



# Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust

Through Christ, in partnership,  
enabling all to flourish.



## Sustainability Strategy

2026-31

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth...And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*

*Genesis 1 1.31*

*The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life.*

Pope Francis. Laudato Si (23) 2015

## Introduction

At Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, we recognise our responsibility to embed the principles of Catholic social teaching, to promote the common good and to care for our common home.

Pope Leo raised the question in October 2025,

*God will ask us if we have cultivated and cared for the world that he created for the benefit of all and for future generations, and if we have taken care of our brothers and sisters - what will be our answer, my dear friends?*

We recognise that we have a crucial role in achieving environmental sustainability and welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with our communities to strive for decarbonisation and living sustainably. We seek to ensure that our pupils and students are prepared for a world impacted by climate change through learning and experience.

Our whole-Trust approach encompasses all aspects of school life and supports each school to include the following aspects in their approach to climate action planning and sustainability:

- Energy usage
- Waste management
- Recycling
- Water usage
- Sustainable transportation
- Eco-friendly and biodiversity projects
- Climate education
- Community engagement
- Innovation and creativity
- Greener skills and careers

We enable our pupils and students to flourish and to succeed and grow with a passion for making positive environmental changes within a sustainable and caring community.

We will work collaboratively to take positive action across the Trust to drive change. Staff, students and pupils will be involved in undertaking actions which will bring long-term success as we are aware that our collective choices will add up to significant change.

Each school will identify a Sustainability Lead and develop a climate action plan which should be reviewed regularly by the local governing committee.

## Our strategy

Our strategy sets objectives for improvement which encompass what we need to do in the future as well as now. We aim to lead by example and expect our suppliers to meet environmental standards in the service and goods they provide too.

We aspire to the best outcomes for our pupils and students and to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to take care of our common home both now and in the future.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The Trust Board is responsible for

- Identifying a member of the board to meet with the Trust Sustainability Lead termly, to monitor the progress of the Sustainability Strategy and action plan.
- A commitment to making progress towards net zero across the Trust
- Consider the environmental impact of any building redevelopment or new builds

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for

- Ensuring that the long-term environmental initiatives are aligned to the long-term financial health of the Trust
- Ensuring that the financial reporting includes the investments and returns on projects, people and resources associated with environmental responsibility
- Working collaboratively with stakeholders to drive environmental sustainability through supply chains
- Validating the contract award process to ensure environmentally sustainable outcomes

The Director of Estates is responsible for

- Recording data, (eg energy and waste energy use) to be shared with the Trust Board and school leaders
- Ensuring that all building maintenance and development actions prioritise environmental sustainability and climate action
- Overseeing asset management, with consideration for life cycle maintenance, to meet Trust priorities and strategic plans
- Leading the development of energy, water and waste management strategies, in line with best practice
- Identifying opportunities for environmental sustainability improvements
- Identifying risks relating to the climate or environment, (eg. extreme weather, poor air quality,) and ensure that the Trust risk register reflects these risks

The BWCET Sustainability Group are responsible for

- Regularly monitoring and reviewing the Trust strategic and climate action plans
- Supporting school sustainability leads
- Reporting to the Trust Board on progress against strategic and climate action plans
- Supporting the communication of sustainability actions and climate action plans

- Promote the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust Sustainability Award, and celebrate the successes of schools

School leaders are responsible for

- Identifying a school Sustainability Lead
- Developing a school climate plan
- Conducting an environmental audit [Greener Schools Index](#)
- Supporting the implementation of Trust and school sustainability and climate action plans
- Providing outdoor space and biodiversity to promote healthy living, mental wellbeing and practical skills
- Reviewing curriculum policy on climate, sustainability, green skills and careers, and outdoor education
- Ensuring sustainability is included in staff induction and ongoing professional development
- Ensuring that premises staff work to minimise environmental impact, reduce energy and water waste, and manage waste ethically
- Encouraging parents to
  - Promote an eco-friendly lifestyle at home
  - Support pupils to walk or use sustainable transport to school

The Local Governing Committee are responsible for

- Ensuring that school leaders implement and monitor a school climate action plan
- Monitoring the school's commitment to reduce waste, improve energy and water efficiency, and to seeking sustainable procurement opportunities
- Monitoring the school's curriculum which promotes sustainability, green skills and careers

## Key areas

### Behavioural change

In all aspects of our strategy, we seek to embed meaningful changes in perspective, attitudes and behaviours towards environmental issues, demonstrating that even small actions can make a significant difference to the environment. Induction and ongoing professional development promotes behavioural change.

We recognise that engaging in nature promotes mental wellbeing and therefore we encourage staff and pupils to use outdoor space during lessons as well during recreation times.

We seek to secure funding and support, when available, to promote and sustain initiatives which are focused on sustainability and climate action

### Adaptation and resilience

Effective estates management is at the heart of the sustainability strategy. Condition surveys identify priority areas, and all new building and refurbishment projects consider environmental impact and energy saving solutions. Smart meters, EV chargers, heat source pumps and solar panels are installed when possible.

#### IT

Reducing the use of print is essential to IT developments in our schools and software is installed to reduce print waste. Energy-efficient and ethical hardware solutions are sought, and all digital equipment is recycled or disposed of following WEEE guidance. Due diligence is paid to the use of artificial intelligence, (AI,) particularly in relation to the energy this uses.

#### Catering

Local food providers are sourced wherever possible, and delivery routes are agreed to reduce environmental impact. Menus are developed to minimise food waste. The use of single-use plastic is minimised, and when appropriate, recyclable packaging is used for takeaway food. No disposable packaging will be used for food eaten on BWCET school or HQ premises.

#### Energy usage

Energy is procured through the DfE scheme which monitors ethical practices and ensures reusable energy sources whenever possible. Staff and pupils are educated in relation to the management of energy use.

#### Waste management and recycling

Waste management providers sort dry waste for recycling and food waste is used to develop greener energy. Recycling stations are installed on schools' and HQ sites. Staff and pupils are educated in relation to waste reduction and recycling.

#### Water usage

Water audits are conducted as part of the BWCET estates strategy. Water usage is monitored to identify and repair leaks. Staff and pupils are educated in relation to water use and wastage.

#### Sustainable transportation

Smart delivery routes are agreed as part of procurement processes and school buses follow sustainable routes. EV chargers are installed on school and HQ sites when possible/ suitable. Schools are encouraged to provide 'walking buses' and cycle shelters, (if there are safe cycle journey routes.) Staff are encouraged to car share and BWCET HR provide a salary sacrifice bicycle purchase scheme. Staff and pupils are educated in relation to sustainable transport options.

#### Eco-friendly and biodiversity projects

Schools are encouraged to register with [Home | Education Nature Park](#) and other organisations, (see appendix.) Schools choose to instal compost bins/worm farms, (with agreement of the cluster estate manager.) Most schools establish Eco warrior/Laudato si/environment pupil groups which develop student-led initiatives to promote the awareness of sustainability and climate change issues. Many schools undertake the CAFOD Live Simply Award [LiveSimply award](#) and also plant trees and shrubs in partnership with the Woodland Trust. [Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](#) A number of schools are involved in wider initiatives, beyond school, which promote biodiversity.

#### Climate education

Staff induction and ongoing professional development includes the principles of sustainability, climate change and green careers. School leaders map sustainability topics across the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop a breadth of understanding. When possible, schools provide parent workshops and activities which promote sustainable living and climate awareness.

#### Community engagement

Schools engage with local companies and organisations to promote initiatives that support climate action and sustainable living. Environmental projects are undertaken, including those linked to parish initiatives, for example, community litter picking and campaigning.

#### Innovation and creativity

Technology is used to monitor and improve energy usage and waste management as part of the BWCET estates strategy, including the installation of heat source pumps, EV chargers, and solar panels. Energy and waste management providers share data which is used to reduce waste. Staff training is provided to ensure that all are aware of the impact of AI on energy consumption, and student-led initiatives are encouraged.

#### Greener skills and careers

School leaders ensure that opportunities for outdoor education are available to pupils. They also ensure that sustainability topics are mapped across the curriculum so that pupils are able to develop 'green' skills, and have knowledge of climate change, biodiversity, environmental issues and ethical solutions. Schools include 'green jobs' as part of the careers curriculum and liaise with local employers to provide school visits and work experience in green careers.

## Appendix: Sustainability Resources for Schools

Some useful websites and resources include:

Met Office for Schools will help young people understand the wide-reaching impacts of weather and climate change locally and globally, for people, places and businesses. [Climate Change Toolkit for Teachers | UNEP - UN Environment Programme](#)

The Climate Change Teachers Toolkit by Edmentum is an easy to navigate library of resources that link directly to the curriculum. It will support classroom learning about climate change. [Climate Change Teacher Toolkit - The Good Cause Project](#)

Curriculum Resources - [National Association for Environmental Education - NAEF](#)

KS1, KS3 & KS5 Environment Agency lesson packs [Environment Agency lesson packs](#)

Environment agency packs via STEM: | [STEM](#)

WWF work with schools: Supporting teachers and schools | [Support WWF | Wildlife & Conservation Charity | WWF UK](#)

Teaching resources and inspiration from Young Climate Warriors Schools | [Young Climate Warriors | Climate Change for Children | Cut Carbon |](#)

Sustainability entertainment: [Learn the World! - Earth Cubs](#)

Empowering eco-clubs and young people: [Kids Against Plastic – KAP](#)

Virtual workshops, training programmes and learning resources: Schools | [Virtual workshops | Natural History Museum](#)

RSPB resources: Education and inspiring the next generation [Education and inspiring the next generation](#)

Wilding schools: [Wilding Schools | Green Schools Revolution](#)

Common Seas resources: [Common Seas | Charting a course to healthier seas](#)

World's largest lesson: Teaching the Goals for the First Time | [The World's Largest Lesson](#)

Transform our World resources: [Transform Our World: bringing environmental action into the classroom with quality-rated resources](#)

Our Planet | [Our Planet | Resources for Schools and Young People](#)

[Green Schools Revolution](#)

Become an Eco-School: [Home - Eco Schools](#)

Let's Go Zero: UK Climate Change • [UK Climate Change • Let's Go Zero](#)

Modeshift STARS - [Modeshift STARS - Travel Plan in Education, Business & Communities](#)

Carbon Literacy training: [Carbon Literacy and Climate Awareness - Speak Carbon Collective](#)

Embrace outdoor learning: [Pioneering 'Nature Friendly Schools' to boost children's learning and well-being at a critical time | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

Our planet educator programme: [our planet their future \\_educator pack.pdf](#)

[Innovation Inspired by Nature — AskNature](#)

[Sustainability Support for Education](#)

[Climate Ambassadors: Turning Climate Ambition into Climate Action in Education | Climate Ambassadors](#)

[About | Education Nature Park](#)

[Sustainability mindset - Oxford Brookes University](#)

[Successful approaches to learning outdoors \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Environmental sustainability: a whole school approach | National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](#)

[Home | Energy Sparks](#)

[Home - Count Your Carbon](#)

[Climate Adapted Pathways for Education](#)

[Transform Our World: bringing environmental action into the classroom with quality-rated resources](#)

[UKSSN Operations Group](#)

[Greener Schools Index](#)