

Richard Challoner School

Environmental and Sustainability

Strategy 2023-2025



The Environmental and Sustainability Strategy is based on :-

- Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home – Encyclical Letter from Pope Francis
- DFE 32056 -2012 – Top Tips for Sustainability in Schools
- CAFOD – Live Simply
- London Mayor’s Environmental Strategy - 31 May 2018

Richard Challoner School recognises that the economic, social and civic responsibilities are central to its activities and that the core business and teaching of our pupils has the potential to affect the environment, health and prosperity of students, employees and the communities we operate in.

The Holy Father in his Encyclical letter ‘Laudato Si’ On Care for Our Common Home discusses the ecological concerns and tragic consequences of unchecked human activity. The Holy Father wants us to recognise the immensity and urgency of the challenges we face.

In response to this and to support this belief, Richard Challoner School will continue to set in place initiatives in the short, medium and long term, which will contribute to the Care of Our Common Home and protect and enhance sustainability in all our operations and activities.

This is our revision of our plan first put in place in 2018 and will aim to build upon the work already begun.

AIMS

Governors increasingly wish our School to become the change that will make our part of this world more sustainable.

STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

Governors want to continue and enhance sustainable action in our school, through the learning and commitments of our students, and to have an impact beyond the school in our wider community.

Governors want to reduce our carbon footprint, make our operations more sustainable, and become an agent for greater social change, to make our world safer and more sustainable through a commitment to a fairer world, where this can be achieved through this work.



PATHWAYS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The school community needs to engage with school management, students, parents and the local community to effect this change.

The school has now appointed a committed leader to take the whole project forward. Year and class ambassadors have been found and meet regularly. The school now needs to look for leaders in the key areas of procurement, site management, financial planning (including sourcing of specialist sustainability funding, the school parliament and the PTA to look at more detailed action plans in these areas. These leaders will identify where the greatest impact can be achieved in the short, medium and long term.

Governors will support these actions through their oversight activities to encourage the achievement of this strategy, and support the prioritisation of these actions through existing committee structures. The Governors will seek to identify performance measures, that will allow the wider community to see progress as it is achieved, and become more committed to this strategy.

AREAS FOR ACTION

Areas for action were identified in our preceding strategy document and remain:

- Reducing waste
- Carbon reduction
- School travel
- Sustainable purchasing
- Green Infrastructure
- Global Dimension
- We encourage our school to look to achieve:
- Green Flag Eco School award and the CAFOD Live Simply award.

These will demonstrate to the wider community that we are responding to the invitation of the Holy Father in Laudato Si and Cardinal Vincent Nichols who says 'We are right to repeat again and again the straightforward appeal: Live simply that others may simply live'



REDUCING WASTE

Waste production is a dire reflection of modern consumption and lifestyles. The UK produces over 26 million tons of household rubbish in the UK annually. The nature of waste is constantly changing as materials are synthetic and increasingly complex resulting in health problems and pollution.

As a school we should ensure we know that our waste is going to recycling plants which are managed effectively and is not going to landfill or to overseas recycling plants where standards are lower. To encourage transparency to students of where their waste goes to encourage engagement in the student body.

We need urgently to reduce the use of single use plastic bottles. Staff and pupils should be encouraged to bring in reusable bottles made from sustainable products. We will continue to review the need for additional bottle filling taps and additional water fountains around the school where there is an identified need.

There is now an ever-increasing range of sustainable products made from bamboo, rice etc and we should where feasible look at these alternatives.

We need to make progress of recycling and composting of food waste.

We have already moved forward in the reduction of paper use and collection of used paper for recycling. We need to continue to build on the progress in this area and extend it to other areas where the school produces waste products.

CARBON REDUCTION

The prime focus is to continue to make all our school community aware of the duty we owe to the world we live in and how this translates into the care and respect that each individual needs to cultivate as part of their day to day activity.

Our intention remains to permeate the curriculum with an awareness of developing the understanding about our responsibility we must all share to protect our environment, whilst putting in place various expectations regarding the ecological behaviour of our school community.

Actions are required to moderate our energy use even more so now than when our initial plan was produced.



We need to continue with good practices such as:

- switching off lights and whiteboards in classrooms when leaving
- Ensuring all computer monitors are switched off when left unattended
- Ensure radiators are able to be managed effectively with reflectors on walls where practical
- Continue to review where we can install automated systems to shut down electrical items such as computers, lighting, etc at days end
- Encourage our students to consult with nominated ambassadors and ensure that ideas about energy saving activities are discussed regularly
- Make all members of the school community aware of the link between energy usage and cost
- Begin planning to refurbish and develop the school estate in a manner that avoids negative environmental impact and enhances the local environment
- We will continue to upgrade our heating controls, use energy efficient lighting, install smart metering, look again at renewable energy where grants are available and constantly renew energy use and billing
- We will again pay close attention to the ergonomic impact of major building works, look at development of solar panel usage and alternative methods of heating the school, carry on installing LED lighting where good progress has already been made throughout school buildings and provide ergonomic hand dryers in all toilets.

We have already made good progress with a programme of over 400 trees planted helping to provide carbon offsets to our energy use. We will link this with the Mayor of London's targets for tree planting where we will look to the Woodland Trust, PTA etc to provide donations of trees. We have applied for funding towards a wild garden behind the MUGA.

SCHOOL TRAVEL

- Planning for Trips
- Carbon Footprint
- Environmental Impact
- Travel to and from School (Staff/Pupils)
- Parental Transport

The Governors, staff, students and parents of Richard Challoner School wish to work together with the wider local community and others where appropriate to ensure that everyone can travel to and from School in a considerate and environmentally sustainable way. We also wish to promote the health and fitness of our students and staff. We need now more than ever to take account of the environmental impact, carbon footprint and affordability when planning school activity and trips.



Travel to School is widely recognised as one aspect of modern living in which reliance on the car has grown significantly in recent years. Nationally, transport accounts for approximately 23% of all the energy used in the UK and still over 25% of pupils' trips to and from schools are made by car.

Pope Francis says (in *Laudato Si*) 'Until greater progress is made in developing widely accessible sources of renewable energy, it is legitimate to choose less harmful alternatives or to find short term solutions'

The Mayor of London in his Environmental Policy states that more walking and cycling, and fewer vehicles on the street, help reduce traffic noise, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. He is developing strategies to limit traffic outside schools and also further proposals to extend the ultra low emission zones which will impact on our school and its catchment area.

In our school we should therefore look carefully at current travel choices made by staff, pupils and parents and identify methods of encouraging the use of sustainable travel for journeys to school and for school purposes. We have four bus stops and a train station close to the school which places us in a privileged position.

The main objective of this travel plan is to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle in line with local and national government planning policies on sustainable travel. In achieving this objective our plan will also seek to:

Raise awareness of local transport issues and the problem of motor vehicle usage around the school;
Increase acceptance that individuals and communities can contribute to solving some of the problems;

Promote alternative ways of getting to school other than by car.

Our aim is that each of us will reduce our impact on the planet, save money on commuting and improve health.

WHAT WE CAN DO:

Walking

- We will continue to encourage more students and staff to walk to school, or to encourage parents who take children to school as part of their own journey to work to drop children further from the school gates (or park further from their own place of work) so as to increase walking as part of regular commuting.

We will encourage car free days on a regular basis, possibly linked to our charitable activities.



Cycling

- We continue to encourage more cycle use by students and staff by adding to our secure cycle parking provision.
- We will identify unused facilities within the school and provide funding for additional showers and changing facilities.
- We will endeavour to purchase electric or hybrid minibuses when existing vehicles require replacement.
- We will continue to review the need for electric charging points particularly when the school minibuses need replacement.
- We have already ceased the contract for 6th form travel between Holy Cross and Richard Challoner.

CURRICULUM

- A survey has been carried out to make sure students experience a balance of environmentalism across the curriculum'
- We will continue to develop links to sustainability as a topic across the curriculum.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- We will use school communication systems to increase the messages students give about sustainable travel. It remains that parents often make the decision about how their children travel to school. Continuing fears about traffic and stranger danger, plus parental concerns about timekeeping and need to balance other activities (E.G the commute to work) can make the car the default option. If parents have a better understanding of different routes to school, the time they take and safety measures that have been put in place, then more children will walk or cycle to school.
- We will encourage pupils and parents to discuss how they might travel to school, helping them to identify sustainable methods and most appropriate routes.
- We will encourage parents to reduce the distances they travel on holidays, and to reduce the carbon footprint of their holidays.
- School Trips.
- School trips remain a valuable part of the learning environment at school.
- Trips must directly support the curriculum, such as standard field trips that support Geography and History course work. As such, Governors will review all trips before planning for sustainability and need.
- We will continue to look at trips that utilise environmentally friendly means of transport.
- Forms for approval of school trips will need to show the environmental impact of travel. The possibility of carbon offsets and increasingly the requirement for the trip in the light of the global dimension of energy consumption and prices.
- Sustainable Purchasing.
- The school's procurement processes can be used to consider changes towards greater sustainability, reviewing the cost or savings implications, and to encourage the school, it's management and governors to encourage change.



- We will work towards adopting purchasing policies which promote environmental and social sustainability.
- We will seek to influence our suppliers and contractors through the development and gradual implementation of this policy, an objective that will require sustainable issues to be considered in the procurement of all goods and services to the school and procurement chains.
- The school should review annually a list of contracts known to be awarded in the upcoming twelve months with an early indication about how the scope of work could be amended to contribute towards the school's sustainability programme.
- We will review all products bought where possible to ensure they are from real ethical producers, particularly cleaning products, detergents, recycled paper etc.
- The school will look at food products and drinks and their packaging to ensure where possible recyclable packaging is gradually introduced.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

This is an area concerned with the health and wellbeing of our pupils and the wider school community. Its intent is to provide the basics for linking up with other initiatives and work on climate change by building with nature. Within the boundaries of our school this remains a challenge but will include water management, waste management, climate adaptation, biodiversity, food, air quality, sustainable energy production, clean water and healthy soil.

Grants remain in many areas within certain criteria. The nature trail alongside the school at the Hogsmill Open Space was funded by the Mayor of London.

There are also grants available from the Mayor of London under the heading School Air Quality Greening Projects which include money for Green Screening to mitigate and aid air quality and also tree planting. We have already had a successful tree planting project and we will continue to look at further areas in the school where we can plant more trees and shrubs.

We should consider tree and shrub planting schemes to help less developed communities around the world.

GLOBAL DIMENSION

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek sustainable and integral development, for we know things must change. There is a nobility in the duty of care for creation through little daily actions and it is wonderful how education can bring about a real change in lifestyle. Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which will directly and significantly affect the world around us.

As a Catholic school we are inspired to be good stewards of the earth, to preserve and protect God's creation and the earth's resources. By our actions, we can mitigate the effects of climate change, stop



the destruction of habitat and reverse the decline of species worldwide. The way we treat the earth today is already affecting the poorest and most vulnerable in the world and in time will affect us all.

We will look to our School Ambassadors to come up with projects and suggestions to take forward the actions noted in this plan and as Governors will where possible ensure this plan moves forward based on our pupils' thoughts.

We will encourage the school to look at Kiva Loans (www.kiva.org), as a sustainable way of helping those less affluent around the world, and to encourage our students to understand the needs of others.

We will look at charitable giving by adoption of environmental causes where we feel as a school we can raise awareness and make a difference.

Review Date: January, 2024

Review Cycle: Annual