

Saving energy at school



Almost 70% of energy in a school is used for heating and hot water

Think about it...

Here are some questions to get class thinking about the energy you use each day at school...

1. *How do you use energy at school? Think about each room; classroom, bathroom, the staff room, the office, the hall*
2. *Is energy being wasted at school?*
3. *Can you think of ways to save energy at school?*

Energy is used in school for lots of things like heat, light, interactive whiteboards and computers. Most of this energy comes from fossil fuels. Burning fossil fuels for energy produces carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is one of the greenhouse gases which are causing climate change.

What can you do?

There are lots of ways to use less energy and make your school more comfortable. You can also save money and take action against climate change by saving energy. Why try to get the whole school involved in saving energy at school?

Here are the main things you should consider when thinking about saving energy at school:

- Heating
- Lighting
- Computers and office equipment, photocopiers, interactive white boards, projectors

There are different ways for schools to save energy, some cost money and some cost nothing.

Heating

- Check that all windows are closed at the end of the school day.
- Close curtains and lower blinds at the end of each day to help keep warmth in during winter months.

- Don't cover radiators or allow furniture to cover radiators.
- Switch off the radiator in the draught lobby at the entrance to the school. The draught lobby is a porch with one door into the yard and another into the school.
- Your school attic should have 300 mm of insulation.
- Thermostats in classrooms should be set to 18°C.
- Saving water saves energy, don't leave taps running.

Lighting

- Use energy efficient bulbs.
- Switch off lights when there is enough daylight, especially the row of lights nearest the window. Label the switches so people know which switch controls which light.
- Close blinds only if there is a problem with glare from direct sunlight.
- Switch off lights when the room is empty or when there is good natural light in a room.

IT and office equipment

- Switch off the monitor when leaving a computer, even for a short period.
- Choose computers and laptops with matt screens (not shiny). This will reduce reflection and glare from windows. You will be less likely to close blinds and turn on lights.
- Use the Power Management settings on a PC. It is a good idea to set computers up to go into Standby mode if not used for an hour or two. Set to go into Hibernate mode overnight and at weekends. Make sure to switch computers off at the end of each day.
- Run an awareness campaign so that all computers, printers and office equipment are switched off at the end of the day.
- Use Power Management settings on photocopiers. Reduce power usage when the machine is not in use.
- Close the lid of the photocopier when not in use so it goes into power saving mode.
- There may be kettles, water boilers and dishwashers in the staff room or home economics room. Choose equipment with an A on the energy label and use it efficiently. Only boil the amount of water needed and make sure dishwashers are full before switched on.

Find out more

Resources for Teachers and Student

Websites

- For factsheets, videos and lots of other information on saving energy at school go to the resources section of the [Energy in Education website](#).
- Read about how schools around Ireland are [saving energy](#).

Videos

- [Transition Year students](#) give the top ten tips for saving energy in school.
- St. Clare's Primary school tell us how they [save energy at school](#).
- Primary pupils tell us how to [save energy in the classroom](#).