



The Castle Partnership Trust

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Environmental Sustainability Strategy

About Us

We are a local Trust with an absolute commitment to our local area and an ambition to serve all the children and families in our communities. To do this we have partnerships with all our local schools regardless of whether they are in the Trust or not, seeking to ensure that every child achieves exceptionally, has a strong sense of belonging and of their own intrinsic worth and value, and for every child to participate in learning, a wealth of enrichment and in the community, local, national and global. This is what drives us. An ambition for all children and to engineer social change for the better through powerfully addressing disadvantage in all its forms through education.

Our values strongly align with the need to take positive action to do our part to address the climate emergency. As local, national and global citizens our learners will inherit the challenges and inequalities that climate change will create, and we owe it to them to play our part in implementing solutions.

Aim

The Castle Partnership Trust is committed to playing its part in the challenge to fight climate change. As an organisation we aim to reduce our negative impact on the environment and increase our positive impact. A large part of this will be to achieve net zero GHG emissions in a realistic timescale of between 20 to 30 years. We believe the young people who we educate have the right to inherit a world that is sustainable.

Terminology

Environmental Sustainability describes the entire subject. It includes everything from encouraging biodiversity to decarbonisation and even eating sustainably.

Decarbonisation is a term to describe the process of reducing an organisation's greenhouse gas emissions.

Carbon Footprint is defined as the total GHG emissions caused directly or indirectly by an organisation. This includes greenhouse gases other than CO₂ which are commonly converted in CO₂ equivalent.

ISO14001 is the international standard that specifies requirements for an effective environmental management system (EMS). It provides a framework that an organization can follow, rather than establishing environmental performance requirements

Buildings and Energy

Where are we now?

The TCPT estate comprises a mixture of buildings varying from brand new builds to 1950s and 60s built blocks along with numerous buildings built in the 70s, 80, 90s and 2000s. The majority are heated by gas and have varying levels of insulation. All electricity is purchased through the Crown Commercial Services procurement framework and is sourced from nuclear power stations which are carbon neutral during their operation although this does not take into consideration GHG emissions during their construction.

Objective

The TCPT estate to achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2050 in line with Government targets.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- replace all gas fired heating systems with air or ground source heat pumps or other zero carbon technologies.
- increase levels of insulation in all building
- design new builds to be carbon neutral wherever possible
- scrutinise construction programmes and supply chains to ensure that that are as low carbon as possible.

Transport

Where are we now?

A substantial proportion of students across the Trust cycle or walk to school. Cycle parking is well supplied for at all schools however some students arrive by car or school bus. Most staff drive to work as walking or cycling with large quantities of books is not practical. and many live at a distance. The Trusts minibuses are all diesel powered.

Objective

To increase the proportion of students and staff who walk or cycle to school or use public transport; increase the number of staff and student drivers who use electrically powered vehicles; and replace the minibuses with electrically powered vehicles when practicable.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- identify barriers that prevent staff and students from walking or cycling to work and remove these barriers where possible
- install electric vehicle charging points to support the transition to electric vehicles.
- convert our fleet of minibuses to electric only vehicles, when the technology becomes affordable and charging infrastructure is more readily available

Water Usage

Where are we now?

Our water supply is almost entirely mains fed except for a rainwater harvesting system in the Court Fields sports hall. Auto stop taps are fitted in most of our buildings which reduces the risk of taps being left on and water usage is monitored to enable us to detect leaks.

Objective

Reduce mains water consumption,

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- minimise how much water we use, including by investing in rainwater harvesting systems, waterless urinals and other water saving technologies
- ensure all staff and students are aware of how they can minimise water consumption and that there are regular reminders in the form of posters, activities and teaching and tutorial topics

Waste / recycling

Where are we now?

Our waste contract is provided by Somerset County Council and provides for the recycling of paper, card, tins, plastic bottles and food waste. Recycling bins are present in every classroom and in communal areas such as dining rooms and playing fields. Although a significant amount of waste is recycled, occasionally recycling bins get contaminated with non-recyclable waste.

Objective

Increase the amount of waste that is recycled with the long-term goal being to have zero waste to landfill.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- identify why and how some recycling bins get contaminated with non-recyclable waste and address these issues
- ensure all staff and students are aware of how they can minimise waste and that there are regular reminders in the form of posters, activities and teaching and tutorial topics
- engage with Somerset County Council with a view to pressing for the recycling of more waste products

Biodiversity and Eco Systems

Where are we now?

All schools in the Trust have substantial outside space which is a tangible asset to help us increase our positive impact on the environment. All schools in the Trust already make good use of their outside space and all have eco clubs and / or forest schools. Specific areas are set aside for this purpose and the students and staff actively encourage biodiversity in these areas. Funding is made available to buy pollinator friendly plants, bird boxes, bug hotels and local businesses have donated plants to support this initiative. When trees must be removed for H&S reasons new trees are planted and where possible logs are retained on site to provide wildlife habitats. The species of tree is carefully considered so that it will have maximum benefit on the area's ecology. We also engage with carbon offsetting schemes to receive free saplings to plant in our grounds.

Objective

To increase biodiversity and support eco systems across the Trust.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- identify new areas at all schools that can be set aside for wildlife and continue to actively fund these initiatives seeking support from local businesses
- increase our access to carbon offsetting schemes

Marine Environment / Litter

Where are we now?

Students and staff across the Trust are encouraged to put all litter in appropriate bins. All members of the Trusts community engage in litter picking to reduce the amount of plastic waste that finds its way into water courses and the sea. Fencing around our grounds is designed to stop litter blowing off the premises. Increasingly, bins are being replaced with seagull and squirrel proof bins, preventing them from pulling litter out of bins.

Objective

Reduce our impact on the marine environment by preventing plastics and other litter from entering water courses and procuring only sustainably sourced fish for our food service.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- actively reduce the use of plastics across the Trust, with targets set for the reduction
- increase the number and frequency of litter picking activities within and around all schools in the Trust
- continue with replacing the bins as described above

Procurement / Supply Chain

Where are we now?

We are increasingly making use of procurement frameworks to procure large contracts and high value items. These frameworks often scrutinise a company's environmental credentials and some insist on ISO14001 accreditation. For small or routine works we use local contractors which reduces carbon emissions linked to travelling.

Objective

To only use ISO14001 accredited contractors and suppliers where possible and increase the use of local contractors; and decrease the carbon footprint of goods and services.

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- ensure that we increase the use of local ISO14001 accredited contractors and make it widely known locally that this is our objective
- Formulate, together with local contractors, staff and students, creative ways through which we can decrease the carbon footprint of goods and services.

Education and Curriculum

Where are we now?

Within the taught curriculum the issue of environment and the climate emergency is strategically addressed in Geography and Science specifically. In these subjects, colleagues have mapped the curriculum to ensure that knowledge about the environment builds in complexity. For example, at TCS habitat destruction and deforestation are learnt in Yr 7 Geography, are developed through Yr 8 and then culminate in a synoptic unit based around Borneo, rainforests and palm oil. The Trust has an unshakable commitment to teaching knowledge of climate change, despite the uncertainty of the last year. For example, in Science at TCS the curriculum was re-sequenced following lockdown to ensure that students in Yr 11 left with a good knowledge of climate change even though the changes to the CAGs meant that climate change was not being tested and therefore didn't need to be taught.

The environment is also addressed in the secondary curriculum of other subjects: In Food students learn about food miles and seasonality; in DT students learn about sustainable materials; in RE students learn about the theories of stewardship and dominion.

The curriculum also addresses the environment and the climate emergency through enrichment. Eco clubs are active across the trust where students focus on changing mindsets and behaviours at a local level. The enrichment day programme at TCS addresses climate change by including a universal trip to Magdalen Farm, a sustainable organic farm in South Somerset and a GCSE trip to Bristol, which includes a focus on sustainability. Further trips are being planned as part of the Enrichment Day review, and at least one of these will have a sustainability focus for Yr 9 students. The Trust has a commitment to outdoor education, within which the environment and sustainability are taught. At TCS all Yr 7 students attend Pinkery Centre for Outdoor Learning, with further outdoor ed trips being planned to Outpost on the Quantock Hills.

STEM clubs and activities over the last few years have included a wind-turbine club (which entered a prestigious competition in the US) and Go4SET/Industrial Cadets (which have included student-led projects on sustainable developments).

Part of the secondary curriculum provision has also included forest school. Among the SEMH and learning benefits of this education, students have also learnt a knowledge of the environment around them.

Objective

To increase our existing long-term commitment to increase knowledge of climate change and environmental issues and develop and increasing number of creative and innovative activities and schemes to enable students to be active participants in changing the future as climate change and environmental issues become even more pressing

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- further develop our long-term commitment to increase knowledge
- undertake strategic reviews of the curriculum, especially in Science and Geography, where further refinement is needed
- promote and support colleagues in working with external agencies, such as Ofsted, DfE, Geographical Society etc as they continue to publish more research regarding curriculum and pedagogy
- ensure that climate change and environmental issues are interwoven into all subjects across the curriculum as appropriate

Healthy Living / Sustainable Diet

Where are we now?

School catering services mainly use recyclable / compostable packaging for food and drinks. Meat is sourced from a local butcher and is locally sourced and slaughtered. Other supplies

are procured from suppliers based in the South West. All food served complies with the relevant school meals guidance regarding nutritional values, and healthy options are always available and promoted

Objective

To ensure that all students understand the concepts of healthy living and a sustainable diet at the level appropriate to their age and stage of development; that healthy living, including exercise and keeping oneself safe and well are promoted routinely across the Trust; and that healthy lifestyle and a healthy sustainable diet are promoted routinely across the Trust

Strategy

To achieve this, we will:

- Carry out an audit of the Trust's promotion of healthy lifestyles and healthy eating and identify and act upon areas for improvement
- Identify the barriers which students face in living and eating healthily and develop strategies to support them
- further scrutinise the provenance of our catering supplies looking at the carbon footprint of supplies, particularly meat
- consider the welfare of animals in the supply chain.
- continue to explore ways to reduce single use plastics through sale of drinks in alternative ways.