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Climate Action Free Pack



Introduction

This free pack has been designed to support schools in taking meaningful steps towards sustainability and climate responsibility. Whether you are starting your climate journey or already have practices in place, this free pack provides tools, templates and guidance to embed climate action across your school community.

The resources included in this pack are just a small selection of the resources available to Purple Mash subscribers. Alongside a range of resources and activities to support the teaching of climate change and sustainability.

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Key actions/points for staff:

1. Appoint a Sustainability Lead

Give clear responsibility for driving the plan, coordinating projects, and reporting progress. Link the role to school improvement priorities and ensure leadership support.

2. Create a Whole-School Vision

Develop and share a sustainability statement that reflects school values. Communicate it to staff, pupils, and families to build shared ownership and momentum.

3. Audit and Prioritise

Carry out a simple audit of energy, waste, travel, and biodiversity. Use findings to set realistic targets and focus on quick wins that make visible impact.

4. Integrate into the Curriculum

Highlight where climate education fits naturally across subjects. Encourage real-world, project-based learning and support staff with training and resources.

5. Lead by Example in Operations

Adopt sustainable practices — reduce energy use, minimise waste, review suppliers, and promote active travel. Encourage both staff and pupils to model change.

6. Monitor, Celebrate, and Share

Track progress termly, share success stories, and celebrate achievements in assemblies, newsletters, and on social media. Keep sustainability a visible, ongoing priority.

Links to useful documents

- [DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#)
The national framework for sustainability in education.
- [DfE Guidance on Climate Action Plans](#)
Practical advice for schools.
- [Eco-Schools \(Keep Britain Tidy\)](#)
A seven-step framework and awards scheme.
- [National Education Nature Park](#)
Tools for mapping and enhancing biodiversity.
- [Climate Ambassadors Programme \(STEM Learning\)](#)
Volunteers who support schools.
- [National Governance Association – Greener Governance](#)
Resources for governors.

Guidance For Climate Action Policy

This sample climate action plan has been prepared by 2simple to illustrate potential content that schools may wish to include in their own policy. Schools should adapt and amend the content as necessary to ensure full alignment with their individual practice and guidelines.

Questions To Consider

Example Statements

Introduction and Purpose

- **Local purpose:** In one or two sentences, what is the main reason XXXXXX School is adopting a Climate Action Plan Policy (e.g., preparing pupils for a changing world, protecting our local environment, improving wellbeing, reducing costs)?
- **Community context:** Which features of our local community or site (e.g., nearby green spaces, flood/heat risks, travel patterns) should be named to show why sustainability matters here?
- **Link to national guidance:** How will we explicitly reference the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and the expectation to nominate a Sustainability Lead and have a Climate Action Plan by 2025—using wording staff and governors will immediately recognise?
- **Scope of our commitment:** Which everyday areas will we state up front as in-scope for this policy (curriculum, operations/energy, procurement, travel, waste, grounds, partnerships)?

XXXXXX School recognises its responsibility to prepare pupils for a changing world and to protect the local environment we learn and play in. Rooted in our community context, this Climate Action Plan Policy sets out our purpose, priorities, and ways of working so that sustainability becomes part of everyday school life—shaping our curriculum, our use of resources, our school grounds, and the relationships we build with families, local organisations, and the wider community.

This policy is informed by national guidance, including the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and the expectation that every education setting nominates a sustainability lead and develops a Climate Action Plan. In line with that guidance, our policy organises action across four areas:

- **Decarbonisation** – reducing the school's carbon footprint by saving energy, cutting waste, choosing low-carbon resources, and promoting sustainable travel.
- **Adaptation & Resilience** – preparing the school site, staff, and pupils to cope with the impacts of climate change such as heatwaves, heavy rainfall, or flooding.

- **Four action areas:** Do we clearly introduce the four areas Decarbonisation, Adaptation & Resilience, Environment & Biodiversity, Climate Education & Green Careers—and explain in one line how each applies to **XXXXXX School**?
- **Pupil experience:** How will the introduction signal that pupils will have meaningful roles (eco-council, class projects, outdoor learning) rather than sustainability being an adult-only initiative?
- **Whole-school embedding:** What concise sentence will we use to show sustainability is woven into teaching and learning, daily operations, grounds development, and leadership decisions—not a stand-alone project?
- **Monitoring & reporting:** Which simple indicators (e.g., energy use, waste, biodiversity counts, curriculum links) and reporting routines (SLT termly; governors annually) should be mentioned here to set expectations without going into detail?
- **Partnerships:** Which partners (families, local authority, community groups, should be named in the introduction to signal collaborative intent from day one?
- **Future-facing statement:** What single sentence will we use to express the long-term intent of **XXXXXX School's** policy (e.g., “practical, age-appropriate steps that reduce impact, build resilience, enrich learning, and serve our community now and in the future”)?

- **Environment & Biodiversity** – protecting and improving green spaces in and around the school, creating habitats for wildlife, and giving pupils hands-on experiences with nature.
- **Climate Education & Green Careers** – embedding sustainability into teaching and learning across the curriculum, while inspiring pupils to explore future careers that support a greener world.

This policy explains how we will set achievable objectives, involve pupils meaningfully, and report regularly to leaders and governors. Pupils are central to this work; through eco-councils, class projects, outdoor learning, and student-led monitoring, they will take active roles in shaping and delivering climate action across the school. We will monitor and report our progress using simple measures such as energy and water use, waste and recycling levels, biodiversity counts, and pupil participation, with updates shared termly with SLT and annually with governors and families.

Our commitment is to embed sustainability throughout the work of **XXXXXX School**: in teaching and learning, in day-to-day operations, in the design and care of our site, and in the decisions we make as leaders and governors. We will take practical, age-appropriate steps that reduce our environmental impact, build resilience to climate risks, enrich pupil's learning, and contribute positively to our community—now and for the future, supported by strong partnerships with parents, local groups, the local authority, and national programmes such as Climate Ambassadors and the National Education Nature Park.

Aims and Objectives

- **Clarity of purpose:** Have we set out in plain language what our school hopes to achieve through its Climate Action Plan (e.g., reducing emissions, improving resilience, protecting biodiversity, teaching pupils)?
- **Balance of timeframes:** Do we have a mix of achievable short-term objectives (e.g., behaviour changes, small-scale projects) and aspirational long-term objectives (e.g., investment, culture change)?
- **School context:** How do our aims reflect our specific circumstances—such as our site, local environment, pupil needs, and community priorities?
- **Pupil involvement:** How will pupils have a voice in shaping objectives, and how will their contributions be recognised and celebrated?
- **Measurement:** Have we identified simple indicators or success criteria that will help us measure whether our aims are being met?
- **Integration:** Do our aims connect clearly to other school policies and priorities (e.g., curriculum, health and wellbeing, estates management, travel planning)?
- **Longevity:** How will we ensure that our aims remain relevant and achievable over time, even as staff or leadership change?

The Climate Action Plan at **XXXXXX School** sets out our clear goals: to reduce our carbon footprint, build resilience to the impacts of climate change, protect and enhance biodiversity, and deliver high-quality climate education across the curriculum. These goals guide the actions we take across our site, our teaching, and our community partnerships.

Our aims include both short-term objectives, such as reducing energy use through simple behaviour changes, creating small new habitats within the school grounds, and embedding sustainability themes into existing lessons, as well as long-term objectives, such as investing in more efficient infrastructure, establishing sustainable travel patterns, and ensuring climate education is embedded across all subjects and phases.

We aim to involve pupils actively in setting and achieving these objectives, so that their voices and actions shape the direction of the plan.

Regular monitoring and reporting will ensure that progress is visible and measurable, using simple indicators such as reductions in energy and paper use, increases in recycling rates, numbers of pupils travelling to school sustainably, new habitats created on site, and evidence of sustainability themes within the curriculum. These measures will help us track whether our aims are being met and will ensure the plan remains responsive to the school's context and evolving local and national priorities.

Our aims will be integrated with other school policies and priorities—including curriculum design, health and wellbeing, estates management, and travel planning—so that sustainability is woven into all aspects of school life rather than standing alone.

To ensure longevity, this plan will include clear roles and responsibilities, succession planning for the Sustainability Lead, and annual reviews by governors, so that our objectives remain relevant, achievable, and embedded even as staff or leadership change. Through these aims and objectives, **XXXXXX School** will work towards becoming a sustainable, resilient, and forward-looking school community.

Scope

- **Audience:** Have we clearly stated who this policy applies to (staff, pupils, governors, parents, visitors, contractors), and does everyone know their role?
- **Whole-school coverage:** Does the scope include all aspects of school life—teaching and curriculum, daily operations, site management, community engagement, and governance?
- **Pupil role:** Have we described how pupils will be meaningfully involved, beyond participation in eco-clubs (e.g., audits, leadership roles, assemblies)?
- **Contractors and visitors:** Have we set clear expectations for how contractors and visitors support our sustainability goals (e.g. waste disposal, energy use, travel)?
- **Governance:** Is the role of governors in providing accountability and oversight explicitly mentioned in the scope?
- **Shared responsibility:** Does the policy make it clear that sustainability is a collective effort and not reliant on one individual or team?

This Climate Action Plan Policy applies to everyone connected with **XXXXXX School**: all staff, pupils, governors, parents and carers, visitors, and contractors. Every member of our school community has a role to play in supporting sustainability and contributing to the success of our aims.

The policy takes a whole-school approach, ensuring that sustainability is embedded across teaching and learning, the daily operation of the school, the care and development of our site, and the way the school is led and governed. This means that pupils are actively involved through eco-councils, class projects, and outdoor learning; staff are supported to make sustainable choices in the classroom and in their work; governors are responsible for oversight and accountability; and families, visitors, and contractors are expected to align with our sustainability principles when working with the school.

By applying this policy broadly and consistently, **XXXXXX School** ensures that climate action is not the responsibility of a single group or role, but a shared commitment across our whole community.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Clarity:** Have we clearly defined what each group (staff, pupils, governors, partners) is expected to do to support the Climate Action Plan?
- **Balance:** Do responsibilities spread fairly across staff, leadership, pupils, and the wider community, rather than falling heavily on one role?
- **Accountability:** Is it clear who monitors and reports progress, and who holds the school accountable for meeting its aims?
- **Integration:** Are sustainability responsibilities linked to existing roles (e.g., admin reducing paper use, teachers embedding sustainability in lessons) rather than creating extra burdens?
- **Pupil leadership:** Have we outlined meaningful opportunities for pupil voice, decision-making, and leadership (not just participation)?
- **Community role:** Have we identified how parents, local groups, and external partners will contribute to and support the plan?

At XXXXXX School, sustainability is a shared responsibility. Every member of our school community has a part to play in achieving the aims of our Climate Action Plan, with clear roles to ensure accountability and progress.

- **Sustainability Lead** – coordinates the Climate Action Plan, monitors progress, reports to the SLT and governors, and supports staff and pupils to embed sustainable practices across the school.
- **Headteacher** – provides oversight and ensures that sustainability is prioritised within school planning, allocating time, resources, and support to achieve the plan's objectives.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** – leads on operational delivery, supporting curriculum integration, managing estates and resources sustainably, and ensuring sustainability is a standing item in decision-making.
- **Governors/Sustainability Governor** – provide strategic oversight and accountability, ensuring the Climate Action Plan is regularly reviewed, monitored, and aligned with wider school improvement priorities.
- **Teachers and Support Staff** – integrate sustainability into teaching and classroom routines, model positive behaviours, and encourage pupils to take part in eco-projects and campaigns.
- **Admin Staff** – support sustainable practices in school offices and administration, including reducing paper use, managing communication digitally, and sourcing environmentally friendly supplies.
- **Pupils** – play an active role through eco-councils, monitoring energy and waste, leading projects, and encouraging their peers and families to take positive climate action.
- **Community Partners** – parents, local groups, and Climate Ambassadors work alongside the school by sharing expertise, supporting events and projects, and helping extend sustainability beyond the school gates.

By clarifying roles and responsibilities, XXXXXX School ensures that sustainability is not an add-on for one individual but a whole-community effort.

Climate Action Plan Priorities

- **Relevance:** Do the four pillars reflect our school's context (site layout, travel patterns, budget, community needs) and current starting point?
- **Clarity:** Is it obvious what kinds of actions sit under each pillar (e.g., Decarbonisation = energy/travel/waste; Adaptation = shade/water/overheating plans; Biodiversity = habitats/outdoor learning; Curriculum = lessons/CPD/careers)?
- **Balance:** Do we have a realistic mix of quick wins and longer-term improvements across all four pillars?
- **Pupil involvement:** Where, specifically, will pupils lead or contribute (audits, eco-council projects, data collection, assemblies) under each pillar?
- **Integration:** Do the pillars connect to other policies and plans (School Development Plan, travel plan, and curriculum maps)?
- **Equity & inclusion:** Are actions accessible to all pupils (including SEND), and are costs/time demands manageable for staff?
- **Review cycle:** Have we stated how often priorities will be reviewed and updated, and who signs off changes (SLT/governors)?

To make sustainability practical and measurable at **XXXXXX School**, our Climate Action Plan is organised around four core pillars. Each pillar guides our objectives, actions, and monitoring, with a strong emphasis on pupil involvement, integration with other school priorities, and regular review.

- **Decarbonisation** – We will lower our carbon footprint by using energy wisely, choosing efficient equipment, promoting active and shared travel, and reducing, reusing, and recycling resources. Pupils will lead audits of energy use, run “switch-off” campaigns, and present findings in assemblies. Data such as electricity, paper use, and recycling rates will be tracked and reported to SLT and governors.
- **Adaptation & Resilience** – We will prepare our site and routines for a changing climate by improving shade and ventilation, managing surface water (e.g., rain gardens, water butts), and building climate scenarios into emergency procedures. Pupils will help monitor classroom comfort, test solutions such as blinds and fans, and share their experiences with staff. Adaptation work will align with our School Development Plan and health & safety policies.
- **Biodiversity & Green Space** – We will enhance our grounds to support wildlife and learning: creating habitats (bug hotels, bird boxes, wildflower areas), planting trees and hedges, and taking part in citizen science and Nature Park activities. Pupils will design and build habitats, carry out biodiversity counts, and showcase their results in eco-council reports. These projects connect to curriculum maps in science, DT, and geography, ensuring outdoor learning is purposeful and inclusive.
- **Curriculum & Education for Sustainability** – We will embed sustainability across subjects and phases, provide staff CPD, and highlight real-world green careers. Pupils will take leadership roles in eco-councils, create newsletters or podcasts, and act as peer-educators during Climate Week assemblies. Curriculum actions will be mapped directly to subject schemes, ensuring links are intentional and equitable across all year groups.

Across all four pillars, equity and inclusion will be a guiding principle. Activities will be accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND, with adjustments made to ensure everyone can participate meaningfully. Staff workload and costs will be carefully managed by focusing on achievable actions that add value to existing routines and policies.

Finally, the plan will follow a clear review cycle. Priorities will be monitored termly by the Sustainability Lead and SLT, with annual reviews by governors to check progress against success indicators. Updates will be shared with pupils, families, and community partners to ensure the plan remains relevant, achievable, and embedded in the long-term culture of **XXXXXX School**.

Implementation and Action Planning

- **Action sources:** Have audits (energy, waste, travel, biodiversity), pupil input, and staff ideas all been used to identify priorities for the year?
- **Clarity & ownership:** Does each action have a named lead, contributors, timescale, and simple indicators (e.g., kWh, paper reams, species counts, pupil participation)?
- **Workload & sequencing:** Is there a realistic mix of quick wins and longer projects, sequenced to fit the school calendar and avoid peak-pressure periods?
- **Inclusion:** Do actions note any adaptations so all pupils (including SEND) can participate meaningfully?
- **Resources & budget:** Are materials, training, and costs identified early, with options for low- or no-cost alternatives and community support?
- **Review:** Is the review cycle clear (termly SLT check-in; annual governor review), and are update points visible in the school calendar?
- **Communication:** How will progress be shared with pupils, staff, families, and governors (e.g., assemblies, newsletters, website, displays)?
- **Continuity:** If a lead leaves or roles change, does the plan show who will maintain momentum (succession notes or co-leads)?

At XXXXXX School, actions are identified through a simple, repeatable cycle that draws on audits, pupil input, and staff ideas. Each year begins with brief baseline audits (e.g., energy, waste, travel, biodiversity) and a pupil-led review via the eco-council or class representatives. Staff contribute priorities through phase meetings, and operations needs are gathered with the site and admin teams. These inputs are grouped under the four pillars (Decarbonisation; Adaptation & Resilience; Environment & Biodiversity; Climate Education & Green Careers) and developed into termly actions and annual objectives with named leads, timescales, and simple success criteria.

Actions are sequenced so there is a balance of quick wins (e.g., switch-off routines, mini audits, planting) and longer projects (e.g., shade structures, rain gardens, curriculum mapping). Each action is recorded in an Action. Progress is reviewed termly by the Sustainability Lead and SLT, with a short update to governors; the plan is refreshed annually.

Implementation is aligned with existing school systems to minimise workload. Actions explicitly reference and support other policies and plans, such as the School Development Plan, Teaching & Learning policy, Curriculum maps, Travel Plan, and Procurement guidance. Where helpful, projects are integrated into scheduled events (e.g., Science Week, Sports Day, parent evenings) so that sustainability activity complements—not competes with—core school priorities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Right indicators:** Are our chosen measures (energy, water, waste, travel, biodiversity, curriculum, pupil voice) simple enough to collect and meaningful for decision-making?
- **Timetable:** Do we have a realistic schedule (pupil checks weekly/fortnightly; SLT termly; governors annually) that fits our calendar?
- **Ownership:** Is it obvious who collects which data and who compiles the dashboard (Sustainability Lead, site manager, admin, curriculum leads, pupils)?
- **Pupil role:** Have we specified where pupils lead (audits, data entry, assemblies) and how their work feeds into formal reports?
- **Inclusion:** Have we adapted monitoring tools so all pupils (including SEND) can take part confidently?
- **Integration:** Will findings automatically feed into other processes (School Development Plan, estates/health & safety, travel plan, curriculum reviews)?
- **Governance:** Is the Sustainability Governor's termly check-in and board reporting cycle clearly described?
- **Celebration:** Have we planned how to share success (assemblies, newsletters, website, awards such as Eco-Schools) to keep momentum high?

What we track. XXXXXX School will use simple, repeatable indicators to measure progress under each pillar of the Climate Action Plan:

- **Energy & water:** kWh per month/term, gas/oil use, water meter readings.
- **Waste & recycling:** weights/estimates from bin audits, food waste volumes, paper reams ordered.
- **Travel:** pupil hands-up surveys (walk/scoot/cycle/park-and-stride), staff travel snapshots.
- **Biodiversity:** termly species counts (e.g., birds, pollinators), habitats created/maintained, tree/hedge planting.
- **Curriculum & engagement:** lessons/units with sustainability links, CPD hours, pupil participation in eco-projects, visitor/careers events.
- **Pupil voice:** eco-committee minutes, class audit sheets, pupil surveys.

Monitoring will follow a clear review cycle.

- **Weekly/fortnightly:** pupil eco-committee walkarounds (switch-off checks, grounds observations).
- **Half-termly:** data collation and a brief dashboard from the Sustainability Lead to SLT.
- **Termly:** SLT review meeting; headline update to governors (or the Sustainability/Environment committee).
- **Annually:** full Climate Action Plan review and refresh, signed off by the Governing Body and shared with families/community.

- **Resourcing:** Do we have the minimal tools we need (meter access, audit sheets, simple spreadsheet or dashboard, time in meetings) and a fallback if staff change?
- **Next steps:** Does every review end with agreed next steps and are those actions recorded, owned, and time-bound?

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined to ensure effective monitoring.

- **Headteacher:** ensures monitoring happens by allocating time/resources; keeps climate indicators visible in routine leadership discussions; approves any course-correction actions.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** embeds sustainability in operations and curriculum; reviews termly dashboards; challenges under-performance; agrees next-step actions and support.
- **Governing Body:** provides strategic oversight; receives termly highlights and an annual report; checks alignment with school development priorities.
- **Sustainability Governor (Link Governor):** meets termly with the Sustainability Lead; samples evidence (dashboards, pupil logs); reports to the full board on progress and risks.
- **Sustainability Lead:** coordinates all monitoring; maintains the data dashboard; supports staff/pupils to collect consistent evidence; prepares termly/annual summaries.
- **Site/Estates Manager (or Caretaker):** supplies meter readings and contractor/maintenance data; logs estate adaptations; advises on practical feasibility and costs.
- **Curriculum/Phase Leads:** capture curriculum links, pupil work, and staff CPD; ensure subject plans reflect agreed priorities.
- **Admin/Business Manager:** tracks paper orders, procurement choices, contractor compliance; supports data collation and publication deadlines.
- **Teachers & Support Staff:** run class audits (energy/waste/water), evidence curriculum work, and enable pupil participation.
- **Pupil Eco-Committee & Class Reps:** lead audits, gather peer feedback, present in assemblies, and contribute to displays/newsletters.
- **Community Partners (parents, local groups, Climate Ambassadors):** provide expert input, validate projects (e.g., biodiversity counts), and support celebration events.

Celebrating and communicating success is vital to keeping momentum. Achievements will be shared in assemblies, newsletters, website updates, and eco-displays that highlight pupil-led data. The school will also participate in recognised schemes such as Eco-Schools, ensuring that both outcomes—like kWh saved or species recorded—and the leadership shown by pupils are celebrated.

To ensure accessibility, monitoring tools will be age-appropriate and inclusive. Younger pupils may use picture-based checklists, while older pupils and staff will use simple digital forms or spreadsheets. Adjustments will be made so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can take part meaningfully in data collection and presentation.

Continuous improvement will be built into the process, with termly reviews focusing on “what worked and what next,” removing tasks that have little impact and scaling up the most effective ones. Each annual report will propose updated objectives and identify links to other school policies and plans, such as estates management, the travel plan, or teaching and learning, before being signed off by the Governing Body.

Reporting

- **Annual summary:** What should be included in the yearly Climate Action Plan report (achievements, challenges, pupil voice, data, next steps), and who will write and approve it?
- **Audience:** How will we ensure the annual summary is shared in formats accessible to all key groups — staff, pupils, governors, parents, and the wider community?
- **Regular updates:** What are the most effective channels for sharing progress during the year (assemblies, newsletters, displays, website, social media)?
- **Pupil involvement:** How can pupils help prepare or present updates (eco-council newsletters, assemblies, website content)?
- **Governor accountability:** How often will governors receive updates, and how will sustainability be kept as a standing agenda item at board level?
- **External accountability:** How will our reporting demonstrate compliance with national guidance and expectations, such as the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy?
- **Celebration vs. improvement:** Does our reporting balance celebrating success with identifying areas for further action?
- **Transparency:** How do we make sure reports are honest and easy to understand, even when progress is slower than expected?
- **Longevity:** How will we ensure that reporting continues consistently, even if staff or leadership changes?

At XXXXXX School, reporting is a key part of keeping our Climate Action Plan visible, accountable, and celebrated. 7

An annual summary of progress will be produced by the Sustainability Lead and shared with staff, pupils, governors, and parents. This report will highlight achievements, pupil involvement, and areas for improvement, ensuring that all members of the school community understand the impact of our actions. Pupils will have an active role in preparing and presenting updates through the eco-council, class assemblies, newsletters, and website content, helping to ensure that reporting reflects their voices and experiences.

Regular updates will also be provided throughout the year via assemblies, newsletters, and the school website, so that families and the wider community can see ongoing progress and celebrate pupil contributions.

Our reporting will strike a careful balance between celebrating success—for example, through pupil-led campaigns, Eco-Schools awards, and biodiversity projects—and identifying areas for further action, making sure the plan continues to grow and improve. Reports will be written in a clear, accessible style to ensure transparency, so that successes are shared proudly but slower progress is acknowledged openly and constructively.

Reporting is closely linked to accountability: governors will receive formal updates each term and a full annual review, while the Sustainability Governor will ensure sustainability remains a standing item at board meetings. These reports will also demonstrate how the school is meeting national expectations, including the Department for Education's requirement for a nominated Sustainability Lead and a Climate Action Plan by 2025.

To ensure longevity, reporting processes will be embedded into the school's leadership and governance cycle, so they continue consistently even if staff or governors change, maintaining a strong culture of accountability and progress for years to come.

Training and Awareness

- **Purpose & outcomes:** What specific knowledge or behaviours should CPD improve (e.g., planning a sustainability-linked unit, running a class audit, using outdoor spaces)?
- **Fit with existing systems:** When and where will training happen (inset, twilights, briefing slots), and how will it connect to curriculum maps and school priorities?
- **Roles:** What do teachers, support staff, and site/operations staff each need to know, and who will lead or deliver the training?
- **Resources:** Which simple tools will we provide (ready-to-use lesson ideas, audit templates, risk assessments, short guides/videos)?
- **Pupil offer:** How will workshops and assemblies build progressively from EYFS to upper KS2, and where will pupils lead (eco-committee, data collection, assemblies)?
- **Inclusion:** How will we ensure training and pupil activities are accessible to all (including SEND), with clear adaptations and safe practice outdoors?
- **Monitoring impact:** How will we capture CPD attendance, staff confidence, curriculum evidence, and pupil participation—and who will review it termly/annually?
- **Continuity:** How will new staff be inducted, and how will we keep knowledge live if roles change (handbooks, shadowing, annual refreshers)?

At XXXXXX School, training and awareness ensure that everyone has the confidence and skills to play a meaningful part in the Climate Action Plan.

Staff CPD will focus on practical ways to embed sustainability into teaching and learning—linking to existing curriculum maps, modelling enquiry and data-handling using school audits, and sharing ready-to-use resources and assessment ideas.

Site and operations staff will receive targeted training on energy and water efficiency, waste management, safe use of adaptations (e.g., blinds, ventilation, water butts), and contractor expectations, so day-to-day decisions reinforce our priorities.

Pupils will take part in workshops and assemblies that build knowledge and agency, with activities scaled by age (e.g., switch-off routines for younger pupils; biodiversity surveys, green careers talks, and pupil-led reporting for older pupils). Training will be inclusive and practical, with brief sessions built into existing meeting time, short “how-to” guides, and peer support.

We will monitor impact through CPD logs, staff confidence checks, evidence of curriculum integration, and pupil participation—reviewed termly by SLT and annually by governors to keep improvements on track.

Partnerships and Support

- **National engagement:** How will we make best use of the national programs aimed at supporting climate education—who leads this, and how do pupils benefit?
- **Local authority links:** What support, funding, or guidance can we access through our local authority (travel planning, estates, waste, energy)?
- **Community partnerships:** Which local groups or charities could we partner with (wildlife trusts, allotment societies, sports clubs, eco-charities)?
- **Business partnerships:** Are there local businesses with expertise or resources (energy firms, construction, retail, recycling) that could support school projects or careers education?
- **Family role:** How can we involve parents and carers meaningfully (events, workshops, pledges, home sustainability actions)?
- **Pupil experience:** How will pupils see and feel the benefit of partnerships (guest speakers, joint projects, local visits, volunteering opportunities)?
- **Monitoring impact:** How will we measure whether partnerships add value—what evidence (resources gained, projects delivered, careers awareness raised) will be reviewed annually?
- **Sustainability of partnerships:** How will we ensure links are long-lasting, not one-off, and continue even if staff change?

At XXXXXX School, we recognise that working in partnership greatly strengthens the impact of our Climate Action Plan. We will actively engage with the Climate Ambassadors Programme, drawing on expert volunteers to provide guidance, mentoring, and practical support for staff and pupils as we implement and review our plan. Our school will also participate in the National Education Nature Park, using its resources to connect pupils with biodiversity projects, citizen science, and curriculum-linked outdoor learning, while contributing data to a national picture of environmental action in education.

Beyond national initiatives, we will seek to build strong links with our local authority, including support for travel planning, estate improvements, and access to funding streams. We will also develop partnerships with local community organisations and businesses, working together on practical projects such as tree planting, waste reduction, energy efficiency, and green careers awareness. Families and parents are key partners too, supporting school campaigns, joining events, and modelling sustainable behaviours at home.

These partnerships provide expertise, resources, and opportunities that extend our impact well beyond the school gates, while giving pupils authentic experiences of collaboration and community action. Progress and outcomes from partnerships will be celebrated in assemblies, newsletters, and reports, and will be reviewed annually by SLT and governors to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the school and community.

Policy Review

- **Frequency & ownership:** How often will we review the policy and plan, and who leads, contributes, and signs off (Sustainability Lead, SLT, governors)?
- **Pupil voice:** In what specific ways will pupils contribute to the review (eco-committee evidence, class surveys, assemblies)?
- **Staff & parent feedback:** What simple channels will we use to gather views from staff and parents/carers, and when in the year will we ask?
- **Evidence base:** Which indicators (energy, waste, biodiversity, curriculum engagement, travel) will be compiled for each review, and where will they be stored?
- **In-year adjustments:** Do we have a clear termly check-in process to make small changes without waiting for the annual review?
- **Record-keeping & continuity:** How will updates and the reasons for them be logged so progress continues smoothly if roles change?
- **Alignment:** How will we ensure the updated plan aligns with the School Development Plan and other linked policies before governors sign off?

At XXXXXX School, the Climate Action Plan Policy and the accompanying Action Plan will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain relevant, achievable, and aligned with school priorities.

The Sustainability Lead will coordinate the review, compiling a short evidence summary (indicators, pupil voice, successes, and improvement areas). The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will consider this evidence and propose updates, while the Governing Body will provide oversight and sign off the revised plan each year. Pupil input will be gathered through the eco-committee, class feedback, and assemblies; staff feedback through phase/departments meetings and brief surveys; and parent/carer feedback via newsletters, website forms, and parent forums.

Mid-year termly check-ins will track progress against indicators and allow minor adjustments without waiting for the annual review. All changes, along with a brief rationale, will be logged on the Action Plan so that continuity is maintained even if staffing changes.

Sources used in this draft policy

Department for Education – Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy

The national strategy setting out the DfE's vision for sustainability in education, including targets for carbon reduction, climate resilience, biodiversity, and education for sustainability.

Department for Education – Sustainability leadership and Climate Action Plans in education (Guidance)

www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education

Practical guidance for schools on appointing a Sustainability Lead, developing a Climate Action Plan, and embedding sustainability into everyday school life.

National Education Nature Park

www.educationnaturepark.org.uk

A national programme helping schools map, improve, and monitor biodiversity on their sites. Provides free curriculum-linked resources, citizen science activities, and tools for pupil involvement.

Eco-Schools – Keep Britain Tidy

www.eco-schools.org.uk

An international award programme that gives schools a clear seven-step framework for embedding sustainability, leading to recognition through the Eco-Schools Green Flag.

National Governance Association – Greener Governance Campaign

www.nga.org.uk/Greener-Governance

Guidance and resources for school governors and trustees to integrate environmental sustainability into governance, strategy, and accountability structures.

Education and Training Foundation – Climate Action Governance Toolkit

www.et-foundation.co.uk/resources/climate-action-governance-toolkit

Toolkit for governors and leaders offering practical steps for monitoring and embedding climate action as part of school improvement and governance practice.

Climate Ambassadors Programme (STEM Learning / Met Office)

www.stem.org.uk/climate-ambassadors

Connects schools with climate and sustainability experts who volunteer their time to support teaching, staff training, and Climate Action Plan development.

Climate Action Plan Example

This action plan has been prepared by 2Simple to illustrate potential content that schools may wish to include in their own plan. Schools should adapt and amend the content as necessary to ensure full alignment with their individual practice ad guidelines.

Ideas for School Actions

The climate action plan is organised into four linked pillars that together shape a whole-school approach to sustainability.

Below are the four pillars and some suggested objectives that a school could implement as part of their plan.

Decarbonisation - Cutting the school's carbon footprint through energy, travel, and resource choices.

- Launch a pupil "Switch-Off Team" to check lights, screens, and devices are off when not in use.
- Set heating at sensible levels, close doors and windows, and use jumper days in winter to save energy.
- Encourage walking, cycling, or scooting to school through "Walk to School Week" or park-and-stride zones.
- Reduce waste by separating food, recycling, and general waste; celebrate "zero waste lunch" days.
- Choose low-carbon supplies such as recycled paper, refillable pens, and energy-efficient devices.

- Appoint class "energy monitors of the week" to check lights, devices, and taps.
- Install a small solar panel kit or demonstration system and display its output in reception.
- Set printers to double-sided by default and promote digital homework/newsletters.
- Introduce a "meat-free Monday" or focus on local/seasonal produce in the canteen.
- Swap disposables (cups, cutlery, glue sticks) for reusable or refillable alternatives.

Adaptation and Resilience - Preparing the school site and community for the effects of climate change.

- Plant trees and install canopies to provide shade and reduce classroom overheating in hot weather.
- Use rain gardens, planters, and water butts to help manage surface water and reduce flood risk.
- Add “resilience routines” into emergency plans – for example, guidance for hot days, storms, or flooding.
- Fit blinds or reflective film to help keep classrooms cool in summer.
- Create shaded outdoor seating so lessons and play can continue safely in warmer conditions.
- Trial reflective playground or roof paint to reduce heat absorption.
- Plant hedgerows or tree belts to act as windbreaks and provide shelter in storms.
- Fit larger rainwater harvesting tanks and use stored water in gardening projects.
- Run practice “hot weather routine” days so staff and pupils know how to stay safe in heatwaves.
- Build covered gazebos or pergolas for shaded outdoor learning and play.

Biodiversity - Protecting and enhancing green space while giving pupils hands-on nature experiences.

- Build bug hotels, bird boxes, and hedgehog houses with pupil eco-groups.
- Plant wildflowers and pollinator-friendly borders around the playground.
- Take part in national tree planting campaigns and let each class monitor a “class tree.”
- Set up raised beds or a mini orchard so pupils can grow vegetables, herbs, and fruit.
- Join citizen science projects like the RSPB Big Schools’ Birdwatch or Butterfly Count.
- Create a mini pond (e.g. in a barrel or tub) to support frogs, insects, and birds.
- Leave “untidy corners” of grounds as wildlife corridors for insects and small mammals.
- Introduce compost bins for food waste and use compost in the school garden.
- Join wider science programmes.
- Plant a small living wall or green roof on sheds, bike stores, or playhouses.

Climate Education and Green Careers - Embedding sustainability into lessons and inspiring pupils for the future.

- Link sustainability across subjects:
 - Science: Investigate renewables, plants, and habitats.
 - Maths: Use data from audits for statistics.
 - English: Write persuasive texts on environmental issues.
 - Art/DT: Create recycled art or design eco-friendly solutions.
- Support pupils to lead eco-projects, present assemblies, and report their findings to governors.
- Use outdoor spaces for creative writing, science investigations, and nature-inspired art.
- Invite local professionals – like park rangers, engineers, or architects – to talk about green careers.
- Provide staff CPD and share free resources such as the National Education Nature Park.

- Run “Climate Week” or “Green Careers Week” with cross-curricular activities.
- Set up a “Green News Team” to share sustainability updates through newsletters or podcasts.
- Build renewable energy models in DT or science (e.g. solar cars, mini wind turbines).
- Incorporate environmental themes into drama, creative writing, or art exhibitions.
- Highlight a monthly “green job” in assemblies to inspire pupils.
- Partner with local secondary schools or community groups on joint climate projects.

Definitions

Area	The climate action plan is organised into four linked pillars that together shape a whole-school approach to sustainability. These are decarbonisation, adaptation and resilience, biodiversity and climate education and green careers. The plan must include at least one action from each area.
Objective	This should clearly state the main objective or area of focus. It must be realistic, measurable, and achievable within the timeframe of the plan. Objectives should align with the school's overall vision and strategic improvement plan, focusing on impact for pupils, staff, and the wider community.
Success Criteria	Success criteria should describe what success looks like when the priority has been achieved. They should be specific, evidence-based, and ideally quantifiable. Criteria should also reflect both qualitative and quantitative measures where possible, drawing from surveys, assessment data, observations, and feedback.
Actions	Actions should outline the specific steps needed to achieve the priority. They should be practical, targeted, and focused on impact rather than volume. Avoid overloading the plan with too many actions; instead, identify the most efficient and effective activities that will directly contribute to achieving the objective. Each action should be time-bound, with clear deadlines or milestones.
Who	This section should identify who is responsible for carrying each action through to completion. It should be clear whether the responsibility lies with a named individual or a group. Accountability should be distributed fairly to ensure workload is manageable and progress is achievable.
Resources	Resources include both tangible and intangible support required to achieve the actions. This may involve financial resources, staff time, external training, access to technology, or curriculum materials. Consider the implications of resource use on other areas of the curriculum, staff workload, and school operations. Ensure that resource planning is realistic and links directly to the school's budget, development plan, and staff development strategy.
Monitoring	Monitoring should be clearly planned and proportionate, focusing on efficiency and impact. Identify how, when, and by whom monitoring will take place, whether through lesson observations, work scrutiny, pupil and staff voice, or data reviews. Monitoring should not create unnecessary workload but instead be built into existing structures such as staff meetings, learning walks, or termly reviews. Feedback from monitoring should be timely, constructive, and shared with all relevant stakeholders to inform next steps.

Climate Action Plan - Example

Decarbonisation					
Objective	Success Criteria	Actions	Who	Resources	Monitoring
Reduce classroom energy waste by setting up a pupil "Switch-Off Squad"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lights, screens, and projectors consistently switched off Energy bills show small reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train pupils as weekly monitors Create a rota Display posters Record results on charts 	Eco-Council Class teachers Site manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters Checklists Badges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly checks Half-termly energy review by SLT
Cut paper use by introducing double-sided printing and reducing photocopying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in paper orders More use of digital platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change printer settings Encourage digital homework/ newsletters Provide staff training 	Office staff Teachers Support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT support Staff meeting time Digital platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Termly review of paper use Staff feedback

Adaptation and Resilience					
Objective	Success Criteria	Actions	Who	Resources	Monitoring
Provide more shade in playground areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New shaded space created Pupils and staff report improved comfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant trees or install canopies Create shaded seating areas 	SLT Site staff Gardening club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree saplings Canopies Benches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual site walk Staff and pupil surveys
Collect rainwater to use in school gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water butts installed; pupils use harvested rainwater for plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase/install water butts Train pupils Use in gardening projects 	Site manager Gardening club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water butts Watering cans Gloves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gardening logs Eco-Council termly reports

Biodiversity

Objective	Success Criteria	Actions	Who	Resources	Monitoring
Build bug hotels, bird boxes, and hedgehog houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 habitats created Pupils identify species using them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run DT project to make the boxes and houses Set up habitats Monitor use 	Eco-Council Teachers Site manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood Recycled materials Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photos Pupil surveys Biodiversity log
Plant wildflower and pollinator-friendly borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildflower areas established Increase in insect sightings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select sites Sow seeds with pupils Maintain areas 	Gardening club Pupils Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wildflower seeds Spades Gloves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal insect counts Eco-Council reports

Climate Education and Green Careers

Objective	Success Criteria	Actions	Who	Resources	Monitoring
Run a themed "Climate Week"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All classes complete at least one sustainability-linked lesson Pupils share learning in assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan timetable Link lessons in subjects Showcase in assembly 	Curriculum leads Teachers Pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson plans Display space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher feedback Pupil survey post-week
Invite a local professional to talk about a green career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor hosted Pupils show awareness of green jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact local organisations Arrange talk/visit Prepare pupil questions 	Sustainability Lead Teachers Local professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor contacts Hall/IT setup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil feedback forms Teacher review

Climate Action Plan Role of the Governing Body

Introduction

Governors have a vital role in ensuring sustainability is a core part of school life. The Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy requires every school to appoint a Sustainability Lead and create a Climate Action Plan by 2025.

Governors make sure the plan is realistic, resourced, monitored, and embedded so that progress is long-lasting and visible.

Role of the Governors

- Keep sustainability as a standing agenda item.
- Receive termly updates from the Headteacher/Sustainability Lead.
- Review data on energy, waste, travel, biodiversity, curriculum links.
- Ensure pupil voice (eco-committee, class reps) is heard in reviews.
- Support a Sustainability Governor (if appointed) to sample evidence and report back.

Accountability

- Integrate the Climate Action Plan into the School Development Plan.
- Ensure time, resources, and training are available to deliver the plan.
- Provide strategic oversight so progress continues even if staff change.
- Hold the Headteacher and SLT to account for progress and impact.
- Celebrate successes and address barriers openly.

Suggested Monitoring Questions

- How is the Climate Action Plan linked to our School Development Plan and curriculum?
- What progress has been made under the four pillars (Decarbonisation, Adaptation & Resilience, Biodiversity, Education & Careers).
- How are pupils involved in leading and monitoring sustainability?
- What evidence/data do we collect to show progress?
- What quick wins have we achieved this year?
- What longer-term projects are underway?
- How are actions made inclusive for all pupils, including those with SEND?
- What partnerships (community, local authority, national organisations) support our plan?

- How is sustainability being integrated into staff training and CPD, and what evidence shows this is improving teaching confidence?
- What are pupils saying about sustainability in school — through surveys, eco-committee minutes, or class councils — and how are their ideas acted upon?
- What risks or barriers have you identified (e.g., funding, time, staff changes), and how are these being managed? What support can governors provide?
- How are we celebrating and communicating success with families, the local community, and external partners?

Summary

- Every school must have a Sustainability Lead and a Climate Action Plan by 2025 (DfE requirement).
- Governors must ensure the plan is resourced, realistic, and embedded in the School Development Plan.
- Progress should be monitored termly (via SLT/Sustainability Lead reports) and reviewed annually.
- A Sustainability Governor (if appointed) provides focused oversight and reports back to the full board.
- Governors should ask impact-focused questions (What's working? Where are barriers? How are pupils involved?).

Ideas for Pupil Contributions to a School Climate Audit

Pupil led audits are a practical way for schools to turn their climate action plans into everyday action. Using simple, child-friendly audits for energy, waste, travel, and biodiversity, pupils can gather real evidence about what's working well and what needs to improve. The findings can feed into monitoring dashboards, inform class projects and assemblies, and guide next steps for staff, governors, and families – making sustainability visible, measurable, and part of daily school life.

Here are some suggestions:

Energy Audit

Pupils walk around classrooms/offices and tick if:

- Lights are switched off when not needed.
- Devices (computers, projectors, screens) are on standby/off.
- Doors/windows are closed to save heat.
- Thermostats or heating controls are at a sensible level.
- Class “switch-off monitor” is active.



Waste Audit

Pupils check bins and waste points:

- Are recycling bins clearly labelled and used correctly.
- Is food waste is being separated (if system in place).
- Is paper is being used double-sided where possible.
- Are plastic bottles/lunch packaging seen in bins (count sample).
- What is the total bags/weight of waste collected per class (weekly).



Travel Audit

Pupil-led “hands-up survey” in classes:

- How many pupils walked to school?
- How many pupils cycled or scooted?
- How many pupils used park-and-stride?
- How many pupils came by car?
- How many pupils came by bus?
- Special events (e.g. “Walk to School Week”) participation.



Biodiversity Audit

Pupils explore outdoor spaces and record:

- How many green areas are available (playground, field, garden, wildflower patch).
- What habitats are present (bug hotels, bird boxes, ponds, hedges, compost area).
- What wildlife is spotted (birds, bees, butterflies, worms, hedgehogs).
- The number of trees/hedges planted this year.
- Any litter or hazards that damage biodiversity.

Water Use Audit

Pupils walk around the school:

- Check taps and toilets for drips or leaks.
- Monitor how long taps are left running.
- Record use of water butts for outdoor learning/gardening.



School Grounds & Play Audit

Working with the site manager, pupils:

- Record how much green vs. concrete space is available.
- Investigate if outdoor play areas are shaded and safe in hot weather.
- Investigate if there are opportunities for active play and outdoor learning.



Curriculum & Awareness Audit

Working with the Sustainability Lead the pupils:

- Review where sustainability topics already appear in lessons (science, geography, art, etc.).
- Record number of assemblies, workshops, and CPD sessions on climate.
- Check if pupils know about green jobs.

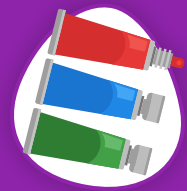
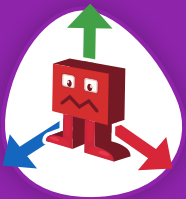
Community & Partnerships Audit

Working with the Sustainability Lead the pupils:

- Survey families on travel, energy saving, or recycling habits.
- Record local partnerships (council, businesses, charities).
- Check how sustainability is shared in newsletters/websites

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