

Sustainability and Climate Change Policy

Role Responsible:	Vice Principal Director of Finance & Resources
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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out Itchen Sixth Form College's commitment to environmental sustainability and to reducing the College's contribution to climate change. It applies to all students, staff, governors, contractors and visitors, and covers the College's estate, curriculum, operations and community engagement.

The policy has been developed with reference to the Department for Education's (DfE) Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, which sets an expectation that all education settings work towards net zero emissions, embed sustainability across the curriculum, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

This policy should be read alongside the College's Health and Safety Policy, Estates and Facilities Management arrangements, Procurement Policy, and Travel Plan.

2. Aims and Objectives

The College aims to:

- Reduce carbon emissions from the College estate and operations, working towards the DfE's system-wide net zero ambition for education by 2050.
- Minimise waste and maximise reuse and recycling across the College.
- Promote sustainable travel to and from the College for students, staff and visitors.
- Build the College's resilience and adaptive capacity to the physical impacts of climate change, such as extreme heat and flooding.
- Ensure sustainability is a standing consideration in governance, leadership and financial planning.

3. Governance and Roles

3.1 Governing Body / Corporation

The Corporation has overall responsibility for this policy and will receive an annual update on progress against the College's Climate Action Plan (see Section 10). A named governor will act as sustainability link governor.

3.2 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure sustainability is considered in strategic planning, capital projects, procurement and curriculum design, and will allocate appropriate resource to deliver this policy.

3.3 Staff

All staff are expected to model sustainable behaviours, support the delivery of relevant curriculum content, and contribute ideas for improving the College's environmental performance.

3.4 Students

Students are encouraged to participate in the Sustainability Working Group, eco-committee or equivalent student-led initiative, and to take an active role in reducing the College's environmental impact.

4. Curriculum and Climate Education

The College is committed to ensuring every student has access to high-quality climate education and to developing the knowledge, skills and green-economy awareness needed for the transition to a low-carbon future, in line with DfE's ambition for a natural history GCSE and broader climate content in the curriculum.

- Sustainability and climate change themes will be embedded within relevant subject curricula (e.g. geography, science, business, sociology) where appropriate to specification content.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular sustainability activity (eco-club, Duke of Edinburgh environmental projects, community volunteering) will be maintained and promoted.

5. Estate, Energy and Carbon Management

The College will work towards reducing carbon emissions from its buildings, energy use and operations, consistent with DfE's expectation that all education settings have a decarbonisation plan.

- Prioritise energy efficiency measures (e.g. LED lighting, improved insulation, heating controls) within capital and maintenance planning.
- Consider low-carbon heating and renewable energy generation (e.g. solar PV) as part of long-term estates strategy and when bidding for relevant DfE capital or condition improvement funding.
- Monitor utilities consumption (gas, electricity, water) and set annual reduction targets.
- Ensure new-build or major refurbishment projects meet, where feasible, the latest DfE Output Specification sustainability standards.

6. Biodiversity and Green Space

- Protect and, where possible, enhance existing green space, trees and planting on the College site.

- Explore opportunities for biodiversity net gain, such as wildflower areas, pollinator-friendly planting, or a student-managed growing space.
- Involve students in monitoring and improving on-site biodiversity as part of curriculum or enrichment activity.

7. Waste, Resources and Circular Economy

- Apply the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle) across all College operations, including catering, offices and classrooms.
- Provide clearly labelled recycling facilities across the site and monitor general waste versus recycling volumes.
- Reduce single-use plastics in catering and College-branded merchandise.
- Encourage reuse of resources such as uniform/kit (where applicable), textbooks, stationery and IT equipment, including through donation or resale schemes.
- Ensure IT and electronic equipment is disposed of via WEEE-compliant routes.

8. Sustainable Travel

- Maintain and promote a College Travel Plan that encourages walking, cycling and public transport use for students and staff.
- Provide secure, accessible cycle storage and promote local walking and cycling routes.
- Consider the environmental impact of College minibuses and business travel, and prioritise lower-emission options where practicable.
- Encourage sustainable options for College trips, work experience placements and staff travel to external meetings and training.

9. Sustainable Procurement

- Consider environmental impact and whole-life cost, alongside price and quality, when procuring goods and services.
- Favour suppliers who can evidence their own sustainability commitments, where cost and quality are comparable.
- Reduce paper use through digital-first processes for administration, communication and learning materials.
- Apply sustainability considerations to catering contracts, including food waste reduction and sourcing of seasonal or locally produced food where feasible.

10. Climate Resilience and Adaptation

In addition to reducing emissions, the College will take steps to adapt to the physical risks of climate change, including:

- Considering flood risk, overheating and extreme weather resilience in estates planning and maintenance.
- Reviewing arrangements for managing extreme heat during examination periods and the summer term.
- Incorporating climate risk into the College's business continuity and emergency planning arrangements.

Further information on the national context is available in the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).