

SOMERS HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL



SUSTAINABILITY PLAN AND CLIMATE ACTION POLICY

Aims and Values

Aims

1. Build Awareness

Educate students, staff, and families about climate change, its causes, and its consequences—empowering the community with knowledge to inspire action.

2. Champion Sustainable Habits

Promote eco-friendly practices such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and embracing sustainable choices in everyday school life.

3. Empower Student Leadership

Encourage children to take initiative by leading climate projects, participating in decision-making, and becoming ambassadors for sustainability.

4. Cut Carbon Emissions

Adopt strategies to reduce the school's environmental footprint—such as switching to renewable energy, eliminating single-use plastics, and improving recycling systems.

5. Embed Climate Education

Integrate environmental themes across the curriculum to foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving around sustainability challenges.

6. Strengthen Community Partnerships

Collaborate with local organisations, government bodies, and families to amplify climate efforts and share resources and expertise.

7. Create Biodiverse Spaces

Enhance outdoor areas with gardens and nature zones to support biodiversity and provide hands-on learning opportunities.

8. Track and Improve

Set clear environmental goals and regularly assess progress to ensure continuous improvement and celebrate achievements

Our Core Values for Climate Action

Stewardship

Instil a shared sense of responsibility in students and staff to care for the planet and protect its resources.

Inclusivity

Ensure everyone—regardless of age, background, or ability—is actively involved in shaping and supporting climate initiatives.

Collaboration

Promote teamwork within the school and build strong partnerships with families, local organisations, and wider communities.

Resilience

Develop adaptive strategies to help the school community respond effectively to the evolving challenges of climate change.

Creativity & Innovation

Encourage imaginative thinking and support bold, forward-looking solutions to environmental issues.

Respect for Nature

Foster a deep appreciation for the natural world and a commitment to preserving it for future generations.

Equity & Justice

Advocate for fairness in resource use and recognise the unequal impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

Long-Term Vision

Focus on sustainable choices and practices that will benefit the school and its community for years to come.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Headteacher (Sustainability Lead) and senior leaders	<p>Make sure staff CPD plans cover sustainability, e.g. including climate change and sustainability in science teachers' CPD, and providing sustainable usage training for all staff</p> <p>Review every subject policy in the next 12 months with an eye to sustainability and quality outdoor education</p> <p>Work with premises and school business staff to look at where to invest money to reduce carbon emissions, and improve sustainability and resilience</p> <p>Develop our school's climate action plan by 2025</p> <p>Communicate the sustainability policy to the school community</p> <p>Receive and co-ordinate training to all staff (if needed)</p> <p>Identify appropriate areas of the school grounds to use as an environmental classroom</p> <p>Encourage whole-school participation in environmental awareness days</p> <p>Lead a whole-school sustainability audit to identify current and future opportunities for change</p>
Curriculum/subject leads	<p>Carry out a sustainability audit for their subject, identifying opportunities to teach about the natural world, sustainable practices and the circular economy</p> <p>Identify ways to reduce usage and waste when teaching their subjects, e.g. reducing printing</p> <p>Investigate how to incorporate outdoor education into their curriculum area</p>
School Business Manager	<p>Carry out sustainable procurement practices by considering usage, waste and supply chains as part of the assessment and validation criteria used when purchasing goods and services</p> <p>Identify funding opportunities for sustainable development and lead bids for that funding, e.g. smart meters, low- carbon boiler replacement</p> <p>Communicate waste reduction practices in school to encourage sustainable and cost-effective behaviour, e.g. limiting printing, and turning off lights</p> <p>Conduct energy and water usage audits at the end of every term</p>
Site Manager	<p>Keep the school site clean and safe for effective outdoor learning</p> <p>Make sure all lights, taps, and unnecessary appliances are switched off at the end of each day</p> <p>Communicate waste reduction practices in school to encourage sustainable and cost-effective behaviour, e.g. limiting printing, and turning off lights</p>
Governors	<p>Receive training on a whole-school approach to food</p> <p>Approve policies that have been reviewed with an eye to sustainability and quality outdoor education</p> <p>Monitor progress of our school's climate action plan</p> <p>Review the sustainability of a school's practices and procedures</p>

Curriculum and Learning

Our curriculum engages directly and encourages children to be:

- Passionate about the natural world
- Look for opportunities to care for the world around them
- Influencers in their wider communities by providing opportunities to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of nature, sustainability and climate change, and to translate this knowledge into positive action.

Embedding sustainability in curriculum and learning:	
2025-2026	Sustainability Key priority to review the curriculum, including opportunity to embed and extend sustainability. Ensure all learners acquire a foundational understanding of sustainability, including climate change, renewable energy, biodiversity, and resource management, through integrated lessons and hands-on experiences. Eco-Warriors/School Council work towards Green Flag status
2026-2027	Consult with stakeholders regarding sustainability in the curriculum, sourcing local champions, visits and visitors

Food and Catering

Our kitchen staff led by Ashlyns look for opportunities to make food and catering more sustainable at Somers Heath Primary School.

Sustainable whole-school food approach:	
2025-2026	Implement systems to reduce food waste, such as portion control, composting leftovers, and reusing excess food where possible. Compostable large food bags to be arranged for the kitchen Provide further learning opportunities for the children about cooking to limit waste with direct cooking lessons – Investigate a Roots to Food workshop day
2025-2026	Sustainability As part of the menu – food will be locally sourced to reduce carbon footprint.
2025-2026	Participation in the Community Food Growing Program with Thurrock Local Authority and their Partner Trustlinks. Details to follow.

Waste and recycling

As a school we work hard to promote the circular economy.

Recycling:	
2025-2026	See food waste
2025-2026	Sustainability Key priority to review the curriculum, including opportunity to embed and extend sustainability. Launch creative projects to repurpose materials like paper, plastic, and textiles into new products or art. Incorporate these activities into lessons and school events to foster a hands-on understanding of the circular economy.
2026-2027	Continue to build on and reuse waste products in school.

Reducing Waste:	
2025-2026	Set up composting bins in the school for food scraps, garden waste, and other compostable materials. Use the compost to enrich school gardens, creating a closed-loop system that reduces waste while teaching students about natural recycling. Recycling bins to be placed in all classrooms

	Review landfill waste and how this can be reduced through recycling and separation of food waste
2025-2026	Key priority to review the curriculum, including opportunity to embed and extend sustainability. Encourage students and families to pack waste-free lunches by using reusable containers, water bottles, and utensils. Provide education and incentives, such as "waste-free lunch days," to inspire participation and reduce single-use packaging waste. Launch creative projects to repurpose materials like paper, plastic, and textiles into new products or art. Incorporate these activities into lessons and school events to foster a hands-on understanding of the circular economy.
2026-2027	Continue to build on and reuse waste products in school.

Energy and Water

Many measures to reduce energy and water consumption require significant investment in infrastructure. Our school has recently upgraded to a more efficient heating system by replacing the traditional wet heating setup with energy-efficient air conditioning units in every classroom. This transition has significantly reduced our reliance on boilers and gas. Additionally, we have installed 98 solar panels in two phases, helping to lower our demand for electricity from the grid. Further improvements include the replacement of all windows, the installation of a new roof with enhanced insulation, complete electrical rewire, and the implementation of energy-efficient LED lighting throughout the building.

We endeavor to reduce energy usage by:	
2025-2026	Investigate the increase of the solar array to provide renewable energy for the school throughout the year.
2025-2026	Sustainability Key priority to review the curriculum, including opportunity to embed and extend sustainability. More active Eco/School Council to champion this area Launch an energy-saving campaign to educate students and staff on reducing energy consumption by turning off unused equipment, using natural light when possible, and limiting heating or cooling to necessary levels.
2026-2027	Continued work with eco council - look for opportunities to involve Ethos/School Council in energy reduction.

We endeavour to reduce water usage by:	
2024-2025	Review and equip taps, toilets, and urinals with water-saving features such as aerators, low-flow fixtures, and timed or sensor-operated systems to minimise water waste.
2025-2026	Sustainability Key priority to review the curriculum, including opportunity to embed and extend sustainability. More active Eco Council to champion this are - Launch a water conservation awareness program to educate students and staff on simple habits like turning off taps while soaping hands, reporting leaks promptly, and using collected rainwater for outdoor tasks like watering plants.
2026-2027	Continued work with eco council - look for opportunities to involve Ethos/School Council in energy reduction. Aim for eco friendly schools award

Transport and Travel

We encourage walking to school and many of our families are local and do so. Many others use public transport. We are working toward the next level of accreditation on our Modeshift Travel Plan.

Buildings and Ground

School site sustainability:

2025-2026	Develop green space – allotments – woodland areas
2025-2026	Conduct energy and water usage audits Review the quality of outdoor education (specifically EYFS)
2026-2027	Conduct energy efficiency audit