



The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

Sustainability Policy 2025 - 2030

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1	HEC	New Policy	22.10.25

*This policy applies to all academies within the DCET
Please visit each school's website for their own local plans*

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DCET Sustainability Policy

DCET Sustainability Vision

The DCET is committed to becoming an exemplar educational establishment, preparing our children to flourish in a world impacted by climate change through learning, practical experiences and sustainable building environments. We recognise the importance of a sustainable future and steer our Climate Action Plan (CAP) in line with our trust values and aligned to governmental strategy and policy.

DCET Trust Values

Together we love, we learn, we live. Our schools are naturally concerned about the environment and the importance of making sure we contribute to making sustainable choices which have a positive impact to all. The DCET acknowledges its responsibility and enables our pupils to flourish through our trust values, which are:

Curiosity: a powerful driving force for learning and engaging with the issues around environmental concerns and how our pupils can contribute.

Stewardship: enabling our schools to take responsibility for the protection of our natural world through their communities.

Resilience: nurture and teach our pupils to adapt to the ever evolving new circumstances such as climate change and biodiversity disturbances.

Forgiveness: acknowledgement of past mistakes and harm and finding solutions to make better choices.

Respect: understanding the environment we live in along with its interconnectivity of living things and being mindful of our daily actions and contributions.

Love: the deep connection with ourselves to drive positive change.

Background

The UK has one of the most ambitious environmental policies in the world which recommends we bring all greenhouse gases to net zero by 2050. However, sustainable development needs to meet the needs of the now and should not compromise the needs of the future as defined by the Brundtland Commission, UN General Assembly 1987. More specifically, sustainability can be viewed as having three dimensions:

- social sustainability - the availability of proper health systems, peace and respect for human rights, decent work, gender equality, quality education, and rule of law.

- economic sustainability - economic growth via appropriate production, distribution and consumption.
- environmental sustainability - protection, conservation, enhancement of the natural environment, biodiversity and tackling climate change.

Whilst both social and economic sustainability are intrinsic to sustainable development, environmental sustainability is the focus of this policy as the trust implements its Climate Action Plan (CAP) for its schools, although all three dimensions are inherently intertwined.

Legislation

In 2021 the UK government issued policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet our net zero target by 2050. The policy paper - Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener announced that a policy would be implemented for sustainability within the education sector. The Department of Education (DfE) subsequent publication: Sustainability and Climate Change policy paper and its ongoing updates form the basis of this policy and the CAP.

Other notable legislation/publications taken into consideration are:

- UK Climate Change Act (2008).
- the Environmental Act (2021).
- the Paris Agreement and Glasgow Climate Pact.

Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

Education plays a vital role to help tackle climate change and create a better, greener world for future generations. The DfE strategy vision as laid down in the [Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children’s services systems - GOV.UK](#) is:

‘for the United Kingdom to be the world leading education sector in sustainability and climate change by 2030’.

In England, we will achieve this through 4 strategic aims and subsequent actions:

Strategic Aim	Action Points
<p>1. Excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.</p>	<p>1. Climate education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning about the natural environment. • support for teaching. • learning in the natural environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> political impartiality.
<p>2. Net zero: reducing direct and indirect emissions from education and care buildings, driving innovation to meet legislative targets and providing opportunities for children and young people to engage practically in the transition to net zero.</p>	<p>2. Green skills and careers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> net zero strategy. additional support for green jobs and skills. support and guidance for green careers.
<p>3. Resilient to climate change: adapting our education and care buildings and system to prepare for the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>3. Education estate and digital infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> new builds and new blocks. existing estate. resilience, adaption, access to nature and environment conditions. heating solutions. water strategy. reporting frameworks, reporting processes and targets.
<p>4. A better environment for future generations: enhancing biodiversity, improving air quality and increasing access to, and connection with, nature in and around education and care settings.</p>	<p>4. Operations and supply chains: drive change by introducing children to more sustainable practices.</p> <p>5. International: world leader in sustainability and climate change by 2030.</p>

Strategy

The DCET strategy objectives will mirror those set out by the DfE above, so as to develop the CAP in alignment with current governmental guidelines:

Excellence in education and skills for a changing world:

- create a greener sustainable future by giving our community of schools a better understanding of climate change, along with a greater connection to nature.
- all pupils, to be equipped with the knowledge and mindset to help with the positive change required in supporting climate change initiatives.
- pupils are given the opportunity to participate in the practical application of sustainable initiatives as well as greater opportunities to embrace outdoor activities and clubs.
- develop our staff to deliver high quality sustainable education and promote greener career opportunities to our pupil base.

Net zero:

- reduce the DCET's overall carbon emissions, using data to set targets to assist with the journey to net zero.
- reduce consumption of energy, including water, through education and building technology arrangements.
- embrace the 'Internet of Things' to improve our building stocks operational efficiency and sustained longevity.
- manage the trust estate through effective maintenance, robust compliance and projects which take into consideration environmental impact.
- develop the DCET's sustainability procurement, ensuring preferred suppliers and contractors have robust corporate social responsibility policies.
- develop smarter, sustainable facility services for our school communities, including but not limited to, catering, cleaning, IT and maintenance, outsourced or otherwise.
- promote the reduction in business travel, wherever possible, and ongoing initiatives to improve sustainable travel amongst our staff, students and parents

Resilience to climate change:

- build in resilience to the DCET building stock against ever changing climates ensuring the integrity of its infrastructure against the elements i.e., flooding, extreme heat and cold.
- provide continuity of educational during adverse weather conditions, creating the environment to allow the buildings to support its core function.
- incorporate heating and water solution strategies into the estate's asset management plan.
- new buildings to have a sustainable focus from inception.

A better environment for future generations:

- improve the DCET estates biodiversity through intelligent grounds maintenance, wild gardens, ponds, reflective and gardening/allotment areas.

- improve air quality, wherever possible, through conscious refurbishments and building projects.
- reduce the trust waste streams, developing success recycling processes.

Roles and Responsibilities

Finance, Resources, Risk and Audit Committee (FRRAC):

- to review the sustainability policy and CAP.
- provide support to the DCET with its commitment to net zero across the trust.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

- support the sustainability policy and CAP.
- support head teachers with their individual school initiatives.
- drive the overall focus to becoming net zero.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO):

- ensure financial reporting includes the investment and returns of projects associated with environmental sustainability.
- understands the strategic role of sustainability within the DCET and promotes efforts and aspirational projects, wherever possible.
- engage with procurement frameworks to identify risk, sustainable partnership arrangements and opportunities to improve DCETs sustainability credentials.
- ensure the CAP evolves and continues to migrate into the Estates Asset Management Plan, allowing sufficient funding streams, wherever possible.

Directors - School Improvements:

- assist head teachers and their schools in delivering cross curriculum activities which promote climate change.
- reviewing curriculum to include climate change, sustainability and increased outdoor activities.

DCET Head of Estates and Compliance:

- act as the sustainable lead for the DCET.

- support individual school sustainability leads.
- develop, with the Head Teachers, the school buildings and grounds.
- assist with the promotion of outdoor learning and biodiversity.
- identify risk, in relation to climate change, and feed this into the trust risk register.
- identify environmental sustainability improvements and embed them into the estate's development plans.
- overseer of the DCET CAP.

Local Governing Committees:

- supporting the school and providing commitment to making progress towards net zero targets.
- hold senior leaders to account for their part in ensuring the CAP is followed.
- monitoring the curriculum, ensuring climate change is promoted, throughout the school day.
- nominate a governor with oversight of their schools CAP and sustainability Lead.

Executive Leads and Headteachers:

- proactively support the sustainability policy and the CAP's overall objectives.
- review curriculums, to include sustainability, climate change and outdoor activities.
- develop its individual schools CAP, with assistance where necessary from external agencies, ensuring it links into the overall CAP objectives.
- support their designated school's sustainable lead.

Schools:

- nominate a sustainable school lead.
- promote awareness of climate change through learning and activities.
- daily implementation of the individual schools CAP, ensuring integration with the DCET's CAP objectives.

- prepare pupils for a world impacted by climate change through teaching and learning.
- encourage parents, through appropriate communication, to promote a more sustainable lifestyle (recycle, walk or cycle to school).

School Business/Office Managers:

- monitor shared spaces, ensuring energy sustainability for such areas.
- promote energy conservation amongst the school staff.
- ensure waste streams are managed and disposed of correctly, maintaining your agreement with the waste removal provider.
- monitoring cleaning, caretaking and contractors whilst working to maintain the school premises, advising on energy and sustainable good practice.
- support the schools sustainable lead and the DCET's CAP.

Conclusion

Each school pupil has the tools to flourish and contribute significantly to our trust values through activities and learnings, as our schools provide the foundations for understanding and contributing to positive climate change.

Sustainability, along with its environmental issues are an ongoing concern for the DCET and it is our responsibility to deliver a CAP which promotes key objectives and deliverables which contribute to the journey, to net zero.