

Sustainability Strategy

Executive summary

The United Kingdom government is ambitious in its vision to be the world-leading education sector in sustainability and climate change by 2030, placing education in a critical position to bring government emissions to net zero by 2050.

Our vision is that Anthem will embed sustainability principles into our culture, curriculum, and operations to educate students for a sustainable future and reduce our ecological impact, contributing to the UK's net zero commitment.

Our ambition is directly aligned with our core values:

Integrity

At Anthem we acknowledge that our community of schools have an environmental impact and that this contributes to the global picture of climate change. We are determined to continually better understand and mitigate any negative impact by relentlessly examining and adapting practices, across our trust, to ensure these are sustainable.

Our concept of sustainability extends to the education we provide to our young people. We must prepare them for a future in which they are sufficiently equipped to enter a 'greener' workplace and to develop the mindset, behaviours and habits required to be the climate advocates of today and the environmental leaders of the future.

Collaboration

Stakeholders at all levels, across Anthem Schools Trust, are committed to working together to drive a culture of sustainability. Drawing upon a wide range of educational and operational expertise and perspectives; building strong internal and external partnerships; and identifying, celebrating and sharing best practice; we will maximise our impact and contribution to national net zero targets, through our collective effort.

Our students and wider school communities will be a driving force for meaningful local decision-making as well as some of the key beneficiaries of the environmental improvements achieved.

Excellence

Forensically collating and examining available data and reviewing our ways of working will allow us to continually drive improvement, optimising our practice across our organisation. We will rigorously benchmark, test, and validate our approaches and progress – both internally and against available external metrics.

We will also ensure that an acute awareness of trends and developments within the sustainability and climate change space is maintained. An active assessment of the changing landscape will ensure that we are ready to adopt new and innovative practice early (once efficacy is proven) to realise all available opportunities.

Our approach to sustainability, at Anthem, is focused on 2 overarching objectives:

1. **Engaging students and developing climate and environmental literacy.** Equipping students with the green skills, knowledge, understanding and experience they require for the future; preparing them to inhabit a workforce in which such skills will be foundational to the careers they pursue; and to ensure the long-term, generational security of our climate.
2. **Developing environmentally sustainable school communities.** Taking measures to minimise our ecological impact; ensuring our estate is resilient and designed for the climate of the future; and maximising opportunities to drive positive environmental impact (both locally and collectively).

1. Engaging students and developing climate and environmental literacy

This objective will be met by:

- **Embedding climate and environmental literacy into the Anthem curriculum**

The Directors of Education will work closely with Headteachers, Senior Leadership Teams and Subject Communities of Practice to ensure sufficient coverage and exposure of students to the relevant skills, knowledge and experiences required to develop climate and environmental literacy.

By providing appropriate opportunities for our students to learn about nature and climate resilience, and facilitating their active participation in sustainability projects, we can instil in them a greater appreciation of the world around them and a passion for contributing to a sustainable future.

- **Establishing sustainability as an interwoven thread throughout our Careers Education, Advice, Information & Guidance (CEAIG) programme**

Existing CEAIG leads will review their careers programme and ensure that their offer sufficiently informs and prepares students for careers both in the sustainability and climate space but also makes clear the impact of these issues on all career pathways. They will seek to provide meaningful opportunities across each of the GATSBY benchmarks.

Our students will be empowered, well-informed and well-positioned to compete in the future job market.

2. Developing environmentally sustainable school communities

This objective will be met by:

- **Decarbonising our trust estate**

The Head of Estates and Sustainability will establish a benchmark of our trust's carbon footprint, and that of each site, along with identifying the drivers of our emissions. They will systematically identify and coordinate efforts to reduce our environmental impact: ensuring infrastructure and systems support timely monitoring and optimisation of utilities; facilitating effective waste management practices; encouraging sustainable transport choices; and managing water usage.

Accurate data and information will be reliably used to measure the impact of our activities and calibrate our approach to maximise outcomes.

- **Adapting our buildings and infrastructure to ensure resilience**

Local assessments of each school site will be carried out to identify strengths and weaknesses and any risk relating to emerging challenges posed by climate change (such as flooding or rising average temperatures for example). The assessment will inform risk registers and the development of mitigations as part of business continuity planning and facilitate planning for capital projects to provide long-term resilience to each school.

School buildings are secure and able to withstand expected environmental changes reducing the risk of school closure and interruption to teaching and learning activities into the future.

- **Increasing the biodiversity of our sites**

Schools will be guided to carry out a habitat map of their site. Using this information, they will undertake initiatives that increase biodiversity through projects such as rewilding, planting trees, and providing diverse habitats for wildlife.

Increased biodiversity will offset emissions, supporting climate goals, whilst also improving the air quality in the local community – impacting positively on the health and wellbeing of residents (including our students).

The delivery of our key objectives is further supported by three key strategic enablers:

1. **Leadership and governance.** New roles, responsibilities and terms of reference have been incorporated into our staffing structure, ensuring sufficient capacity and clear lines of accountability are in place to enable effective planning, coordination and delivery of our strategy.
A Climate Action Plan (CAP) has been devised, which details our approach to implementation, and provides the means to monitor progress and assess impact.
Trust-wide initiatives will be planned and delivered, policies and procedures updated, and funding streams identified to facilitate the execution of our objectives.
2. **Communication and engagement.** A range of communication channels will be used to ensure that our sustainability agenda has a high profile across the trust and that a coordinated effort is being made to deliver on our objectives.
Opportunities to discuss, explore, challenge and debate effective practice will be provided to ensure that our approaches are refined over time and co-constructed by a wide range of stakeholders. Best practice will be identified, celebrated and shared along with any lessons learned.
A range of resources and tools will be developed that drive adoption of effective practice by reducing friction, providing clarity and minimising the impact on workload.
3. **Internal and external partnerships.** We will work with a range of partners to ensure we take an evidence-based approach, that we adopt best practice, and that we remain open and inquisitive to a range of possibilities – identifying and capitalising upon emerging opportunities.
We will ensure that we remain informed by a wide range of experts to drive effective long-term improvement.

Our approach is summarised below:

Objectives	
1. Engaging students and developing climate and environmental literacy	2. Developing environmentally sustainable school communities.

Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedding climate and environmental literacy into the Anthem curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decarbonisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing sustainability as an interwoven thread throughout our CEIAG programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation and resilience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity (A better environment)

Strategic Enablers
Leadership & Governance
Communication & Engagement
Internal & External Partnerships

Our current position

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong educational leadership, embedded curriculum and aligned approach to pedagogy Educational support and challenge teams are well established delivering strong governance LED lighting (14 out of 15 schools) TMV & TRV upgrades (all schools) Benjamin Adlard has existing Eco-School Status Air source heat pumps (LCA & SMA) Cavity wall insulation (GPP) Solar panels (SMA) Unified utilities contract procurement across the trust Some schools are already actively engaged with established climate leads and forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data availability across the estate Lack of impact assessment from previous projects Temporary location at ABP restricts possibilities to improve infrastructure All students at ABP take bus to school due to temporary location Variability in educational standards across the subjects Science, Geography and Technology.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance structures and communities of practice are established 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of EV charging stations (In progress at 4 schools) • Installation of smart meters and data tracking software • The availability of a range of grants and funds • Develop existing partnerships with other MATs and suppliers • Replace single with double glazed windows • Improved community engagement • Student empowerment and preparedness for the future • Cost savings • Building and site improvements • Reduced carbon footprint • Staff development and retention • Student leadership opportunities • A strengthened trust brand 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary constraints • Site condition – emergency remedials take priority over climate impacting initiatives • Policy change • Resistance to change • Inaccurate data and impact assessment • Staff capacity

Implementation

The foundation of our implementation approach will be based on a cycle with the following stages:

Explore

Research and review options and opportunities. Identify existing expertise and established models of best practice within and beyond our trust.

Adopt

Select appropriate and meaningful initiatives for our context and communities.

Incubate

Implement and refine approaches to maximise impact

Propagate

Share good practice and expertise widely leveraging collective effort

Nurture

Put in place the measures and safeguards necessary to protect, embed and sustain initiatives to realise long-term benefits.

Strong collaboration between educational and professional services specialists will be required to drive the significant cultural and organisational change required to meet our aims.

Implementation will be carried out across the three key workstreams

1. Education, curriculum and careers

Led by Directors of Education, Headteachers and Subject Communities of Practice.

The key focus of this workstream will be primarily focused on delivery of our first objective: Engaging students and developing climate and environmental literacy. They will ensure that curricula and careers programmes are structured and contain relevant content and monitor the effectiveness of their implementation and delivery across schools.

2. Improving our estate

Led by the Head of Estates and Sustainability, Estates Manager, School Professional Service Leads, and Premises Managers

The key focus of this workstream will be to review and improve the school estates to reduce carbon emissions and improve local biodiversity. They will systematically review, improve, and measure the impact of activities in relation to school buildings and sites.

3. School and community activity

Led by School Climate Champions and ACC Sustainability Champions

The key focus of this workstream will be to maintain a high profile of the sustainability and climate agenda within schools, engaging and empowering the school community to take meaningful action, appropriate to their context, and adopt behaviours that lead to improved environments.

The following mechanisms will allow us to drive forward the significant cultural and organisational change required to meet our aims:

- **Appointing a Head of Estates and Sustainability**

This post-holder, appointed to the National Team, will coordinate sustainability initiatives across Anthem Schools Trust. They will: ensure alignment of activities with objectives; maintain a high profile for the sustainability agenda across the organisation; and ensure stakeholders, at all levels, are suitably informed and meaningfully engaged.

- **Developing a detailed Climate Action Plan**

Our CAP details the goals, actions, resources required, and timescales involved in the implementation of our identified sustainability initiatives, across the trust. Our CAP will be a working

document, clearly communicated and reviewed at least each half term by the Head of Estates and Sustainability. It will remain responsive to the changing contexts of each of our schools and be informed by input from a wide range of stakeholders.

Each school will adopt individual sub-plans, using a trust-devised structure designed for ease of completion and limiting impact on workloads; this will tie in with the overarching trust CAP.

At the beginning of every year, schools will be asked to select and deliver a manageable number of activities that will contribute to their sustainability goals, to implement in the year ahead. The selection of activities will be made by the School Climate Champion in consultation with staff, students and ACC members, to take into account their unique circumstances - their buildings and site, local opportunities and enthusiasms. If needed, support for this process will be provided by the Sustainability Lead and complemented by a suite of resources to inform their decision-making and aid implementation.

As per guidance from the DfE, actions will be aligned to the 6 Cs: Culture, Curriculum, Community, Campus, Careers, and CPD.

- **Introducing School Climate Champions**

A new School Climate Champion role, within each Anthem school, will be established. With clearly defined terms of reference, they will both lead and own local delivery of sustainability initiatives, ensuring engagement from students, staff and the wider community. Their work will be aligned with that of Anthem Community Council (ACC) Sustainability & Climate Change Champions to ensure clear reporting lines from school to trustee level, where a termly report will be presented and discussed by the nominated trustee with responsibility for sustainability.

- **Monitoring and tracking data forensically**

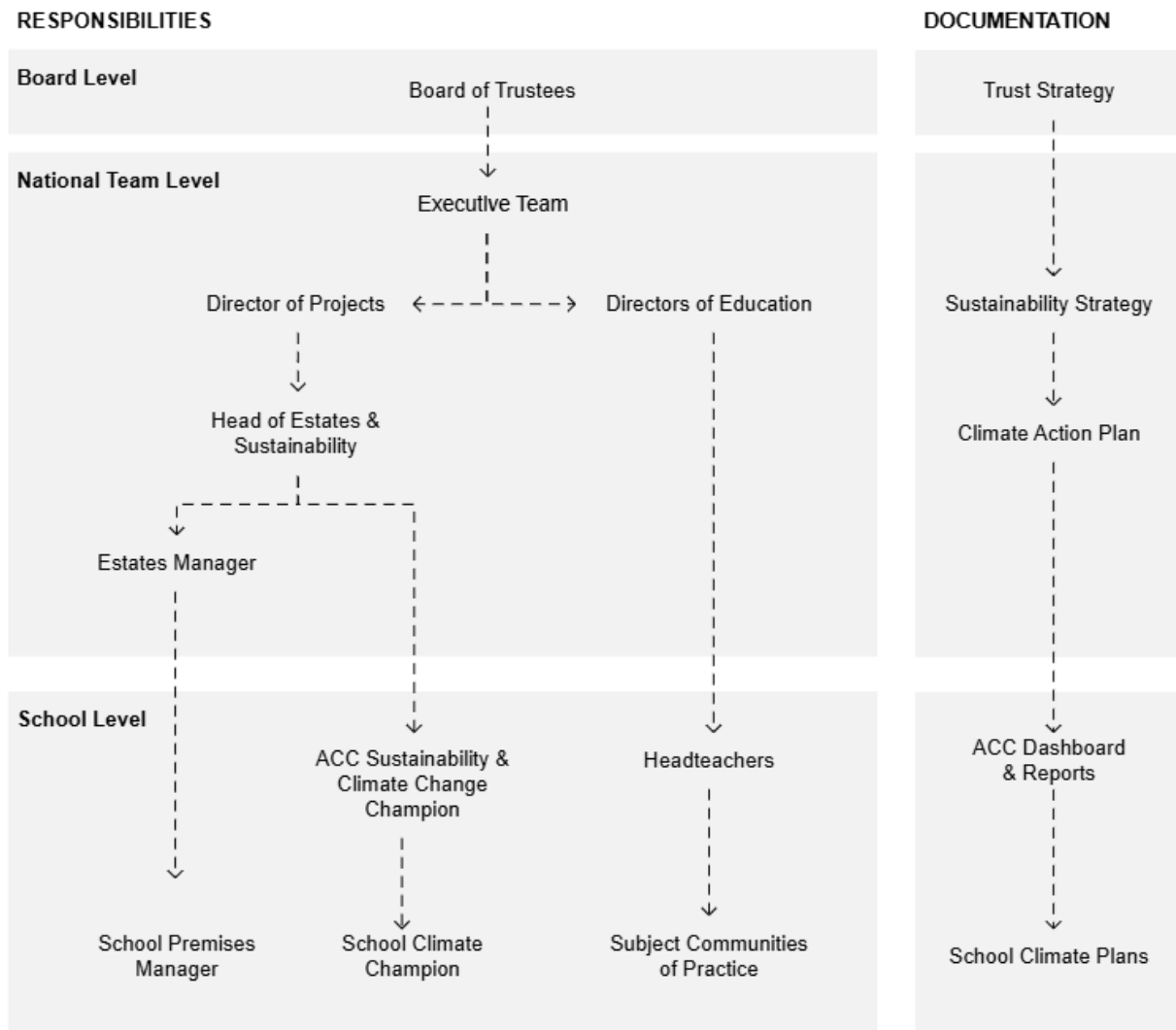
We will put in place the relevant infrastructure to allow us to capture reliable sustainability data relating to our estate (particularly regarding energy consumption). Once an initial baseline has been established, this will be used to accurately measure the impact of our activities and calibrate our approach to maximise outcomes against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

From an implementation perspective, we will track a range of additional information relating to the strategies adopted at, and performance of, each school to enable us to readily identify opportunities for future improvement and enable us to rapidly commit to future initiatives that may have a short window for decision making.

- **Reviewing and refining policy and process**

We will ensure that sustainability and climate aware practice are integrated into our policies, as part of ongoing review cycles. These policies will drive decision-making and processes that encourage and enforce actions toward practice that intentionally contribute to our sustainability objectives.

Governance Framework & Delivery Structure



Roadmap

2025-26: Initiation

The foundation of our approach is established, key stakeholders are engaged, and an accurate assessment of our current position is understood.

- Establish a Climate Action Plan
- Audit and map current practice
- Establish baseline data, SMART targets and KPIs
- Establish the frameworks, structures and forums to drive delivery
- Communicate the strategy and set an impetus for change

- Identify sources of funding, supportive programmes and key internal and external partners
- Create a suite of resources to support the adoption of effective sustainability practices
- Achieve quick wins and complete initiatives already in progress

2026-27: Alignment

Activities across the trust are coordinated and calibrated to increase impact.

- Track and monitor data and progress toward objectives reliably across the trust estate
- Identify and coordinate the highest leverage activities at each site
- Embed Climate Champion collaborative activities and sharing of best practice
- Review policies and practice (such as procurement) to integrate sustainable approaches
- Deliver a programme of training and development to key stakeholders
- Establish pilot schemes with potential
- Identify and plan larger-scale initiatives
- Develop productive relationships with key partners
- Secure available funding

2027-28: Acceleration

The speed of delivery of initiatives is increased, and the effect of improvements begins to compound leading to wider impact.

- Expand pilot schemes where efficacy is proven
- Deliver larger-scale initiatives, as planned, coordinating these across schools where possible
- Establish stretch goals
- Develop areas of specialism and expertise amongst Climate Champions and distribute leadership
- Maximise the impact of internal and external partnerships
- Undertaken an external review of our approach and progress

2028-29: Maturity

Sustainability is embedded as part of our trust culture and a drive for continual improvement and efficiency is a routine part of practice. Our approach is codified.

- Sustainable behaviours, practices and routines are established
- There are beacons of excellent practice at individual trust schools
- Systems and processes effectively channel our community to making sustainable choices

- A comprehensive bank of resources and support materials, which has been co-constructed and validated, is available and undergoes iterative review and improvement
- We are research informed and positioned to readily adopt proven approaches
- Initiatives have been sustained and continue to deliver impact
- Deepening internal expertise is leveraged to self-assess and close gaps of performance consistently across our estate
- There is external acknowledgement of trust practice, including through the achievement of industry recognised awards

2029-30: Leadership

Our approach has demonstrated significant impact, and we are on target to meet net zero goals by 2050. Our codified approach is shared as a model within the multi academy trust sector leading to wider system change.

- We are early adopters of new approaches and are innovative in developing our solutions to climate and sustainability challenges
- Our codified approach makes possible the rapid alignment of any new school joining the trust as it grows with the sustainability standards of the existing estate
- Forecasts show we are comfortably in line to meet 2050 net zero targets
- Our trust is a source of advice and support to other schools and multi-academy trusts in developing their own approaches to sustainability and effective climate action

Partnerships

We will work with a range of partners to ensure we take an evidence-based approach, that we adopt best practice, and that we remain open and inquisitive to a range of possibilities – identifying and capitalising upon emerging opportunities.

We have already initiated partnerships with the following organisations:

Let's Go Zero

Offers support, guidance and opportunities to schools. All Anthem schools are registered with Let's Go Zero and we are in regular contact with one of their Climate Action Advisors. Let's Go Zero deliver training to school leads on climate action planning and assessing carbon footprint. They also provide free resources which can be used by registered schools & trusts.

Count Your Carbon

Offers a carbon emission calculator for education settings and guidance to help schools meet their own and the DfE's decarbonisation targets.

National Education Nature Park

Allows schools to join a national network of education settings working together to improve their sites for nature. Includes access to resources and tools for students to map their habitats to add to the map and contribute to global biodiversity research. They also offer resources for teachers that can be searched by key stage and subject area.

Sustainability Support for Education

Provides suggested actions and quality assured resources for schools.

Eco-Schools

Provides a framework and accreditation scheme, targeted toward students, giving practical guidance and advice focused on engaging school communities in positive ecological and environmental improvement. A number of anthem schools have already engaged with this programme and are accredited as 'Green Flag' schools.

Evaluation

In order to evaluate the progress and impact of our sustainability strategy:

- ACC Sustainability and Climate Champions for each school will produce a champions report for discussion in each ACC meeting (three times per year). This is fed into reporting to trustees.

- School Climate Champions will maintain an up-to-date School Climate Action Plan, with a termly review of progress. Progress will be shared with school Senior Leadership Teams, at least termly, and will be reviewed by the Head of Estates and Sustainability.
- The Director of Projects will review, at least termly, the Trust Climate Action Plan, reporting on progress into the Executive Director of Professional Services and General Counsel and updating trustees via board reports.
- A data dashboard will be established and completed, once per term, by the Head of Estates and Sustainability assessing areas of strength and improvement across trust schools.
- Tools such as Count Your Carbon and Let's Go Zero will be used to establish a baseline carbon footprint and track changes over time.
- Schools will achieve accreditation against nationally recognised standards (such as the Eco-Schools Framework and TfL Travel for Life Scheme)

KPIs

- 100% of schools will have reduced their carbon footprint, against an identified target (contextualised to their site and infrastructure), by December 2030
- 100% of schools will have achieved a nationally recognised sustainability or climate change accreditation.
- 100% of schools will have a site map detailing its biodiversity by December 2028.
- 100% of schools (with a permanent school site) will have LED lighting throughout their site by December 2025.
- There is a 20% increase in journeys to school (Both staff and families) using sustainable modes of transport by December 2028.
- 20% of energy is generated from renewable sources by December 2028.

Strategy Review

As we collaborate on implementation, we will be responsive to the needs of our communities, their wider context, and open to learning from experience. In light of this, the strategy will be reviewed at least annually, and adapted as necessary, to ensure it captures any new thinking or approaches and remains relevant and fit-for-purpose.

Appendix 1 - Role Descriptors

Trustee (with responsibility for Sustainability)

- Ensure sustainability is embedded in the trust’s vision and long-term plans. Approve the sustainability strategy and monitor progress against targets.
- Appoint a sustainability link trustee or working group; incorporate climate action into governance frameworks.
- Hold executive leaders to account for implementation and impact reporting.
- Champion stakeholder involvement and ensure alignment with government guidance and trust values.

Head of Sustainability

This role will:

- Work with stakeholders to set the strategic direction for sustainability
- Keep up to date with opportunities and initiatives, disseminating information to schools and coordinating trust-level bids
- Leading on the implementation of trust-level sustainability initiatives
- Offer training, support and guidance for School Climate Champions to implement initiatives in school
- Facilitate School Climate Champion networking
- Oversee the collection of data about our schools, develop and report on KPIs
- Provide resources for School Climate Champions to use.

Directors of Education

- Drive integration of sustainability and climate literacy across schools systematically
- Support headteachers and subject leaders with resources and training for sustainability education.
- Include sustainability objectives in school development plans and evaluate progress.

Headteachers

- Promote sustainability as part of school ethos; encourage staff and pupil participation.
- Ensure statutory requirements and trust policies on sustainability are met.
- Oversee and quality assure the work of the School Climate Champion
- Facilitate the effective collaboration between School Climate Champions and the ACC Climate Change and Sustainability Champion.

Trust Estates Manager

- Assess and adapt buildings for climate resilience; manage energy and water efficiency across the trust.
- Maintain accurate property and energy data to inform decision-making and capital projects.
- Coordinate and manage associated capital projects of varying complexity
- Embed sustainability criteria in contracts and supplier selection.
- Monitor school progress toward implementation of local action plans and alignment of activities in line with trust climate action plan.

School Climate Champions

The role of the School Climate Champion is to lead on sustainability in their school. Through working with colleagues, students and the wider community, select and implement sustainability initiatives that are designed to reduce the carbon footprint and increase biodiversity.

- Initial self-audit to document what already in place
- Oversight of pre-start and annual collection of data to measure CO2 footprint
- Identification & selection of areas for action at school-level
- Creation of school Climate Action Plans (CAPs)
- Planning & oversight of the implementation of school-level initiatives
- Sharing progress, experiences and resources with colleagues in other schools and the Head of Sustainability through termly network meetings.

ACC Climate Change & Sustainability Champions

The role of the Climate Change & Sustainability Champion is to advocate, support and help drive the school's environmental sustainability activities with both the local community and within the school community itself. This includes:

- Providing challenge and support to schools to implement their Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- Signposting schools & the Head of Sustainability to local opportunities for funding and activities
- Seeking and encouraging opportunities for staff and students to work with local groups and organisations on climate action projects
- Celebrating and sharing successes

School Premises Managers

- Deliver maintenance and improvement projects that support sustainability goals (e.g., habitat mapping, tree planting).
- Ensure premises meet environmental and health standards while reducing carbon footprint.
- Track energy, water, and waste metrics locally and report to trust estates team.

- Liaise with Trust Estates colleagues to support various visits, assessments, feasibility studies and project delivery

SCP Leads

- Embed sustainability themes throughout the curriculum and associated planning documentation.
- Develop projects and extracurricular activities that promote environmental awareness.
- Stay informed on sustainability education best practice and share with colleagues.

CEAIG Leads

- Ensure sustainability and climate literacy are integrated into the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) programme. This includes aligning with the trust's sustainability strategy
- Promote awareness of emerging green careers and skills required for the net-zero transition, helping students understand how climate change impacts all sectors.
- Conduct audits of current careers provision to identify gaps in sustainability-related content. Plan sequencing to embed sustainability themes across career lessons and employer encounters.
- Use frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals to shape career interventions and discussions about future work trends.
- Facilitate encounters with employers in green industries and sustainability-focused roles to provide authentic insights into future opportunities.
- Help students connect their interests and aspirations to sustainability-related pathways, fostering agency and purpose in career planning.
- Keep up to date with labour market trends in green jobs and sustainability careers, ensuring advice reflects emerging opportunities.
- Work closely with subject leaders and senior leadership to embed sustainability across curriculum and careers guidance.
- Track how sustainability themes influence student choices and progression, reporting outcomes as part of the school's climate action plan.

Appendix 2

Example of a Carbon Footprint Report

Appendix 3 – DfE Guidance

In April 2022 the Department for Education published a policy paper: [Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems](#). This paper outlines the DfE strategy & goals for a climate-focussed education, with aims covering the following 4 areas:

- **Decarbonisation** – taking actions to reduce carbon emissions. For example, by reducing energy use, not only from our own sites, but also by our suppliers, in the amount of waste we generate, the water we use and how we get to school.
- **Adaptation and resilience** – ensuring school buildings and estates are sufficiently adapted to meet the changing demands posed by climate change e.g. taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating
- **A better environment** for future generations by enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to, and connection with, nature in and around schools
- **Climate education and green careers** – making sure the education you provide gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that your teaching staff feel supported to offer this

The DfE expectation is that education settings will put in place Climate Actions Plans (CAPs) by 2025, describing them as 'detailed plans to enable your education setting, or trust, to progress or commence sustainability initiatives.' CAPs should typically detail actions across the Six Cs below:

Culture: The way things are done; this should connect with the vision and values of the Trust

Curriculum: Climate education should extend into as many subjects as possible.

Community: This refers to how the Trust fosters a united approach to environmental sustainability, within the local community and school communities themselves

Campus: buildings, energy and grounds. This encompasses all areas of the buildings and grounds, including procurement and energy usage

Careers: qualifications and work experience: Supporting young people to make informed choices about their future is an important responsibility

CPD: staff, governing board and trustee knowledge: Trustees, governors, senior leaders and teachers need to have the skills to deliver on improving environmental sustainability.

Appendix 4 – Resources

[Supporting Climate Action Plans | Education Nature Park](#)

[Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems - GOV.UK](#)

[Good estate management for schools - Sustainability of your estate - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)