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Solefield School

Sustainability and Climate Action Policy

2025–2029

1. Policy Statement

Solefield School is committed to fostering a culture of environmental responsibility, both through its educational provision and its operational practices. The school recognises its role in preparing pupils to understand and respond to environmental challenges, while also taking proportionate and measurable steps to reduce its environmental impact.

This policy supports the school's broader aims of developing well-rounded, thoughtful, and socially responsible individuals, and aligns with national expectations that schools adopt a strategic approach to sustainability and climate action.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Develop pupils who are **environmentally aware, informed, and proactive**
- Reduce the school's **environmental footprint over time**
- Embed sustainability within the **curriculum, culture, and daily practice of the school**
- Ensure a **coherent and coordinated whole-school approach**
- Meet the Department for Education expectation that schools maintain a **climate action plan and nominated sustainability lead**

3. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of school life, including:

- Teaching and learning
- Operational management of the site
- Procurement and resource use
- Community engagement
- Governance and strategic planning

4. Leadership and Governance

4.1 Sustainability Lead

A member of the Senior Leadership Team is designated as **Sustainability Lead**, with responsibility for:

- Strategic oversight
- Coordination of initiatives
- Integration with the School Development Plan
- Reporting to SLT and governors

4.2 Estates Responsibility

The Health and Safety team leads on:

- Energy use and efficiency
- Buildings and infrastructure
- Waste systems and resource management

4.3 Governing Body

A named governor has oversight of sustainability, including:

- Monitoring progress
- Providing support and challenge
- Ensuring alignment with wider school strategy

4.4 Sustainability Working Group

A working group meets termly and includes:

- Sustainability Lead
- Estates representative
- Teaching staff representative

- Pupil representatives (Eco Council)

5. Strategic Priorities

The school's approach is structured around five key areas:

5.1 Curriculum and Culture

The school will:

- Embed sustainability within *all* curriculum areas
- Provide opportunities for pupils to engage in environmental learning and decision-making
- Develop our **Eco Council**
- Deliver an annual **Sustainability Week** or equivalent initiative
- Ensure that older pupils follow a Global Citizenship Pathway

Outcome: Each pupil should leave the school with a sound understanding of environmental issues and a sense of personal responsibility.

5.2 Energy and Carbon Reduction

The school will:

- Undertake an audit of energy use
- Implement efficiency measures (e.g. lighting, heating controls)
- Promote energy-conscious behaviour among staff and pupils
- Explore longer-term options for reducing carbon emissions

Target: A measurable reduction in energy use over the life of this policy.

5.3 Waste and Resource Management

The school will:

- Promote reduction, reuse, and recycling
- Improve consistency of recycling systems across the site
- Work with catering providers to reduce food waste
- Seek to minimise the use of single-use materials

Outcome: Reduction in general waste and more sustainable resource use.

5.4 Grounds and Biodiversity

The school will:

- Enhance biodiversity within the school grounds
- Provide opportunities for outdoor and nature-based learning
- Develop areas such as tree planting, wildflower spaces, or habitat zones where appropriate

Outcome: The school environment supports both ecological value and educational use.

5.5 Travel and Community Engagement

The school will:

- Encourage sustainable travel where possible (e.g. walking, cycling, car sharing)
- Engage families in sustainability initiatives
- Promote awareness through events and communications

Outcome: Increased awareness and gradual change in behaviour within the school community.

6. Climate Action Planning

The school will maintain a **Climate Action Plan**, which will include:

- A baseline understanding of energy use and environmental impact
- Clear priorities and actions
- Measurable targets where appropriate
- A timeline for implementation

This plan will be reviewed and updated periodically.

7. Implementation

7.1 Initial Phase (2026–2027)

- Appointment of Sustainability Lead
- Establishment of working group
- Completion of baseline audits (energy, waste, travel)
- Identification of “quick wins”
- Drafting of formal Climate Action Plan

7.2 Development Phase (2027–2029)

- Embedding sustainability across curriculum
- Implementation of operational improvements

- Expansion of pupil leadership opportunities
- Monitoring and refinement of strategy

8. Monitoring and Review

Progress will be monitored through:

- Termly updates to the Senior Leadership Team
- Annual reporting to the Governing Body
- Review against key indicators such as:
 - Energy consumption
 - Waste reduction
 - Curriculum coverage
 - Pupil engagement

This policy will be reviewed every **three years**, or sooner if required.

9. Staff Responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Support the aims of this policy
- Model environmentally responsible behaviour
- Integrate sustainability into their teaching where appropriate
- Contribute to whole-school initiatives

10. Pupil Involvement

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Take active roles through the Eco Council
- Participate in sustainability initiatives
- Contribute ideas and feedback

11. Key Principles

The school's approach is guided by the following principles:

- **Practicality:** focus on achievable and meaningful actions
- **Integration:** embed within existing structures rather than adding unnecessary burden
- **Progression:** develop the approach over time
- **Participation:** involve the whole school community

12. Publication and Communication

This policy will be:

- Available to staff and governors
- Communicated to parents as appropriate
- Reflected in school communications and development planning

13. Evidence of Implementation and Impact (Inspection Readiness)

The school recognises that effective implementation of this policy must be demonstrable through clear, triangulated evidence. The following indicators illustrate the types of evidence that may be available to support inspection, governance, and ongoing evaluation.

13.1 Leadership and Governance

Evidence may include:

- Named **Sustainability Lead** in staff structure and role descriptions
- Minutes from **SLT and governor meetings** referencing sustainability
- Reports from the **Sustainability Working Group**
- Inclusion of sustainability within the **School Development Plan**
- Link governor visit notes and monitoring reports

13.2 Curriculum and Pupil Development

Evidence may include:

- Curriculum mapping showing where sustainability is taught across subjects
- Lesson observations or learning walks referencing environmental themes
- Samples of pupil work (e.g. projects, displays, written outcomes)
- Records of whole-school events (e.g. Sustainability Week, visiting speakers)
- Eco Council minutes and pupil-led initiatives
- Depth and coherence of curriculum integration
- Evidence that pupils **know, understand, and can articulate** environmental issues
- Opportunities for **pupil leadership and voice**

13.3 Pupil Voice and Engagement

Evidence may include:

- Pupil surveys or interviews demonstrating awareness and engagement
- Records of Eco Council activity and outcomes

- Pupil presentations to SLT or governors
- Evidence of pupil-led campaigns (e.g. energy saving, recycling)

13.4 Estates, Energy and Operations

Evidence may include:

- Energy usage data (electricity, gas) tracked over time
- Reports from energy or site audits
- Documentation of efficiency measures (e.g. LED installation, heating controls)
- Waste audit findings and recycling data
- Photographic evidence of site improvements (e.g. biodiversity areas)

13.5 Behaviour and Culture

Evidence may include:

- Observations of pupil and staff behaviours (e.g. energy awareness, waste practices)
- Displays, signage, and messaging around the school
- Participation rates in sustainability initiatives
- Staff training materials or briefing records

13.6 Community and Parental Engagement

Evidence may include:

- Communications to parents (newsletters, website content)
- Events promoting sustainability (e.g. Green Travel Week)
- Evidence of changes in travel patterns where measurable
- Partnerships with local organisations or initiatives

13.7 Impact Over Time

Evidence may include:

- Year-on-year comparison of:
 - Energy usage
 - Waste volumes
 - Participation and engagement
- Progress against stated targets in the Climate Action Plan
- Governor reports summarising impact