

**InterClimate
Network**



Toolkit for Climate Action

How to make a difference in school

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2020 was due to be a huge year for Climate Action. All 197 countries that signed the Paris Agreement in 2015 were planning to meet in Glasgow to report to the United Nations (UN) Conference of the Parties (COP26) about their progress towards targets for action to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions. International level work is still going on but because of coronavirus, the UN COP26 conference will now be held in 2021.

Whether you are looking to make a start in a school eco-group, want to plan new ideas or your school is declaring its own 'Climate Emergency', this toolkit will help you reach your own targets for making a difference in school. Read the next pages and choose which of the tools you want to use: Climate Action ideas and examples from 39 schools; two group action planning activities and a Climate Action Planner; links to great resources from other organisations.

1. Getting everyone involved

Even if it doesn't feel like a lot, the most important thing we can each do is to speak with others about the Climate Emergency. You could:

Hold a COP26 Climate Conference in your classroom

- * Ask your teacher/year head to contact ICN for a resource with everything that you need to hold your own COP26 global climate negotiations
- * Invite parents and teachers to watch your mini-conference, or even ask them to form a country team
- * Write about it in your school newsletter, and your local press might be interested too!
- * ICN will let you know of other ways to link with COP26 next year.

Find out what those in school think should change

- * Use a survey as an easy way to get talking with people in school. ICN will soon have one available for you to download
- * If you are not part of your school council or eco-group, ask them about current action plans and views on what more could be done
- * Ask your Headteacher or other senior staff what they see as most important. You might also have a teacher leading on sustainability
- * Use what you find out to help your own action planning (see page 5).

2. Climate Actions to make a difference

Four aspects of our lives are said by the world's scientists to be critical in reducing our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions: **Energy**; **Food & food waste**; **Travel & transport**; and **What we buy & use**. On the next page, there are ideas to help think about what can be done in your own school in each of these areas. Students meeting in our Climate Conferences in 2019 told us their priorities, most of which won't cost much, and these are shown on page 4. Do also look at our website for more resources including a Climate Action workshop that can be run within an eco-group, class or year group.

Whatever Climate Action you decide upon, **remember to take photographs and keep a record** so you can share it with other people.

Then tweet it to InterClimate Network and we'll spread the word: [@ClimateVoicesUK](https://twitter.com/ClimateVoicesUK) 

Here are ideas for the 4 key areas for Climate Action in school ...

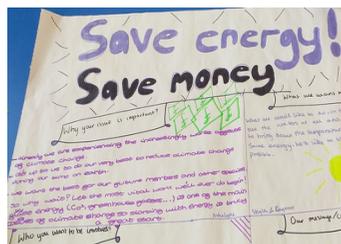
Energy

Despite all that we know already about Climate Change, our global Greenhouse Gas emissions are only just starting to fall as we move away from using coal for our energy. We can cut our energy (and save money!) and make our schools as low-carbon as possible if we:

- * Use less energy for heat, lights, computers and electrical appliances
- * Think about renewable energy and better insulation
- * Encourage everyone to get involved.

Reduce your use:

- * Do an energy audit including classroom temperatures
- * Use technology to monitor energy
- * Let everyone know what you find
- * Ask about your energy supplier
- * Make fun 'energy action' campaigns.



Travel & transport

In the UK, more than 60% of journeys are by car which has a big impact on emissions and our health! Around 35% students now walk to school where a generation ago, it was closer to [70%](#) says Living Streets. More than 75% of the goods we use travel across the country in vans and trucks. We need to:

- * Walk or cycle short distances
- * Use public transport and car-share
- * Ask for better facilities where we need them.

Greener and healthier:

- * Survey traffic at school's peak times
- * Ask people's views on different ways to reduce car-use, then feed back
- * Plan a campaign & (maybe) add rewards and incentives
- * Monitor air quality to show changes.



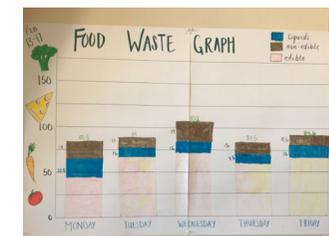
Food & food waste

Food production already has a big impact on the world's environment including via methane gases and clearing of forests. And about a third of the food we buy goes straight to the bin. It has been calculated that cutting avoidable waste would cut 22p off an average school meal. We need to:

- * Use less meat, milk, cheese and butter
- * Eat more locally sourced seasonal food, and
- * Throw less of it away!

Less meat, less waste:

- * Carry out a food-waste survey
- * Find out where your food comes from
- * Test out popular non-meat options
- * Make it easy to compost / recycle
- * Ask if there is outside space to grow food and plant trees.



What we buy & use

We live in a wasteful society where we: make; use (often just once); then throw away products. If a year's worth of the UK's unrecycled plastic bottles were placed end to end, they'd reach around the world [31 times](#). Globally, only 20% clothes are recycled. We need to think about what we use on a daily basis, and what we do with it all:

- * Live with less plastic
- * Recycle and reuse as much as possible
- * Use our 'buying power' to demand sustainability in everything.

Reduce, reuse, recycle:

- * Find out what school does with waste & recycling and what can change
- * Use an art 'shock' installation or campaign to show waste in a new light
- * Think about what school buys and what can be creatively re-used.



Here are priorities for action put forward by students of 39 schools that took part in our Climate Conferences 2019 ...

Low Cost, High Impact

What we buy & use

Switch our main web browser to Ecosia which then plants trees

Outside spaces

Ask Headteacher if we can plant some trees

Food & food waste

Reduce the amount of food waste with messages / posters; optional portion size

What we buy & use

Promote [waste free] packed lunches – also reducing plastic

Energy

Turn down thermostat slowly over time and 'No electricity' days

What we buy & use

Email reports unless parents ask for it to be printed out

Energy

Reduce water temperature and pressure - reduce wasted electricity

Communicating

Informing students and raising awareness to make the whole thing more relatable

Energy

First need to find out about Energy consumption in school. Ask our Head to help and need auditing technology.

Food & food waste

Decrease schools' meat consumption eg Meat Free Monday and if using beef, only on menu once a week

Travel & transport

Map routes to school and reward sustainable travel so more students and teachers to cycle / walk and take buses.

Energy

Trying to change energy supplier

Food & food waste

Compost & look up fermentation bins

Food & food waste

Believe our school could grow their own food eg on an allotment or a roof garden to educate people [include in the curriculum] to grow their own.

What we buy & use

Recycle more eg crisp packets and plastic water bottles for a better cause

Energy

Switch off computers / lights / white boards over break & when school is closed

What we buy & use

School owned water-bottles to be used and water-fountains

Travel & transport

Stop idling as it's a massive issue

What we buy & use

Environmentally friendly glue and masking tape instead of cellotape

Higher Cost, High Impact

Travel & transport

Have 1 week of no cars to school; Lock up the gates for 'No drive days'; taxing people to stay in the car park!

What we buy & use

Cut down plastic in school especially in the canteen. Replace polystyrene boxes with recyclable. Or if you bring your own cutlery/ tupperware box, you get so much off your meal

Food & food waste

Start to use locally sourced seasonal / organic food - reduce our carbon footprint by reducing food miles

Energy

Replace strip lights with LED over time – they may be more expensive but last longer

What we buy & use

More recycling bins. Key message is waste management in schools

Energy

Install (re-install) solar panels and change from gas boiler for less CO2 emissions and also help to reduce amount of money used on energy

Food & food waste

Food waste (bins / biogas digester turns to biofuel) could be used for gas taps in science / cooking - reduce food waste that could be used elsewhere

Outside spaces

Bees kept on roof or allotment or school garden

Travel & transport

School bus and make bike racks more accessible and safe so hopefully they will be used more.

Outside spaces

Rainwater to flush the loos - less water wastage

3. Action planning activities

Decide what to do first (approx 30 minutes)

What is it for: You might have lots of ideas for being more sustainable in school from energy use through to sustainable transport or cutting down plastic waste. This activity will help you to decide what will work well in your school and agree what you want to do.

1. Ideas (5-8 minutes) Work as a group or sub-group to share all your ideas for action in school or in your local community.

2. What's important (6-8 minutes) Divide into smaller groups and choose one idea. Share what you think and then write in brief on a sheet of paper:

- why our issue is important
- what change(s) we want to happen
- who we are targeting / how we will let them know
- what key message we want to get across

3. Persuade your audience (8-10 minutes) Each small group takes 2 minutes to present back to the others. You could ask the 'audience' to take on specific roles as they listen to your presentation, eg pupils, Headteacher, teachers, catering staff etc.

4. Voting (30 seconds!) Gather immediate views at the end of each presentation to find out whether the others think it would inspire action! eg

- Hands in the air – Fantastic
- Scratching chin – not sure
- Thumbs down – no good

5. Deciding what will work best (5 minutes) Group agrees which climate action idea or ideas you want to do first, based on your top votes.

One suggested follow up activity:

6. Testing your idea Present your climate action idea and key message(s) to people from your actual target audience to find out what they think.

Plan your Climate Action (approx 30 minutes)

What is it for: This activity will help you to plan what action to take on your Climate Action ideas in your school or community. By the end your group will have decided the steps to take to make your idea happen and agreed who needs to do what.

1. Decide what needs to be done (5-8 minutes) Use a mind map with your climate action in the middle and then write in everything you might need to make your idea happen. Look to include:

- People – who can help with our climate action?
- Resources – what things do we need?
- Any costs – will any of our ideas need money?
- Changes – what do we need to find out first and then track?
- Steps* – which different tasks are involved?

* Depending on what you're doing, steps might be things like: *'Develop some questions'*; *'Talk to our Head-teacher'*, *'Find out how much (eg food, paper) we use per month'*; *'Make an Assembly presentation'*.

2. Plan what should happen when (6-8 minutes) Agree the order of what you need to do and put a number against each step. Wherever you can, think about when each step will start and end.

3. Agree who will work on each step (6-8 minutes) Work out who from your group will be involved in each of the individual steps. You might want to choose one person to be the lead and others to help make each step happen.

4. Action planner (6-8 minutes) If you think it might be helpful, fill in the Climate Action Planner on page 5 to record all of your hard work in deciding on and planning your Climate Action.

Make copies of the Climate Action Planner sheet on the next page to use for your different ideas.

4. Useful information and websites

Please press control click on the organisation name to be taken to the resource. Whilst we strive to provide only links to useful and ethical websites, we have no control over their content. The links do not imply recommendation for all the content found on these sites.

Eco themes and challenges

Eco-Action Games: Innovative, interactive, eco educational games, resources & employee training so people become more eco-friendly.

Eco-Schools England: Pathway for secondary schools has guidance and resources for a school Eco-Committee to take lots of ownership.

Declare a Climate Emergency: Useful guide by Morpeth School in London

Transform Our World: An online, centralised, quality-rated resource hub to help teachers to bring environmental action into the classroom

World Wildlife Fund: Great range of curriculum linked climate change KS2 & 3 resources and lesson plans available

Young Climate Warriors: Weekly challenges to empower children to help combat climate change using power of collective action.

Food & food waste

Countryside Classroom: Reservoir of classroom resources, packs and guidance including on food and food waste from a wide range of food, farming and environment education partners.

WRAP – Love Food Hate Waste: Campaign to raise awareness of the need to reduce food waste and help us take action.

Travel & transport

Bikeability: Government backed initiative for gaining practical cycle skills for today's roads with different levels / recognition of achievement.

Living Streets: Initiatives to encourage walking, including walk to school month and to create a better walking environment. See an exciting pilot project in two Hackney schools closing neighbouring roads.

Modeshift: National schools awards scheme encouraging schools across the country to join a major effort to increase sustainable and active travel, with a national awards scheme.

Energy

Atlas Schools Tool-kit: Helps schools measure / understand how different activities affect carbon emissions, so reducing impact & cost.

Energy Envoys: National Energy Foundation opportunity for young people completing their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards volunteering.

LESS CO2: Programme for pupils / school communities to integrate energy & carbon savings, through simple behavioural changes & retrofits.

Samsung Energy in Schools: Pilot programme using micro:bit technology to help schools reduce energy usage & bills, with a pupils' resources platform. Second phase is awaited.

Smart Energy GB: Find out about energy efficiency and smart meters from this campaign behind the roll-out of smart meters across the country.

Outside spaces

Sustainability & Environmental Education (SEEd): Resources listed on themed pages include Habitats & Homes; Nature & Biodiversity

Woodland Trust: Gives away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools - apply online for a tree pack and see their great Tree Tools website.

What we buy & use

Another Way: Inspiration for steps we can all take to live sustainably

Ellen Macarthur Foundation - circular economy: Engages students in how to move beyond the linear 'take-make-dispose' model.

Practical Action: Range of resources including for STEM such as Plastic Challenge and a Water Harvester Design Challenge.

Terracycle: Offering recycling schemes for lots of 'hard to recycle' items.

WRAP - Recycle Now: Runs Recycle Week and has useful resources and data.

Other resources are available from InterClimate Network:

- **Climate Action Workshop:** Use this powerpoint, notes and themed work sheets with a class, year or eco-group to generate many ideas for action. By the end of the workshop, students will have presented their climate action ideas and voted on what they believe is going to make a big difference.

<https://interclimate.org/resources/#action-in-schools>

- **Climate Survey for you to use:** ICN has developed a survey with students from the Applied Sociology course at University of Gloucestershire and with students in our Climate Voices programme. This will soon be available for you to use to find out what people in your school think, and to help your climate action ideas.

- **COP26 Conference in your Classroom:** ICN will send you everything that's needed to hold your own COP26 global climate negotiations in your classroom or year group. Use the contact details below to register your interest.

Contact Michila Critchley

InterClimate Network

E-mail: michila.critchley@interclimate.org

Find out more at www.interclimate.org

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