

The Emscote School

POSITIVE about YOUNG PEOPLE



SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Parneet Kang', written over a horizontal line.

Parneet Kang
Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Holland', written over a horizontal line.

William Holland
Chair of Trustees

July 26 – Tracy White

Introduction

The Emscote School recognises its responsibility to contribute positively to environmental sustainability while preparing pupils for life in an increasingly climate-conscious world. As a small independent special school, we are committed to taking proportionate, practical steps to reduce our environmental impact, promote sustainable behaviours and provide meaningful learning opportunities that help pupils understand their role in caring for the environment.

We recognise that climate change presents one of the greatest long-term challenges facing society. Through effective leadership, education and responsible management of our resources, we aim to create a school culture where sustainability is embedded into everyday practice and where pupils develop the knowledge, skills and values needed to contribute positively to their communities.

This policy establishes the role of the Sustainability Lead and outlines the school's Climate Action Plan. It demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and supports the school's wider vision of developing responsible, resilient and informed young people.

National Context and Department for Education Expectations

In April 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) published its Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, setting out the ambition for England's education sector to play a leading role in achieving the Government's commitment to reach Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The strategy identifies education as having a vital role in helping young people understand climate change, develop sustainable behaviours and gain the skills required for future employment within a green economy.

As part of this strategy, the DfE has set out expectations that schools should:

- Appoint or identify a Sustainability Lead to coordinate environmental improvement and climate education.
- Develop and maintain a Climate Action Plan that considers curriculum, estates, operations and community engagement.
- Embed sustainability and climate education across the curriculum where appropriate.
- Improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions where practical.
- Encourage biodiversity and responsible management of school grounds.
- Promote responsible procurement and waste reduction.
- Increase resilience to climate-related risks, including extreme weather events.
- Work collaboratively with pupils, staff, parents, governors and the wider community to promote sustainable practices.

The DfE recognises that schools differ significantly in size, resources and context. Therefore, expectations should be implemented proportionately. For a small independent special school such as The Emscote School, our Climate Action Plan focuses on practical, achievable actions that support continuous improvement whilst remaining appropriate to our setting and the complex needs of our pupils.

Our approach reflects the four key pillars identified within the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy:

- Excellence in education and skills, ensuring pupils develop knowledge and understanding of environmental issues through an accessible and inclusive curriculum.
- Net Zero, reducing the school's environmental impact through responsible management of energy, resources and procurement.
- Resilience and adaptation, ensuring the school is prepared for the effects of climate change and promotes sustainable practices that protect health and wellbeing.
- A better environment, enhancing biodiversity, reducing waste and encouraging environmental stewardship across the whole school community.

The school also recognises its responsibilities under the Climate Change Act 2008, the Environment Act 2021 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, particularly in relation to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

Whilst there is currently no statutory requirement for independent schools to achieve specific carbon reduction targets, The Emscote School is committed to working towards the principles outlined by the Department for Education and embedding sustainability into school improvement planning as part of our commitment to responsible leadership and continuous improvement.

Purpose

The aims of this policy are to:

- Reduce the school's environmental impact.
- Promote environmental responsibility amongst pupils and staff.
- Develop pupils' understanding of climate change and sustainability.
- Encourage responsible use of resources.
- Improve biodiversity across the school site where possible.
- Support the wellbeing of pupils through outdoor learning opportunities.
- Meet the aspirations outlined within the Department for Education Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

Objectives

The school aims to:

- Reduce energy and water consumption.
- Reduce waste sent to landfill.
- Increase recycling across the school.
- Purchase sustainable products wherever practical.
- Encourage active travel where appropriate.
- Improve biodiversity within school grounds.
- Embed sustainability into the curriculum.
- Develop pupils' understanding of environmental responsibility through practical activities.

The Sustainability Lead

The Principal will appoint a Sustainability Lead from the leadership or teaching team.

The Sustainability Lead will:

Leadership

- Develop and monitor the school's Climate Action Plan.
- Report annually to governors and senior leaders.
- Coordinate sustainability initiatives.
- Monitor progress against agreed objectives.
- Ensure sustainability is considered in strategic planning.

Curriculum

Work alongside curriculum leaders to ensure pupils have opportunities to learn about:

- Climate change
- Biodiversity
- Recycling
- Renewable energy
- Conservation
- Sustainable living
- Environmental responsibility

Learning opportunities should be adapted appropriately to meet individual SEND needs.

Staff Development

The Sustainability Lead will:

- Raise staff awareness.
- Share good practice.
- Organise sustainability-themed CPD where appropriate.
- Encourage environmentally responsible working practices.

Site Management

Work with premises staff to:

- Monitor energy use.
- Reduce unnecessary waste.
- Encourage efficient heating and lighting.
- Improve recycling facilities.
- Promote biodiversity.

Community Engagement

The Sustainability Lead will encourage:

- Parent involvement.
- Local community partnerships.
- Participation in national sustainability events.
- Student voice through Eco Groups or School Council.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

The Principal will:

- Support sustainability initiatives.
- Allocate appropriate resources.
- Monitor progress through school improvement planning.

Governors

Governors will:

- Receive annual updates.
- Monitor implementation.
- Support long-term strategic planning.

Teachers

Teachers will:

- Promote sustainable behaviours.
- Integrate environmental learning into lessons where appropriate.

- Model good environmental practice.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants will:

- Encourage pupils to recycle.
- Promote responsible use of materials.
- Support practical environmental activities.

Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Recycle appropriately.
- Turn off lights and equipment when requested.
- Respect outdoor spaces.
- Care for wildlife and plants.
- Participate in environmental projects.

Climate Action Plan

Leadership and Governance

Actions

- Appoint Sustainability Lead.
- Produce annual Climate Action Plan.
- Report progress annually.
- Include sustainability within School Development Planning.

Success Measures

- Named Sustainability Lead.
- Annual report completed.
- Governors receive annual update.

Curriculum

Actions

Embed sustainability into:

- * Science
- * Geography
- * PSHE

* Citizenship

Examples include:

- Recycling projects
- Growing vegetables
- Energy investigations
- Weather monitoring
- Wildlife studies
- Upcycling activities

Success Measures

- Sustainability included in schemes of work.
- Evidence within lesson observations.
- Student voice demonstrates increased understanding.

Energy

Actions

- Switch off unused lights.
- Switch off interactive boards overnight.
- Reduce unnecessary printing.
- Use LED lighting when replacing fittings.
- Monitor electricity usage each term.

Success Measures

- Reduction in electricity bills where possible.
- Increased staff awareness.

Waste

Actions

Increase recycling of:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Plastic bottles
- Printer cartridges
- Batteries

Reduce:

- Single-use plastics.
- Food waste.
- Unnecessary photocopying.

Success Measures

- Recycling bins in rooms
- Reduced general waste.

Water

Actions

- Promote responsible water use.
- Repair leaks promptly.
- Display reminders in toilets.

Success Measures

- Reduced water consumption over time.

Biodiversity

Actions

Where practical:

- Install bird feeders.
- Plant wildflowers.
- Develop wildlife areas.
- Create bug hotels.
- Encourage outdoor learning.

Success Measures

- Increased biodiversity around school.
- Pupils participating in environmental activities.

Procurement

The school will aim to purchase:

- Recycled paper.
- Sustainable classroom resources.
- Energy-efficient equipment.

- Durable furniture.
- Environmentally friendly cleaning products where practical.

Travel

Where appropriate the school will encourage:

- Walking.
- Cycling.
- Car sharing.
- Efficient school transport planning.

Recognising that many pupils require specialist transport due to SEND needs.

Student Voice

Pupils will be encouraged to contribute ideas through:

- School Council
- Eco Projects
- Gardening activities
- Recycling monitors
- Environmental awareness weeks

Activities will be appropriately adapted for pupils with SEND.

Monitoring

The Sustainability Lead will monitor:

- Energy use
- Water use
- Waste and recycling
- Curriculum coverage
- Student participation
- Staff engagement
- Progress against Climate Action Plan

Monitoring will take place termly with an annual report presented to governors.

Equality and Accessibility

The school recognises that all pupils should be able to participate in sustainability activities regardless of their individual needs.

Activities will be differentiated and adapted to ensure pupils with SEND can access practical environmental learning safely and meaningfully.

Implementation, Communication & Review Cycle

1. Mid-year implementation review – Spring Term 2027
2. Formal annual review – July 2027 (or earlier if national guidance changes).