



Seeking to inspire and encourage schools to reduce carbon emissions

## Helping schools reach net zero carbon

[scroll down](#)

We are seeking to inspire and to encourage Church of England schools to sign up to a vision of Net Zero Carbon schools.

At the Church of England Education Office, we are seeking to inspire and to encourage Church of England schools to sign up to a vision of Net Zero Carbon schools for the benefit of the whole school community, to conserve the environment and to enable the planet to flourish for future generations.

# Free resources

## ***Make a Declaration***

We are encouraging schools to take ownership of the zero carbon target by making a **declaration** from the governing body or academy board.

To assist with making a declaration we are working with the '[Let's Go Zero](#)' campaign by [Ashden Climate Solutions](#), this campaign aims to help all schools to get to zero carbon by 2030.

Schools and Diocesan Boards of Education that hold capital funding, are required to maximise the use of resources such as the Department for Education's [Good Estate Management Guide](#) and toolkits. This will help to establish a clear '[Estates Vision and Strategy](#)' to work toward achieving year on year reductions in emissions. There are also organisational assessment tools to assess the school's current approach and consumption of resources which will help to motivate action planning focused on decarbonising the estate.

## ***Quick Wins***

To support schools identify energy efficient measures we have created a [Practical Path to Net Zero](#) with actions and quick wins for all school estates. See also:

Quick wins videos – [Ashden](#) & [RAFT](#)

## ***Establish your Carbon Footprint***

Understanding current consumption and habits is the first step in the journey toward achieving the Net Zero target. Complete the [Count Your Carbon](#) from [Eco Schools](#) to establish your carbon footprint and collate recommendations for your governing board.

Schools are also encouraged to install and utilise data from smart meters. Schools should also consider using the free online energy analysis tool and energy education programme from [Energy Sparks](#). This programme is specifically designed to help schools reduce their electricity and gas usage through the analysis of smart meter data. Energy Sparks helps pupils and the wider school community to reduce their school's carbon emissions and make a real contribution to addressing the 'climate emergency'. Participating schools are supported with online training, energy audits and education workshops.

Following the government roll out of CO2 monitors in every classroom, schools can also benefit from the data that is captured by those monitors including temperature, watch these clips to understand more about how they can help with the management of the classroom environment  
[CoSchools - tools for healthy schools](#).

## ***Evidence Led Planning***

Once schools understand how they are performing they need to be able to identify what the technical route is to achieve zero carbon. The best way of doing this is to commission a [Heat Decarbonisation Plan](#) ('HDP'). The key to progressing schools toward the target is for each to understand the blue print for your site by commissioning these detailed audits; which also help to establish clear business cases to bid for the [public funding](#) required to deliver the projects that are identified. □

If you do not have funding to secure a HDP, the CofE have also designed a [CofE Self Audit Tool](#) and a [Heating Resilience Plan](#) to understand your buildings better and collate recommendations for your governing board and Diocesan Board of Education.

### ***Climate Action Plan***

In anticipation of the DfE Sustainability Strategy established plan, we have developed a [Climate Action Plan](#) using CofE provided headlines and a [gannt chart](#) to help support school planning. You can also watch a [webinar on this here](#).

Integrating environmental considerations, an understanding of climate risks and where adaptations are required, is key to driving change. [The Annual Resilience Statement for Schools](#) offers steps for understanding the school's climate resilience and targets, and addressing challenges over the short, medium and long-term, including risks posed by climate change.

Review your Climate Action Plan using the CofE Annual Resilience Statement to update your governing board AGM for example. The plan is to help schools to review the zero-carbon declaration as part of an ongoing agenda.

*Please remember to copy your Annual Resilience Statements to your Diocesan Board of Education to seek support and to help inform local and national reporting.*

### ***Inspiration***

For further inspiration about how to decarbonise your school building please watch [the latest webinar](#) held in February 2024 or by following clips on our [Webpage](#), and further information can be found at [St Andrews Church of England Primary School, Chedworth](#). [Inspired Efficiency Consultants](#), who delivered the project, have also helpfully created a virtual tour of the Net Zero school building [here](#). This case study outlines how to reduce consumption and become more efficient, and how to plan to decarbonise the school estate. Blackburn Diocese has also been working with architecture students at the University of Sheffield to collate and showcase material produced to demonstrate efforts to decarbonise schools in the diocese, please see [here](#). □

Schools and dioceses could also look at creating a potential framework for local delivery in each context and establishing community projects as one way in which to share good practice and take collective ownership of the journey toward net zero carbon; an example of a joint community project can be found in [St Wenn, Cornwall](#), where the church and local school shared a biomass heating project.



## ***Support***

Get help from [Ashden Climate Action Advisors](#) and the CofE National Framework via your Diocesan Board of Education.

You can also visit [Creative for Climate Justice](#) by Christian Aid.



# Key Resources

## New Energy and Buildings Self Audit Tool for schools

A new [Energy and Self Audit Tool](#) for schools has been launched - this aims to help schools understand their buildings better and to start planning decarbonisation plans. Please let your Diocesan Board of Education know when you have completed this tool.

[Watch the new video](#)

## The Net Zero Carbon Routemap

Published in July 2022 the Routemap is a plan for how the Church of England can be net zero carbon by 2030. The schools section of the Routemap can be reviewed under 4.3.

[The Church of England Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030](#)

## Learning Journey

Download Christian Aid's climate justice resource charting a course through the academic year to support children and young people to learn and act together.

[Christian Aid Learning Journey](#)

## Free resources to help schools cut carbon emissions

Watch a **new webinar** introducing a range of new free resources to help schools reduce carbon emissions and reach net zero carbon.

Speakers include Robyn Ford, Education Policy Specialist at the Church of England Education Office; Sam Johnson, CEO of DBE Services, who talks through the new National Framework; Adam Flint from Keep Britain Tidy shares the new Count Your Carbon tool; Jo Pettifer, Climate Action Adviser from Let's Go Zero; Lee Hughes from Peterborough Diocese Education Trust; Harry Paticas and Deborah Adler from RAFT introducing a new Energy and Self Audit Tool; David Williams from Gloucester Diocesan Board of Education and Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer, Church of England Education Office.

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