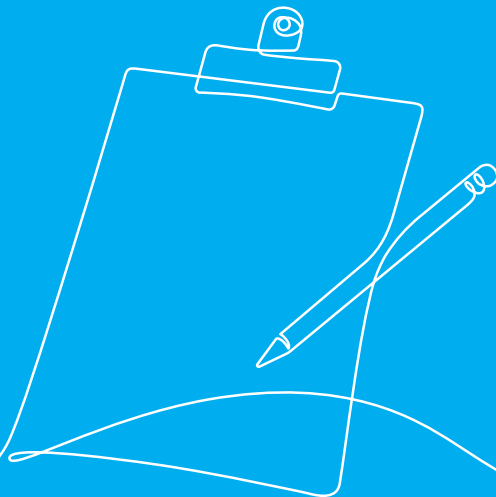




ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Climate Action Plan

2025-2028





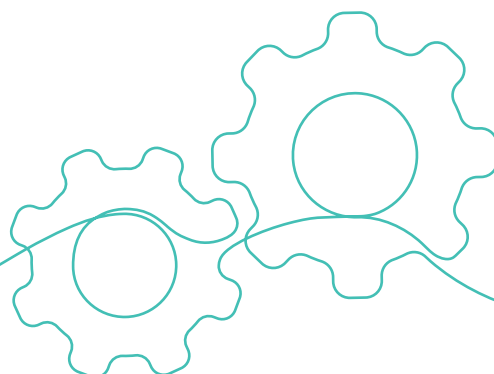


Introduction

Ormiston Academies Trust is one of the oldest and largest school trusts in the country, educating over 35,000 pupils in 45 schools with over 5,000 staff.

We are one of the few national trusts in the school system with our schools spread across England in diverse locations such as Lowestoft, the Isle of Wight, Grimsby, Runcorn and in the West Midlands.

We are committed to promoting sustainability across our Trust and taking active steps to reduce our environmental impact. Our Trust-wide **Climate Action Plan for 2025–2028** sets out how we will act on and promote sustainability.





Our commitment

At Ormiston, we recognise our role in helping the UK achieve net zero and take our responsibility to the environment seriously. We are committed to reducing our footprint and promoting sustainability across everything we do.

To put our commitment into practice, we: teach pupils and our workforce about sustainability, engage both pupils and staff in environmental projects, protect and enhance natural habitats across our schools, and make decisions that reduce emissions and support long-term sustainability.

Our Board of Trustees has approved a trust-wide climate action strategy and plan that our National Leadership Group will monitor and review regularly.

The plan builds on [our 2025-30 Trust Strategy](#) and our strategic priorities to deliver an excellent education for all pupils, and develop enabling functions that operate effectively and sustainably.

Through this work, we are embedding sustainability at the heart of our trust to secure a better future for our pupils and communities.

Tom Rees
Chief Executive Officer

Joanne Dawson
Chief Operating Officer

James Miller
National Director of
Infrastructure and Sustainability



Background

The UK is committed to reaching net zero by 2050

The UK Government has set a target to cut emissions by 81% by 2035, compared with 1990 levels, and to reach net zero by 2050.

Net zero means balancing the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere with the amount we remove. We reach net zero when we add no more greenhouse gases than we take away, aiming to limit global warming and its impacts on the climate. To achieve this, all parts of society must reduce their emissions, including homes, transport, agriculture, businesses and organisations.

Reducing carbon dioxide emissions is essential to these efforts. Carbon dioxide makes up more than three-quarters of greenhouse gases. In 2024, global carbon dioxide levels reached a record 423 ppm, rising sharply from pre-industrial levels. High indoor carbon dioxide can pose health risks, while rising outdoor concentrations drive melting ice, dangerous sea level rise, and extreme weather events.

The public and education sectors have a key role to play

Public sector buildings currently produce about 2% of the UK's emissions from heating, vehicles, and air conditioning. When you add indirect emissions – like electricity use, business travel, purchasing, construction, and social housing – the total rises to around 8%. These numbers show just how much public services can influence the UK's carbon footprint.

Schools within the sector have an important role to play. Across England, school sites cover around 52,000 hectares – about the same size as Birmingham, Sheffield, and Newcastle combined. That scale gives schools a real opportunity to make a difference for the climate.

To help schools take action, the Department of Education (DfE) has encouraged all education settings to have a climate action plan in place by the end of 2025, structured around four key pillars. We have reflected on our starting point and set plans around these four key pillars to continue developing sustainability and to achieve our commitment.



Our starting point



Sustainability across the curriculum

Our curriculum integrates environmental and sustainability topics across many subjects, including over 40 areas, ranging from climate science and biodiversity to ethical consumerism and beyond.



Conscious procurement and partnerships

93% of our largest suppliers have an environmental policy and 70% have a zero-carbon target of before 2050. 73% have a social value policy that provides a form of economic, social and environmental wellbeing to benefit customers.



Renewable electricity across all schools

Since 2016, our contract for electricity has come entirely from renewable sources.



On-site solar generation across 21 schools

21 of our schools combined generate over 1,500 MWh of electricity annually.



LED lighting upgrades across 41 schools

31 schools have full LED lighting and 10 sites have nearly all LED lights. This has reduced energy consumption by 30% compared to our previous lights.



Upgrading efficient gas boilers

39 of our schools have fully or partial modern, efficient gas boilers, reducing energy consumption.



Efficient carbon footprint per pupil

With just 0.15 tonnes CO₂ per pupil, our emissions are among the lowest for schools of our size.



Reduced electric and gas consumption

Over the past few years, we have reduced electricity consumption by 2,180,398 kWh and gas usage by 6,101,526 kWh. The gas savings alone are equivalent to the carbon stored by approximately 1.3 million trees each year (based on 25 kg per tree and 0.185 kg CO₂ per kWh).



Tree care and planting new trees

We have planted 630 trees through active engagement from over 300 active eco member school pupils. We are planning to plant new trees across our new building projects.



Caring for over 320 habitats across our schools

We are tracking biodiversity across more than 320 habitats on our school grounds, covering an area of 150,000 m² and storing 5,000 tonnes of CO₂.

2025-28 Climate Action Plan

DfE pillar	Our objective	What we already do	Plans and impact
Decarbonisation and net zero	<p>Energy and water conservation</p> <p>We will conserve energy and water by turning off lights and IT equipment when not in use, repairing leaks promptly, and running heating and hot water systems efficiently.</p> <p>We will maintain clear maintenance schedules to prolong the life of our equipment and upgrade building fabrics and systems where appropriate to reduce overall energy consumption.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our on-site solar generation generates over 1,500 MWh of electricity annually and saves approximately £350,000. • 31 of our schools have full LED lighting and 10 schools nearly have full LED lighting, reducing energy consumption by at least 30% compared to the old lights. • Most IT equipment is set to power down automatically when not in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decommission local file storage servers in schools and migrate services to the cloud by the end of 2026 to reduce energy consumption and improve data efficiency. • Implement a water monitoring system pilot in two schools by December 2026 to help identify leaks, reduce water wastage, and promote sustainable water management practices. • Increase the amount of LED lighting each year, with a goal of all schools having LED lighting by 2030, to enhance energy efficiency and reduce electricity costs. • Establish clearer enhanced Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedules for all school buildings to ensure long-term sustainability, efficiency, and reduced maintenance costs.
	<p>Waste reduction</p> <p>We will support our schools in reducing waste by using reusable containers and bottles, recycling paper, plastic, glass, and metal, and composting food waste where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are compliant with the Simpler Recycling requirements for separating core waste streams for businesses (introduced from 31 March 2025) and with the ban on supplying certain single use plastic items that came into force in England from October 2023. • We provide advice and guidance for our schools on our Trust-wide intranet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor waste reduction to ensure compliance with all legislation. • Explore composting food waste with schools.




DfE pillar	Our objective	What we already do	Plans and impact
	<p>Sustainable procurement</p> <p>We will implement a purchasing process that considers the environmental, social, and economic impacts of goods and services across their entire lifecycle, not just cost and quality. Our approach will meet the Trust’s needs and integrate sustainability principles, including reducing waste and emissions, ensuring fair labour practices, and supporting local economies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We collect data from our largest suppliers to guide our decision-making and prioritise those with environmental policies and processes that reduce carbon emissions and create opportunities for social value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a process in which all procurement above the £173k threshold takes environmental and social value credentials into account as part of the selection criteria by April 2026. • The environmental assessment will be bespoke to the contract and can include evaluating biodegradability, recyclability, electricity consumption, maintenance, and the repairability of equipment.
	<p>Sustainable transportation</p> <p>We will encourage alternative modes of transport, such as cycling, walking, or using public transport, for our students and staff, and promote video conferencing where possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use video conferencing to minimise travel between schools. • We provide a car scheme for staff, offering access to fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles. • We offer a Cycle to Work scheme for all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage staff and pupils to walk, cycle, or scoot to work as part of our activity with the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award. • Provide cycle training for pupils. • We will continue to promote our Cycle to Work scheme. • Ensure there is adequate bicycle storage for pupils and staff. • Improve access to fuel-efficient school vehicles. • Reduce air travel for school trips and use public transport for school trips. • Explore a no-idling policy around school sites to reduce congestion and air pollution from cars. • Explore installing EV charging points at our schools where appropriate.
Adaptation and resilience	<p>Built environment</p> <p>We will monitor and record building problems to inform decisions on future investments, ensuring that our sites are warm, dry, safe, sustainable, and suitable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on deleterious building conditions helps target investments to reduce the likelihood of failure and improve classroom conditions, taking specific account of flood risk, energy efficiency, and suitability for teaching. • Our revised premises plans now cover classroom environmental conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance our capacity to anticipate and address flooding or overheating with resilient technology. • Further embed classroom environmental conditions as part of our revised premises plans.

DfE pillar	Our objective	What we already do	Plans and impact
Biodiversity, nature and outdoor play spaces	<p>Natural habitats</p> <p>We will conduct surveys and monitor zones of biodiversity across all schools. This information will be used to develop and maintain a sustainable approach to biodiversity in non-usable school areas, including fields, grass, trees, ponds, flowerbeds, hedges, banks, and other spaces that can support natural wildlife.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have created a tracking tool to monitor progress and calculate stored carbon in school habitats and fields. This dashboard will help us track progress in mapping all habitats across all schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain natural wildlife habitats at every school where economically viable, ensuring wildlife can thrive in these areas (this could include simple hedgerows, wildflower patches, or bug hotels). • Map each school site on the National Education Nature Park website over the coming years, as recommended by the DfE, to support habitat improvement and increase biodiversity over time. • Include habitat provision (e.g. tree planting, wildflowers, hedgerows) as part of larger capital programmes.
	<p>Play and sports spaces</p> <p>We will provide and maintain outdoor areas at each site for community and pupil use, encouraging sport, play, and interaction with the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our annual investment plan helps to maintain existing outdoor sports spaces for pupil and local community use. • We creatively seek funding for new sports facilities in all our schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue our investment plan using sinking funding. • Ensure all schools have robust procedures in place to maintain sports facilities. • Deliver new sports centre provision at Ormiston Sudbury Academy and Ormiston Endeavour Academy within the next four years.
Climate education and green skills	<p>Environmental education</p> <p>We will provide environmental education and promote awareness among our students and staff by offering learning opportunities and activities that highlight the importance of sustainability and protecting the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82% of our schools have held the prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag Award at least once since 2021. • Our schools mark National Green Careers Week to help promote green careers. • We have audited sustainability topics across the curriculum. • Engage with the National Education Nature Park programme through habitat mapping using an online tool and educational resources. • Ensure green career themes are considered within school careers provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will support more schools to achieve the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award. • Continue to review our careers provision to ensure students have access to high-quality education and information about green careers. • Continue to review our curriculum to ensure appropriate sustainability topics are effectively covered across year groups and subjects. • Support schools to develop their own action plans that align with the overarching Trust-wide plan and DfE pillars where appropriate. • Explore engagement with the Climate Ambassadors Programme.





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