

A School's Guide to Go Green

**Eco programmes for
Newcastle schools**



Eco Programmes for Schools

The Department for Education (DfE) has mandated that all education settings in the UK, including early years, schools, colleges, and universities, must have a designated Sustainability Lead and a Climate Action Plan in place by 2025. This is a key component of the DfE's sustainability and climate change strategy for the education and children's services systems. Here is the [link](#) to the strategy.

A Climate Action Plan outlines how the setting will address climate change, including areas like decarbonisation, energy efficiency, adaptation and resilience, biodiversity, and climate education.

Please explore the guide, outlining organisations to support you in developing your climate action plan and delivering on this.

The support on offer is split into the following categories:

1. School Wide Programmes
2. Energy
3. Plastic Pollution
4. Transport
5. Biodiversity and Green Spaces
6. Food



One school has shown how working on eco programmes promotes the extensive personal development of all pupils. [Ofsted](#) highlighted their success:



“Pupils access a wide set of coherently planned experiences that enrich the curriculum. Through these, pupils are encouraged to become healthy, responsible and active citizens. They explore sustainability and complete research and as a result, pupils are more aware of their impact on the world around them.”

If you have any questions about this guide please email:
climatechange@newcastle.gov.uk

Let's Go Zero

Free

Let's Go Zero is a national campaign helping UK schools cut their carbon and lead the fight against climate change. Any school can sign up to pledge that your school is working to become zero carbon. As part of the campaign Climate Action Advisors can give free and tailored advice to help green England's school buildings, transport, menus and more.

- **Recognition:** Mentioned positively in Ofsted reports.
- **Website:** [UK Climate Change • Let's Go Zero](#)
- **Contact:** letsgozero@ashden.org

**LET'S GO
ZERO
2030**



Free

Green Schools Project

Green Schools Project: This project offers a comprehensive climate education program for students, teachers, and communities, enabling them to act on climate change. The deadline for registration is at the end of September.

- **Recognition:** Let's Go Zero coalition partner. The programme has been mentioned positively in Ofsted reports.
- **Website:** [Green Schools Project - Zero Carbon Schools](#)
- **Contact:** info@greenschoolsproject.org.uk



Eco Schools

Eco Schools is a seven-step framework to support schools in sustainability action. If schools work through this framework successfully over a year, they are then awarded with the Eco-Schools Green Flag. To achieve the Green Flag schools must connect their activities to three or more of the ten Eco-Schools Topics. Application window is from 1st of May – 31st of July.

- **Cost:** Free registration with £200 + Vat for Green Flag Award
- **Recognition:** Green Flag Award with upgrade Merit or Distinction
- **Website:** [Home - Eco Schools](#)
- **Contact:** eco-schools@keepbritaintidy.org



**COUNT
YOUR CARBON**



Count Your Carbon

Free

This free, online tool helps schools understand their carbon emissions and develop a tailored reduction plan. It allows users to input data about energy consumption, travel, waste, and other activities to calculate their carbon footprint, identify areas of high impact, and track progress over time.

- **Recognition:** Contributes to [Eco-Schools Green Flag accreditation](#)
- **Website:** [Home - http://countyourcarbon.org](http://countyourcarbon.org)
- **Contact:** enquiries@countyourcarbon.org

Free

Ministry of Eco Education

A collaboration of teachers working together to place sustainability at the heart of education. They provide curated environmental education resources, curriculum materials, CPD links, challenge suggestions, updates, sharing best practice and information about upcoming events, training and new resources and opportunities, following 5 steps programme.

- **Recognition:** Ministry of Eco Education and Let's Go Zero campaign recognised in Ofsted reports.
- **Website:** <https://www.ministryofeco.org/>
- **Contact:** meryl@ministryofeco.org



Climate Friendly Schools (OASES)

This programme engages the whole school in making positive changes against Climate Change: staff, pupils, governors, and the wider community. Actions taken are based on initial audits completed by the school and cover 7 themes: Buildings, Energy, Food, Grounds, Water, Transport and Consumption.

- **Cost:** Free registration, with £100 fee for facilitation of the Climate Friendly School Award
- **Recognition:** Climate Friendly School Status
- **Website:** www.climatefriendlyschools.org.uk
- **Contact:** info@climatefriendlyschools.org.uk

Young Green Briton Challenge

Free*

The Young Green Briton Challenge is a national initiative for KS3 pupils. They apply design, innovation and business skills to design solutions for local climate and sustainability issues. Each participating school selects a whole year group (either Year 7, 8 or 9) to participate in the Challenge.

- **Cost:** *Free but limited places
- **Recognition:** Dragon's Den award winners with cash prizes
- **Website:** <https://www.genearth.uk/ygbc>
- **Contact:** info@genearth.uk

YOUNG
GREEN
BRITON
challenge



CLIMATE AMBASSADORS
In association with EAUC, STEM Learning and the University of Reading



Climate Ambassadors

Free

Climate Ambassadors offers every education setting in England free access to volunteer support to develop and deliver impactful climate action plans. They match volunteer climate experts with education settings to develop climate action plans in nurseries, schools and colleges.

- **Website:** [Climate Ambassadors: Turning Climate Ambition into Climate Action in Education](https://climateambassadors.net) | [Climate Ambassadors](https://climateambassadors.net)
- **Contact:** climateambassadors.ne@newcastle.ac.uk

Green Schools Revolution (SOS)

Free

Green Schools Revolution is a three-year project launched in January 2023 hosted by SOS-UK helps pupils to green their schools. Students develop whole-school Climate Action Plans, create Wilding Plans to bring nature back to their school grounds, and deliver Teach the Teacher sessions to help integrate climate education into the curriculum.

- **Website:** [Students Organising for Sustainability \(SOS-UK\)](https://www.sos-uk.org/).
- **Contact:** <https://sos-uk.org/contact-us/>

Green Schools Revolution



Net Zero Carbon Schools

Free

A platform that sets out a practical approach to the net-zero carbon journey for schools of all sizes. The site provides clear and succinct information, advice and guidance, and signposts to free practical tools and resources, whilst providing case studies that celebrate success.

- **Recognition:** Contributes to eco-schools Green Flag
- **Website:** [Home - netzerocarbonschools.co.uk](https://www.netzerocarbonschools.co.uk)
- **Email:** sam@dbeservices.co.uk

Energy

Energy Sparks

Energy Sparks is a charity-powered school energy management tool and education programme. It analyses school energy use, provides tailored actions, and links to 150+ pupil activities. Schools save ~10% on bills.

- **Cost:** £545 to £595+VAT per school per year
- **Recognition:** Compete with other schools in the Energy Sparks scoreboards
- **Website:** [Energy Sparks](https://www.energysparks.org.uk)
- **Contact:** hello@energysparks.uk



GB Energy Programme

Free*

A solar panel and electricity reduction programme was jointly announced by the Secretaries of State for Education and Energy Security and Net Zero in March 2025. **Schools will be chosen by AECOM based on criteria from DfE data.** If chosen, the scheme could deliver works such as a building survey, solar PV, LEDs, battery storage and EV chargers with climate education & behaviour change workshops for the school.

- **Cost:** *Fully funded capital works
- **Website:** [Great British Energy announces £10 million for local government - GOV.UK](https://www.gbe.gov.uk)
- **Contact:** info@gbe.gov.uk

Energy for Schools

Energy for Schools provides an energy procurement and management service to help schools save money and reduce energy consumption. Schools will have access to competitive and compliant energy contracts and by actively managing your portfolio, validating bills, and resolving queries, schools can ensure billing accuracy and reduced energy costs. Schools will also be provided with a dedicated Energy Manager Portal to view and monitor half hourly consumption with dashboards and downloadable reports to support carbon reporting requirements. Additional services include PV monitoring, BMS support and Display Energy Certificates.

- **Cost:** From £468 per school (discounts available for multiple schools purchasing together)
- **Website:** [Energy Services for Schools](#)
- **Contact:** utilities@newcastle.gov.uk



Plastic Pollution



Plastic Free Schools

Free

The Plastic Free Schools campaign empowers pupils to make real changes in their school and community. They investigate single-use plastics, find alternatives for their school to use, and challenge polluters to change their ways. Sign up to the programme to receive your welcome pack and start completing the five objectives to become a plastic free school.

- **Award:** Plastic Free Schools accreditation from [Surfers Against Sewage](#).
- **Website** [Pupil Power - Plastic Free Schools - Surfers Against Sewage](#)
- **Contact:** education@sas.org.uk

Plastic Clever Schools

Free

Plastic Clever Schools is building a global community, driving and celebrating student-led action on climate change through plastic reduction. Through three stages - Inspire, Investigate, Act - the award helps students to develop the knowledge, skills and courage for a future freed from plastic pollution.

- **Website:** <https://plasticcleverschools.co.uk/>
- **Contact:** education@commonseas.com



Newcastle City Council's Waste Assemblies

Free

Newcastle City Council's Waste and Recycling Engagement Team will deliver an interactive assembly which will cover:

- what you can and can't recycle at home and school
- why recycling is important
- how reducing your waste and recycling more will lower your carbon footprint

The aim is to refresh recycling knowledge and inspire students and teachers to recycle more at home and at school.

- **Target:** Primary schools
- **Website:** www.newcastle.gov.uk/recycling
- **Contact:** Keepitclean@newcastle.gov.uk

Free

Child Pedestrian Training

Child Pedestrian training is run through Gateshead Council on Newcastle City Council's behalf. Places are limited and subject to availability.

- **Recognition:** Certificates for completing the programmes
- **Target:** Primary and first schools
- **Website:** [Road Safety Training | Newcastle City Council](https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/road-safety-training)
- **Contact:** road.safety@newcastle.gov.uk



Newcastle
City Council

Free

Bikeability/ Cycle Training

Newcastle City Council are an accredited Bikeability Cycle Training provider and deliver National Standard cycle training to Newcastle's Schools. Bikeability National Standard cycle training gives participants practical skills and understanding of safer cycling practices.

- **Recognition:** Bikeability Certificates of Level 1 - Year 4 or 5, Level 1 and 2 combined - Year 5 or 6
- **Target:** Primary schools
- **Website:** <http://bikeability.org.uk/>
- **Contact:** road.safety@newcastle.gov.uk



Walk to School Challenge (WOW)

WOW is a free, fully funded pupil led Active Travel challenge from Living Streets. The programme is designed for kids to self-report how they get to school each day using the fun and interactive WOW Travel Tracker: Walk/Wheel, Scoot, Cycle or Park and Stride to school to earn a monthly badge!

- **Award:** Monthly badges
- **Website:** [Join WOW - the walk to school challenge](https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/wow)
- **Contact:** info@livingstreets.org.uk

Free*

WOW the WALK
TO SCHOOL
challenge



Big Walk and Wheel

The Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans') Big Walk and Wheel inspires pupils to make active journeys to school. It is an annual competition in Spring and works to encourage pupils to make active journeys to schools to improve air quality. Any school can register, and then staff log the pupils' daily journeys.

- **Award:** Entry into prize draws
- **Website:** [Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel 2025](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/big-walk-and-wheel)
- **Contact:** bigwalkandwheel@sustrans.org.uk

Free



Modeshift Stars

Free

Modeshift STARS is the national scheme that recognises schools making a real difference through sustainable and active travel. Whether you're already encouraging walking, wheeling, cycling, or just getting started – STARS supports you to plan, deliver, track and celebrate the progress of your Travel Plans, which are required by the Department for Education.

- Website: [Modeshift STARS - Modeshift](https://www.modeshift.org.uk)
- Contact: admin@modeshift.org.uk



Biodiversity and Green Spaces



Planet Action Street Arts Charity

Planet Action Street Arts aims to promote the arts whilst promoting the protection of the environment through educational activities and community-based projects. They offer school insect education documents and are available to attend all schools to bring giant insects science participatory art and planting.

- **Cost:** School visits may have additional costs
- **Website:** <https://www.planet-action-street-arts.com/education-and-schools>
- **Contact:** paul.miskin@sa4tp.co.uk

Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Free

Northumberland Wildlife Trust work closely with schools to deliver free, curriculum linked activities, including outdoor leader training, and loan boxes for hands-on learning. These can take place in classrooms, on school grounds, in local green spaces, or at one of their services.

- **Website:** <https://www.nwt.org.uk/get-involved/education>
- **Contact:** mail@northwt.org.uk



Forest Schools

Forest School are a child-centred inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. During Forest School lessons children spend regular time learning outdoors, in child led, child-initiated activities. There are a number of businesses who will offer support to become a forest school.

- **Cost:** Usually £5-£15 per child, £150 to £300 per half-day or £250 to £500 for full-day, depending on group size and service provided.
- **Website:** <https://forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>
- **Contact:** enquiries@forestschoollassociation.org



Free

Kids Action Through Science (KATS)

Kids Action Through Science (KATS) is an innovative climate change education outreach project created by Water Security & Sustainable Development and developed and delivered by Newcastle University. It involves a 6-week programme with a weekly workshop and various activities focused on ecosystems or marine pollution.

- **Target:** Students aged 8-12
- **Website:** <https://blogs.ncl.ac.uk/kats/>
- **Contact:** <https://blogs.ncl.ac.uk/kats/contact-us/>



National
Education
Nature Park



National Education Nature Park

Free

The National Education Nature Park is a free environmental education programme, commissioned by the Department for Education and delivered by a partnership led by the Natural History Museum working with the Royal Horticultural Society and others. Pupils explore and transform their learning site, collecting data that supports real-world science and nature recovery. Curriculum resources connect children and young people with nature, boosting wellbeing and building essential green skills.

- **Website:** [Home | Education Nature Park](https://www.northeastnaturepark@rhs.org.uk)
- **Contact:** northeastnaturepark@rhs.org.uk

Scotswood Garden School Engagement

Scotswood Garden offer a range of education and youth programmes for young people which cover a huge variety of themes and activities including pond dipping, environmental arts and forest schools.

- **Cost:** Registration is free, however programme costs vary:
 - Schools of Sanctuary (SOS) workshops for 15 children (£15).
 - Forest School Training for school staff (Level 1: £300, Level 3: £900).
 - Whole-staff training (outdoor learning / forest school), onsite or at your school.
 - School visits - curriculum-linked sessions for 30 children (£50 half-day, £80 full-day).
- **Website:** [Home - Scotswood Garden](https://www.sncg.org.uk)
- **Contact:** office@sncg.org.uk



Woodland Trust

Woodland Trust is the UK's largest woodland conservation charity. Their vision is a world where woods and trees thrive for people and nature. The Green Tree Schools Award, run by the Woodland Trust, has been running for more than 17 years, and has now seen more than a third of all UK schools join and learn about woods, wildlife, nature and the environment in a fun and practical way.

- **Recognition:** Green Tree School Award
- **Website:** www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/award
- **Contact:** learning@woodlandtrust.org.uk

Biodiversity and Green Spaces

Free



Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN)

The Natural History Society of Northumbria work with schools in and around Newcastle on their programme "Gosforth's Wild Web". This programme involves co-designing a nature-based activity programme fitting the needs of each individual school. The NHSN also facilitate school trips to Gosforth Nature Reserve where participants can get involved in activities such as pond dipping, nature art, minibeast explorations and bird spotting.

- **Target:** Primary schools
- **Website:** [Education at Gosforth Nature Reserve - Natural History Society of Northumbria](https://www.nhsn.org.uk/education-at-gosforth-nature-reserve-natural-history-society-of-northumbria)
- **Contact:** nhsn@ncl.ac.uk

North East Community Forest

The North East Community Forest (NECF) is a one of 15 Community Forests in England. They are passionate about nurturing the environmental stewards of tomorrow. They would love to work with schools to engage the next generation in tree planting. They are able to supply funding for trees, their maintenance and for the running of planting events. All they need from school's are: permission, space to plant and some enthusiastic volunteers ready to dig in.

- **Cost:** up to 100% of tree planting and ongoing maintenance costs
- **Website:** <https://northeastcommunityforest.org.uk>
- **Contact:** info@necf.org.uk



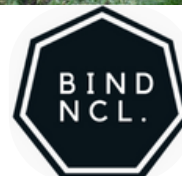
Food

Free

Eat Smart

Eat Smart is a part of Bind UK and it is a 6 week programme. The program typically involves a four-step process: a food waste audit, a food awareness week, a waste prevention plan, and a follow-up audit to measure success. During the programme schools often reporting a 30% or more reduction in food wasted.

- **Cost:** Free cost for Newcastle schools
- **Website:** <https://projectbind.com/bind-flagship-projects/>
- **Contact:** eatsmart@projectbind.com



Canteen to Classroom

Free

Canteen to Classroom teaches children about the food they eat where it comes from, how it is made, and its impact on our health and the planet. They offer free resources, including lesson plans, curriculum links, engaging lesson presentations, and discussion sessions. All aimed at promoting action towards sustainability goals.

- **Recognition:** Part of Eco Schools programme and Let's Go Zero
- **Website:** [Canteen to Classroom - ProVeg UK](https://www.proveg.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/)
- **Contact:** <https://www.proveg.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/>