

Sustainability and Climate Action Plan



Sustainability and Climate Action **Plan updated by Mrs Rankin (Sustainability and Climate Lead): May 2026**

2026 updates approved by Governors: June 2026

Ghona Taylor

Chair of Governors

Mr M Grogan

Headteacher

Updated plan shared with staff and shared on the school website: June 2026

'Never settle for less than your best'

SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission Statement

St. George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral, and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Introduction

St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery is committed to promoting a sustainable future for our pupils, community, and planet. This strategy sets out our commitment to embedding environmental responsibility into all aspects of school life – from our curriculum to how we manage our buildings, grounds, and resources.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Reduce the school's environmental impact
- Educate and empower pupils to make sustainable choices
- Engage staff, pupils, families, and the wider community in sustainability
- Promote biodiversity and healthy, natural environments
- Meet or exceed regulatory requirements, including those related to carbon reduction and the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy
- Outline the actions to be taken to fulfil our obligations

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- UK's 2050 net zero carbon target and de-carbonisation plan
- The Department for Education's strategy for sustainability and climate change for the education and children's services systems
- The UK Climate change Act 2008
- The Environment Act 2021
- The DEFRA Environmental Improvement Plan 2023
- The Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) and the Fourth Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting 2023

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the following school policies and procedures:

- Health & Safety Policy
- School Uniform Policy
- Learning Environment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, '**sustainability**' is defined as the long term maintenance and enhancement of human well-being within finite planetary resources. It is usually considered to have environmental, economic, and social dimensions.

For the purpose of this policy '**climate change**' is defined as the long-term shift in average weather patterns and temperatures across the world.

For the purpose of this policy '**sustainability lead**' is defined as the person who will own and implement Climate Action Plans, facilitating local action and building capacity to protect learners and staff from the effects of climate change the long-term shift in average weather patterns and temperatures across the world.

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Community and Partnerships

This plan will be implemented and shared with:

- Parents/carers and the local community through newsletters and social media
- Local businesses and environmental groups
- Local schools in the area when successes are achieved to inspire collective action

Monitoring and Review

This plan will be regularly reviewed by the School Sustainability Lead in conjunction with the Headteacher. Any changes made to this plan will be communicated to all staff members.

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Action Plan

Aim 1: Decarbonisation

Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Travel and Transport	Develop understanding of travel impact	Perform a travel survey	Autumn Term 2025	The questions have been created and have been sent to the survey company.
	Reduce air pollution from transport linked to school	Encourage walking to school	Autumn Term 2025	Taking part in walk to school week in the summer term. We could also encourage children to take part in 'Wow Wednesday!' every week where they aim to walk or park and stride on a Wednesday.
		Encourage combination of public transport and walking	Autumn Term 2025	Taking part in walk to school week in May. We will also encourage children to take part in 'Wow Wednesday!' every week.
		Reduce the number of staff and pupils travelling to school by car (most notably in single occupancy vehicles)	Autumn Term 2025	This was discussed at a staff inset day when all staff were present. A number of staff do use public transport already. Other staff walk when they can. Due to places of work and commutes for other staff it is necessary to drive.
		Investigate bike/scooter storage to encourage active travel	Autumn Term 2025	The bike and scooter store is well used by pupils. In the summer term we can reiterate the store is there and can be used.
Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Energy Use	Reduce carbon emissions from energy consumption	Energy review	Summer Term 2026	Reviewing the heating set points, and potential to adjust to a lower temperature if acceptable with occupants. Occupants can add 2/3 degrees, through body heat. Lowering set points by just 1°C can potentially reduce the annual heating bill by up to 8% (info from Carbon Trust).
		Investigate potential to switch to renewable energy tariffs	Spring Term 2026	At present this is not something that we can do. We have a service level agreement with the local authority who procure the best energy deal for schools in the area.
		Understand the types of emissions (Scopes) that contribute to the carbon footprint	Summer Term 2026	The school's carbon emissions are broadly typical for a small primary school of this age in England. The building does not appear highly inefficient. The current DEC CO ₂ emissions suggest greater immediate impact will be gained from improving emissions from use of electricity. A new Eco competition will be

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		implemented this to encourage improved operational reduction of electricity consumption.
Building Survey	Summer Term 2026	The current DEC is valid until 30 March 2027. Recommendations are given to aid cutting energy use. These are being investigated to determine feasibility of implementation.
Heating system audit to check running efficiently and correctly	Summer Term 2026	We have applied for funding from the diocese to replace the boiler as it is now over 25 years old and is breaking down intermittently. We also can no longer maintain the temperature in all areas of school satisfactorily.
Investigate reducing energy consumption by removing gas boiler and replacing with air source heat pump	Summer Term 2027	The school is awaiting a decision by the diocese on our application for funding for a new boiler. There are presently few funding options. The question will be posed if this may cover an air source heat pump.
Investigate installing solar panels on the roof to increase use of renewable energy and reduce energy bills	Summer Term 2026	At present we are looking into available funding for this. We could register our interest in this with the local authority so if any new government funding is released the local authority would know to bid for this. We could also speak to the diocese if they have any funding in place.
Assess building for draughts and leaks to reduce heating demand	Summer Term 2026	If this was done it could be used to determine if an air source heat pump would be a better option than a new gas boiler. The cost of an energy audit and thermal imaging survey would have to be taken into consideration. Also, the diocese would need to be approached to determine if the funding applied for at present could be transferred to an air source heat pump if awarded.
Install reflector panels behind radiators	Summer Term 2026	Radiators in classrooms are not suitable for this. The price for installation behind radiators in other areas will be sought.
Encourage 'people out lights out' in all rooms	Autumn Term 2025	A new Eco competition is being implemented in the Summer Term to encourage this across school. Eco members will monitor each classroom and every half term the winning class in each key phase will win the Eco trophy for

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		their key phase to display in their classroom.	
Encourage monitors and interactive screens off when not in use	Autumn Term 2025	A new Eco competition is being implemented in the Summer Term to encourage this across school. Eco members will monitor each classroom and every half term the winning class in each key phase will win the Eco trophy for their key phase to display in their classroom.	
Label large banks of switches	Autumn Term 2025	Looking into label options for the switches in the hall.	
Investigate the cost of motion sensor lighting and install where appropriate	Spring Term 2026	At present we are looking into available funding to try and include this with solar panel installation.	
Review light bulbs used with a view to choose energy efficient LED if not already installed	Autumn Term 2025	Energy efficient LED already installed.	
Encourage blinds up policy whenever possible	Ongoing	An email has been sent out to all staff requesting this.	
Maximise daylight by removing any window obstructions	Autumn Term 2025	An email has been sent out to all staff requesting this.	
Maximise daylight regularly cleaning all windows, skylights, transparent doors and lights	Autumn Term 2025	External windows are cleaned once a year. Internal doors and windows are cleaned more regularly and when required.	
Review temperature setting of ICT suite	Autumn Term 2025	The temperature in the ICT suite is not set. This is altered by the users of the room. Reminders will be emailed to staff during warmer periods not to leave the aircon on low once the room is vacated.	
Reduce carbon emissions by adapting teaching and learning practices	Audit printing and paper usage	Autumn Term 2025	The number of copies in black and white and colour can be found on the invoices from the copier company. At present it is preferred to print sheets rather than purchase booklets.
	Reduce unnecessary printing – print number required and extras only when required	Autumn Term 2025	An email has been sent out to all staff requesting this.
	Purchase recycled paper for printers and FSC paper for the limited number of external publications	Spring Term 2026	The cost of this is currently prohibitive.

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Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Waste	Reduce amount of waste going to landfill	Compel contractors (as part of a tendering prequalification process) to report accurately on their waste management processes during the construction process	Ongoing	This will be included in all new tenders for work at school.
		Work to eliminate the amount of non-hazardous construction waste that is sent to landfill	Ongoing	This will be included in all new tenders for work at school.
		Audit classroom display policy and lesson resource use	Autumn Term 2025	The school uses hessian for backing boards and encourages the longevity of the hessian.
	Promote recycling to achieve year on year increases and	Increase the visibility of re-cycling facilities around the site	Autumn Term 2025	The Eco club have produced posters for around school to encourage recycling.
		Educate users about the importance of waste segregation	Autumn Term 2025	The Eco Club have produced posters for around school to encourage this.
		Work towards the total elimination of single use plastics	Summer Term 2026	
		Implement recycling of pens used in school	Spring Term 2026	The cost of purchasing a pen recycling station is currently prohibitive for this to be implemented.
		Encourage swap shops to recycle uniform	Spring Term 2026	We already have a large uniform stock in school and we have an area in the school foyer where parents can put uniform they no longer need or take uniform that has been donated.
	Area	Target	Action	Timeline
Catering and Food Waste	Reduce food and drink associated waste	Conduct a food waste audit	Autumn Term 2025	Due to high levels of need within the school and lack of available staff this has not been conducted.
		Recycle bread bags at Aldi	Autumn Term 2025	
		Assess high food waste alternatives	Spring Term 2026	At present a new lower sugar menu plan is being implemented at school and this led to an increase in food waste. We are now a term into this and the amount of food waste has started to reduce. This will now be moved to 2027.
		Compost food waste – reinstate council collection and rectify bin lorry access issues	Spring Term 2026	Trying to get a contact person at the council who we can liaise with.
		Increase recycling of milk waste	Spring Term 2026	We have changed from plastic bottles to cartons of milk. At present we are looking into how the cartons can be collected each day and put in the blue recycling bins.

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		Reduce litter in outdoor environments from milk consumption at break times	Autumn Term 2025	An email has been sent to all staff requesting they are particularly vigilant that the plastic straw wrappers go in the bins.
		Re-useable drinks bottles used	Ongoing	In the end of year newsletter we could include a request to consider re-useable drinks bottles for the new school year.
Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Procurement	Reduce school supply chain impact	To develop, over time, a better understanding of the environmental impact of suppliers and to endeavour to continually improve it through considered selection	Ongoing	
		Ensure all budget holders are aware of the importance of sustainability and include a reference to it in the financial policy	Autumn Term 2025	This has been discussed with the School Business Manager.
		Develop a Supplier Sustainability Risk Assessment (RA) that identifies suppliers most likely to create a large carbon footprint	Summer Term 2026	

Aim 2: Biodiversity

Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Outdoor spaces	Improve biodiversity net gain (BNG)	Engage with the National Education Nature Park	Ongoing	
		Enhance the area of meadow (non-pitch) grassland	Spring Term 2026	This is something that will be actioned jointly by the Eco Club and Gardening Club in the next academic year once a watering regime has been determined to use harvested rainwater.
		Increase plant diversity on grass that is not used as pitches	Summer Term 2026	This is something that will be actioned jointly by the Eco Club and Gardening Club in the next academic year.
		Increase the number of trees and plants on the site	Summer Term 2027	
		Care should be taken to ensure where possible that native species (of local provenance) are used so as to prevent establishment or encroachment of non-native species into the surrounding area	Ongoing	A discussion has been had with the Gardening Club and this will be taken into consideration in the future with any planned planting.
		Remove any invasive plants	Summer Term 2026	The Gardening and Eco Clubs will work together to achieve this. This will extend into the next academic year.

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Aim 3: Education and Skills

Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Climate Education	Outdoor education	Continue to enable pupils to play an active role in the development and management of green spaces - Eco-Club	Ongoing	The Eco Club meet weekly each half term. They carry out regular litter picks around school to help manage the outdoor space.
		Ensure teaching staff make use of the outdoor classrooms and forest school	Ongoing	There is a timetable in place for all year groups to access the forest school. Early years classes are also accessing these areas regularly.
		Educate the School community about key environmental issues and the climate crisis	Ongoing	
	Curriculum audit	Identify opportunities to embed and deliver environmental sustainability education.	Ongoing	
	Understand climate anxiety in school	Audit climate anxiety in school	Summer Term 2026	
	Environmental job prospects	Include careers information on green roles	Ongoing	
Invite in external speakers to run workshops and talks		Ongoing		

Aim 4: Climate Adaptation

Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Water Use	Reduce volume of water used by school	Complete water audit to understand use of water across school.	Summer Term 2026	This can be carried out with information from the caretaker and business manager to understand water use in the school.
		Install smart water meters where possible, to facilitate monitoring of water usage and reduction from baseline once established	Summer Term 2027	
		Introduce low water planting in garden areas	Summer Term 2026	The new gardening club will endeavour to investigate this and ensure this type of planting is used going forwards.
		Audit food waste disposal methods to limit water use	Spring Term 2026	At present trays are washed prior to going in the dishwasher.
		Attend to leaks in water infrastructure promptly	Ongoing	
		Investigate rainwater/grey water harvesting options for future projects	Summer Term 2026	This has been discussed with the school business manager and will be considered in all projects going forwards.

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		Install water efficient features when undertaking renovations, e.g. dual flushing toilets, low flow taps	Summer Term 2026	This has been discussed with the school business manager and will be considered in all projects going forwards.
Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Climate Risks	Understand how the estate is susceptible to climate change	Audit temperatures around school over an annual period. Install heat sensors to monitor levels	Summer Term 2027	
		Audit flood risk – linked to drainage following climatic events	Summer Term 2027	
		Develop emergency response plan to mitigate risk for vulnerable staff and students, including those with preexisting health vulnerabilities and social vulnerabilities	Summer Term 2027	
		Develop a policy in place for adjusting hours during periods of extreme weather	Summer Term 2027	
		Increase areas of shading for children during break times to allow for the physical impacts of overheating from climate change, e.g. installing sail shading.	Summer Term 2026	
	Uniform	Clarify uniform requirements, particularly in periods of climatic extreme. School fleeces in periods of cold weather and relaxing dress code in periods of hot weather, e.g. encouraging pupils to wear loose, light-coloured cotton clothing. Teachers should also encourage children to take off their jumpers	Autumn Term 2025	
Health & Safety	Clarify that sunhats and sunscreen should be worn by all children once a particular UV rating is reached	Autumn Term 2025	This information is included on the school newsletter. It is advised in the UK that once UV index is 3 or above that sunscreen should be worn.	
Area	Target	Action	Timeline	Progress towards objective
Leadership awareness of climate risks	Increase SLT and governor's awareness of climate risks and adaptation planning	Hold training session to discuss hopes and options for school	Ongoing	The updating of this document has led to discussions with SLT about the options available to school for improving the sustainability of the building and practices.

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