

Design for the Climate Action Plan

GETTING STARTED

What does a climate ready Early Years setting look like?

In considering the format and actions that we will use to frame our CAP document there are many things to think about.

Success of course will mean involving the whole staff team all the way and also the children and families.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Essentially any changes we are trying to make involve changes in human behaviour for students, staff and parents and our community. Motivation is critical if we are trying to change our behaviours, hence why most new year's resolutions to eat less chocolate and exercise more etc, do not last. This VENN diagram of climate action – is helpful as it gets us to consider how to use our energies wisely in order to get the most effect from our actions.

The Permaculture principle of “**least effort maximum gain**” is also helpful here. Behavioural change is incredibly hard and early years settings are incredibly busy places,

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

What are you good at?

What are you passionate about?

What is achievable?

What work needs doing?

What gaps need to be filled ie staff training and knowledge to support motivation.



TAKING ACTION and IMPLEMENTATION

It is important to think about implementation as this is critical to success. The EEF Guide to Implementation [Putting Evidence to Work - A School's Guide to Implementation | EEF](#) can offer a framework and support implementing your Climate Action Plan. Implementation should be viewed as a process rather than an event.

Using the 4 parts in the implementation process (Explore, Prepare, Deliver, Sustain) to help plan for the process of change can be helpful. Remembering when you want to scale up your plan, the scale up should be treated as a new implementation process, again, using the 4 headings.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS DIAGRAM

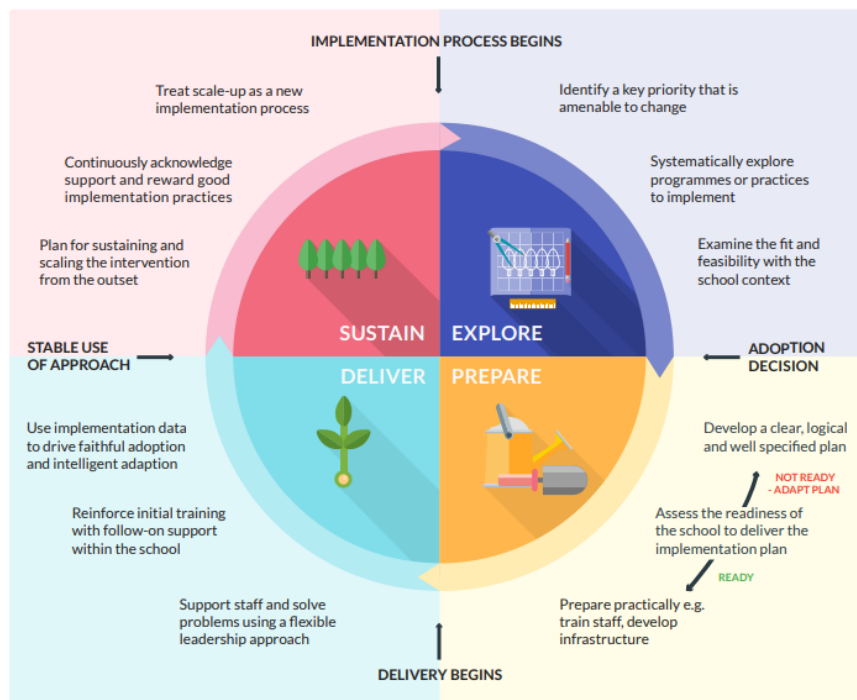


Figure 1: Implementation can be described as a series of stages relating to thinking about, preparing for, delivering, and sustaining change.

Consider : what are your LONG TERM GOALS?

Short term actions..... long term goals andhow you will get there?

QUICK WINS /IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

examples:

Lead decided (having read how long it takes for laminate sheets to decompose) to stop use of the laminator – one action and then deal with the repercussions one at a time and think of new ways of working. One management decision like this can save work time too and electricity so is energy, time and financially saving.

Another setting decided to notice, discuss and challenge the way staff used vocabulary starting with the use of the word DIRT to name soil. This took them on a year of staff development.

Consider what matters most and remember that progress is very motivating so If you can make a few quick actions, this will spur on further actions and motivate others.

PLANNING THE JOURNEY

The Permaculture principle of: “**Observe and interact**” is helpful to consider here getting to your climate action plan,
There could be 3 layers to the implementation
Long term goal, which thus influences actions for medium term and short-term goal.

This is planning across the system.

POLICY STATEMENT /SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT

A policy statement or commitment to sustainability needs to tie in with this action plan, and should have input from the whole staff team, including the operations team.

AUDIT: WHAT YOU DO NOW

There are several audit tools available which can be helpful in considering and analysing your current provision.

These can be across aspects of provision as the one below , which provide useful questions for adults

Transport	Energy and water	Food	Waste
1. Have you done an audit of where everyone comes from?	1. Do you monitor your usage?	1. What happens to your food waste?	1. Do you have recycled bins across the setting?
2. Do you have an active travel plan?	2. Do you use a green energy provider?	2. Do you audit it ?	2. Are the bins labelled?
3. Do you have a bike shelter?	3. Who turns off things and turns things down?	3. Do you collect it /chuck it ? if so where?	3. Do you teach about usage ? Regularly? Does everyone know ?
4. Do you encourage staff to car share ?	4. Who monitors the usage?	4. How many meat free days do you have ?	4. How many bins get collected each week ?
5. EV charging – support staff to use electric bikes ?	5. Solar, Led, TRV, heat pumps	5. How often is there a veggie option?	5. What types are there?
6. How does the curriculum support this sharing of knowledge ?	6. Water butts ?	6. Sourcing your food Do you consider food miles ?	6. How about your e-waste ?
7. How are you sharing this into the community?	7. water play?	7. How do you use the curriculum to support sharing of knowledge ?	7. How about your laminating ?
	8. How do you use the curriculum to support sharing of knowledge?	8. How are you sharing this to the community ?	8. Dress up days ?
	9. Pond?		9. What about your resources, do they get reused ?
	10. How are you sharing this into the community ?		10. How do you use the curriculum to support sharing of knowledge ?
			11. How are you sharing this into the community ?

Or across the curriculum.

INVOLVING THE CHILDREN

Our main consideration always is how to involve our very young children in this and take them and their families with us on our journey, as this is also key to success in the implementation of our plan.

UNESCO Greening Schools Curriculum GREENING EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Through this audit tool all aspects of provision are covered as it considers them through the curriculum rather than as outside of it and the curriculum as another aspect to be considered. This Framework wants 50 % of all schools across Europe to be using the standard by 2030, it is a quality standard designed for all stages of education, with four core dimensions for integrating sustainability principles and climate action;

- 1.school governance
2. facilities and operations
3. teaching and learning
4. community engagement

It sees schools clearly as central to the change in the community that is needed and states that mainstreaming of climate education is a key way to mitigate climate change, starting with Early Years.

The UNESCO Greening Schools Curriculum and has a designated section for EYFS with learning outcomes and covers 6 aspects:

CLIMATE SCIENCE

ECOSYSTEMS AND BIODIVERSITY

RESILIENCE BUILDING

CLIMATE JUSTICE

POST CARBON ECONOMIES

SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

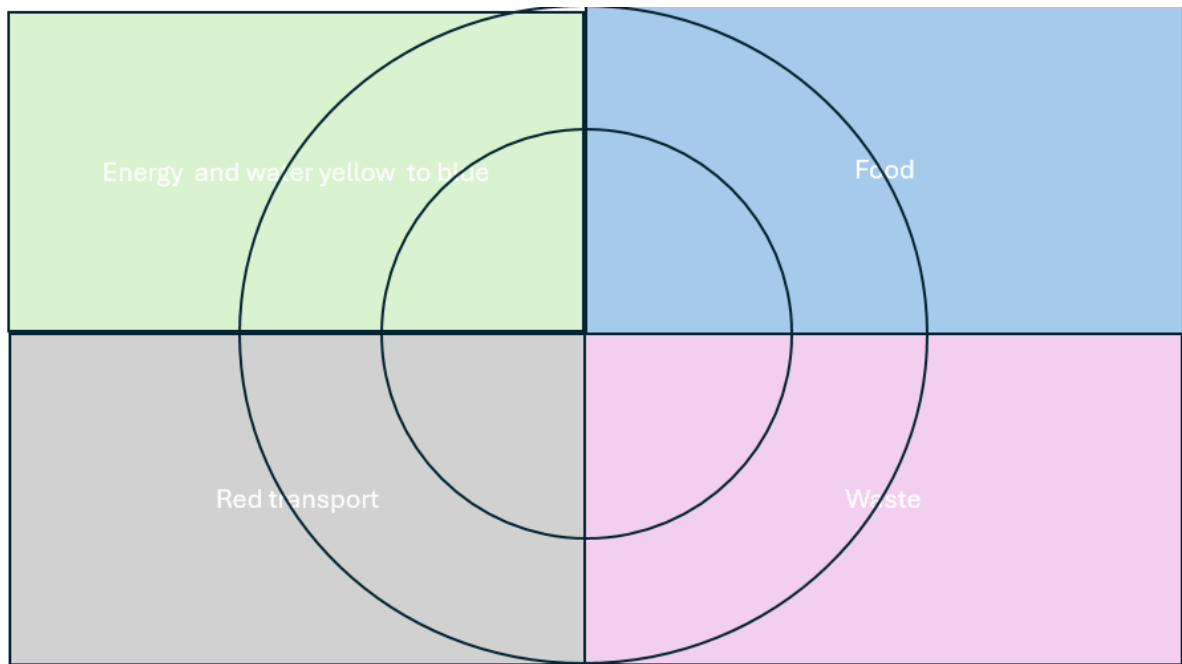
The WWF have also created a helpful guide and this audit considers aspects of provision such as paper and printing, food and food waste, waste and recycling, energy, travel, water [Schools Sustainability Guide | WWF](#)

An infographic like the one below can be helpful to link long term goals to short term and medium term across the aspects you want to think about. This also helps staff visualise the plan – often long grid-based tick sheets are less helpful for the brain.

This format could be useful for a staff meeting session to consider the long-term goal and which short term and medium-term actions need to happen to get there, groups of staff can consider one aspect of provision then share or each group could complete this whole diagram and ideas could be collated afterwards.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE – this is really the long-term goal but also success along the way really help keep staff motivated to do more so celebrating small changes and successes is hugely important.

Long term/ Medium term/ Short term diagram

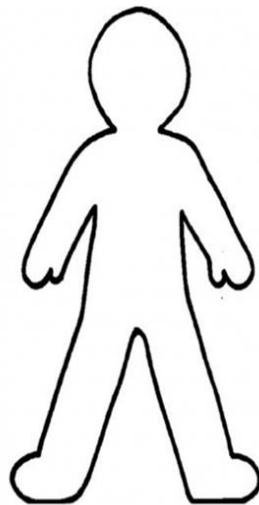


Another helpful way to look at things uses the permaculture principle of “**Inputs and outputs**”. Using an infographic like COSMOS below can help staff and children to think about the inputs and outputs of each thing they come across in their daily lives and the impact of their own living. Our unconscious bias affects how we see our own actions.

MEET COSMOS

Inputs – needs

Outputs - Products



INPUTS needs

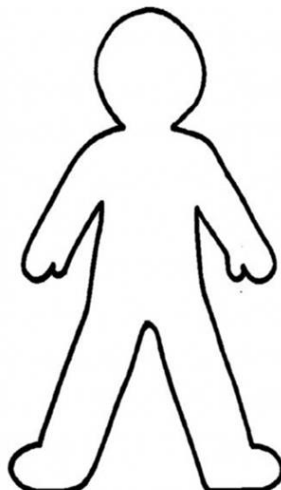
Clean air O2

Love family company
fun learning

Shelter home

Good nutrients food
water

Warmth – to be kept
cool



OUTPUTS products

Poo wee

CO2

Waste, rubbish from
toys food clothes
transport heating my
home

Noise

This little character can be introduced to children as he/she/they is/are interested in their needs and what they use, each week an aspect of their lives can be introduced, clothes, journey to pre-school, lunch and snack and drinks, home. Another way to think about this is when you have a plate of food in front of you – can you say you know where it has all come from and afterward where the residue will end up (including the packaging of the food you have eaten. This exercise helps us focus down to each individual choice we are making in each moment of the day.

REMOVE BARRIERS AND HELP MOTIVATE STAFF

1. Consider things that will motivate and help remove barriers for staff, for example, placing a book about waste and climate change that is helpful in the staff room so staff can pick up knowledge in moments and chat about stuff, with colleagues.
2. Consider gaps in staff knowledge which will enrich and motivate – such as training.
3. Ask staff what they need to support them in this

What training have staff asked for to increase their knowledge about aspects of climate change science, Climate justice, Ecosystems and biodiversity, resilience and low carbon economies. Invest in training for them to increase knowledge and thus motivation.

4. Involve them in creating the CAP, and involve the children and parents. One rep from each room will be better than a single person leading this.

MAKE TIME AVAILABLE

Time is always one of the largest barriers for staff in educational settings.

Allowing time for staff meetings to discuss one action area at a time, will take much longer but be much more valuable for succeeding in the changes you wish to see.

CONSIDER WHY you are doing what you are doing. The permaculture principle of “**observe and reflect and then interact**” is helpful here. If you are going to measure something, for example, your carbon or your electricity or water usage. The question to consider is: what are you going to measure and why and for whom? Is this the best use of your time? Time management is critical for our own energy use.

WHAT THE DfE Document says (in italics)

[Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems - GOV.UK](#) The strategy doc says :

“Children and young people are worried about climate change and want to know more about it: The impact it is having now...how it will impact their future lives DfE and the Education sector have a joint responsibility for preparing children and young people for the challenges and opportunities they will face- with the appropriate knowledge, skills and pastoral care.”

The guiding principles of the strategy are:

- *Partnership and collaboration,*
- *leadership and support,*
- *a whole system approach*

The strategy mentions using our buildings to help support learning

“Climate adaptation and decarbonisation activity in nurseries and schools can provide powerful learning opportunities. Young people can:

Participate in the implementation of climate adaptation measures

Learn in buildings designed for net zero

Find out more about the impact of energy and water use.”

“Practical opportunities to participate in activities to increase climate resilience, reduce carbon impact and enhance biodiversity will enable children and young people to translate knowledge into positive action to improve their local communities, their country and the planet.”

DfE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The DfE have also produced a guidance document: Sustainability Leadership and Climate Action Plans in Education

[Sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education)

Page 1 *“a climate action plan is a detailed plan to enable your education setting or trust, to progress or commence sustainability initiatives “. You may already have a plan in place, where this is the case we are not suggesting that you create a new plan. Leadership support is key for the greatest success in driving change, holistic action plan as leadership has the authority knowledge and commitment to take it forward.*

The CAP should help your settings to:

- *Increase the confidence and expertise of your leadership team, staff, learners in understanding climate change and how positive change can be achieved*
- *Create a culture that prioritises sustainability*
- *Share effective practise with other education settings and develop a peer to peer learning network*
- *Use data to identify and prioritise action*
- *Improve energy efficiency and water efficiency*
- *Calculate your carbon emissions and identify ways to reduce them*
- *Reduce operating costs*
- *Increase resilience and start adapting to the impacts of climate change’*
- *Enhance biodiversity*
- *Help learners develop skills and knowledge which help them to contribute to sustainability and climate change in their lives and future jobs.”*

It needs to be for the whole setting

And LEADERS are very important in all stages.

“education and operational staff on your team must engage the whole setting so that planning becomes action”

“ensure sustainability features are on agenda of every meeting”

“be responsible for succession planning”

“The CAP will allow you to take

A structured and strategic route towards ensuring your trust or setting is acting toward and educating about sustainability.

Should typically cover the 4 areas:

- 1. Decarbonisation: calculating and taking actions to reduce carbon emissions such as becoming more energy efficient*
- 2. Adaptation and resilience- such as taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating*
- 3. Biodiversity ie being part of the nature park*
- 4. Climate education and green careers: ie ensuring the education you provide gives knowledge rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that your teaching staff and lecturers feel supported to do this.”*

LEARNERS - *“involving children and young people is important in climate change action Planning*

- Inspire their enthusiasm to drive positive change*
- Increase their practical knowledge of sustainability and climate change*
- Give young people a sense of agency where climate anxiety stems from climate concerns*
- Create a sense of pride in their education setting*
- Enable them to share their knowledge and enthusiasm in the local communities*
- Enable them to engage their parents and carers and wider community in sustainability and climate change”*

“Our approach is not designed to duplicate planning and action that has already taken place, we recognise that settings and at different stage of this journey,”

Although the above sections of decarbonisation, adaptation and resilience, biodiversity and climate education and green careers, can be helpful , other people are preferring to use the following ways to consider their plan.