



# Heron Hill Primary School

## CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

### OUR CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY INTENT:

Reflecting our **RESPONSIBILITY** and **RESPECT** values, we aim to ensure that all stakeholders understand climate change, take climate action and proactively protect the environment.

### WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

*“Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Such shifts can be natural, due to changes in the sun’s activity or large volcanic eruptions. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.” (ref. United Nations)*

There are many factors that can make the Earth warmer and colder including:

- *greenhouse gases caused by human activity,*
- *deforestation, where more than half of the world’s surface has been ploughed and paved,*
- *the ozone layer trapping heat closer to the Earth’s surface*
- *different types of air pollution which have different effects on the atmosphere.*

The challenge of climate change is formidable. For children and young people to meet it with determination, and not with despair, we must offer them not just truth but also hope. Learners need to know the truth about climate change – through a knowledge-rich education. They must also be given the hope that they can be agents of change, through hands-on activity and, as they progress, through guidance and programmes allowing them to pursue a green career pathway in their chosen field. (DFE 2023).

## WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO AT HERON HILL PRIMARY?

- Eco Green Flag School Award
- Heron Hill's Planned Curriculum reflects climate & sustainability awareness and is embedded from KS1
- Recycling of all paper products used in school
- Polytunnel and gardening club
- Offer community battery recycling onsite
- Community litter pick with local councillors
- Extensive tree planting on school grounds, in collaboration with Cumbria Wildlife Trust
- Eco Councillors plastic recycling efforts – glue sticks, whiteboard pens
- Composting team – fruit and vegetable composting collected weekly
- Reduced use of plastic at lunch time – metal cutlery, wooden disposable cutlery, paper grab bags,
- Motion sensors installed for automatic light switch off to reduce carbon footprint
- Annual 'walk to school' week
- Travel Plan Working Party to analyse travel to school and promote environmentally friendly options.
- Reduce carbon footprint in building through planning outdoor lessons
- Climate and sustainability projects with external agency through Global Links and CDEC collaboration

## CLIMATE ACTION PLAN AREAS:

- 1) **Adaptation and resilience:** taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating.
- 2) **Biodiversity:** getting to know our outdoor space and improving the school grounds for people and nature.
- 3) **Education and green careers:** ensuring the education we provide gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that our teaching staff feel supported to offer this.
- 4) **Decarbonisation:** calculating and taking actions to reduce our carbon emissions, such as becoming more energy efficient.

## ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

### Prompt questions:

- *Has the education setting undertaken an assessment of climate and weather risks?*
- *Has the education setting experienced the effects of extreme weather in the past e.g. high temperatures in summer, flooding of buildings or grounds?*
- *What aspects of the education settings life has been or could be affected by these hazards? What damages were incurred?*
- *Who are the important people in the setting with responsibilities for preparing for and responding to these events?*
- *Does the setting have any vulnerable staff or students that could be at greater risk?*
- *Is there any important infrastructure that the setting needs to ensure remains operational, or is high cost e.g. IT equipment, boiler, laboratory or other specialist equipment?*
- *Does the education setting have any existing plans for action in the event of a heat wave or flood?*
- *Does the setting know where they can find out what their local climate might look like in the future and how these extreme events might change?*

| ACTION:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | INTENDED IMPACT:                                                                                                                                                                                                             | LINK TO SDP:                                                                   | RESPONSIBILITY OF:                                    | TIMESCALE:                         |
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| <p>Continue to promote active travel on the school run via HT newsletters and incentives such as 'Walk to School' week.</p> <p>Continue to ensure the school Travel Plan Committee meet to discuss impact, next steps and data collated.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>To reduce the use of cars and vans for daily school journeys. To promote the choice of exercise over convenience with young people.</p>                                                                                   | <p>Personal Development &amp; Wellbeing</p> <p>Leadership &amp; Management</p> | <p>Lucy Middleton &amp; Travel Plan Working Party</p> | <p>Ongoing from September 2025</p> |
| <p>Promote and actively consider water sustainability by raising awareness around water consumption.</p> <p><i>(Use water-efficient appliances. Conserve water while using appliances: Run washing machines and dishwashers with full loads and only use eco-settings. Turn off the tap: Don't let the water run while washing dishes. - Push taps and sensory taps only throughout school. Rainwater harvesting: Collect rainwater for non-potable uses.)</i></p> | <p>To develop pupil knowledge of water use and ensure they are aware this is not an infinite resource. Pupils learn about the Water Cycle in our planned curriculum and via workshops with external partners (Y3 and Y6)</p> | <p>Curriculum &amp; Teaching</p>                                               | <p>Subject leads (Geography, Science)</p>             | <p>Ongoing from September 2025</p> |

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| Reduce plastic use: Plastic pollution contributes to water contamination. | To develop pupil knowledge and understanding of the environmental impact of plastics, particularly single-use plastics.<br>To promote taking responsibility for the world we live in and the world of the future via recycling opportunities. | Curriculum & Teaching | Subject leads<br>(Geography, Science) | Ongoing from September 2025 |
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## BIODIVERSITY

### Prompt questions:

- *Has the education setting mapped and recorded biodiversity on their campus?*
- *Could the settings estate be managed differently, to provide habitats that serve to enhance local biodiversity?*
- *Does the estates team need CPD and/or help to provide habitats that enhance local biodiversity?*
- *Do pupils have opportunities to learn in and about nature? Could this be enhanced on the education settings campus or using facilities elsewhere in the local community?*

| ACTION:                                                                                                                                                                                | INTENDED IMPACT:                                                                                                                                              | LINK TO SDP:                     | RESPONSIBILITY OF:        | TIMESCALE:                                |
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| Continue to work with Cumbria Wildlife Trust and local councillors to ensure that planting opportunities are taken to increase vegetation on school grounds.                           | To ensure that all 6.5 acres of our school site are purposeful and are contributing positively to the biodiversity of the site.                               |                                  |                           | Ongoing from September 2025               |
| Map out enrichment opportunities for pupils from Nursery to Y6 to ensure each year group utilise our school grounds well for a range of outdoor learning.                              | To ensure that all pupils spend significant time outdoors during their school journey. (We know this is beneficial for their physical and mental health.)     | Personal Development & Wellbeing | Mike Corrie (AHT and EVC) | September 2026 to be shared with parents. |
| Plan annual biodiversity surveys of the school grounds to track the presence of flora and fauna on school site. (Consider joining the National Education Nature Park to support this.) | To raise pupil awareness of the habitats created within our school grounds. To promote the protection of species and the responsibility of taking care of the | Curriculum & teaching            | Sustainability Lead       | Plan in place by December 2026            |

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| Participation in RSPB's Big Bird Watch each year and promotion of this via HT newsletter.                                                                                        | natural world, in line with our school values (respect and responsibility).                                                          |                         | Lucy Middleton           | Annually from Spring 2026   |
| Continue strong liaison between leadership and site team (caretaker and gardener) to develop school grounds, plan for pollinators and increase the diversity of wildlife onsite. | To ensure that opportunities to maximise ground usage and support various species during different seasons are considered in detail. | Leadership & Management | Michelle Wilkinson (DHT) | Ongoing from September 2025 |

## EDUCATION AND GREEN CAREERS

### Prompt questions:

- *In what parts of the education settings curriculum do pupils learn about nature, climate change and the importance of sustainability? Could this be broadened and developed? How could it be integrated across all subjects and educational stages?*
- *How confident are teaching staff in delivering climate change and sustainability material? Do they need CPD? Do they have access to high-quality resources?*
- *Do pupils have opportunities to learn in the natural environment? How is this part of their curricula or extra-curricular programme?*
- *Are pupils made aware of the likely future career opportunities which exist in the green economy? Do staff have good training about these opportunities?*
- *What are the skills that pupils will need to be able to develop to access these careers? How can these skills be embedded across the educational offer?*

| ACTION:                                                                      | INTENDED IMPACT:                                                                                                                                                                                                     | LINK TO SDP:                     | RESPONSIBILITY OF: | TIMESCALE:                                                             |
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| Continue to plan 'Inspiring People' assemblies linked to eco/climate change. | To raise pupil awareness of inspirational people who have made a difference in the environmental world and inspire their interests in future green careers. (E.g. Greta Thurnberg, David Attenborough, Jane Goodall) | Personal Development & Wellbeing | Lucy Middleton     | Termly assembly linked to school's eco pledge and interests. (Ongoing) |

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| Plan for debate, persuasion and viewpoint development in all pupils via the Literacy curriculum.                                                                                                        | To enable all pupils to develop a solid understanding of language to discuss, persuade and give viewpoint. Pupils will use this to gradually build the ability to write a formal argument (balanced or one-sided) to advocate for an environmental change they feel passionate about. | Curriculum & Teaching                                         | Lucy Middleton (HT and Writing Lead)                                             | Ongoing since November 2024 – development and implementation of Literacy Progression Map |
| Map out enrichment opportunities for pupils from Nursery to Y6 to ensure each year group utilise our school grounds well for a range of outdoor learning.                                               | To ensure that all pupils spend significant time outdoors during their school journey. (We know this is beneficial for their physical and mental health.)                                                                                                                             | Personal Development & Wellbeing                              | Mike Corrie (AHT and EVC)                                                        | September 2026 to be shared with parents.                                                |
| Working with subject leads (particularly Science, Geography and PSHE) plan for effective and impactful use of our school grounds to provide hands-on learning experiences for pupils.                   | To ensure that all pupils have learning experiences such as fieldwork skills, habitat exploration, outdoor mindfulness and natural observations across their primary journey.                                                                                                         | Curriculum & Teaching                                         | Subject Leads & SLT                                                              | Ongoing curriculum development 2025/2026                                                 |
| Continue to offer outdoor gardening and growing experiences for children via extra-curricular clubs. (Use of school allotment and polytunnel.)                                                          | To enable all pupils to experience the growing process from seed to plate during their time at Heron Hill.                                                                                                                                                                            | Personal Development & Wellbeing                              | Michelle Wilkinson (DHT & Polytunnel Club Lead)                                  | Ongoing - seasonal                                                                       |
| Continue to offer eco-opportunities for children to take responsibility for the world they live in and make a small change. (Recycling teams, composting teams, Classroom Eco Monitors and Eco-Council) | To provide children with early experience in driving change, linked to the environment.                                                                                                                                                                                               | Personal Development & Wellbeing<br><br>Curriculum & Teaching | Sustainability Lead and teachers involved in leading our 'Pupil Leadership team' | Relaunched in September 2026, embedded across the academic year 26-27                    |

## DECARBONISATION

### Prompt questions:

- *What are the total carbon emissions of the education settings operations?*
- *How efficient are the education settings buildings?*
- *How could the education setting retrofit their estate and improve energy efficiency?*
- *Could the education setting reduce their waste and encourage reuse and recycling?*
- *Does the education setting adopt sustainable procurement practices?*
- *Does the education setting have food bins or compost their food waste on site?*
- *Does the education setting have a travel plan which encourages staff and students to take zero and lower emission forms of travel to and from the setting?*

| ACTION:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | INTENDED IMPACT:                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | LINK TO SDP:                                                                                                           | RESPONSIBILITY OF:                                                                                  | TIMESCALE:                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <b>Uniform:</b> Continue to offer and promote the use of pre-loved uniform over newly-bought. (School has an extensive range of good quality, pre-loved uniform that is regularly made available to parents via school events, afterschool stalls and newsletter promotion.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | To reduce the environmental impact of school uniform wastage and the carbon footprint created via clothes manufacturing.                                                                                                                   | N/A<br>Community engagement                                                                                            | Friends of Heron Hill (in collaboration with HT/DHT/Office team)                                    | Ongoing                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Energy use:</b> Collect data on energy usage from electricity bills. Analyse school's out-of-school hours energy usage. carry out a spot check to see if electrical items are left on after school. Look particularly at the charging banks, printers, etc. Where possible, use 7-day timer switches.<br><br>Energy champions: engage students in energy monitoring. Eco Council to promote Eco Monitor roles within the class/year groups.<br><br>Automatic lighting: Via phased building works (2024-2027) replace all lighting | To ensure that school is not wasting energy and is taking all reasonable steps to keep carbon emissions low.<br><br>To ensure that pupils learn from a young age that small actions can make a big difference when it comes to energy use. | N/A<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Personal development & wellbeing<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>N/A | Laura Harte & Lucy Middleton<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Emma Patrick (Eco-Council Lead) | Building work completion predicted August 2026<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Energy usage tracked from September 2026<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Energy champions launch Spring 2027 |

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| across school with energy efficient sensor-activated lighting.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                  |                                                                                                  |                                                                               |
| <b>Waste:</b> Review our recycling procedures. Continue to ensure all recycling bins are clearly labelled and have clear expectations about what can / cannot be recycled, to support any necessary behaviour changes.                                                                                                                                                                                                     | To ensure that recycling opportunities at our school are maximised and that all recyclable products are being disposed of correctly.                                                                                                                                                          | N/A                              | Laura Harte (SBM)                                                                                | Timeline will be decided by Local Authority service introduction for schools. |
| <b>Procurement:</b> Review the companies we purchase from. Are we re-using everything we can? Create a sustainable procurement policy to ensure that any purchase minimises environmental and social harm and that all electrical items are efficient. Switch to recycled or sustainability sourced paper. Consider using School Resources Exchange when purchasing new resources.                                         | To ensure that suppliers chosen are reputable companies that consider the environmental impact of their business choices and services provided.<br>To ensure that all reasonable steps are made to choose suppliers who actively take steps to reduce any negative impact on the environment. | N/A                              | Laura Harte (SBM)                                                                                | Summer 2027                                                                   |
| <b>Food waste:</b> Audit food waste processes and engage pupils in weighing daily food waste from the canteen. Highlight the issue of food waste via assemblies and HT newsletter. Liaise with TNS (Catering Provider) on their sustainability plans and ensure these are being adopted in daily practice at Heron Hill.<br><br>Continue to engage pupils in composting processes via playground bins and composting team. | To raise the issue of food waste with young people and encourage responsible choices from a young age with food waste. To foster a sense of responsibility and awareness of the impact of wasteful decision making.                                                                           | Personal Development & Wellbeing | Emma Patrick (Eco-Council Lead)<br>Sustainability Lead<br><br>Liason with TNS – Laura Harte, SBM | Spring 2027                                                                   |