

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Promote active travel on the school run  Pathway: Culture	1) Start a walking bus Work with parents/carers to set up walking buses. A walking bus is a group of children and adults who walk to school along a set route, picking up more students along the way. When done on a regular basis, adults can take it in turns to accompany the walking bus. 2) Create and share a map of low pollution walking routes to school A walking zone is a defined area around the school within which children and families are encouraged to walk. Work with students to use mapping software to create a map of low pollution walking routes within the walking zone, and distribute this across the school community. 3) Launch a week-long active travel challenge to encourage your students to try walking or cycling to school By trying walking and/or cycling to school as part of a fun challenge week, new travel habits can be formed as families and students experience the benefits of active travel. Co-benefits Physical activity improves physical and mental health. There are also beneficial social outcomes.	Living Streets hosts an annual Walk to School Week. Living Streets' 'Walking Zones' lesson plan involves children in the set up of a walking zone. Use the 'Creating a map of low pollution walking routes' guide to lead your students through a map-making activity. Take a look at our case study of a school using Clean Air Day to launch their brand-new walking bus as a way to reduce children's exposure to pollution. Download Clean Air Day's the ' How to: Organise a walking bus to school' guide or 'Walking bus banner' and get walking. Check out our case study of a Clean Air Route map design helping 96% of children to walk to school in Bow. Sustrans have resources available to help encourage children to cycle to school.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Improve the facilities at school to encourage more people to walk, scoot or cycle  Pathway: Community	1) Provide showers and locker facilities for staff to encourage active travel 2) Offer a cycle to work scheme to your staff to encourage active travel The Cycle to Work scheme is designed to help your staff save money on a new bike and spread the cost of the bike over monthly tax-free instalments throughout the year. 3) Improve cycle and scooter parking to encourage active travel The recommended minimum levels of scooter and cycle parking are: Primary schools: 1 scooter space per 10 pupils and 1 cycle space per 20 pupils Secondary schools: 1 cycle space per 10 pupils. In Scotland, funding is available to help implement cycle/scooter parking through Sustrans. All schools: 1 cycle space per 20 staff in a non-pupil area Co-benefits Physical activity improves physical and mental health. Suitable bike/scooter parking will promote physical activity, which improves physical and mental health.	Cycle UK provides useful guidance on cycle-friendly employers and cycle-commuting. Check out Sustrans' helpful guidance called 'The Cycle to Work scheme explained'. Plus, they have lots of excellent ideas and actions that you can use to change your workplace.
Receive a free talk or workshop from WaterAid  Pathway: Curriculum	It is important for students to understand that even in the rainy UK it is important to look after our water.	WaterAid's trained speakers are experts in water, sanitation and hygiene. Speakers can give an online talk or workshop to your group about WaterAid's work to tackle COVID-19, climate change, periods and more! Book a free talk or workshop.
Take action against habitat loss by developing habitats in your local area  Pathway: Community	We share the UK with around 88,000 different species of animals, plants and fungi. All playing a key role in balancing our ecosystems. Developing and protecting habitats is essential to preserving biodiversity. Co-benefits Increases biodiversity and gets students out in nature which has a positive impact on wellbeing.	In this lesson provided by Young Citizens, students will learn about the importance of habitats and explore endangered British species and the threats to their habitat. Students will be guided through ways in which they can take action against habitat loss by developing the habitats in their local area.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Engage and inform the school community about air pollution to help everyone play their part  Pathway: Community	1) Talk to families about the air pollution actions you are taking at school in your school newsletter Adding air pollution content to your school newsletter will help to inform parents/carers about the problem and what they can do to help tackle it. 2) Add a link to the Clean Air Hub on your school website Providing information about air pollution and what people can to do improve it will help people to protect their health and reduce air pollution in the community. The Clean Air Hub is a one-stop shop for information on air pollution. 3) Send out text alerts to families informing them of high air pollution days Informing families about high air pollution episodes can help protect people's health. 4) Make provisions for those with health issues to stay inside during periods of high air pollution For some students with health conditions such as asthma, air pollution may exacerbate their symptoms. It is important to be aware of the possible implications of high pollution days and have a plan in place. 5) Display air pollution information on notice boards around the school Clean Air Day posters and the leaflet helps you to share key information about air pollution and what you can do to avoid it. Co-benefits Helping the school community to understand and act on air pollution will help improve people's health and help meet the school's objectives on reducing air pollution.	The Clean Air Day school resources webpage gives you access to lots of school resources including; sample newsletters, leaflets and other top tips for engaging with the school community on air pollution. Air pollution forecasts can be found on the Clean Air Hub. Look at government guidance on creating individual health care plans. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs releases air pollution alerts and notifications when pollution levels are high. Visit the website and text your families with the corresponding health advice.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Ask local decision makers for more action on air pollution  Pathway: Community	Use the student voice and the school community's experience of tackling air pollution to ask local decision makers to do more on reducing air pollution in your local area. Taking part in local decision-making could include: writing to and meeting your local councilors or MP, responding to consultations and/or attending consultation events. Students' experiences and opinions can be very influential. Co-benefit Involving students in a campaign can help to empower them and build confidence in their ability to make a valuable contribution and to change things within their own lives and communities.	Living Streets have a guide to getting involved in air quality consultations. Unicef have a guide to involving children in local decision making. Clean Air Day provide a template letter to a councillor. A joint investigation by the Guardian and Greenpeace's investigations unit has revealed which schools across the UK are in air pollution hotspots. This is a useful tool to support your conversations with local decision makers. Check out our case study of a school tackling pavement parking with teddy bears in Newcastle. Take a look at our case study of a school campaigning against idling cars in Greater Manchester.

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Implement traffic restrictions outside the school gate  Pathway: Culture	1) Hold a play street Work with parents/carers and the council to close the road outside your school for a few hours, run fun activities and games using the space the road provides when there are no cars and experience traffic-free, cleaner air streets. 2) Close the road outside the school to cars permanently Work with your local authority to permanently remove cars from the street outside your school. Modal filters still allow for bicycle, pedestrian and emergency vehicle access, and a bus gate can provide access to buses, taxis and those with mobility issues. 3) Organise a car free day Work with the local authority to close the road outside the school to vehicles for the day to experience traffic-free, cleaner air streets. Use the space to encourage active play and collect feedback from your school community on the types of temporary and permanent road closures to see if a permanent road closure is possible. 4) Make your street a school street by adding traffic restrictions during school pick up and drop off times A school street closes the road to traffic during drop off and pick up times to discourage the use of cars to get to and from school. Co-benefits A car free day can be a useful trial towards a more permanent road closure. Removing cars from your street will encourage families to use active travel to get to school. This will have physical and mental health benefits, as well as reducing noise pollution.	Playing Out: Play Streets provides heaps of useful guidance and tip on organising a play street. Car Free Day and Clean Air Day are the perfect opportunities to hold a car free day. School Streets Initiative provides accessible information and guidance to empower local communities who want to see School Street schemes implemented. The 'Hackney School Streets Toolkit for professionals' is a detailed guide to setting up a school street scheme, ideal for working with local authorities. The 'Living Streets School Streets toolkit' is a guide to creating car-free school streets, ideal for teachers and community members. Check out our case study of a school tackling pavement parking with teddy bears in Newcastle.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Organise school staff CPD sessions relating to Climate and Sustainability  Pathway: Curriculum	Climate change and sustainability is a big topic, and we are not expected to know all the answers. However, whatever your role in a school and stage of your journey you are at, there is more training that you can do.	UK Schools Sustainability network have created an Inset training video for all Secondary school staff and includes thoughts, ideas and tips from over 30 individuals from across the UK - including teachers, students and representatives from various organisations - culminating in a call to action from Lord Jim Knight, former Minister of State for Schools. It is aimed at secondary schools and sixth-form colleges but some sections will be relevant to primary schools and other educational settings. All involved has rallied together to produce this short introduction to the issues of climate and sustainability, resources, what you can do and who is out there to support you. There are also various other free and paid (marked by a £) CPD options on the Transform Our World website.
Hold a Fairtrade assembly  Pathway: Curriculum	Present an assembly to help raise awareness and understanding of Fairtrade across the whole school. Fairtrade have a range of assemblies to choose from in the assembly section of their teaching resources library or you could make one of your own. Co-benefits The student-led role play assemblies support children to become confident individuals, boost self-esteem and develop empathy.	A Fairtrade message from Lothersdale Primary School in West Yorkshire.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Run a Clean Air Day assembly  Pathway: Curriculum	Spread awareness throughout your whole school community on the issue of air pollution and how it impacts our health as well as the environment. Co-benefits This is a good opportunity for students to gain confidence in presenting to a group.	For Clean Air Day, Global Action Plan created a collection of school resources to inspire schools to create cleaner air. If you are new to the topic there are learning resources for KS1, 2 & 3 available. If you are keen on involving a whole year group or the entire school, they also provide an assembly pack that includes a PowerPoint and plan that can be used by teachers, volunteers or adapted for students to run an in person or digital assembly on clean air.
Create a pond or a wetland in the school grounds  Pathway: Campus	Creating a rain garden helps alleviate localised flooding. A rain garden is designed to temporarily channel and contain rain water. Often on a slope it collects water run-off from roofs and hard surfaces into a depression in the ground. Like any garden the depression will be landscaped and planted according to the conditions. 1) Talk to senior leaders about your idea. 2) Consider the site and, if there is flooding, where the water comes from and runs to. Consider where a hole could be dug deep in order to be filled with materials that allow water to sit around them. 3) Bring in expertise to help you consider the need, its position and the costs. Co-benefits It keeps the air cooler, provides habitat and can look good.	If you want to see school rain garden there is a local garden at Moorlands Primary in Trafford, whilst the University of Salford have a demonstration rain garden on their campus called the Living Lab. Groundwork, City of Trees and the RHS have experience building rain gardens. Rain gardens can be expensive so it is worth exploring grants and getting quotations. This action supports the key area of "our natural environment" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Designate a No Mow Zone in the school grounds  Pathway: Campus	Leaving an area of grass to grow is beneficial for biodiversity. Leaving an area of grass to grow wild can simply mean not cutting the grass in the Spring. The grass will grow and wild flowers are likely to appear, but it will need cutting back in late Summer. 1) Talk to senior leaders to contact and discuss the No Mow Plan with the grounds maintenance team. 2) Agree a new mowing regime depending on how you want to manage the area. Wild flowers will grow through the grass but it will not be a wild flower meadow as this needs the grass to be removed and the area seeded. 3) Work with the Eco team or classes to compare the biodiversity before the grass grows and when it is long. Co-benefits: Having wildlife in the grounds can be woven into a richer curriculum.	The No Mow May project advises that grass is not mown during the month of May. If you want to create a wild area go to The Wildlife Trust. If you want information on creating a wild flower meadow go to the RHS. This action supports the key area of "our natural environment" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.
Plant trees  Pathway: Campus	Trees absorb carbon dioxide and provide oxygen, improve air quality, retain water, cool air and provide valuable habitat. Planting trees implies buying, or sourcing, small whips or larger trees and finding the right space in the school grounds where they can grow. But it could also mean creating a tree nursery and growing trees from seed. 1) Assess your site and consider the soil and how the trees will grow across their lifetime. 2) Consider if you want to bring in an organisation to support or, 3) Consider the equipment needed to plant the trees and whether they will need safe-guarding from being strimmed, trampled or eaten. 4) Consider who will help to plant them - the whole school, or a class, or the Eco team. 5) Consider how they will be maintained in the future. Co-benefits They are proven to increase our sense of well-being.	City of Trees have a school tree planting programme and can organise a day's planting. The Woodland Trust will send schools free packs of small tree whips. Smaller trees easily get damaged so it might be better to find a programme where larger trees can be planted. This action supports the key area of "our natural environment" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Improve insulation, pipe lagging and draft proofing  Pathway: Campus	Good insulation can make a big reductions to the school's carbon footprint. Ensuring your school buildings are well insulated is key to becoming sustainable. Leaky buildings and unlagged pipes are responsible for wasting huge amounts of energy. 1) Work with the site manager to check the insulation in the school roof. If it is not at the recommended depth increase it. 2) Check whether the walls are insulated or could be insulated. 3) If you have a hot water tank make sure it is insulated. 4) Check any hot water pipes to make sure they are lagged. Co-benefits It can also reduce your energy bills and enable effective use of a ground source heat pump.	The Department for Education have specific advice for schools whilst The Energy Saving Trust have more general advice. Make sure that if the walls are insulated that they the material is sustainably sourced and safe from fire hazard. Refer to Salix for financial support. This action supports the key area of "our homes workplaces and public buildings" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.
Invest in heating controls from radiator thermostats to building solutions  Pathway: Campus	Being able to control the temperature of school buildings can save money on heating bills and reduce the school's carbon footprint. To reduce the school's heating it is necessary to consider how the heating system is run and how it can be improved. Measures could include small adjustments such as installing manual or thermostatic radiator valves (TRUs), to installing a building management system. 1) Find out who controls the heating in school. 2) Contact the heating controls service engineer to review, reset and advise on the current system and outline what improvements could be made. Ask the heating engineer to map the heating needs on a room by room basis and/or as a whole school. 3) Consult with the building users for their opinions. 4) Use the map and consultation to plan solutions. Co-benefits It can improve working conditions.	The Department for Education have produced a guide on energy and water saving for schools. Refer to Salix for possible financial support. This action supports the key area of "our homes workplaces and public buildings" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Install an air source heat pump in your school building  Pathway: Campus	Most heating systems are fired by methane (natural) gas: air source heat pumps provide the opportunity to generate heat from a renewable source cutting the school's carbon footprint Air is drawn into the building by an electric pump and, like the back of a fridge warming up as the inside cools down, a process called heat exchange occurs. This means warm air is exchanged for cold air and can be used for heating or hot water in a building. The process can also work in reverse to provide cool air. However, in order to work well your building needs to be sufficiently insulated. 1) Raise the issue with senior leaders. 2) Check Salix funding opportunities. 3) Ensure your building is well insulated first. 4) Employ an external consultant or renewable energy company who can advise on the suitability of installing an air source heat pump in your school and ensure they are accredited by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineer. Co-benefits: Your school could gain air conditioning.	Refer to Salix for grant opportunities. The fan on the air source heat pump needs electricity so the system is only as renewable as the electricity which runs it. Check out The Energy Saving Trust for advice. This action supports the key area of "our energy supply" which is part of the GMCA's 5 year environment plan.

Your School's Climate Action Plan

St Thomas of Canterbury - 05/10/26

Your Action	In a bit more detail	Looking for inspiration
Take part in RSPB's Wild Challenge  Pathway: Campus	By taking part in RSPB's Wild Challenge Award, your school will increase biodiversity in the school grounds to help insects and wildlife thrive. Co-benefits Increases biodiversity and gets students out in nature which has a positive impact on wellbeing.	RSPB's Wild Challenge Award, not only provides schools awards for their efforts to increase biodiversity but, provides educators structure to follow which supports enriching curriculum delivery and builds children's lasting emotional connection to nature. Coupled with actions to support nature, Wild Challenge Award has an equal number of experiencing nature activities which provide excellent creative stimulus and build time for children to reflect on the awe and wonder of nature. Wild Challenge helps to build children's sense of agency. They develop the passion to make change happen whilst feeling empowered by the impact their actions have on the nature around them.
Completed Sign up to the TOW newsletter, to keep up to date with the latest news, events and resources  Pathway: Community	The Transform Our World (TOW) website, is a dynamic hub with a huge pool of environmental resources for teachers to freely use. Through signing up to the monthly TOW newsletter, you will receive helpful links to the most up to date and relevant resources as well as hearing about important news and events, to keep you fully informed and engaged along your climate action journey.	Go to edit your TOW profile, and tick yes under 'receive news and updates from Transform our World and the latest about the Youth Climate Summit.'