



Diocesan Board of Education Environmental Sustainability Policy

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Review date	February 2028

Diocesan Board of Education

Environmental Sustainability Policy

1. Background

Christians recognise that all life exists in an intimate, mutually supporting community, sustained by and reflecting God's love¹ and Anglicans affirm their responsibility 'to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'.²

Church of England schools are hubs for the community, places of creativity and provide a foundation for authentic social, cultural and spiritual action. Good education plants seeds that can inspire and bear fruit for generations to come.

In February 2020, the Church of England General Synod passed a motion to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030. Diocesan Synod passed a motion to action this in June 2021.

The [Diocesan Environmental Policy](#) sets out how care for God's creation is a fundamental part of the Diocesan Growing in God vision.

The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) is a statutory committee of the Diocesan Board of Finance with particular functions and responsibilities for church schools, RE and Collective Worship and education in the diocese more widely:

- to develop and support highly effective church schools and Headteachers
- to equip and resource church schools to deliver high quality RE and Collective Worship
- to support schools, governors and clergy in ensuring the Christian distinctiveness of church schools
- to develop and strengthen effective links between churches and schools which enable faith to grow and to contribute to the Diocesan Growing in God strategy
- the DBE has no funding to implement this policy, other than the School Condition Allocation grant funding for Voluntary Aided schools.

2. Environmental Vision

The environmental vision of the Diocesan Board of Education is that the DBE and Church of England schools will **celebrate** God as Creator, and fully **understand** the impact of their work upon the environment. Church of England schools will become truly **sustainable** places of learning which create better outcomes for all children and young people, conserve the environment and enable the planet to flourish for future generations. The DBE will encourage collaboration amongst stakeholders to achieve this, and Church of England schools will **achieve** net zero carbon emissions by 2030.³

¹ Colossians 1:17

² The Fifth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion: <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx>

³ Scope 1 & 2 emissions at Voluntary Aided & Multi-Academy Trust schools (where the MAT has church majority governance articles of association),

3. Strategic Objectives

Within the DBE's control:

- we will understand the environmental impact of DBE Members' and Officers' work (e.g. travel, paper, office, emails, waste) and set goals to reduce adverse impact
- our Diocesan Asset Management Plan will ensure that the following are appropriately prioritised in the allocation of School Condition Allocation grant capital funding from the Education Skills & Funding Agency at Voluntary Aided schools:
 - Net Zero 2030 target
 - creation of a better environment for future generations, enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to (and connection with) nature in and around schools
 - developing resilience to climate change through adaptation of school buildings and systems
- A pre-condition to accessing Voluntary Aided SCA funding will be a requirement that governing bodies develop a Climate Action Plan and nominate a Sustainability Lead, to comply with the requirements of the [DfE Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy](#)
- we will keep abreast of funding opportunities and promote these to schools (e.g. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme)
- we will encourage our supply chain to operate in a manner that is consistent with this policy
- In relation to the requirement for its consent to capital works at church schools under the DBE Measure 2021, the DBE will require schools to have considered low-carbon and sustainable options at feasibility stage of project planning
- we will maintain an Action Plan with timescales and periodically review this
- we undertake to celebrate success and learn from experience.

Within the DBE's influence:

- we will promote understanding and teaching of best environmental practice at all Church of England schools (e.g. meetings of school leaders, weblinks and distribution of external resources)
- we will encourage all Church of England schools to develop a Climate Action Plan and nominate a Sustainability Lead, to comply with the requirements of the DfE, and also to commission and implement a Heat Decarbonisation Plan
- we will encourage governing bodies and academy trust boards to make meaningful commitments to reduce their carbon emissions and other environmental impacts
- we will encourage MATs with church majority governance articles of association to develop their own environmental policy which aligns with this one
- we will collaborate with the Local Authority to ensure that Voluntary Controlled schools are supported, and learn from the Local Authority's experience with these and community schools
- with the support of charities and other organisations, we will encourage behavioural change at all Church of England schools to reduce energy consumption, reduce waste, and encourage biodiversity.

Daniel Jones, Buildings Officer
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