

# *St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School*



## *Environmental Sustainability Policy*

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<b>Headteacher:</b>	Mrs E Poulteney	<b>Chair of Local Governing Body:</b>	Mr Thompson
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## **Statement of intent**

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we are committed to educating our pupils about environmental concerns and the importance of living sustainably. We recognise our responsibility to ensure that pupils are prepared for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.

We encourage both pupils and staff to think about the environment and how their actions will impact upon their local surroundings, as well as the global environment.

Effective use of this policy will ensure pupils are taught about environmental sustainability, promote an eco-friendly attitude, and ensure that the school itself is as sustainable as it can be.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Climate Change Act 2008
- The Ozone-Depleting Substances Regulations 2015
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Control of Pollution Act 1974
- DfE (2012) 'Top tips for sustainability in schools'
- The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems'

- **Simpler Recycling legislation comes into effect 1st April 2025**

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies/procedures:

- Data Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Travel to and from School plans
- Health and Safety Policy
- Records Management procedures

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The school is responsible for:

- Developing a curriculum which promotes the need for environmental sustainability.
- Including and engaging staff, governors, pupils, parents and the local community to improve and sustain the world today for future generations.
- Sharing good practice with pupils, parents and the community, and encouraging them to adopt the initiatives outlined within this policy.
- Promoting awareness of climate change through cross-curricular activities.
- Sharing the responsibility with the wider community for promoting and practising policies which show concern and care for the future of the global environment.
- Preparing pupils for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that teaching staff have the necessary knowledge to teach pupils about environmental concerns.
- Ensuring that staff and pupils understand the importance of energy conservation, for example, ensuring that they turn lights off when not in use.
- Communicating with disposal companies regarding the disposal of recyclable and non-recyclable waste, so that the school can implement a waste disposal procedure for all staff and pupils to follow.

- Ensuring that catering staff understand the importance of recycling and disposing of waste **within the framework of the Simpler Recycling legislation**.
- Ensuring that the site manager understands their responsibility to maintain the cleanliness of the school grounds.

The LGB is responsible for:

- Monitoring and reviewing the school's energy usage.
- Identifying, with the site manager, energy waste and taking the necessary steps to rectify this, such as installing motion sensor lights.
- Checking the environmental standards of suppliers and contractors.
- Ensuring equipment purchased is made from sustainable resources, for example, biodegradable cups for water rather than plastic.
- Ensuring the heating systems are monitored daily using the Thermostats around the site to ensure the school remains at a comfortable temperature and only comes on when needed.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Promoting the need for environmental sustainability in their lessons.
- Ensuring their classrooms are using energy sustainably, for example, ensuring that computers are turned off when not in use.

- **Disposing of rubbish in line with the Simpler Recycling legislation**

The site manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring that outside lights are switched off when they are not needed.
- Recording energy use and reporting any waste to the Headteacher.
- Monitoring the cleaning staff and advising them on good energy practice.
- Arranging and coordinating waste disposal from the premises and ensuring that all waste is disposed **of under the Simpler Recycling initiative**.
- Maintaining the overall cleanliness of the school premises.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Applying their learning at home and aiming to be sustainable outside of school.
- Walking or cycling to school, when possible.
- Using energy sustainably, for example, not leaving taps running.
- **Disposing of rubbish in the designated bins**

Parents are responsible for:

- Promoting an eco-friendly lifestyle at home.
- Encouraging children to walk or cycle to school, when possible.
- Recycling at home and ensuring that their children understand how to recycle.
- Reinforcing the learning that the school implements in regard to the environment.

### **3. Waste and recycling**

We will reduce the amount of waste we produce by:

- Writing and printing on both sides of paper wherever possible.
- Using emails, using the school's website and Arbor when communicating with parents, to reduce paper waste.
- Disposing of food waste **in food waste bins** in line with the school's kitchen's procedures at all times.
- Putting used paper in a scrap paper drawer and re-using it whenever possible.
- Only printing documents when it is essential.
- Making sure that all waste office equipment is correctly disposed of via re-use or recycling schemes.
- Where possible, encouraging pupils to share worksheets.
- Where possible, laminating frequently used documents, protecting them from damage and prolonging their use.

The school will ensure that there are water fountains available for pupils to drink from and refill their water bottles. Pupils will be encouraged to bring reusable water bottles into school, as opposed to disposable plastic bottles. Any disposable plastic bottles brought into school will be recycled.

There will be clearly labelled bins located throughout the school for recycling, food waste and general waste. **From 1st April, bins will be reviewed under advice from Thurrock Council so that we ensure that we comply with the new legislation.**

The school may display posters explaining important environmental considerations, for example, what sort of waste can be recycled and how litter can be detrimental to the environment.

Any paper containing personal or sensitive information will not be re-used and will be disposed of in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

### **4. Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)**

WEEE is regulated to reduce the number of devices and equipment that is incinerated or sent to landfill sites. To reduce the school's carbon footprint and minimise the impact on global warming, the necessary steps are taken to ensure WEEE is disposed of properly.

The types of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) the school will safely dispose of include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Desktop computers
- Servers
- Laptops
- Monitors
- Printers

- Projectors
- Scanners
- Interactive whiteboards

The headteacher, in collaboration with the Network Manager, will find a suitable local partner, e.g. a producer of EEE that manufactures and sells EEE under their own brand, to dispose of WEEE safely. The headteacher will contact the Christus Catholic Trust for more information and guidance, where necessary.

Before choosing a partner to dispose of WEEE, the Network Manager and Headteacher will review the potential partner's risk assessments and procedures to determine whether the school's WEEE and any data stored will be handled and disposed of correctly.

Once a partner is selected and WEEE is ready to be removed from the school, the Network Manager will undertake a risk assessment in collaboration with the partner to ensure all EEE is removed safely and securely from the school.

WEEE which hold personal data, or data the school needs to fulfil legal obligations, e.g. relating to safeguarding, are reviewed by the DPO to ensure the data is no longer needed or has been backed-up. Data is securely deleted or backed-up in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy.

The Network Manager will display the WEEE symbol in their office and around the school to remind themselves and other members of staff, e.g. the DPO, that all EEE should be properly disposed of.

## **5. Littering**

The school understands that, under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, littering is a criminal offence. It also understands that fines may be incurred where individuals deliberately litter the premises.

Every member of the school community has a duty to dispose of waste properly. Specifically, individuals are responsible for:

- Putting litter in the appropriate bin, e.g. recycling bins.
- Using resources thoughtfully.
- Reusing resources where possible.
- Assisting the site manager and eco committee with the cleanliness of the premises.

The school will appoint staff members and pupils, who are responsible for:

- Promoting awareness of anti-littering throughout the school.
- Monitoring the school's anti-littering procedures.
- Listening and responding to questions from the school committee.
- Organising and recruiting volunteers for litter picking groups.

Teachers will encourage pupils to partake in litter picking around the school grounds.

To mitigate risks of littering, the school will implement the following procedures:

- Designated eating areas at Lunchtime – pupils and staff will only be permitted to eat in these areas to prevent unwanted litter.
- Waste disposal – bins will be provided throughout the school, with additional bins provided in eating areas, to ensure sufficient availability for waste disposal.

The school will raise awareness of anti-littering amongst pupils and staff through dedicated assemblies, PSHE lessons, staff training days and additional resources, such as leaflets and posters.

## **6. Transport**

Pupils and staff will be encouraged to walk to school, where possible.

The benefits of daily exercise, such as walking to school when possible, will be promoted throughout the school.

The school will encourage teachers and other members of staff to car share whenever possible, for example, when travelling to external training days.

The school may produce informative material, such as posters and leaflets, regarding the impact of the carbon emissions produced by personal vehicles and public transport on the environment, which may be displayed and distributed around the school. The school will have suitable and safe storage for staff and pupils to store bicycles.

The school will recognise that there are risks involved when individuals choose to walk or cycle to school; therefore, road safety lessons will be organised by Thurrock Council.

## **7. School grounds**

The Headteacher, Finance Manager, and the site manager (Site Team) will monitor the consumption of energy within the school, recognising where the school is wasting energy and implementing measures to reduce energy consumption, e.g. introducing motion sensitive lights.

LED lightbulbs will be used throughout the school.

The Site Team LGB will monitor heating within the school, assessing whether it is at an appropriate temperature and frequency and adjusting it accordingly.

When new buildings or refurbishments are being planned, the school will always consider any environmental impacts and the LGB will consult an expert.

## **8. Healthy living**

The school will promote an ethos of environmental understanding. Pupils will be taught to understand that their actions have a direct impact upon the environment. The school will discourage environmental indifference and promote the importance of understanding the impact that each individual has on the environment.

The school will encourage staff and pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, as healthy lifestyles often lead to a sustainable lifestyle, for example, walking instead of driving.

The school will ensure pupils get at least 60 minutes of moderate exercise a day, in line with NHS recommendations.

## **9. Sustainable farming and fishing**

The school will teach pupils where food comes from as part of the PSHE lessons, including giving them first-hand experience of growing their own fruit or vegetables. Teaching staff will organise educational visits to food suppliers and producers to aid pupils' understanding as to where food comes from. Pupils will be taught about the importance of sustainable fishing and farming in accordance with the curriculum.

School meals will be designed with due regard to seasonal produce and locally sourced food. The school may approach local food suppliers for their produce to be used in school meals.

## **10. Energy**

The school will reduce our energy usage by:

- Switching off lights when they're not in use.
- Keeping doors and windows shut in cold weather and installing draught excluders so that warm air is retained.
- Turning off energy-draining appliances, for example, computers, projectors and interactive white boards, when they're not in use.
- Monitoring the temperature and frequency of heating in the school and adjusting it accordingly.
- Conserving water.
- Insulating hot water pipes to reduce water waste when running a tap, as well as reducing the likelihood of frozen pipes in winter.
- Ensuring all systems work efficiently, and any breakages or leaks are resolved as a matter of high priority by the site manager.
- Auditing the amount of energy used each term.
- We have upgraded the school's heating system to a modern, more efficient system to reduce emissions.
- Increasing the share of electricity from renewable energy sources or biomass.
- Information around the school and in classrooms to ensure that pupils understand the importance of switching off lights, computers and taps when they're not in use.
- Monitoring the environmental sustainability of suppliers and adjusting procurement arrangements accordingly.
- Making all members of the school's community aware of the link between energy use and financial costs.
- Appointing a team (Site team), to ensure that these measures are carried out.

The school will display our Display Energy Certificate in plain sight in the school office.

## **11. Reducing carbon emissions**

The school is committed to reducing our overall carbon emissions. Emissions will be reduced by:

- Implementing renewable technologies that export surplus energy to the national grid.
- Advertising the benefits of being environmentally friendly around school.
- Promoting the benefits of recycling.
- Sourcing school supplies from UK suppliers as much as possible.

The school will communicate with our Trust and other MAT schools to enhance our provisions and continue to develop and implement best practice within the school.

## **12. Sustainable procurement of goods**

The school will devote our time to ensuring all product procurement is done in the most sustainable way. The school will dedicate a team to purchasing, this will include the Finance Manager, the catering manager and the Headteacher; they will be responsible for creating an inventory of current stock and ensuring that orders are not processed with unnecessary purchases listed on them.

The purchasing team will ensure that produce bought is cost efficient, sourced from within the UK where possible and bought from a company with an energy efficient ethos.

The purchasing team will avoid buying branded products where quality is not compromised. The purchasing team will obtain contracts with suppliers that stipulate their terms of purchase, paying particular regard to pricing, quality and their returns policy.

### **Paper**

The school is committed to:

- Purchasing paper that is 100 percent recycled and eco-certified.
- Purchasing paper that is produced through a process of low energy consumption and emissions.
- Avoiding certain substances in paper production, e.g. bleach.
- Purchasing paper based on recycled paper or paper based on sustainability harvested virgin fibre.
- Ensuring that manufacturers state 'ecological responsibility' wherever possible.
- Ensuring that paper is, at a minimum, Elementary Chlorine Free (ECF) or Totally Chlorine Free (TCF).

### **Lighting**

The school is committed to:

- Using lighting controls to reduce energy consumption.
- Replacing light bulbs with low energy alternatives.
- At the installation stage, ensuring the system works energy efficiently.
- Promoting the use of lamps with low mercury content.
- Recycling all waste products appropriately.

### **Office equipment**

The school is committed to:

- Buying energy efficient models.
- Buying products which have a low impact on the environment through their life cycle.
- Buying recyclable products with a long lifespan and recyclable packaging.
- Buying products with a restricted amount of hazardous material.
- Buying products with restricted noise emissions.

### **Furniture**

The school is committed to:

- Buying furniture that is produced with environmentally friendly material and processes.
- Using materials which are partly or wholly made from recycled/renewable materials.
- Making sure that all furniture purchased is repairable and recyclable.
- Purchasing timber from legal and sustainable managed forests.
- Ensuring that packaging material is based on renewable raw materials and can be suitably recycled.
- Avoiding possibly hazardous substances in both production and surface treatment.

### **Food and catering**

The school is committed to:

- Purchasing organic food or food from partly organic sources.
- Purchasing livestock products with high welfare standards.
- Purchasing seasonable products.
- Purchasing marine products which are sustainably produced.
- Making sure the cutlery, crockery, tablecloths and glassware used are recyclable.
- Purchasing locally produced products and promoting local purchasing to parents.
- Making sure the kitchen appliances procured are water and energy efficient.

### **Cleaning products**

The school is committed to:

- Using products produced in the UK.
- Using the recommended amounts of products and minimising use where possible.
- Using products which can be used at lower temperatures.
- Minimising the use of hazardous chemicals in cleaning and dishwashing products.
- Avoiding phosphorous and limiting biocides.
- Making sure that packaging made from recyclable materials is recycled.
- Purchasing sprays without propellants.
- Ensuring that no substances in products are identified as 'volatile organic compounds'.

### **Gardening products**

The school is committed to:

- Buying peat-free products.

- Buying products which come in packages which are compostable, recyclable or biodegradable.
- Buying organically produced plants.
- Using alternative methods of pest control to pesticides.
- Using low-noise, low-emission and low-consumption machinery.

### **Textiles**

The school is committed to:

- Buying materials with an EU organic logo or the international gold standard for organic textiles.
- Buying fair trade textiles.
- Ensuring that clothes or materials purchased contain natural fibres or organic cotton.
- Buying textiles with lower residues of substances harmful to human health.
- Buying textiles with a reduced use of environmentally harmful substances in production.
- Buying textiles/materials that can be reused or which have been previously used.
- Reusing purchased items, e.g. uniforms, ties, and school bags.

## **13. Curriculum**

The school will aim to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding in biodiversity and sustainability, by embedding the topics within many areas of our curriculum. For example, but not limited to:

### **Science:**

- Pupils will be taught about how animal extinction can impact ecosystems.
- Pupils will be taught about how deforestation and loss of habitat can impact species.

### **Geography:**

- Pupils will engage in discussions about windmills and other sustainable energy sources, outlining the advantages and disadvantages.
- Pupils will be given case studies to analyse, such as looking into the effectiveness of sea defences.

### **English literature:**

- Pupils will be given nature poetry to read, assessing how the environment is depicted and the implications of these depictions.