

Howe Dell Primary School - Climate Action Plan 2025-2028

Our Commitment to a sustainable future

Howe Dell is committed to developing children's understanding of the world around them and their responsibility to it. As we face the urgent challenges of climate change, we recognise our vital role in educating the next generation and in actively contributing to a more sustainable future. This Climate Action Plan outlines our strategic approach to addressing climate change within our school community and beyond.

Howe Dell has a history of environmental innovation. The school building was designed as Hertfordshire's first 'eco-school', with many environmentally sustainable features including electricity-producing photovoltaic panels, and a 'living' sedum roof. These features, alongside our dedicated outdoor learning spaces like "Kingfisher Island" and our Eco Discovery Bus, provide a unique 'living laboratory' for pupils to learn from. Our curriculum already complements this eco-status, fostering a strong awareness of global issues and active citizenship.

Developed in line with government guidance on sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education, this document serves as a roadmap for our journey towards becoming an even more environmentally conscious and resilient school. It reflects our commitment to a whole-setting approach, integrating environmental responsibility into every aspect of school life – from our curriculum and daily operations, to the management of our grounds and our engagement with the wider community.

This plan is structured around four key pillars of action:

- **Climate Education and Green Careers: ensuring the education we provide gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and empowering our staff to deliver it.**
- **Improving the Environment and Biodiversity: getting to know our outdoor space and enhancing the school grounds for both people and nature.**
- **Decarbonisation: taking measurable steps to reduce our carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.**
- **Adaptation and Resilience: taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating to safeguard our school environment.**

We understand that addressing climate change is an ongoing process that requires collective effort. This plan is a living document, and we invite our students, staff, parents, and wider community to join us in implementing these actions and helping Howe Dell lead by example in building a sustainable future for all.

Climate Education and Green Careers					
Area	Action	Who	Links to SIPs / Policy?	Timescale	Progress/Notes
Sustainability and Climate Education in the Curriculum	Audit the current sustainability content in the curriculum	ESD Lead		Spr 26	
	Create a document that outlines links to sustainability education throughout the curriculum	ESD Lead Curriculum Lead		Sum 26	
	Use CUSP resources to identify areas for further sustainability links	ESD Lead Staff		26-27	
	Deliver in-school staff PD to support embedding climate education across the curriculum	ESD Lead		25-26 26-27	
	Identify PD opportunities for sustainability lead and school staff	ESD Lead		Ongoing	
Books and Reading	Audit the school library and class book areas for eco themed books	ESD & Reading Lead		Dec 25	
	Grow the collection of eco reading materials on site	ESD Lead Reading Lead		26-27	Aut'25 – added eco sharing books EYFS/KS1
Enrichment	Arrange Whole school or year group enrichment through inviting experts in.	ESD Lead Teachers		Ongoing	
	Explore opportunities for sustainability and climate education enrichment linked to the wider curriculum through trips outside of school	ESD Lead Teachers		Ongoing	Y3 – Nature Reserve
	Engage the whole school in national initiatives: walk to school week, clean air day, count your carbon, big schools birdwatch etc.	ESD Lead	Y	Annual	
School Grounds use for Climate Education	Mend the floorboards of the 'lookout' so this can be used for learning outside	Facilities		Aut 25	Completed
	Utilise the outdoor areas of the school for learning outside: Kingfisher Island, Outdoor Classroom, Eco Bus, Nature Trail, Orchard	Teachers		Ongoing	Aut'25 Y2 – Orchard + Island
	Create a nature observation area to include a 'hide', bug hotels and educational signs	Facilities		26-27	Plans discussed, budget proposed
Green Skills	Set up and run Eco Committee successfully in school hours	ESD Lead	Y	Aut 25 Ongoing	Set up + first meeting held
	Encourage staff to run a climate targeted club – eg. litter picking club, recycled art club	ESD Lead		Ongoing	
Comms	Include a sustainability section to the newsletter at least termly showing school's improvements or opportunities for families	ESD Lead		Aut 25 - Termly	Aut'25 – Eco Committee + Bins Wins
	Add climate action plan to a new sustainability section of the website	ESD Lead	Y	Aut 25	Completed – Uploaded to 'Our Eco School'

Improving the Environment and Biodiversity					
Area	Action	Who	Links to SIPs / Policy?	Timescale	Progress/Notes
Environment and Biodiversity	Register for National Education Nature Park	ESD Lead		Aut 25	https://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/
	Undertake biodiversity mapping of habitats in the school site (<i>Education Nature Park</i>)	ESD Lead Eco Reps	Y	Spr 26	
	Classes grow native plants or seasonal crops in upcycled planters	ESD Lead Staff Pupils		Ongoing	
	Maintain wild areas for bird to nest	Facilities		Ongoing	Aut'25 - Shrub areas maintained for small birds
	Survey wilded areas of land on the property and identify a new area for potential rewilding	ESD Lead Facilities		2025-26	Aut'25 – 2 new identified areas for long term rewilding projects
	Encourage staff to restart a gardening club	ESD Lead Staff		25-26	
	Manage the orchard area better to utilise the fruit in learning and improve wildlife usage	Facilities		26-27	Aut'25 - Started
	Introduce more wildflower areas around the site	Facilities ESD Lead		Spr 26	Aut'25 - Seeding budget proposed
	Install more educational signage about native plants and wildlife around school grounds	ESD Lead Facilities		26-27	
	Participate annually in Big Schools Birdwatch	ESD Lead	Y	Annual	
Continue to purchase environmentally friendly cleaning products	Facilities Office		Ongoing	Aut'25 – Paper towel switched to recyclable option	

Decarbonisation					
Area	Action	Who	Links to SIPs / Policy?	Timescale	Progress/Notes
Energy	Put IT devices on an automatic shutdown timer at an agreed time	Computing & ESD Lead Facilities		Aut 25	
	Explore the use of smart plugs to measure power usage for particular devices	Computing & ESD Lead Facilities		25-26	Aut'25 budget for one initial smart plug proposed
	Lighting has been changed to LED and independently switched sections – encourage staff to switch off as much as possible, when lighting is not needed	Facilities Eco Reps		Ongoing	
	Experiment with reduced heating timings linked to seasonal changes	Facilities		Ongoing	
	Teach outside to reduce the need for artificial light	Staff		Ongoing	
	Investigate the possibility of leasing the roof space for solar energy production	Facilities Exec Head		25-26	
Decarbonisation Education	Regular re-education on all eco initiatives and targets in school e.g. bins, food waste etc.	ESD Lead Eco Reps Staff	Y	Ongoing	
Food Waste	Review the food waste from the daycare and plan changes to menus to reduce this	Facilities Daycare Manager		25-26	
	All classrooms that receive free snack to ensure this is 'optional' rather than 'enforced' to reduce food waste from children disliking food.	ESD Lead Staff		Ongoing	
	Offer surplus free fruit to children and parents at the end of a school day	Staff		Ongoing	
Waste	Monitor for leaks around the building regularly and monitor water levels	Facilities		Ongoing	Aut'25 monitoring carried out
	Replace current non-recyclable paper towels with a recyclable alternative	Facilities		Aut 25	Aut'25 Completed – costs + waste reduced
	Trial recycling only bins in the classroom – general waste moved communally – review and adapt where it does or does not work	Facilities Staff		Aut – Spr 25-26	Aut'25 – Completed – 75% target of waste being recycled achieved for the first time
	Reduce printing waste and paper purchasing costs by educating staff on costs and waste volume	Facilities Office		25-26	
	Encourage staff to reuse printed resources as scrap paper in classes or re-print on the other side	Facilities Staff		Ongoing	

Adaptation and Resilience

Area	Action	Who	Links to SIPs / Policy?	Timescale	Progress/Notes
Water and Flooding	Monitor and lower water levels used for toilets and cisterns to a reduced rate based on usage	Facilities		Ongoing	
Heat and Overheating	Undertake a shade mapping activity NENP	ESD Lead Eco Reps	Y	25-26	https://www.educationnaturepark.org.uk/
	Explore adding more natural sources of shade e.g. large trees around the boundary	Facilities		25-26	Aut'25 – 2 year budget proposed for mature trees