



Policy:	Sustainability
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Key changes/notes:
This is a Kent Model-based policy which has been amended following the updated guidance from the Local Authority

Statutory Requirement:	No
Proposed Renewal Cycle:	Two years
Proposed annual review authority:	Head Teacher
Policy Section:	Governance

<p>Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Luke 18:16)</p> <p>This policy is based upon our Christian values of thankfulness, respect, honesty, love and resilience.</p>

1. Aims and values

Our curriculum is built on the Christian values of thankfulness, respect, resilience, honesty and love and within this, our aims to affirm every individual as a unique part of God's creation, to foster care relationships and respect for others and to provide a learning environment and school community to be proud of are particularly relevant when considering our pledge to sustainability. Therefore, at St. Mary's, we aim to enable every pupil to take positive action to help make our school a sustainable and caring community. Furthermore, we will seek opportunities in our school procedures and budget to make positive environmental changes.

In September 2023, we signed up with the Green School Project to begin our journey into becoming a Zero Carbon School.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Headteacher and senior leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure staff CPD plans cover sustainability, e.g. including climate change and sustainability in science teachers' CPD, and providing sustainable usage training for all staff• Review every subject policy with an eye to sustainability and quality outdoor education• Work with premises and school business staff to look at where to invest money to reduce carbon emissions, and improve sustainability and resilience• Develop and deliver our school's climate action plan by 2025• Communicate the sustainability policy to the school community
Sustainability team (CH, SS, CS, AM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive carbon literacy training and co-ordinate delivery of this training to all staff• Identify appropriate areas of the school grounds to use as an environmental classroom• Encourage whole-school participation in environmental awareness days e.g. Earth Day (22 April), World Ocean Day (8 June)• Lead a whole-school sustainability audit to identify current and future opportunities for change
Curriculum/subject leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out a sustainability audit for their subject, identifying opportunities to teach about the natural world, sustainable practices and the circular economy• Identify ways to reduce usage and waste when teaching their subjects, e.g. reducing printing• Incorporate Forest School and outdoor education into their curriculum area• Apply the new primary science model curriculum with an emphasis on nature

School business manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out sustainable procurement practices by considering usage, waste and supply chains as part of the assessment and validation criteria used when purchasing goods and services • Identify funding opportunities for sustainable development and lead bids for that funding. • Communicate waste reduction practices in school to encourage sustainable and cost-effective behaviour, e.g. limiting printing • Conduct regular energy and water usage audits
Cleaning team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the school site clean and safe for effective outdoor learning • Make sure all lights, taps, and unnecessary appliances are switched off at the end of each day • Utilise different waste streams e.g. dry recycling
Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve policies that have been reviewed with an eye to sustainability and quality outdoor education • Monitor progress of our school's climate action plan
Pupils – Eco-warrior committee	<p>Under the guidance of staff from the sustainability team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in regular litter picks • Support with the maintenance of the allotment and biodome e.g. weeding, watering • Create posters to encourage others to make sustainable choices e.g. turn off lights, walk to school, recycle paper

3. Curriculum and learning

At St Mary's, we are working to tailor our curriculum to foster a passion in children about the natural world who want to do their best to protect the natural world and can influence their wider communities.

We have identified a sustainability team of Mrs Hawkins, Mrs Sepet and Mrs Malone who have already committed to the Zero Carbon Schools Programme. Currently, this project has been in addition to the school curriculum and has focused on Year 4 only. Moving forward, we aim to audit our curriculum across every subject to identify opportunities to deliver content around sustainability and we aim to audit teacher knowledge to provide additional training as required (see action plan). In addition, we aim to set up an eco-committee amongst the pupil body to lead on new whole school initiatives and to support our participation in environmental awareness days.

In addition to planned opportunities for developing sustainability within our curriculum offer, we already provide extra-curricular experiences to enrich our pupils including forest school and gardening club.

4. Food and catering

At St Mary's, our food is provided by Caterlink. They state that they are committed to reducing their carbon and have a culture of being sustainable. Breakfast is provided by Magic Breakfast who aim to operate as a net zero organisation by 2030. Children in KS1 receive fruit from the government funded school fruit and vegetable scheme and milk for under-fives is provided by Cool Milk. Although food is provided by outside agencies, St Mary's staff monitors use by dates, freezing food where appropriate to reduce waste.

5. Waste and recycling

At St Mary's we have committed to a number of practices to support the reduction of waste and increase the process of recycling.

Recycling: We have clearly labelled bins throughout the school for recycling and general waste with posters on how to use them. Staff also have access to recycling bins for batteries and ink. We teach pupils about the different types of bin they might have in their homes, and encourage them to continue good recycling habits when they are not at school. Our forest school has two compost bins, the waste from which is used to fertilise new plants.

Reducing waste: We reduce paper waste by printing on both sides of paper wherever possible, having scrap-paper drawers and using emails as much as possible. Staff are encouraged to consider what materials can be reused the following year, when clearing out their classrooms at the end of a term or year. We provide pupils with reusable water bottles in school rather than using disposable single-use plastics. Where possible, we reduce the need to print out paper. Office staff have recently developed electronic permission slips, for example.

Purchasing: We run a second-hand shop for uniforms, bags and school equipment.

6. Energy and water

Future budgets will consider the that benefits to infrastructure improvements such as:

Low-carbon boilers

Smart meter installation

We have committed to the below small steps to reduce usage:

Reducing energy usage:

Switching off lights and appliances when they're not in use

Displaying information around the school to help pupils understand the importance of switching off appliances and saving energy.

Reducing water usage:

Turning off taps when not in use – all of our taps have a pressure mechanism so that they stop automatically.

Displaying posters reminding pupils of the importance of turning off taps and saving water

Use of a water butt to collect rain water in order to water plants in the allotment and biodome.

Water irrigators have been placed in the base of the newly planted trees which release water slowly.

7. Transport and travel

Audits inform us that the majority of our pupils walk to school. Staff are less inclined to walk because they are less likely to live locally. St Mary's commits to promoting national and local initiatives to encourage more sustainable methods of transport through:

- Encouraging staff to share lifts to school and off-site training wherever possible to reduce car use

In addition to this, we aim to audit the carbon footprint of our school trips. We will use this information to consider more environmentally-friendly options.

8. Buildings and grounds

Although St Mary's site is situated in the town, we are a large site with a generous school field. We ensure that we have enough rubbish bins to keep our school clean and we regularly organise litter-picking to maintain this level of cleanliness.

We have created a forest school area with natural habitats to teach pupils about the natural world and we are working to develop new areas of biodiversity on the school site, by increasing plant diversity on grass that isn't being used for sports pitches. Within our biodome and allotment areas, we have eliminated pesticide and herbicide use.