

CLIMATE CHANGE FACTSHEET

6. Advice for Schools



Learning how to adapt A guide to helping local schools

The declaration of the Climate Emergency by Local Authority Members was arguably a response to the global movement we have seen young people leading around protecting our climate for their future.

School climate strikes have been in the news since 2019 and many pupils are still enthused and enraged in equal measure about the inaction on climate change. Schools are an excellent setting in which to start raising awareness of climate change impacts, which can be taken home to families.

This factsheet gives you ideas and inspiration with which to engage local schools, alongside links to the resources you need to empower them to start taking collective action.

SKILLS FOR LOW CARBON SCHOOLS

Encouraging schools to focus on developing skills for low carbon living is a great way to instill positive environmental behaviours in young people, and give them new skills for life. Many schools are running gardening clubs to teach children how to grow their own food, which will not only teach them valuable self sufficiency skills, but also give access to produce with zero food miles.



IDEAS FOR ACTION

ENVIRONMENT CLUBS

After school clubs are a great way for interested children to get extra curricular opportunities to learn about climate change.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

This well known award has a community service element. Why not stipulate that pupils do this with an environmental charity to ensure their efforts have a positive outcome for them and the planet?

WOODCRAFT FOLK (WCF)

Can parents or volunteers start a WCF group in their school? These groups encourage environmental awareness.

ECO SCHOOLS

This international programme allows schools to get a Bronze, Silver or Green Flag accreditation.

FOREST SCHOOLS

Foster a connection with nature and create environmentally aware children. Suffolk Wildlife Trust and other charities can train staff or come into your school.

SCHOOLS RECYCLING

Free recycling resources and activities for teachers
www.suffolkschoolsrecycling.org.uk/

See <http://www.greensuffolk.org/schools>

TRAILBLAZING SCHOOLS ARE TACKLING THEIR ENERGY USE

Schools across Suffolk have already taken action on their energy usage to do their bit to **reduce carbon emissions**. Many schools have installed **solar** panels and switched from oil to locally sourced **woodchip** for their heating. Real-time display screens can help children really see the impact these **technologies** have, and will also prompt **behaviour changes**.

To see a full list and **interactive map** for more inspiration, see: <http://www.greensuffolk.org/schools/casestudies/energy>



ECO SCHOOL IDEAS FOR SECONDARY AGE CHILDREN

Secondary school years are often where the enthusiasm and extra curricular time for **Eco School activities** wanes, as children begin to feel the pressure of exams.

However there is huge scope for enhanced learning at this age, moving a step beyond the **practical gardening** and **forest school** learning activities common in primary settings, to those based on **energy** and electricity. Giving children responsibility for **monitoring** energy use and generation around the school is an excellent topic for the mathematics and science curriculum. Aside from this, **school councils** are also brilliant for ensuring young people are thinking about **democracy**, and how to weave environmental concerns into school decisions. Why not have an '**Environment Minister**' on your school council for example? Gardening can also be done at this level, where older children can be given a plot of land and a budget, and given **collective responsibility** for delivering an entire project.

Top tips for schools

This is the 6th factsheet in a series of 7 aiming to inspire and empower action on climate change.

Can you inspire and empower schools to...

- Start **growing food** in school grounds or on allotments to learn about food miles and sustainable food?
- Engage children with their energy use and '**switching off**' lights and screens when they leave classrooms?
- Encourage **walking and cycling** to school (and provide bike storage for them) to reduce transport emissions?
- Take **action on waste** in school and learn about the methane emissions that landfill creates?
- Upgrade heating and lighting to **save energy**?
- **Host forest school sessions** to get young people connecting with the natural world?
- Introduce key literature texts and topic work themed on **environmentalism**, to get messages across more often?

What is my Council doing in response to the Climate Emergency declaration in 2019?

Suffolk County Council:

The Council is investigating ways to cut carbon and harmful emissions on a spend to save basis, with the ambition to make all council buildings, schools and services carbon neutral by 2030.

East Suffolk Council:

The climate emergency task group, which is made up of a cross-party group of members, is reviewing the recent climate emergency report it commissioned and is reporting quarterly to Cabinet on proposed actions. Updates are online: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/climate-change/east-suffolk-environment-task-group/>

West Suffolk Council:

The Council has set up a taskforce that has produced a road map of around 50 initiatives, agreed by the Cabinet, to build on their already successful work to reduce greenhouse emissions to net zero by 2030. You can read more online at: <https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/protecting-our-environment/>

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils:

In 2019 the Council set up a taskforce engaged with environmental experts to develop an action plan which was unanimously approved by Cabinet in 2020, forming the two councils' first Carbon Reduction Management Plan.

Ipswich Borough Council

The Borough has declared a climate emergency and produced a plan of action which Cabinet approved in 2020.

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