

The DfE Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy: A CPD Guide

"Young people will be empowered to take action on the environment as part of new measures designed to put climate change at the heart of education."

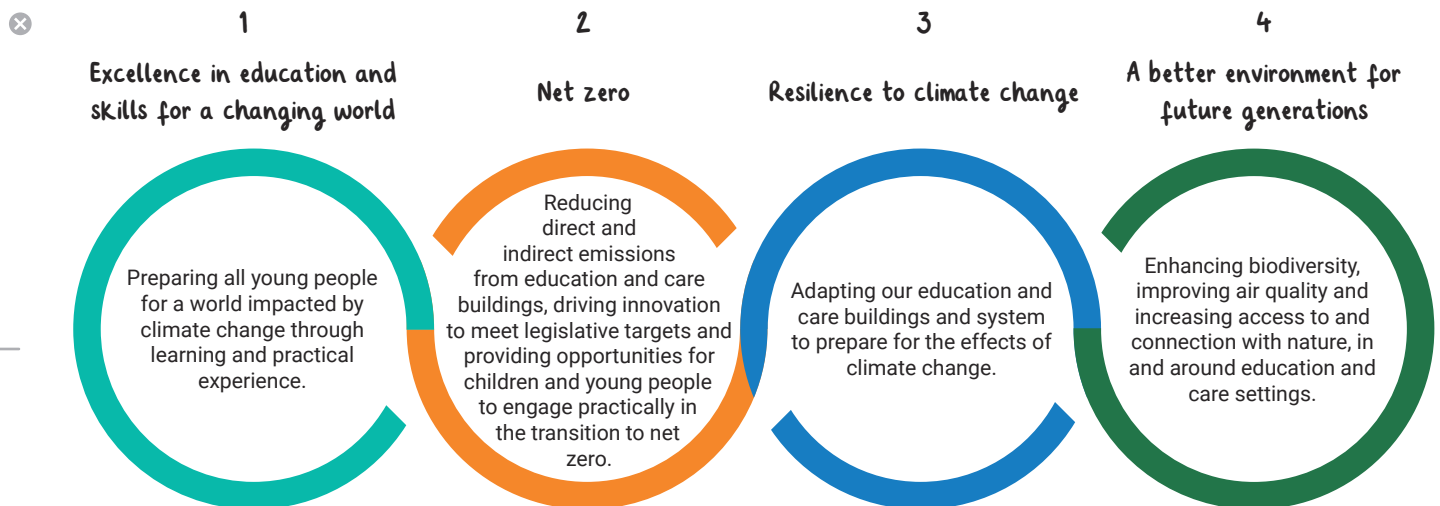
Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP

➤ What is the 'Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy'?

Published in April 2022, the **Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy** is a United Kingdom (UK) government policy paper which sets out to **establish the UK as a world leader in sustainability and climate change by 2030**.

➤ Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2022) - Vision and Aims

In England, we will achieve this through the following strategic aims:



The Department for Education's strategy for sustainability and climate change for the education and children's services systems.

➤ Why Should This Matter to Me?

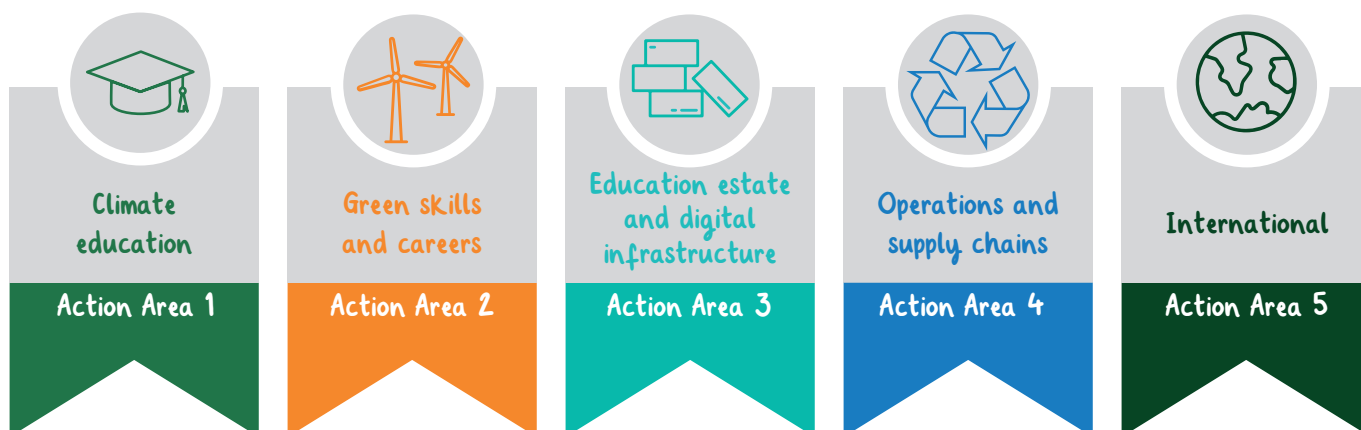
- ✕ The 'Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy' applies to **all education and children's services systems in England**, including early years, schools (independent schools where applicable), further education, higher education and children's social care.

Children and young people want to know more and do more about climate change. They are worried about the future we face. Through education, we can engage children by encouraging a passion for our natural world, showing them ways to explore and protect it and inspiring them to share their knowledge with their local communities.

The government is working towards:

- a **whole-school approach**, which can be integrated from EYFS up to year 6;
- encouraging the incorporation of **sustainability content**, including **climate change**, and **increasing access to nature**;
- looking at ways to **increase biodiversity** and **climate resilience/adaptation** (school sites are perfect for this).

➤ Strategy Action Areas



➤ Action Area 1: Climate Education



Support for Teaching

- Climate change and sustainability content will be included within **science teachers' CPD**.
- The Department for Education (DfE) will **share best practice** tips on how to incorporate climate education into teaching and learning.
- Support will be shared for **incorporating the teaching of sustainability into subjects**, such as design and technology. For example, **the circular economy**.
- **Teacher training** enhancement will be continuing with higher education providers.
- By 2023, a **Primary Science Model Curriculum** for children will include an emphasis on nature and the world around them.
- Specific **teaching resources** from other government departments will be shared. For example, **resources from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), environment agencies and the National Education Nature Park**.
- Provide **carbon literacy training** for all staff through a nominated **sustainability lead**, within their setting.

Twinkl Advice: Join our Sustainability and Eco Facebook Group to share best practice tips on how sustainability and climate change can be incorporated into national curriculum subjects.

Twinkl Sustainability Group - Facebook



Learning About the Natural Environment

- Children should learn about **the importance of nature, sustainability and the causes and impact of climate change**.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework ensures that 'all children develop an understanding of the world around them'. This sets up the building blocks for sustainability content, introduced throughout the curriculum in later years.
- Progression through primary settings enables children to build on this knowledge, which can be **integrated through various national curriculum subjects**: science, geography, citizenship and design technology.

Twinkl Advice: Use our Eco Adventurers curriculum to aid the teaching of climate change and sustainability through resources which can be taught alongside national curriculum subjects.

:ECO:
ADVENTURERS



Learning in the Natural Environment

- Children and young people may take part in **eco-clubs, vegetable growing or adaptation projects**. They may also be encouraged to **recycle, monitor weather and energy** or be exposed to **sustainable food choices**.
- The **physical and mental health benefits** of time spent in nature can improve engagement and provide support for many pupils with SEND. It can also help to ease climate concerns.

- The **National Education Nature Park and Climate Action Awards** will provide opportunities for all children to gain practical experience and turn their learning into positive climate action.
- Encourage schools to build links with the **local community and other delivery partners**.
- Further educational activities should be provided around **energy efficiency, the circular economy, resilience and green careers** for the future.

Twinkl Advice: Our Eco Adventurers curriculum is a great way to fulfil 'Step 4: Curriculum Links' of the **Eco-Schools** programme, incorporating environmental issues into the teaching of at least three curriculum subjects, helping you to work towards the Green Flag award.

Eco-Schools programme - Seven Steps



Political Impartiality

- It is important to **remain politically impartial** when teaching about climate change and sustainability. Topics should be handled in line with schools' legal duties on political impartiality.

Twinkl Advice: We carefully craft our Eco Adventurers resources to be politically impartial and only include the most relevant and accurate climate science from the most recent reports produced by the **IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)**.

IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Reports



> Action Area 2: Green Skills and Careers



Demand for 'green jobs' is increasing. It is hoped that improving sustainability and climate change education will inspire children and equip them with the skills needed when considering future career paths.

The three areas of focus are career paths that support:

the transition to net zero;

the restoration of biodiversity;

a sustainable future.

For example, **increased opportunities to connect with nature, through the National Education Nature Park, could increase the number of young people that become data scientists, ecologists and biologists in the future.** These career paths will be necessary for nature's recovery.

Twinkl Advice: Through learning activities in our Eco Adventures curriculum, children will have opportunities to practise skills in readiness for future green careers.

ECO:
ADVENTURERS



➤ Action Area 3: Education Estate and Digital Infrastructure



The DfE wants education estates to become more green, sustainable and climate resilient. This will help to demonstrate to children that sustainable improvements can make a difference and could inspire them to live more sustainably at home. It is hoped that the physical improvements to the environment around children will also bring positive physical and wellbeing improvements to their daily lives.

New builds

- All new school buildings will be **net zero** in operation and be **designed to cope with climate impacts**, such as **a rise in average global temperatures**.

Existing school buildings

- Smart energy management systems, such as **smart metres**, will be trialled.
- New technologies and research opportunities are being explored by the DfE to improve the **decarbonisation** of school estates. Best practice will be shared, alongside the update to the [‘Good Estate Management for Schools guidance’](#).

Twinkl Advice: Our Eco Adventurers unit **‘Water & Life Below Water’** introduces the importance of water from a young age, and teaches about conservation of water in our daily lives.

**Eco Adventurers:
Water and Life Below Water**



➤ Action Area 4: Operations and Supply Chains



Introducing Sustainable Practices

Children will be introduced to knowledge around key sustainable practices, such as:

- circular economy** - moving away from ‘buy it, use it, throw it away’ to, ‘reuse, repair and recycle’
- waste prevention** - reducing waste at the source
- resource efficiency** - responsibly using Earth’s precious remaining resources sustainably

2023

- Carbon literacy training** will be offered to at least one person (ideally, the Sustainability Lead) in every locally maintained school. Training will build knowledge on climate change; access to public funding; engagement with the National Educational Nature Park and Climate Action Awards; understanding emissions reporting and how to develop a climate action plan to share learning with colleagues within the school setting.
- Support will be offered to schools to improve their sustainable practices, such as **food and waste systems**. For example, **improving the uptake of nutritious, yet sustainable, meal choices**. A whole-school approach to food will be piloted and schools will be encouraged to voluntarily report on their food arrangements, with the intention of making reporting mandatory in the future.

2025

- A sustainability lead will be nominated and a **climate action plan** will be put in place.

2030

- Education settings will be taking part in circular economy initiatives, such as **using food waste to produce compost**, through participation in the National Education Nature Park and Climate Action Awards.

> Action Area 5: International



Sustainability and climate change are global issues which require a collective effort. The DfE states that they want the UK education sector to be 'world leading in sustainability and climate change by 2030', and to provide inspiration to children and adults internationally. The DfE will work across other government departments to equip adults and children alike with skills and knowledge for the future, such as:

being resilient to changing climates;

taking positive climate action;

driving solutions.

UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals



Twinkl Advice: Our Eco Adventurers curriculum offers a wide range of case study content relating to sustainability and climate change from across the world, whether it's demonstrating the increase in severity and frequency of climate related events; highlighting the resilience of foreign communities or celebrating new technologies and sustainable methods for our future. Our curriculum is closely aligned with the UNESCO sustainable development goals, to ensure key content is integrated within our lessons.

Disclaimer: The recommendations of this CPD resource may not be suitable for your current development stage in your career. You should consider what is appropriate and what will work for your own development and knowledge. The examples used are not an exhaustive list; if you require more support we recommend you go to your senior leadership team. While every care has been taken to ensure that there are no significant emotional triggers regarding eco-anxiety for children in this resource, any feelings that arise should be embraced and discussed non-judgementally.

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