



Birchanger C of E Primary School
Climate and Sustainability Action Plan
2025/26

Rationale

At Birchanger C of E Primary School, we believe that caring for the world around us is part of living our vision of “Life in all its Fullness.” Guided by our values of Believing, Being our Best, Being Creative, and Belonging, we see climate action as an opportunity for every child to make a difference. Sustainability is not just about protecting the planet for the future—it is about giving children the chance to learn new skills, take responsibility, and feel empowered to shape their school, their community, and the wider world. Together, we are building a community where every child knows that their ideas, creativity, and actions matter, and that they belong to something bigger than themselves.

Aligned with our value of ‘Belonging’ we are committed to educating our pupils about environmental concerns and the importance of living sustainably. Through our curriculum and additional provision children explore not just their role in helping the environment but in how they can shape their community and the world they will grow up in.

Our climate change team consists of:

- Sharon Vessey - Headteacher / Sustainability Lead
- Carolyn Field – School Business Manager
- Jane Patteson - Forest School Lead
- Eco Council (Pupil Group)

The plan is split into two sections:

- Section 1: Current Actions
- Section 2: Action Plan for Change

Section 1: Current actions

	DfE Link	Actions	Responsibility
Curriculum and Collective Worship			
1	Climate education and green careers	Through our school's vision of 'Life in all its Fullness', spirituality is incorporated into our Collective Worship and daily life serving as reminder of the importance of nature and the environment. This is also supported through our value of 'Belonging' which promotes the importance of looking after the Christian belief of God's creation of Earth e.g. books shared such as 'The Giving Tree'.	HT (Curriculum Lead) Reverend Colin Fairweather
2	Climate education and green careers	Through our long-term plan which incorporates climate change into the curriculum e.g. Literacy texts, Geography and Science.	HT (Curriculum Lead)
3	Climate education and green careers	Through lessons, the curriculum plan and enrichment activities we encourage behavioural change by the students to help the environment.	HT/Teaching Team
4	Climate education and green careers	The Forest School programme at Birchanger Primary School is designed to teach young people about nature in their local area, for example different types of land and habitats, how they are managed, flora and fauna and weather patterns.	Forest School Lead
5	Climate education and green careers	Year 6 took part in 'Climate for Change' Art Competition run by the Sanctuary Foundation to raise awareness of environmental issues.	Teaching Team
6	Climate education and green careers	Through links with charities such as Touchpoint who collect unwanted food from Pret-A-Manger and provide it to our school community.	HT
7	Climate education and green careers	School introduced 'Agents for Change' as part of homework and whole school termly initiative to encourage children to take part in courageous advocacy activities, some of which include environmental issues.	HT
8	Climate education and green careers	Through our 'Eco Council' who undertake pupil-led projects such as litter-picking, planting bee-friendly flowers and designing posters about looking after the environment.	HT
Waste			
1	Decarbonisation	Clear recycling system in place for paper: waste paper separated and pupils and staff educated about the value of resources.	Business Manager

2	Decarbonisation	The school's approach to school uniform means that the uniform is cost-effective and reduces waste. Badges are available to use on old uniform instead of buying new. Also second-hand uniform is available for free for parents every half term – unclaimed lost property and donations.	Business Manager/Teaching Team
3	Decarbonisation	Paperless communication with parents.	Business Manager
4	Decarbonisation	When laptops replaced, old ones are recycled responsibly.	ICT Company/HT
5	Decarbonisation	Through the school's OPAL initiative waste products are used for the children's play e.g. unwanted tyres, plastic barrels and cable reels.	HT/AHT/OPAL Lead
6	Biodiversity	Regular litter picks completed around school site by Eco Council.	HT
Food			
1	Decarbonisation	The school's catering provider, Caterlink, have a commitment to reducing their carbon footprint and being sustainable, see plan: https://caterlinkltd.co.uk/https-caterlinkltd-co-uk-wp-content-uploads-2024-06-wsh-second-nature-2023-sustainability-report-low-res-pdf/	Business Manager/Caterlink
2	Decarbonisation	Children encouraged to bring in reusable lunchboxes and water bottles.	HT
3	Climate education and green careers	The school's menu includes vegetarian options and meat-free choices.	Business Manager/Caterlink
4	Climate education and green careers	Lunch time is managed to reduce queuing time and to ensure all pupils are given time to eat and time to play to reduce food waste due to pupils feeling they do not have enough time to eat.	Staffing Team
4	Climate education and green careers	Meals are managed in a way which means pupils can make a selection at the servery – ensuring they are choosing something they want to eat, alongside reducing wastage of over cooking through pre-ordering on Arbor.	Business Manager/Caterlink
Air Quality			
1	Climate education and green careers	Children are encouraged to come to school on foot, bikes or scooters scooter to reduce pollution near school. There is a bike rack in the playground.	HT
2	Biodiversity	The grounds are planted with a range of trees, flowers and shrubs to improve air quality. Areas of the school field have been developed into Wildlife Areas and bee-friendly flowers planted, also in the tyres around the sandpit.	HT/Ace of Spades
3	Adaptation and resilience	Air quality / carbon dioxide monitors around the school show the air quality is good – this is monitored regularly.	Business Manager
Travel			
1	Decarbonisation	Bike rack in playground supports pupils keeping their bikes safely in school after travelling.	HT/Business Manager
2	Decarbonisation	Bikeability training offered to pupils in Year 5/6.	Business Manager

3	Decarbonisation	Parents/carers of pupils in KS2 are encouraged to allow their children to be responsible for getting themselves to and from school.	HT
Reducing Energy			
1	Decarbonisation	Reminders to staff (via email) to switch off all lights, appliances and plugs when not in use.	Business Manager
2	Decarbonisation	Energy costs are monitored and concerns investigated.	Business Manager
3	Decarbonisation	Room thermometers are used to monitor temperature levels, for heating purposes we maintain the following temperature levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18°C-20°C for parts of the building where there is a normal level of activity, such as classrooms and offices, 15°C for corridors, halls, washrooms and circulation areas 	Business Manager
4	Decarbonisation	Regular reminders for windows and doors to be kept closed when the heating is on to ensure maximum efficiency of insulation and warmth.	Business Manager
5	Decarbonisation	Energy-saving lighting LED system installed in 2024.	Business Manager
Outdoor Space			
1	Biodiversity	Green spaces utilised well across the school including regular forest school and/or outdoor learning sessions for all pupils.	Forest School Lead and Teaching Team.
2	Biodiversity	Planting of native trees, shrubs and other plants on school grounds to capture more carbon with natural solutions.	Landscape Gardeners/HT
3	Biodiversity	Feeders, bird houses and bug hotels all installed to support local wildlife, pond in wildlife garden.	Forest School Lead /Teaching Team
4	Climate education and green careers	Children are involved in looking after our green spaces through Eco Council.	Forest School Lead / Teaching Team
5	Biodiversity	Wild patches left and wildflower areas around the site.	HT/Landscape Gardeners
7	Climate education and green careers	Forest School on site, sessions run by a trained practitioner providing nurture learner-led exploration and discovery, nurturing meaningful experiences for positive lifelong impacts.	Forest School Lead
Procurement			
1	Decarbonisation	Resources are purchased effectively to ensure a reduction in over ordering and reducing waste.	Business Manager
2	Decarbonisation	Consideration is given to travel emissions in the supply chain and where possible local suppliers are used.	Business Manager

Section 2: Action Plan for Change

Action	DfE Link	Target/ Measure	Timescale / Deadline	Responsibility	Evaluation of action / result of action
Curriculum					
Increase number of initiatives to build whole-school and community awareness e.g. celebrate Earth Day, take part in switch-off fortnight, participate in Climate for Change Art project again, run a Climate Action week.	Climate education and green careers	Pupil voice shows an increased awareness of looking after the planet and how it ties in with our school value of Belonging.	Academic year 2025-26	HT and Eco Council	
Increase ways to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum e.g. children mapping safe cycle/walking routes to school in Geography.	Climate education and green careers	Evidence of curriculum links across subjects i.e. art project showing impact of climate change	Academic year 2025-26	HT and Teaching Team	
Promote green careers to pupils – invite visitors such as Landscape Architects. Landscape gardeners, conservationists, marine biologists into Collective Worship.	Climate education and green careers	Highlight ‘green careers’ in Climate/Environment Assemblies.	Academic year 2025-26	HT	
Eco Council to register with The Pod and choose initiatives to undertake such as Switch-Off Fortnight and Recycle to Read.	Climate education and green careers.	Children complete 2-3 projects across the year, such as Switch-Off Fortnight.	Academic year 2025-26	HT	
Children take part in projects as part of ‘Agents for Change’ linked to the environment.	Climate education and green careers.	Children collect stamps in their passports. Whole-school project termly.	Academic year 2025-26.	HT	
Gardening/Outdoor Club offered throughout the year by Forest School Lead.	Climate education and green careers	Lunchtime Gardening Club offered for one/two terms.	Academic year 2025-26	Forest School Lead	

Waste					
Work with school IT Company to identify electronic hardware no longer used in school and to recycle products.	Decarbonisation	Safely recycle electronic hardware in school.	Academic year 2025-26	HT/ICT Company	
Provide recycling opportunities for a range of products (e.g. unwanted toys, batteries) through OPAL and The Pod.	Decarbonisation	Additional recycling stations at school Items in school recycled/reused/re-purposed	Academic year 2025-26	HT/AHT/OPAL Lead Eco Council	
Action	DfE Link	Target/ Measure	Timescale / Deadline	Responsibility	Evaluation of action / result of action
Food					
Encourage students and staff to bring plastic-free packed lunches - awareness to be raised/promoted in Climate Action Week.	Climate Education and Green Careers	Develop understanding for pupils of importance of reducing plastic in the environment – highlighted in Climate Action Week. Reduction in waste	Spring 2025	HT/Eco Council/School Community	
Air quality					
Encourage children to choose walking and cycling routes to school that are safe and with less traffic and pollution.	Climate Education and Green Careers	Highlight benefits to the environment of walking /cycling to school during Climate Action Week. More pupils / parents walking and cycling to school.	Spring 2025	HT, Teaching Team, School Community.	
Travel					
Eco Council to carry out a school survey on ways children travel to school to provide a baseline of mode of travel for school data.	Climate Education and Green Careers	Survey completed to create a baseline to measure against for future years.	Autumn 2025	HT/Eco Council	

Reducing travel emissions on school trips.	Decarbonisation	Consider transport modes for trips – add to trip checklist	Academic Year 2025-26	Business Manager	
Energy					
Investigate funding for solar panels	Decarbonisation	Evaluate whether able to install solar panels. Reduction in energy usage from the grid.	Academic Year 2025-26	HT/Business Manager/Governors	
Outdoor Space					
Plant more trees and flowers to absorb more CO2 from the atmosphere.	Adaptation and resilience	Increased number of trees and flowers on the school site leading to higher absorption of CO2 in the environment.	Academic Year 2025-26	HT/Forest School Lead/Landscape Company	
Continue to develop Wildflower areas and plant more bee-friendly flowers. Develop more bug hotels and bee houses.	Biodiversity	More wildlife and flowers present on the school site.	Spring 2026	HT/Forest School Lead/Eco Council	
Water					
Raise awareness of whole school community using refillable water bottles and educate them to pour leftover water onto the garden.	Climate education and green careers.	Less disposables being used at school. Leftover water being re-used.	Academic Year 2025-26.	HT/Eco Council	
Purchase water butts to use rainwater for the children's play and watering the site.	Adaptation and resilience	Water conserved during hotter, drier periods. Reduced surface water runoff and flood risk during heavy rainfall. School grounds more resilient to changing weather patterns.	Academic Year 2025-26	HT	
Invite local water company in to come and do an assembly to raise awareness of school community.	Climate education and green careers	Children have more of an understanding of importance of conserving water.	Academic Year 2025-26	HT	

Procurement

Once purchases have reached end of life, consider alternative uses and how they can be repurposed/reused e.g. OPAL.	Decarbonisation	Reduction in waste/skip use. More items recycled/repurposed.	Academic Year 2025-26	HT/AHT/OPAL Lead/Business Manager	
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