and to build a just, equitable and peaceful society.

2. PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMMITMENT

Sustainability issues raise fundamental questions about what we value, what we think is important and the way we live our lives.

- To encourage our pupils to care for themselves (their health and well-being), for each other and for the environment.
- To promote and practise the principles of social equity both in school and through our links with the local, national and global communities.
- To empower our pupils to lead sustainable lives through educating them in sustainable behaviours.
- To operate in line with Scottish Autism's wider Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

We acknowledge evidence from the Scottish Government (2020) that rather than this be a 'timetabled' subject, most impact and meaning is made when Sustainability themes are woven across all four learning contexts of Curriculum for Excellence, bringing together sustainability development, global citizenship and outdoor learning. Using the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development goals is a useful starting point for exploring real life contexts.

Real life, complex and often controversial issues such as poverty, education, gender equality, human rights and climate change are best suited to inter-disciplinary learning approaches. This helps the young person make meaningful connections to their own life and understand the natural connections between curricular areas.

4. LITTER

Litter is waste in the wrong place. Instead of being in a bin or recycling container, it is on the school grounds, pavements and parks.

Litter is very dangerous for wildlife. Small mammals can get trapped in drinks bottles and larger grazing animals can choke and die on plastic bags, for instance.

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In line with the Curriculum for Excellence, the school has a duty to support our pupils to develop as Responsible Citizens. Consistent with this is a focus by all school staff to encourage young people to maintain a clean and litter free school environment. Staff do this by encouraging the use of the recycling bins situated throughout the school building and grounds as well as setting a positive example for pupils.

Pupils will receive recognition from school staff for effective use of the recycling bins throughout the school and, in line with our Communication Policy, staff are aware on how best to support pupil understanding and connections in the most meaningful way to the individual pupil. New Struan School continues this effective work in relation to maintaining Eco School status.

5. THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

In the past, school grounds were often characterised by featureless expanses of asphalt and grass. However, it is now commonplace to see these areas transformed into social and educational areas, often with links to the curriculum.

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We will continue to develop our outdoor area to meet the needs of our pupils and develop opportunities for young people to learn through play and interaction with stimulating resources. This will include playground equipment, markings to encourage imaginative play and seating areas for pupils to relax and reflect in the outdoor environment.

6. WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste is what people throw away. Scotland produces about 20 million tonnes of waste a year. About 20% of that is household waste – that's almost 2 tonnes for every house in Scotland, every year.

It is difficult and expensive to dispose of waste – it is usually burnt in incinerators or buried under the ground at landfill sites. However, capacity is short and there are concerns about the health impacts of these disposal techniques.

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To eliminate as much waste as possible going to landfill we will:

- Use paper sparingly before putting it in the recycling bags.
- Staff and pupils are encouraged to use re-usable drinking cups and avoid single use disposable cups.
- Food waste will be recycled using the food waste bins situated within the school Kitchen and Lunch hall.
- Use email to communicate as opposed to paper whenever possible to minimise ink and paper usage.
- Recycle items such as paper, cardboard and ink cartridges.
- In line with the Scottish Autism procurement policies and procedures, the school strives to become a model of sustainable procurement, using goods made from recycled materials and services from local sources where possible.

7. ENERGY AND WATER

Energy use has consistently increased over the years to meet the demands of our changing lifestyles and of modernisation all over the world. The way we create that energy has implications for the planet. The use of fossil fuels like coal and oil uses up finite resources and releases CO₂, thereby contributing to global warming and climate change.

Demand for water is growing and clean water is becoming an increasingly rare and valuable commodity. Man-made changes to the water eco-system, such as dam-building, altering the natural course of rivers and construction work on flood plains, have been controversial and subject to debate.

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We continually monitor energy use and develop ways of reducing consumption. We will:

- Switch off electrical appliances and lighting when not in use
- Repair leaking taps promptly
- Record and analyse meter readings

8. FOOD AND DRINK

It has been proved that pupils' concentration and results are improved by following a healthy balanced diet. We therefore encourage healthy eating within school and all food and drink offered to pupils, staff and visitors are nutritionally healthy.

Food businesses in Scotland producing 5kg or more food waste per week have a duty to comply with the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Zero Waste take all reasonable steps to ensure the separate collection of food waste produced by the business

Section 34 (4B) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 defines food businesses as;

"An undertaking, whether for profit or not, and whether public or private, carrying out any activity related to the processing, distribution, preparation or sale of food".

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency's (SEPA) Food Waste Management Guidance sets out the expectations across the food waste supply chain in order to achieve high quality recycling.

9. TRANSPORT

A larger number of vehicles on the road could be seen to increase the level of danger to pedestrians and cyclists. Secondly, there have been some suggestions, albeit subject to debate, that vehicle pollution can contribute to illnesses such as asthma. Finally, choosing to walk or ride a bicycle rather than travelling by car is good for our general health and fitness.

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With our pupil residences all located within one mile of the school building, we not only reduce our CO₂ emissions during transitions but we are able to support more young people to walk or cycle to or from the school which encourages positive health behaviours and routines.

10. REVIEW & MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required.

11. RELEVANT LEGISLATION & REFERENCES

- Environmental Protection Act, 1990
- GTCS Professional Standards for Teachers
- GTCS Learning for Sustainability, a professional guide for teachers
- <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/education-and-learning/eco-schools/>
- <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Scottish Government (2020) Impact of Learning for sustainability in Educational outcomes
- Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Author/Editor	Summary of Changes	Version No.
Dec 2014	NSLT	New Policy	1
Jan 2018	Lucy Chetty	Small additions re recycling & food waste	2
Apr 2021	Deborah Henderson	Review & Update	3

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CONSULTATION AND RATIFICATION SCHEDULE

Name of Consultative Body	Date of Approval
Board of Trustees	N/A
Senior Leadership Team	10 th June 2021
Policy Group	14 th May 2021

CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER POLICIES / STRATEGIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with:	Detail
Policy 1	Procurement Strategy/ Guidelines
Policy 2	Food Safety & Nutrition Policy
Scottish Government legislation	Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012

EQUALITY & PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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KEYWORDS

Environment, waste management, energy efficiency, recycling, responsibility, Curriculum for Excellence