

HEART

Helping Early years practitioners to Apply Research into Teaching and learning



Welcome!

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Activity Registration WELCOME



Camera on

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Microphone on mute

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Hands up

Use the hands up function to indicate you would like to talk at any time



Please add your name and setting to the chat box as you join the session

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CLIMATE AMBASSADORS

Introduction to the Climate Ambassadors Scheme

Turning climate ambition into climate action in education

Emma Baines, West Midlands Regional Hub Manager

Elizabeth Mathen, West Midlands Project Coordinator

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Range of EY providers



What we will cover

1. An introduction to the Climate Ambassadors Scheme
2. Why should EY providers take climate action?
3. Case studies
4. Resources available to support you

Call to action: sign up for one of the upcoming action planning workshops in July

Our objective

To provide education settings within England access to free specialised support from volunteer **Climate Ambassadors**, who will help them develop and deliver impactful Climate Action Plans.

Find out more: [DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#)

By 2025:

- all education settings will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan

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Our delivery model

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Digital Infrastructure



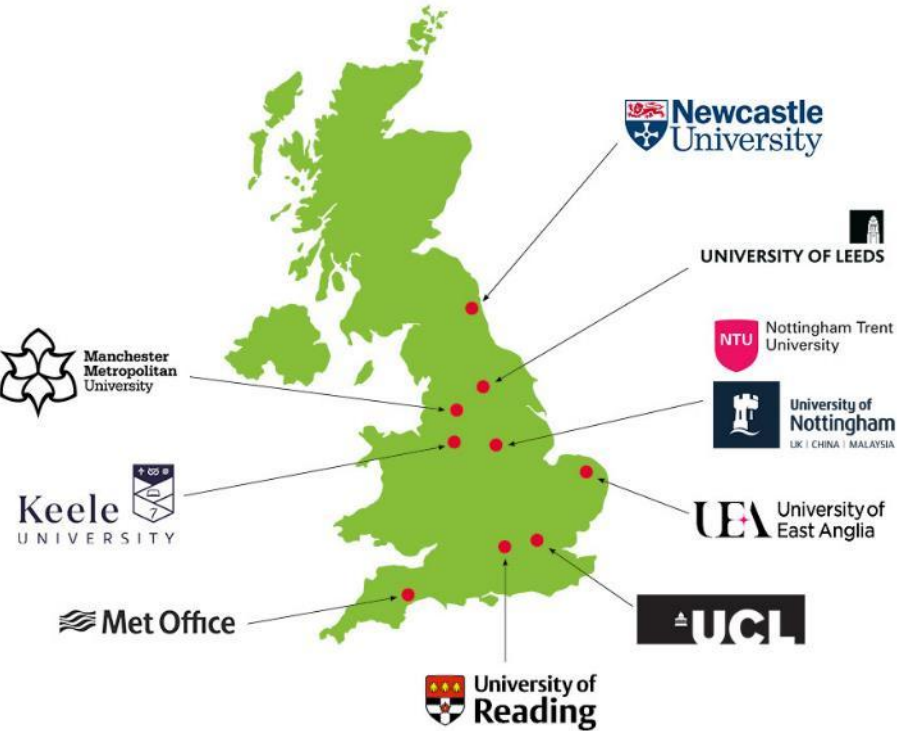
Training and Mentoring



Engagement



Regional Hubs



'Sister' Projects



Regional hubs

Supported by a national infrastructure

Operating in a well-coordinated ecosystem

Why should Early Years providers take climate action?

- Education is the public sector's largest emitter of carbon from buildings, accounting for 37% of public sector emissions (National Audit Officer 2023).
- 95% of teachers find teaching about sustainability and climate change extremely important (UNESCO 2021) yet 70% don't feel ready to do so (Teach the Future 2021).
- 70% of young people feel poorly prepared to face the challenges of climate change (UNESCO 2022).
- When environmental issues are taught in age-appropriate ways, young children feel empowered to help - hence making early climate education vital (Gambino et al., 2009).
- Climate education helps young children enjoy and explore nature, build confidence, and connect with others – boosting nature connectedness and a sense of community!

Benefits for EY education settings

Education settings

- Tailored and direct expert support
- Climate Ambassadors are trained, DBS checked and can help you navigate support available
- Early childhood is a crucial phase for laying the foundation of environmental values
- Supports the setting's strategic goals and aligns with core values
- Grow connections and networks in sustainability

Who are our Climate Ambassadors?

Who are our Climate Ambassadors?

We recruit Ambassadors from across **private, public, charity and university sectors** who want to put their sustainability expertise to work.

What do we ask of Climate Ambassadors?

- Willingness to make a lasting connection with the education setting and wider community.
- Volunteer a minimum of one day a year, spread over three activities.
- Undertake mandatory safeguarding training and Enhanced DBS check

Meet Tom

Thomas Guilbert-Newall, Sustainability Officer, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council



"Tom and his colleagues decided to take action, becoming Climate Ambassadors and working with the West Midlands Climate Ambassadors Hub to **create useful resources for the 50+ education settings.**

Tom has supported **Keele Nursery** to create and implement a Climate Action plan including actions such as:

- Undertaking a **biodiversity and energy** assessment,
- Calculating their **carbon footprint**,
- Teaching their staff and children about sustainability through activities like **tree planting and guest visits.**

The Nursery is already making great strides in climate action through **growing** sustainable produce, having a **green roof**, and getting energy from **solar and wind** all for a better future for all!

West Midlands Ambassadors

Energy consultant volunteer helped 2 MATs change to renewable energy tariffs, conduct a carbon audit and reduce energy usage.

Jules

Digital Learning Designer supported his local primary school to develop a Climate Action Plan, explain its importance to governors, and identify staff to take each action forward.

Paul

Fashion business owner delivered workshops to embed sustainability into the curriculum, teaching children about the important of reusing and recycling.

Maya



Resources available to support you on your journey

Climate action plan templates

Climate Action Plans

A climate action plan (CAP) is a detailed plan to enable an education setting, or trust, to progress or commence sustainability initiatives. It allows education settings to take a structured and strategic route toward ensuring they are acting toward, and educating about, sustainability. The CAP can sit within an individual setting, across a trust, or both. It is important that the whole education setting, or trust, is engaged when creating a CAP so that planning becomes action.

For a CAP to be effective, you must consider the following:

- Who will own and develop the CAP and monitor progress towards your targets?
- What additional training might your sustainability leadership team need?
- How will the CAP fit with your governance structures? Where will progress against the CAP be reported?
- How will you communicate with your wider community about your CAP?

A whole setting approach

Best practice shows that change is delivered when driven by a diverse team of passionate individuals. It is important that the whole education setting, or trust, is engaged in developing a CAP so that planning becomes action. Remember to include both educational and operational expertise in this team. Take a whole setting approach when developing a CAP, including individuals who represent different parts of a settings community:

- Senior leadership team, governors, trustees and executive leaders**- critical for planning and implementation to be successful. They have the authority, capacity, and support to influence and lead strategic change within the setting and ensure climate change and sustainability feature on the agenda at key meetings.
- Learners**-inspire enthusiasm to help drive positive change and give learners a sense of agency, whilst increasing their practical knowledge of sustainability and climate change. Learners can develop a sense of pride in their education setting and engage their parents, carers and the wider community in sustainability & climate change, expanding the impact of your CAP.
- Teachers**- identify where climate change and sustainability teaching fits into the curriculum and embed this into learning.
- Estates management**- it is important the estates manager or management team inform the CAP as they have the operational knowledge of an education setting. This is required for baseline data and to enact more sustainable practices.

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What has already been achieved?

Before developing a CAP it is important to assess and celebrate what has already been achieved. Education settings may have already implemented sustainability initiatives, for example, taking part in environmental action days, developing a travel plan or improving recycling within their setting. Make a note of these successes using a table like the below example, as they are a good foundation to build future actions for a CAP.

Action	Benefit/ Impact

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Decarbonisation

Our Vision (how can an education setting reduce emissions and support students to be part of the transition to net zero?):

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?

Biodiversity

Our Vision (how can an education setting enhance biodiversity, improve air quality and increase access to, and connection with, nature?):

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	Link to Improvement Plan	Responsibility and Key Stakeholders	Timescale	Information and/or resources required	Target/ Measure	Progress (Update at regular review points)
			Start date: Review Date:	Useful links:		
			Start date: Review Date:	Useful links:		
			Start date: Review Date:	Useful links:		

Menu of actions

Our menu of actions is there to help you choose which actions to include under each of the four pillars:

1. Decarbonisation
2. Adaptation and Resilience
3. Biodiversity
4. Climate Education & Green Careers

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Climate Action Plans - Actions List

This document contains a list of possible actions to add to your climate action plan, categorised into each key pillar of action from the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

Use this list to identify actions you may wish to include in your setting's plan, or simply to help inspire your setting and imagine what is possible!

Sustainability Support for Education can help you to explore the actions listed here. It is a place for all educational settings to build their climate action plans and do it:

- Quickly: easy to navigate for time poor staff
- Easily: one stop shop, covering all the pillars of action
- Well: the highest quality resources, checked by experts



[Visit the site](#), create a profile, save actions to lists and support your climate action planning journey!

Key pillar: Decarbonisation

Actions for decarbonisation include:

- Calculate your carbon footprint with the [Count Your Carbon tool](#) to set some baselines and understand your current situation
- If possible, switch to a renewable energy tariff (or [explore the idea](#))
- Conduct a [travel survey](#) for staff and students (this could be student-led!)
- Incentivise use of public transport, lift-sharing and active travel by running a travel campaign
- Create a 'walking bus' scheme
- Consider a cycle hire scheme for staff and students
- Create a 'no idling' policy within a certain radius of your setting to ensure better air quality and reduced emissions
- Take part in the [National Switch Off Fortnight 2025](#)
- Consider installing solar panels on your roof with Solar for School's [paneliser tool](#)
- Install LED lighting in all buildings/rooms by 2030
- Conduct a [waste audit](#)

10 Actions for Early Years

- Create a sustainability working group
- Encourage your parent voice
- Understand sustainability funding opportunities
- Promote the benefits of using outdoor learning spaces to your stakeholders
- Introduce outdoor activities as part of learning
- Complete an energy review
- Identify some quick wins to decarbonise your setting
- Complete a water audit
- Understand how your estate is susceptible to climate change
- Complete a biodiversity assessment

Prioritising Action

	Easy to implement	Hard to implement
High impact	Quick wins Do as soon as possible	Strategic projects Study and plan; usually worth doing
Low impact	Low-hanging fruit Consider, as there may be value	Not worth doing Drop, don't waste your time



Any Questions?

Activity: Key stakeholders

In your groups, come up with a list of key stakeholders you could engage with for your pillar of climate action.

Group 1: [decarbonisation](#)

Group 2: [adaptation and resilience](#)

Group 3: [biodiversity](#)

Group 4: [climate education and green careers](#)

Decide who will report back your group's ideas.

The call to action...

- Connect with us via the [regional email address](#).
- Sign up to one of the July action planning workshops [Leaders + Managers Network: Developing your Climate Action Plan Tickets, Mon 7 Jul 2025 at 15:30 | Eventbrite](#)
- [Drop-in](#) once a month!

CLIMATE AMBASSADORS

THANK YOU

Get in touch: climate-ambassadors.wm@keele.ac.uk

Visit the website: www.climateambassadors.org.uk



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