

Schools are hubs for the community, places for ideation and provide a foundation for authentic social, cultural and spiritual action. Good education plants seeds that can inspire and bear fruit for generations to come. Church of England schools are integral to the Church's mission to work towards net zero as a whole Church. 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 sustainable schools that create better outcomes for all children and young people, to conserve the environment and to enable the planet to flourish for future generations.

The Net Zero 2030 target for the whole church is for all parts of the church to work towards achieving year on year reductions in emissions, and includes those schools where the Diocesan Board of Education has 'a significant degree of influence' (generally Voluntary Aided & Diocesan Academy Trusts).

Key Resources

Net Zero Carbon Schools Autumn 2022 Newsletter

A termly newsletter designed to connect dioceses and church schools to the work of the Church of England Environment Programme.

[Net Zero Carbon Schools Newsletter](#)

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](#)

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.

A national template 'Annual Resilience Statement' will be provided in due course to help schools to review the zero carbon declaration as part of an ongoing agenda. A suggestion is that this would be a statement setting out how directors/governors are measuring the school's climate resilience and targets, and addressing challenges over the short, medium and long-term, including risks posed by climate change. The Church of England Environment Programme has commissioned [RAFT](#) to create these key resources and materials designed to support schools and dioceses in response to the Net Zero Carbon Routemap.

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 sustainable practices.

Data Collection

Understanding current consumption and habits is the first step in the journey toward achieving the Net Zero target. To help schools understand their consumption, our inhouse statisticians have developed an [Energy Footprint Tool](#) ('EFT') for schools that accepts data from the school's DEC (Display Energy Certificate) and energy bills and automatically calculate their carbon footprint. The report on data from the 2020 EFT collection can be reviewed [here](#).

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](#).

Decarbonise School Buildings

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 produce a [Heat Decarbonisation Plan](#) ('HDP'). The key to progressing schools toward the target is for each to understand the bespoke route 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.

For inspiration about how to decarbonise your school building please watch the 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.

Webinars and Further Information

Integrating environmental considerations, an understanding of climate risks and where adaptations are required, is key to driving change. The Church of England Education Office is therefore providing support through the delivery of a series of [webinars](#) for dioceses and their school communities as part of the [Church of England Environment Programme](#).

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