



Climate Ambassador Guide

Created by the University of Reading and STEM Learning

Climate Ambassadors is an initiative to help schools and colleges across the UK deliver world-class climate education and develop climate action plans by connecting them with climate professionals.

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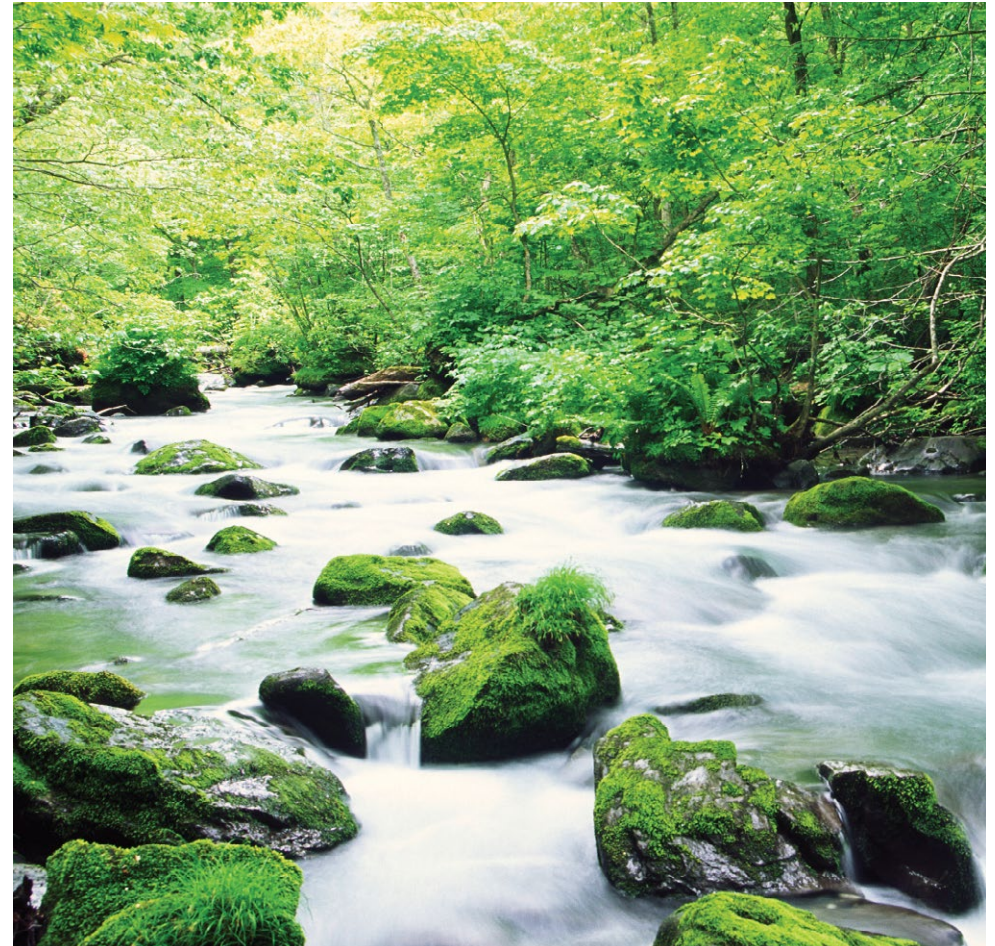
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What is the Climate Ambassador Scheme?

Climate Ambassadors has been launched to unlock the potential of the world-leading climate sector in the UK. By recruiting and training volunteers with relevant skills or experience the Climate Ambassador scheme will:

- Improve the climate education of young people.
- Help guide schools and colleges on their path to Net Zero.

Anyone working on climate research, policy or practice in the UK can become a climate ambassador. The Climate Ambassador scheme takes a cross-disciplinary approach and aims to put ambassadors of all backgrounds and expertise in touch with schools, colleges, educators and young people. Volunteers are being sought, who can pledge a small amount of their time each year to giving advice and support to schools and colleges.



"Action on climate change has never been higher on the agenda. Young people want improved climate education to prepare them for challenges to come. Teachers are going above and beyond to pass on knowledge to their pupils."

"Climate change will touch all our lives, regardless of our careers or interests. It is therefore vital that we incorporate climate change into every single subject."

"Teachers cannot do this without expert support. The Climate Ambassadors Scheme has been set up to connect anyone with climate change expertise with schools, colleges and nurseries, to recommend climate teaching resources, deliver teacher training, or advise on reducing carbon emissions."

"I urge anyone who is passionate about and has knowledge of climate change to sign up as a Climate Ambassador and help drive this positive change in education."

Laura Tobin, Meteorologist, Climate Ambassador

Thank you for volunteering as a Climate Ambassador. Schools, colleges and other education providers across the UK are eager for your help in delivering better climate education, mitigating their climate impact and adapting to the extremes of weather associated with the changing climate. By volunteering your time to help them, you can help the next generation of young people be better prepared for a healthy, productive and sustainable future.



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Have you signed up to become a Climate Ambassador?

1 / Register online

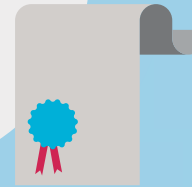
Go to stem.org.uk/register and select STEM Ambassador.

2 / Online Induction

Find out what to expect as a STEM Ambassador.
A link will be sent after you register.

3 / Apply for a free DBS or PVG

Essential for working with young people, this will require an ID check by someone from an approved profession.



4 / Register on the Climate Ambassador Scheme

Once approved, go to your profile, on the 'Skills and Qualifications' tab find the 'Schemes Participation' box.
Search for and select 'Climate Ambassadors'
If you're happy to, tick the box to share your details so you can be contacted about additional training opportunities and resources.



5 / Connect with your local STEM Ambassador Hub




If you are newly approved your local Hub will get in touch. They will be your main point of contact for any questions.



6 / Begin volunteering

Once you've received your approved DBS or PVG certificate you're ready to go! You'll receive your STEM Ambassador badge when you've done your first activity.

YOU COULD START BY:

-  Signing up for an activity with a teacher or youth leader
-  Improving your skills with our free online courses on FutureLearn
-  Offering an activity to teachers and youth leaders near you

Go to stem.org.uk/climate-ambassadors for more information

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What are the benefits?

✓ Pupils:

- pupils can develop the skills they will need to address the changing climate
- pupils will have access to an inspiring role model
- provides an insight into careers working on addressing the climate and sustainability crisis

✓ Teachers and schools:

- provides guidance on developing a climate action plan
- develops a link to a climate expert to help advise on bringing climate education into the curriculum

✓ Climate Ambassadors:

- be able to make a genuine difference in the lives of pupils, inspiring the next generation of climate professionals
- gain a sense of achievement as you share your experience with a new audience
- develop your own career skills, especially communication, and give your confidence a boost

About climate capital

Real-life science and contact with adults working in the climate sector helping to build pupils' climate capital, which can help them to consider a rewarding future in the sector.

Climate change will affect everyone, so developing climate capital is important for every young person, irrespective of their future career.



Ten ways to work with schools and colleges

Being a Climate Ambassador is about helping schools and colleges in their response to climate change. It can take all sorts of different forms and involve interaction with different people working or studying in the education sector. Here are our top ten suggestions for things to do, but please don't be limited by these ideas and send us any creative ways you have found to help.

Remember schools and colleges need help in developing their climate education and skills, developing their resilience to extreme weather events and in planning to deliver net zero. Climate Ambassadors might also like to engage in broader work around sustainability, including enhancing biodiversity and access to nature for young people. It's important to work closely with the schools or educators to ensure that your engagement as a Climate Ambassador is mutually beneficial to yourself and the school, educators and young people that you might be working with. Make sure you discuss what the school or college wants out of your engagement, and that any session is designed to achieve this.

> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea one

Help to deliver a continuing professional development session for teachers

A large majority of teachers want to teach about climate but more than 70% say they don't have training to do so. You can make a huge difference by helping to deliver a continuing professional development session for teachers or guiding them to online CPD. Most important is offering teachers the chance to talk with you and ask all the important questions they have that they don't know who to ask. Many teachers also need help finding the best climate teaching resources. There are great collections of resources on the STEM Learning Climate Hub, the Met Office or MetLink.

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> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea two Deliver a presentation to young people

Sharing your expertise with young people is often as straightforward as giving a presentation to a school assembly, to a college enrichment day or within a school lesson. This might be on your own work, the work of your organisation or on a broader topic suggested by teachers or students. Although you might not be an expert on the topic chosen, be confident that bringing your knowledge and training will help schools and colleges navigate a complex topic.



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> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea three

Partner with student groups

Students are powerful advocates for change in their schools and colleges and often now have a voice in strategy through student councils. Attend a student council or eco or sustainability group meeting.

> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea four

Mentor students who want to develop the skills for green careers

Recent surveys show that more than half of young people want to work in a career with a strong sustainability focus. The green jobs taskforce identifies the huge range of skills needed for the green industrial revolution. Helping young people understand your route to a green job and inspire their own planning by working with careers leaders on how you can support school careers events or particular groups of students.

> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea five Organise a visit or meaningful experience

A school visit to your institution or bringing exciting and interesting climate related resources into schools and colleges can help to start new conversations about green careers and the role of the education sector in tackling climate change. Think about physical and digital artefacts you can share with young people which will help give them a new viewpoint on climate and sustainability.

> TO IMPROVE CLIMATE EDUCATION

Idea six Connect your school or college with others working on climate

There are growing networks of schools and colleges in the UK working on climate and sustainability and sharing resources and ideas to make action possible. The student led UK Schools Sustainability Network is a great place to start and you can help facilitate broadening the network through your connections to schools and colleges. The Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education is a great place for resources and information.

> TO HELP ACHIEVE NET ZERO

Idea seven Give a presentation to school or college senior leaders

School and college leaders have the power and agency to drive change but often have been given little professional training on climate. A short presentation on what we know about climate change and what we can do about it can have huge power to help shape policy and practice. Talk with leaders about what help and resources they need to build a whole organisation approach to climate.

> TO HELP ACHIEVE NET ZERO

Idea eight Brief the governing board

In schools, you can support the National Governance Association [Greener Governance campaign](#) to ensure all schools have a sustainability and climate change strategy. Talking about the future climate risks the governing body needs to consider is a good way to frame the problem and speaks to the diverse professional experience of many governors. On the global scale, the slide deck from the IPCC [WGI](#) is a great starting resource for framing the problem and the slides from [UKCP18](#) give context for the UK. The interactive UK [Climate Risk Indicators](#) website can be used to provide further local context.

> TO HELP ACHIEVE NET ZERO

Idea nine

Work with business management staff

Schools and colleges are medium to large size business with complex estates and supply chains, typically managed by a school or college business manager. Talk with them about their challenges around buildings, energy, food or grounds and offer your advice on what practical steps to action they can take.

> TO HELP ACHIEVE NET ZERO

Idea ten

Support schools and colleges to develop a climate action plan

Schools and colleges need help to develop a climate action plan for their transition to net zero. The Transform Our World and Let's Go Zero [action plan](#) is a fantastic place to start. For UK FE colleges, the [Climate Commission Roadmap](#) gives practical guidance for initiatives to implement. You can use your professional expertise and network to help build out this plan with ideas to measure and monitor progress against the plan.

Before your session

This may be the first time you have worked with non-experts or it may be some time since your last activity, so this section will support you with information about how to prepare for your session.

Know your audience

You will need to vary your content and delivery based on the audience, see the section on ten ideas of how you can work with schools. This will be very different if you are working with adult groups, professional staff within schools and colleges or young people.

Talk to the organiser

Talk to whoever is leading the session before you deliver it to give an overview of what you plan to cover (and adjust if necessary).

Learn from previous sessions

Make sure you take notes on any lessons learned when you deliver a session and use these to build on any future delivery, whether returning to the same group, or delivering a similar session to a new audience.

You can use the [STEM Ambassador Community](#) to connect with other Climate Ambassadors and share best practice and tips with one another.



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Working with young people

Ask about what pupils will already know:

- does the school follow the national curriculum (for England, Northern Ireland or Wales) or the curriculum for excellence (Scotland)?
- have pupils covered the topics of climate yet, or will they soon? Is there anything that the teacher would like you to focus on?

Find out as much as you can about the pupils:

- are there any behaviour routines that you should know, e.g. the best way to get the class's attention, or is there a reward scheme for positive behaviour?
- are there any special education or behaviour needs that you need to be aware of?
- do pupils have any relevant allergies?

Asking the right questions

The right questions will help you to involve pupils, establish and unpack their ideas, generate and confirm new understanding and apply this in new ways:

- ask one question at a time
- give pupils time to think before inviting answers
- ignore calling out and praise pupils who use the agreed rule to contribute
- avoid multiple questions at once, leading questions or trick questions
- try to include a balance of open questions (with more than one correct answer) and closed questions (with one correct answer)
- avoid jargon and use curriculum vocabulary which pupils will be familiar with
- encourage questions at any time. Either answer them straight away or agree to answer them later in the session

Working with young people

Making it personal

- what questions could we ask, to find the best solution to this?
- what could we investigate, to answer this question?
- help pupils share their own real life experiences that are relevant



Hands-on activities (if applicable):

As you circulate around the groups during the investigations, ask questions to help pupils reflect on what they are doing:

- what are you going to do during this investigation? What method are you going to use?
- what are you trying to find out? What scientific question are you answering?
- how are you making this a fair test?
- what things (variables) are you going to change?
- what things (variables) are you going to measure or compare?
- what things (variables) are you going to keep the same?
- what will you use to make your measurement or help you compare?



Background information on climate change and Net Zero

Although you work in climate, we know that having a few quick and easy facts and figures to hand will help you to make your conversations with schools and colleges more engaging and informative. Some key facts and figures:

- Human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in at least the last 2000 years ([source](#)).
- Climate change is already affecting every inhabited region on Earth, with human influence contributing to many observed changes in weather and climate extremes ([source](#)).
- The annual average global mean temperature in 2020 was $1.11 \pm 0.13^{\circ}\text{C}$ warmer than the 1850-1900 average ([source](#)). The warmest seven years on record have all been since 2015.
- The most recent decade in the UK (2011-2020) was the warmest on record and was 0.5°C warmer than the 1981-2010 average and 1.1°C warmer than 1961-1990 ([source](#)).
- By the end of the 21st century, all areas of the UK are projected to be warmer, more so in summer than in winter ([source](#)).
- Hot summers are expected to become more common. By the middle of this century, the chance of seeing a summer as hot as 2018 or 1976 will be 50% ([source](#)).
- Climate change could cause large economic damages in the UK, at least 1% of GDP by 2045 ([source](#)). The largest potential impacts might be felt from increased river and surface water flooding, coastal flooding and storm surges, and the impact of extreme heat and health and well-being ([source](#)).
- The sixth carbon budget recommended by the Climate Change Committee to reach Net Zero by 2050 requires a reduction in carbon emissions by 63% by 2035 from their level in 2019 ([source](#)). The carbon budget can be met by increasing adoption of low-carbon solutions in transport and heating, expanding low-carbon energy supplies, reducing the demand for carbon-intensive activities like eating meat and air travel and removing carbon through tree-planting, changes to land-use and better management of peatlands.
- Accelerating the rate of emissions reduction to meet the sixth carbon budget could result in an increase of UK GDP by 2-3% and provide around 300,000 additional jobs by 2050 ([source](#)).
- Across the UK there are already more than 400,000 jobs directly involved in low carbon businesses. Current government plans will support more than 250,000 more green jobs by 2030 with the ambition for more than 2 million green jobs over the same time period ([source](#)).

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Examples of future climate careers

To address the climate challenge, there will be many jobs working in specific green industries and many more jobs that will need to adapt and change. Some examples of future careers in different sectors are:

Renewable energy

Engineers who build, install and maintain wind, solar and other renewable power systems. Project and financial managers and scientists to make sure power plants are built in the right places. Software designers and electrical engineers to build the electricity networks and electricity storage of the future.

Retrofitting buildings

Builders, installers, and engineers to retrofit most buildings in the UK to increase their energy efficiency. Designers and scientists to think about new, cheap and efficient methods for retrofitting and new materials to use. Installers and engineers for the new generation of heat pumps which will be needed to warm our homes.

Electric vehicles

Workers for the new battery manufacturing and electric vehicle factories needed to replace petrol and diesel cars, vans and buses.

Engineers and computer scientists to design, build and maintain the large number of electric vehicle charging points that will be needed.

Circular economy

An increased focus on reusing and repairing goods will mean new jobs for those involved in recycling or mending products. New companies will be built which make use of our existing resources providing opportunities for entrepreneurs and finance professionals.

Climate adaptation

Experts to anticipate and protect our infrastructure and communities against extreme weather. Designing and installing defences against flooding and building the weather forecasting systems of tomorrow.

Communicators and Educators

The scale of the transition is bigger than any many of us have faced in our lifetime so we need people to help give people the green skills they need, lead transformation of existing businesses and help them to assess their carbon footprint and respond to it.

Where does climate fit in to the curriculum?

It is important to understand where the teaching of climate fits in to a young person's education. You want to make sure that you are pitching your session at the correct academic level. Don't forget the teacher can support you on making sure your session suits the age group you are working with.

England: do all schools follow the national curriculum?

The national curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject. Some types of school, like academies and private schools, don't have to follow the national curriculum, though academies must teach a broad and balanced curriculum including English, maths, science and religious education.

England: how does climate fit in with the English national curriculum?

Age 5-6 students should be taught to:

- Observe changes across the four seasons
- Observe and describe weather that is associated with the seasons and how day length works
- Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to: key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather

Age 9-10 students should be taught to:

- Recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things
- Identify the part played by evaporation and condensation in the water cycle.

Age 11-14 students should be taught:

- Earth as a source of limited resources and the efficacy of recycling
- The carbon cycle
- The composition of the atmosphere
- The production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the impact on climate
- Understand, through the use of detailed place-based exemplars at a variety of scales, the key processes in: physical geography relating to: geological timescales and plate tectonics; rocks, weathering and soils; weather and climate, including the change in climate from the Ice Age to the present; and glaciation, hydrology and coasts
- Understand how human and physical processes interact to influence, and change landscapes, environments and the climate; and how human activity relies on effective functioning of natural systems

Age 14-16 students should be taught:

- Positive and negative human interactions with ecosystems
- Evidence for composition and evolution of the Earth's atmosphere since it's formation
- Evidence, and uncertainties in evidence, for additional anthropogenic causes of climate change
- Potential effect of, and mitigation of, increased levels of carbon dioxide and methane on the Earth's climate
- Common atmospheric pollutants: sulphur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, particulates and their sources
- Renewable and non-renewable energy sources used on Earth, changes in how they are used

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Scotland: how does climate change fit in with the Scottish curriculum for excellence?

ENERGY SOURCES AND SUSTAINABILITY

	Early	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Learners explore types, sources and uses of energy and develop their understanding of how energy is transferred and conserved. They consider the relevance of these concepts to everyday life. They explore the nature and sustainability of energy sources and discuss benefits and assess possible risks to form an informed view of responsible energy use.	I have experienced, used and described a wide range of toys and common appliances. I can say 'what makes it go' and say what they do when they work. SCN 0-04a	I am aware of different types of energy around me and can show their importance to everyday life and my survival. SCN 1-04a	By considering examples where energy is conserved, I can identify the energy source, how it is transferred and ways of reducing wasted energy. SCN 2-04a Through exploring non-renewable energy sources, I can describe how they are used in Scotland today and express an informed view on the implications for their future use. SCN 2-04b I can analyse how lifestyles can impact on the environment and Earth's resources and can make suggestions about how to live in a more sustainable way. SCN 2-04b	I can use my knowledge of the different ways in which heat is transferred between hot and cold objects and the thermal conductivity of materials to improve energy efficiency in buildings or other systems. SCN 3-04a By investigating renewable energy sources and taking part in practical activities to harness them, I can discuss their benefits and potential problems. SCN 3-04b	By contributing to an investigation on different ways of meeting society's energy needs, I can express an informed view on the risks and benefits of different energy sources, including those produced from plants. SCN 4-04a Through investigation, I can explain the formation and use of fossil fuels and contribute to discussions on the responsible use and conservation of finite resources. SCN 4-04b

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PROCESSES OF THE PLANET

	Early	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Learners explore the changing states of matter and the physical and chemical processes which influence Earth's atmosphere and oceans. They learn about climate change as a natural process in time as well as the result of human activity. Through connections with collaborative studies of landscape, weather and climate in social studies they build up an integrated picture of the dynamic nature of Earth.	By investigating how water can change from one form to another, I can relate my findings to everyday experiences. SCN 0-05a / SCN 1-05a		I can apply my knowledge of how water changes state to help me understand the processes involved in the water cycle in nature over time. SCN 2-05a	By contributing to experiments and investigations, I can develop my understanding of models of matter and can apply this to changes of state and the energy involved as they occur in nature. SCN 3-05a I can explain some of the processes which contribute to climate change and discuss the possible impact of atmospheric change on the survival of living things. SCN 3-05b	I have developed my understanding of the kinetic model of a gas. I can describe the qualitative relationships between pressure, volume and temperature of gases. SCN 4-05a Through exploring the carbon cycle, I can describe the processes involved in maintaining the balance of gases in the air, considering causes and implications of changes in the balance. SCN 4-05b

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Wales: how does climate change fit in with the Welsh national curriculum?

The curriculum for Wales aims for all young people to:

- Understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
- Show their commitment to the sustainability of the planet

Climate and sustainability topics are mainly covered in the humanities area of learning and experience

Progression step 1 (4-5 year olds):

- I am beginning to recognise the effects that I have on the natural world

Progression step 2 (5-8 year olds):

- I can describe how people and the natural world may impact on each other

Progression step 3 (8-11 year olds):

- I can describe and give simple explanations about the impact of human actions on the natural world in the past and present
- I can describe and give simple explanations about the impact that

physical processes have had on people, places and landscapes in the past and present

- I can give simple descriptions of how places, spaces, environments and landforms have changed over time
- I can give simple descriptions of the processes that lead to change in the natural world

Progression step 4 (11-14 year olds):

- I can understand and explain how human actions affect the physical processes that shape places, spaces, environments and landforms over time
- I can understand and explain the range of factors that affect the interrelationships between humans and physical processes
- I can describe and explain how places, spaces, environments and landforms have changed over time and outline the processes that cause these changes in the natural world



Progression step 5 (14-16 year olds):

- I can explain and analyse the wide range of interrelationships and interdependencies between the human actions and physical processes that shape places, spaces, environments and landforms over time
- I can evaluate the extent to which economic, social, political, cultural, religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and actions have led to changes to the natural world
- I can give comprehensive explanations and analysis of how and why places, spaces, environments and landforms have changed over time

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Northern Ireland: how does climate change fit in with the Northern Irish national curriculum?

Education for Sustainable Development is a core value threaded through the curriculum at all key stages and is one of the four stated key values of the curriculum.

"We value the environment as the basis of life and the need to sustain it for future generations"

The key objectives of the curriculum in this respect are to:

- Understand the interdependence of society, the economy and the environment
- develop respect for the needs of both present and future generations; spiritual awareness
- demonstrate how action can help improve the quality of life for people, locally and globally
- exercise environmental responsibility through conservation of resources, waste management and promotion of local and global biodiversity

The curriculum also has objectives designed around the pupil as a contributor to society which include:

- Contribute to the welfare of the school, the community and the environment
- be aware of some of the dilemmas arising from scientific, technological and environmental change
- assess the human and environmental impact of ethical choices and take action as appropriate

Specific curriculum examples which cover these topics are noted below, but note that the Education for Sustainable Development value is threaded throughout the curriculum and features in many subjects.

4-6 year olds:

- Show curiosity about the living things, places, objects and materials in the environment
- understand the need to respect and care for themselves, other people, plants, animals and the environment

6-8 year olds:

- Me in the world
- how plants and animals rely on each other within the natural world
- interdependence of people and the environment
- the effect of people on the natural environment over time
- interdependence of people, plants, animals and place
- ways in which change occurs in the natural world
- how people and places have changed over time
- positive change and how we have a responsibility to make an active contribution

8-11 year olds:

- how they and others interact in the world
- how living things rely on each other within the natural world
- interdependence of people and the environment and how this has been accelerated over time by advances in transport and communications
- the effect of people on the natural and built environment over time
- how change is a feature of the human and natural world and may have consequences for our lives and the world around us

- ways in which change occurs over both short and long periods of time in the physical and natural world
- The effects of positive and negative changes globally and how we contribute to some of these changes

11-14 year olds

- Mathematics and Numeracy: Understand the need to manage renewable and non-renewable resources
- Modern Languages: Consider local and global environmental issues
- Geography: Investigate the impact of conflict between social, economic and environmental needs, both locally and globally
- Geography: Explore how we can exercise environmental stewardship and help promote a better quality of life for present and future generations, both locally and globally
- Science: Investigate the effects of pollution
- Science: Explore the importance of biodiversity, how it impacts on our lives and how it is affected by human activity. Investigate what can be done to conserve and promote biodiversity
- Technology and Design: Pursue design solutions using environmental friendly materials and energy sources

14-16 year olds:

- I can explain and analyse the wide range of interrelationships and interdependencies between the human actions and physical processes that shape places, spaces, environments and landforms over time
- I can evaluate the extent to which economic, social, political, cultural, religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and actions have led to changes to the natural world
- I can give comprehensive explanations and analysis of how and why places, spaces, environments and landforms have changed over time



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Supporting resources

There is a huge variety of climate resources available to teachers, often collected together in hubs. As a Climate Ambassador, you might want to look at these resources to see how useful they are for your activity. You might also like to help teachers understand and use them.

[Met Link](#) resources from the Royal Meteorological Society

[STEM Learning](#) resources

[Climate in the Classroom](#) resources from the University of Reading

[Met Office](#) resources

[Royal Society](#) resources

[Royal Geographical Society](#) resources

[Geographical Association](#) resources

[ClimaTalk](#) – a youth led climate education group with a particular focus on climate policy

[Transform Our World](#) – resources with a strong sustainability and climate action focus

[ClimateScience.org](#) – resources spanning climate science, policy and action

[Office for Climate Education resources](#) – climate change education

[The Carbon Literacy Project](#) – oversees the delivery of a day's worth of learning and action about climate-change. Carbon Literacy informs and inspires audiences both to act right now to reduce their carbon emissions, but also to begin to plan and take much longer-term action toward a zero-carbon society, whatever they do, and whoever they are.

