



Sustainability Strategy – October 2023

SECTION 1 - CAST OVERARCHING SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY	3
1.1 Introduction	3
CAST Commitment	3
Sustainability Context	4
1.2 Guiding Principles & Priorities	5
1.3 Approach & Implementation	11
Governance, Steering & Reporting	13
Governance	13
Steering	14
Reporting	16
1.4 Overarching CAST Sustainability Goals, Objectives & Targets	17
SECTION 2 - CAST SUSTAINABLE ESTATES, ENERGY, WATER & BIODIVERSITY	21
2.1 Background & Commitment	21
Electricity Supply	21
Efficient Heating Solutions	21
Data-Driven Decision Making	21
Change in Management Practices	22
Energy and Carbon Savings	22
Grant Applications and Projects	22
SECR Intensity Ratio	22
Water Conservation	22
Biodiversity and Grounds Maintenance	22
2.2 Sustainability Context	23
2.3 Approach & Implementation	24
Energy	24
Energy Data	24
Energy Saving Measures (ESMs)	24
Behaviour change	25
Funding	25
Water	26
Biodiversity	26
2.3 Goals, Objectives & Targets	27
1 - Data	27
2 - Energy Saving Measures	28
3 - Water	28
4 - Biodiversity	29
SECTION 3 - CAST SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES	30
3.1 Background & Commitment	30
3.2 Sustainability Context	30
3.3 Approach & Implementation	31
3.4 Goals, Objectives & Targets	32

SECTION 4 - CAST ENGAGING AND INFLUENCING STAFF & PUPILS.	34
4.1 Background & Commitment	34
4.2 Proposed Sustainability & Net Zero Launch Event	34
Background	34
Implementation	34
Legacy	35
4.3 DFE Resources & links with the wider community	35
4.4 Media & Promotion	35
4.5 Training Plan	36
ANNEXE A - CAST SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY DELIVERY BUDGET	37

Version Control	Last reviewed and updated	by
Version 0.1	14/07/2023	Plymouth CAST
Version 1.0	06/10/2023	Plymouth CAST Board - Approved

Front Cover Image: Casey Horner <https://unsplash.com/photos/4rDCa5hBICs>

Section 1 - CAST Overarching Sustainability Strategy

1.1 Introduction

Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust of thirty-four Catholic schools and one nursery. Our mission is to be a community of outstanding schools in which our pupils flourish in safe, happy, and stimulating environments and leave us with the knowledge and skills, personal qualities, and aspirations, to make the world a better place, inspired by the Gospel.

We believe that our role extends beyond the realm of education to actively contribute to the betterment of society and the environment. Our modus operandi and curriculum are inspired by Gospel Values and care of our common home. In line with this ethos, we have undertaken a comprehensive evaluation of our practices and identified areas where we can make substantial progress in reducing our carbon emissions and promoting sustainable practices.

In recent times, the global community has observed a concerning escalation in the adverse consequences of human activities on the environment. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion present substantial perils to our planet and its inhabitants. As a Catholic educational institution, we acknowledge the immediate necessity to confront these challenges and recognise the moral imperative to assume accountability for our ecological footprint.

Within CAST we nurture a culture of good stewardship which strives for viability and sustainability and recognises the pressing need to address the environmental challenges that our world faces today. We recognise that sustainability must inform all decisions we make in every area of our organisation and the importance of understanding the impact of our decisions on our economy, the environment and society.

CAST Commitment

Our Board of Directors have positioned this commitment as a strategic priority for our Trust, and have declared a Trust strategic goal to:

Reduce the Trust's impact on the environment through year-on-year reductions in its carbon footprint towards net zero, and to implement sustainability within the curriculum through the embedding of Laudato Si.

With this objective and our strategic goal in mind, we have formulated a comprehensive sustainability strategy that aims to minimise our carbon footprint, striving towards achieving net-zero emissions.

Our sustainability strategy is underpinned by the principle of continuous improvement, with a focus on achieving year-on-year reductions in our carbon footprint. We acknowledge that the journey to sustainability requires an integrated approach that encompasses not only the operational aspects of our organisation but also the integration of sustainability within our educational curricula.

With an eye to the world's stewards of the future, we aspire to instil a commitment in our schools to the stewardship of the earth, our common home and invite our pupils to be good citizens, agents of change in the world, supported by the teachings from Pope Francis in his encyclical, *Laudato Si*.

Laudato Si provides a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and economic issues. It emphasises the moral obligation to protect our planet and care for the most vulnerable members of our global community. By embedding the principles of *Laudato Si* within our curricula, we aim to equip our pupils with the knowledge and values necessary to create a more sustainable future.

We are aware of the Department for Education's increased focus on sustainability and biodiversity. Through our sustainability strategy, we strive to assume a leadership role in sustainable education and business operations, promoting environmental consciousness and inspiring positive action. By reducing our carbon footprint and incorporating sustainability into our curriculum, we will create a nurturing environment where students can learn, thrive, and become conscientious global citizens. We are committed to fostering a sustainable future, and we invite all stakeholders to join us on this transformative journey towards a more environmentally conscious and resilient world.

Sustainability Context

The Climate Change Act 2008 is the basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. It requires that emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases be reduced and that climate change risks are adapted to. The Act also establishes the framework to deliver on these requirements.

The Climate Change Act commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. The UK public sector are expected to contribute to carbon reductions by 2050 enshrined within the Climate Change Act (2008).

The Department for Education (DFE) in its Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy sets out the following goals "We will work together to set science-based targets from 2025, ensuring we play our part in reducing public-sector emissions against a 2017 baseline by:

- 50% by the end of Carbon Budget 5 (2032)
- 75% by the end of Carbon Budget 6 (2037)

The DFE also sets out its ambition for every school to have a Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy/Action Plan to support the UK in meeting its obligations. Each school's and academy trust's formal sustainability strategy will provide a clear and public demonstration of intent regarding their organisations commitment to respond to the triple planetary crisis: climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, pollution. A sustainability strategy or action plan is crucial for enabling sustained, strategic improvement in environmental performance, and needs to the backing of senior management along with adequate resources to implement.

1.2 Guiding Principles & Priorities

Such is the urgency of the planetary crisis, that simply complying with DFE guidelines and environmental legislation is insufficient to meet the challenge, the most recent progress report by the UK Committee on Climate Change (<https://www.theccc.org.uk/what-is-climate-change/a-legal-duty-to-act/>) warned that the UK is not currently on track to meet its current statutory carbon targets for the late 2020s and early 2030s.

Therefore, as recognised in the introduction to this document, there is a moral imperative for CAST to go further by setting their own additional guiding principles and priorities over and above the current DFE guidelines and UK environmental legislation. This is also in line with the Trust’s stated moral obligations to protect the planet and care for the most vulnerable members of the global community as enshrined in the *Laudato Si*.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals framework has been chosen to help develop these additional guiding principles and priorities.

The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The 17 Goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable














Development which set out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals. (<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>)









This framework is internationally recognised and adopted by many leading organisations operating in the UK Education and Sustainability spaces and aligns well with *Laudato Si*, sharing many of Pope Francis' aspirations.





Action Area - Laudato si'	UN Sus Dev Goal
Pollution – “Some forms of pollution are part of people’s daily experience. Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths - These problems are closely linked to a throwaway culture which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish.”	12
Climate Change - “an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy”	13
The Issue of Water – “Water supplies used to be relatively constant, but now in many places demand exceeds the sustainable supply, with dramatic consequences in the short and long term - Water poverty especially affects Africa where large sectors of the population have no access to safe drinking water or experience droughts which impede agricultural production - One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases, including those caused by microorganisms and chemical substances”	6
Biodiversity Loss – “The earth’s resources are also being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production. The loss of forests and woodlands entails the loss of species which may constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for curing disease and other uses - Caring for ecosystems demands far-sight- edness, since no one looking for quick and easy profit is truly interested in their preservation. But the cost of the damage caused by such selfish lack of concern is much greater than the economic benefits to be obtained. Where certain species are destroyed or seriously harmed, the values involved are incalculable.”	14 & 15
Global Inequality - “ecological debt” exists between countries of the Global North and South - “the countries which have benefited from a high degree of industrialization, at the cost of enormous emissions of greenhouse gases, have a greater responsibility of providing a solution to the problems they have caused”	1,2,3,8 & 10
Consumerism - Calls for “personal and communal” conversion away from consumerism and “collective selfishness,” and invites persons toward lifestyles animated by sound ecological virtues, i.e., “good habits,” that must be developed in persons by both secular and faith communities	11 & 12
Education - Argues that “ecological education” – which should provide information and seek to form habits – must occur everywhere in society: “at school, in families, in the media, in catechesis ... political institutions and various other social groups ... [and all] Christian communities”	4





The following list summarises the CAST Sustainability principles and commitments.

Principles		CAST Commitment	UN Sustainable Development Goal
1	Energy	<p>Electricity supply contracts – we will continue to procure 100% renewable electricity supply contracts using Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) in the short term, with a strategy of contracting directly with Renewable Energy Providers through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) if and as they become available to the education sector, in the longer term.</p> <p>Energy mix – we will look to install as much on site generation of electricity as possible for example using Solar PV to reduce our consumption through and impact on, the National Grid. The renewable electricity we continue to consume from the grid we will ensure is sourced from renewable energy providers who use wind, solar, nuclear, and sustainable biomass to generate our electricity.</p> <p>Gas – we will continue to explore all options for the most sustainably sourced and ethically produced Gas and wherever possible and economically viable we will procure the most sustainable option when renewing our supply contracts. Additionally, we will look to move away from using Gas as the primary source of heating our schools, wherever this is economically possible.</p>	 
2	Banking & Finance	<p>We will introduce ethical banking and finance considerations from 2024, striving to seek the best ethical options for all CAST banking, finance & investment arrangements based on a blend of practical, quality, and ethical measures in the longer term.</p> <p>We recognise that investments in the fossil fuel industry & agribusinesses uphold the injustices experienced by communities on the frontlines of extraction and climate change and are incompatible with our institutional sustainability commitments. We will introduce strong ethical banking policies to ensure that CAST’s financial practices are conducted in the most socially responsible and sustainable manner reasonably practicable within our sector.</p>	  
3	Travel	<p>We will promote active travel as far as possible for all students, encourage staff and students to use public transport, EVs & car sharing.</p> <p>At a trust level we will baseline our current Travel emissions by the end of 2024 and work with each of our schools to develop an Individual Travel Plan.</p> <p>We will include sustainability considerations and the specific Carbon impact in the planning for any school</p>	

		<p>trips and record and publish the Carbon Impact for each trip. We will also investigate the viability of including the cost of carbon offsets for all school trips from 2024 and encourage all our schools to adopt low carbon travel alternatives wherever possible.</p> <p>We will set Travel emission reduction targets by the end of 2025 and establish systems to monitor, measure and track our progress.</p>	
4	Food	<p>We understand that food and agriculture are a major contributor to the Global Climate break down and biodiversity loss. We will therefore establish a policy requiring local, sustainable sources and practices from all producers and suppliers e.g., best environmental/welfare practice animal products, sustainable palm oil etc.</p> <p>We will work with our catering providers to calculate a baseline footprint and agree the use of our preferred system (Meal Analyser) for monitoring, measuring, and tracking our progress by the end of 2023.</p> <p>We will set and achieve a min target of a 10% year on year reduction of carbon emissions for all our schools' food and catering services and work quickly towards a target of 0% food waste going to landfill by the end of 2025 latest.</p> <p>We will also work closely with our schools and community to increase the awareness of all staff, students, and parents regarding the carbon impact of their food choices.</p>	  
5	Water	<p>We understand that water is a precious resource and that in the UK demand for water is rising owing to population growth, urbanisation and increasing water needs from agriculture, industry, and energy sectors. Climate Change, poor management, overextraction of groundwater and contamination of freshwater supplies have also exacerbated water stress.</p> <p>In response to this we will promote the efficient use of water resources to minimise waste and ensure long-term availability whilst also supporting all our schools to responsibly manage water resources.</p> <p>We will encourage our schools to adopt water-efficient technologies and practices wherever possible and support them in raising awareness about water conservation, sustainable water practices, and the importance of water stewardship among staff, students, and our wider community.</p> <p>We will work collaboratively with our water provider and the DFE to collectively address water-related challenges and adaptation needs.</p> <p>We will baseline our current usage across all our schools and set consumption reduction targets by the</p>	 

		end of 2024. We will then establish systems to monitor our water usage and measure and track our progress.	
6	Waste	<p>We understand the impact that waste has on climate change, our environment, and our communities, particularly when it goes to land fill. We will therefore carry out baseline audits and surveys to understand the impact of our Waste by the end of 2024 and work with our schools to set reduction targets by the end of 2025 based on the following aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% no food waste to landfill by 2025 • 100% no landfill by 2030 • 100% reduction in single use plastic packaging by 2025 • Support of the Circular Economy by replacement of new purchases with second hand, re-purposed or re-manufactured products wherever possible. <p>We will work closely with our schools and community to increase the awareness of all staff, students, and parents regarding the carbon impact of waste, the importance of recycling and the circular economy.</p> <p>We will baseline our current usage across all our schools and set consumption reduction targets by the end of 2024. We will then establish systems to monitor our waste output and measure and track our progress.</p>	   
7	Print & Paper	<p>We will carry out baseline audits and surveys to understand the impact of our current paper usage across all our schools by the end of 2024 and work with each of our schools to set reduction targets by the end of 2025 based on the following aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year on year reduction in the number of prints made • 90% of all paper products used to be recycled and from FSC approved sources by 2025 • 100% of all paper waste recycled or not going to landfill • 100% environmentally friendly inks to be used in all printers and on all printed products <p>We will then establish systems to monitor our paper usage and measure and track our progress.</p>	   

8	Biodiversity	<p>We understand that biodiversity loss is a significant problem for the UK and the global community more widely. We also understand that we can directly make an impact as a trust in the choices we make in managing and maintaining our grounds. We fully support and welcome the DFE’s new National Education Nature Park (NENP) initiative in partnership with the Natural History Museum, designed to increase biodiversity across the entire UK education estate.</p> <p>We will encourage all our schools to join the NENP programme as soon as it launches in late 2023 and then carry out baseline audits and surveys by the end of 2024 to understand the current health and biodiversity of our collective grounds.</p> <p>We will also work closely with each of our schools and their grounds maintenance teams to set improvement targets by the end of 2025 based on the following aspirations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year on year improvement in the health, biodiversity, and available habitats within our grounds • Management practices that are 100% free from nitrogen-based fertiliser use • Management practices that are 100% free from harmful chemical pesticides & herbicides • Management practices that are encourage the 100% use and growth of indigenous plant species <p>We will establish systems to monitor the health and biodiversity of our collective grounds and measure and track our progress by the end of 2025.</p>	  
9	Data	<p>We understand that the quality and availability of Data are fundamental to supporting our Sustainability Strategy. Data underpins our ability to make informed management and investment decisions and is essential in setting targets and measuring our progress against these.</p> <p>We will therefore work with all our schools and stakeholders to improve the quality and quantity of data we collect and support all parties to analyse and use the data in the most impactful way to help us achieve our goals and targets.</p> <p>We will carry out a detailed data review and establish a data improvement plan by the end of 2023 when we will also establish systems to monitor, measure and track progress across all key sustainability workstreams detailed in this strategy document.</p>	

		<p>We will work towards and adopt recognised standards such as the Green House Gas Protocol (GHGP) and ISO 14064 to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of our data. We will also work with third party specialists when needed, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help accurately apply standards such as the GHGP to our context • Support us in specifying data requirements and quality standards • Support us in achieving certifications • Support us in setting meaningful targets and milestones • Collect, analyse and track our data • Verify our achievements and progress 	
10	Funding & Resources	<p>We understand that the successful implementation of this strategy is contingent on appropriate levels of annual funding and resources.</p> <p>We will therefore build sustainability funding and resource allocation into our annual financial planning to support the implementation and success of this strategy.</p> <p>We will adopt life cycle and impact on future generations thinking in all that we do and, in particular, in the analysis and evaluation of all management, procurement and financial planning activities, to ensure that we achieve the lowest environmental and carbon footprint impacts from our actions and decisions.</p> <p>We will Implement a new procurement policy and guidelines, that ensures that all new travel & spend requests include environmental & carbon impact/benefit considerations & all contracts & tender renewals include environmental & carbon impact/benefit specifications including sustainability KPIs.</p>	 
11	Celebration & Recognition	<p>We understand that a school or trust's success in gaining staff, pupil & parent buy-in will contribute significantly to the overall success of this strategy and its environmental and social impact.</p> <p>We will therefore play an active role in engaging staff, pupils & parents in sustainable behaviour change and ensure that achievements are celebrated at an individual, school and trust level as we strive to embed long-lasting change.</p> <p>We will support and encourage our schools to achieving recognition through achieving Green Flag Status in the Eco Schools programme and through registering to take part in the new DFE NENP & Climate Leaders awards as they are announced.</p>	 

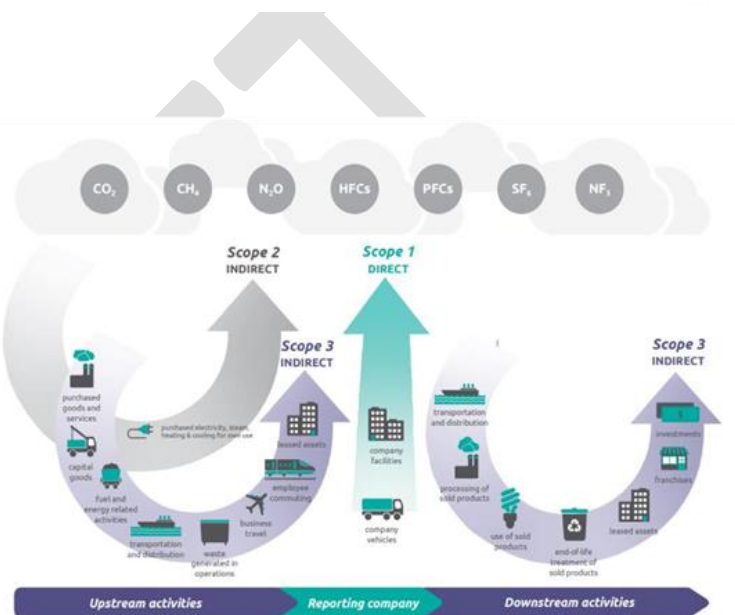
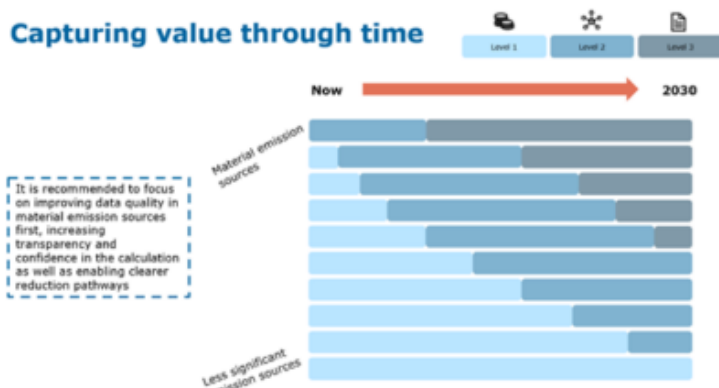
1.3 Approach & Implementation

We will use the principles and priorities detailed above along with, DFE guidance and internationally recognised conventions such as the Green House Gas Protocol to develop and deliver this holistic Sustainability Strategy. This will include adopting the accepted methodology for setting short term (2024 - 2025), near term (2032) and long term (2050) goals and horizons.

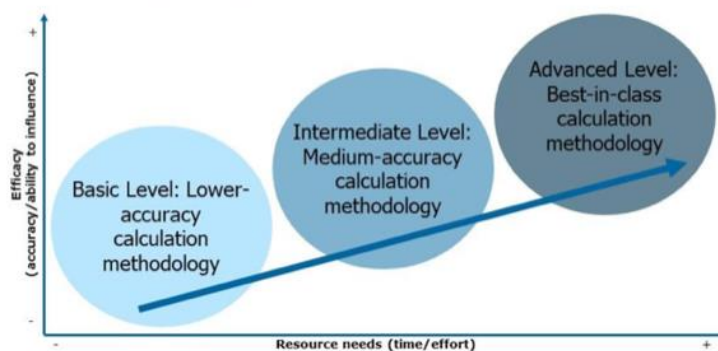
We also understand and accept that this will need to develop over time and be a live and dynamic strategy. It will need to evolve, adapt, and respond to new policies, better data, new thinking, and hopefully new technologies, to stay relevant.

We also appreciate that we currently do not have a sufficiently good understanding of our baseline starting point in many key areas (especially Scope 3 carbon emissions) and that therefore we will need to build our delivery plan realistically over several phases and over several years.

Accordingly, we anticipate developing an implementation plan that will build value and accuracy over a three-year period, culminating in a fully developed plan with meaningful and Science-Based Targets and accurate systems and processes to track, measure and report on progress.



Calculating Scope 3 emissions



GREENHOUSE GAS PROTOCOL

Step 1/Year 1

- Develop Strategy inc Principles & Aspirations
- Baseline assessment & identify data gaps
- Develop Action Plans & budgets
 - Focus on 2 to 3 x key areas/projects per year
 - Data gathering – to fill gaps and increase accuracy
 - Start progress tracking & reporting
- Communications & launch
 - Increased Carbon awareness
 - Training & support



Step 2/Year 2

- Add detail and near-term targets to Strategy (where supported by data)
- Accurate data gathering & analysis
- Tracking & management reporting
- Add one or two more focus areas



Step 3/Year 3

- Use data to add near-term & longer-term Science Based targets to Strategy
- Accurate Progress Tracking & Management Reporting
- Add one or two more focus areas

As we develop this strategy it will be important to make sure it is closely aligned with the DFE guidelines and policies emerging from the Department’s Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy released in April 2022. The DFE strategy is itself in a development phase and is scheduled to deliver several initiatives and increasing levels of support and resources over the next two years. The National Education Nature Park (NENP) and Climate Leaders awards are due to be launched in the next academic year (2023 – 2024) along with regional sustainability support hubs and sustainability assessment tools in early 2024. By 2025 they are planning to set their own near and long-term sustainability targets and cascade these down to schools and trusts.

We will keep a watching brief, engage with the DFE programmes as they are launched and make best use of all resources and tools as they become available to us. The first step in this process is for CAST and our schools to embrace the Eco Schools programme which is closely aligned with the current and developing DFE sustainability strategy. The Eco Schools programme is also closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development goals and has been widely adopted internationally is the largest environmental schools programme in the UK. Additionally, some of the CAST schools have already taken part in the programme.



- In 2021 - 2022, more than 1700 schools achieved the Eco-Schools Green Flag award.
- In 2021 - 2022, over 48,000 young people were members of an Eco-Committee.
- Almost 1.5m young people attended a school working on the programme and benefitted from its impact.



The Eco Schools programme is free to register and take part in and once registered all the resources, training and mentoring are also provided free of charge. A new 12-month programme starts every September to align with the academic year and, if successfully completed by the end of the school year, schools can apply for Green Flag certification; there is a £200 cost per school (a MAT discount will apply to this) to pay for certification and the 'Green Flag'.

We will support and encourage all our schools to register with Eco Schools for the start of academic year 2023 – 2024 and for each subsequent years for a three-year period after which we hope and expect all our schools and the Trust to have achieved Green Flag status. One of the additional benefits to CAST of the Eco Schools programme is that it is a fully supported programme which we anticipate will require minimal centralised administration whilst providing a common platform, common reporting, and a way of really kick-starting sustainability across the Trust.

Governance, Steering & Reporting

Governance

We will implement a robust governance and reporting structure to steer CAST throughout the journey of implementing our sustainability strategy through targeted action plans tailored at trust level and school level.

Our governance structures will be fulfilled by creating eco- steering groups to drive forward our policy objectives, with cyclical information reports provided to the CAST Board of Directors and Local CAST Boards detailing milestones achieved, actions commenced, and challenges experienced.

Our approach will be simultaneously 'bottom up' and 'top down' to promote stakeholder engagement across the spectrum of our organisations. We will establish eco-steering groups at both trust level and school level. Each steering group will include a 'sponsor' from the Senior Leadership Team to secure management support for the action plans.



At trust level, our eco-steering group will comprise the CAST sustainability team who will serve as operational ‘Eco Champions’, leading on specific policy areas and working collaboratively with representative Eco Leads and Eco Council members from schools. The trust level steering group will seek the support of a ‘sponsor’ from the Board of Directors.

CAST Sustainability Team

Area of Policy Focus	CAST Personnel
Culture & Governance	Chief Operating Officer (SELT Sponsor)
Estates, Energy, Water & Biodiversity	Estates & Facilities Manager IT Manager
Sustainable Procurement of Goods and Services	Procurement & Services Manager IT Manager

At school level the eco-steering group will be centred around the schools’ Eco Councils, which will be established through the Eco Schools programme. The Eco Council will include an ‘Eco Lead’ staff member to focus the work of the group, which will align with the DFE strategy. An ‘SLT sponsor’ will work with the group to provide management support and to garner the engagement of parents and the Local CAST Board. The school level eco-steering group will seek the support of a ‘sponsor’ from the Local CAST Board.



Steering

To retain a focus on policy objectives, each eco-steering group will meet once per every half term to agree the action plan for the forthcoming half term, and review actions from the previous half-term, logging key information to be included within the cyclical update reports to the governing board(s).

An annual strategy meeting with representatives from all eco-steering groups will enable the work of each setting to be shared and celebrated, provide an opportunity to share good-practise and ensure a common interpretation of policy objectives and action plans, and achieve a unified approach.

Trust Action plans will take a 'workstream' approach, breaking down the policy objectives into four defined strands:

1. Ethos, Commitment & Communication
2. Data, Baseline, Reporting and Tracking
3. Estates, Energy, Water and Biodiversity
4. Procurement and Waste

Actions will be mapped over an initial three-year period from September 2023 – August 2026 by further sub-dividing the workstreams into 11 'Short Term Goals' to embed the policy objectives into all areas of the Trust's operations.

School Action plans will follow a standard format and be organised as Individual Plans or as Cluster Plans (where it is deemed logical to 'cluster' schools geographically) and be dynamic, owned and driven by each school with guidance and support provided by the Trust as to how to interpret the policy objectives.

- **Year 1 (2023 – 2024)**
 - Energy & Efficiency
 - Food & Catering
 - Global Citizenship & Procurement
- **Year 2 (2024 – 2025)**
 - Transport & Travel
 - Nature & Biodiversity
 - *School Local Choice*
- **Year 3 (2025 – 2026)**
 - Water
 - Waste
 - *School Local Choice*

Each school or cluster of schools will be expected to establish an Eco Council lead by a formally recognised Eco Lead and each Eco Lead will be supported to complete a Carbon Literacy course and an individual school/cluster Action Plan. Six Eco Leads will represent their schools/clusters on the Trust's Eco-Steering Group.

The successful deliver of our policy objectives will be reliant on sufficient funding being available. Funding could be drawn from three distinct streams:

- **An annual budget to support this strategy** – this would require consideration and commitment from the Board of Directors, with due consideration as to how this is split into revenue and capital budgetary allocations and whether Trust reserves can be utilised in support of our strategic policy objectives. *See annexe A for further detail.*
- **An 'Invest to Save' strategy** - this would be led by the Trust's Finance and Operations Teams to re-invest savings into a self-sustaining programme including lease finance

options where savings pay, or part pay, for the capital investment over a period of 3-10 years.

- **Government, DFE & other funding opportunities;** LCSF, PSDS, National Lottery etc – this would be led by the Trust's Finance and Operations Teams, alongside the Sustainability Team, to proactively apply for grant funding, and scan the horizon for wider funding opportunities.

It is noted that the scope and depth of the policy objectives incur a significant commitment to developing new areas of workplace focus which the Trust does not currently undertake. It will be essential to make adequate staffing resource available within the Trust's Operations Team to ensure that our policy objectives progress without detracting from our business-as-usual operations and our Trust's commitment to the wider strategic aims and goals.

Reporting

The Trust have explored several options and tools that are currently available to track, measure and report on sustainability and carbon performance metrics. Through this process then it became clear that currently there is no single system or reporting platform available that will meet a MAT's requirements or budget, however there are a few potential systems, templates and processes being developed including by Eco Schools and the DFE.

Our approach therefore is to keep a watching brief on the tools being developed whilst we define and agree the CAST initial reporting requirements and short-term targets. We also appreciate that to set meaningful reduction targets and milestones with confidence, then this will only be possible once baselines have been calculated and sufficient good quality data has been gathered.

In line with the guiding principles and approach detailed in the sections above, we will engage the support of specialist carbon consultants to help with Step 1 to develop data specifications and reporting methodologies before implementing the relevant processes to capture accurate baseline and ongoing data. As part of step two we will re-visit the tools and reporting platforms before selecting the best options available to help us monitor and track progress.

As part of step/year three we would hope to have a sufficient quantity and quality of data to be able to set near and longer-term Science Based Targets and establish a pathway to NetZero that includes milestones along the way against which we can measure progress.

For all sustainability criteria, including the harder to measure categories such as biodiversity, we will look to the DFE and other expert support to develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon or Actionable, Realistic or Relevant, Time-bound) targets and measures.

In the short-term, at trust level, we will continue to expand the scope and accuracy of our annual statutory SECR reporting and look to introduce termly and annual sustainability progress reporting to the Board of Trustees, against the targets and goals set out within this document.

At school level we will use the Eco Schools reporting platform to measure progress and success.

1.4 Overarching CAST Sustainability Goals, Objectives & Targets

As described above we will develop meaningful and Science Based Targets over a three-year period but have set the following aspirational goals as a starting point:

- **Long-Term** - Operationally NetZero % by 2037 and Organisationally Net Zero by 2050
- **Near-Term** – Reduction on SECR intensity rating Year on Year – 2032 Target to be set by no later than the end of the 2025/26 Academic Year
- **Short-Term Goals** – as detailed in the table below.

Goal	Details & Description	Year	Measure/Target
1 - Data	1.1 Data specification, capture and reporting methodologies assessed and verified by specialist third party. 1.2 Accurate Carbon Footprint baseline for scopes 1, 2 & 3 at both trust and individual school level 1.3 Improved Data collection, Data quality & Data Analytics 1.4 Establish accurate and verified systems to monitor, measure, track, and report on our progress	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a detailed data review and data improvement plan • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1, 2 & 3 (DFE compliant) • Accurate baseline carbon footprint calculated and verified for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food & Catering ○ Cleaning ○ Travel emissions ○ Waste ○ Paper usage ○ IT
		2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1, 2 & 3 (DFE compliant + Voluntary Scope 3 Food & Catering, Cleaning & Travel) • Near Term targets set for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food & Catering ○ Cleaning ○ Paper usage • Accurate baseline carbon footprint calculated and verified for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Biodiversity ○ Water usage ○ Stationary & consumables
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1, 2 & 3 (DFE compliant + Voluntary Scope 3 Food & Catering, Cleaning, Travel, Water & Stationary/Consumables) • Verified Science Based Targets set for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scope 1 ○ Scope 2 ○ Scope 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food & Catering

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cleaning ▪ Paper & Print ▪ Travel ▪ Waste ▪ IT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAST to have achieved ISO14064 Certification
2 – Eco Schools	2.1 All schools to achieve an Eco schools Green Flag	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 90% of CAST Schools to achieve an Eco Schools Green Flag
	2.2 CAST to become one of the first multi academy trusts to achieve Green Flag Status	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% of CAST Schools to achieve an Eco Schools Green Flag
	2.3 CAST to achieve ISO14064 Certification	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of CAST Schools to achieve an Eco Schools Green Flag ▪ CAST to achieve Green Flag Status ▪ CAST to have achieved ISO14064 Certification
3 - Travel	3.1 Accurate carbon footprint baseline for all Transport & Travel emissions including student & staff commute and school trips	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAST to carry out a transport & travel emissions baseline survey ▪ CAST to have a Transport & Travel Policy and short-term reduction targets
	3.2 Improved Data collection, Data quality & Data Analytics	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each school to have an agreed Individual Travel Plan including reduction targets
	3.3 Trust level and Individual Travel Plans for each school	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAST to have a Travel plan with Verified Science Based Targets.
4 – Banking & Finance	3.4 Establish accurate and verified systems to monitor, measure, track, and report on our progress		
	4.1 Introduce ethical banking and finance considerations into CAST planning processes	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce ethical banking and finance considerations into CAST planning processes
	4.2 Investigate and select best options for each finance and investment category	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate and select best options for each finance and investment category ▪ Develop a migration plan
5 – Carbon Literacy Training	4.3 Migrate to new best fit ethical/sustainable banking and finance providers	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Start the migration to new best fit ethical/sustainable banking and finance providers
	5.1 Provide Carbon Literacy Training (CLT) for all Eco Leads at trust and school level	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% Central Procurement, Estates & Premises teams ▪ 100% School Eco Leads funded by DFE (as per their strategy)
	5.2 Provide Carbon Literacy Training (CLT) for key operational and procurement staff at trust and school level	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of School Business Managers to have completed a Carbon Literacy Course
	5.3 Introduce Carbon Literacy for all new starters as part of the CAST induction programme	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CLT to be embedded in all induction & annual refresh training for all staff
5.4 Introduce annual Carbon Literacy refresh training available for all staff			
6- Climate Leaders Awards		2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 90% of all schools to take part in the Climate Leaders Awards

	<p>6.1 Encourage all schools to take part in the Climate Leaders Awards as this is announced by the DFE</p> <p>6.2 Set an aspirational target for the number of awards gained across the Trust once the scheme is understood</p> <p>6.3 Set an aspirational target for the number of awards gained across the Trust once the scheme is understood</p>	<p>2024/25</p> <p>2025/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% of all schools to take part in the Climate Leaders Awards ▪ 100% of all schools to take part in the Climate Leaders Awards
7 - Estates	<p>7.1 Improve data collection and analysis including the deployment of smart energy meters at every site</p> <p>7.2 Set year on year short and near-term CAST Estates wide SECR reduction targets</p> <p>7.3 Work with all schools to set individual Year on Year short & near term SECR reduction targets</p>	<p>2023/24</p> <p>2024/25</p> <p>2025/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SECR (Scope 1&2) 10% reduction against 2022 baseline ▪ 25% of Schools to have Smart Meters installed ▪ SECR (Scope 1&2) 20% reduction against 2022 baseline ▪ 100% of Schools to have Smart Meters installed ▪ SECR (Scope 1&2) 25% reduction against 2022 baseline ▪ Independently verified Science Based Targets to be set
8 - Procurement	<p>8.1 Initial carbon footprint baseline for all Scope 3 procurement activities</p> <p>8.2 Improve data collection and analysis across the top ten procurement activities by spend</p> <p>8.3 Introduce sustainability considerations into the CAST finance policy and develop a standalone sustainable procurement policy and guidelines</p> <p>8.4 Provide Carbon Awareness Training and support for all budget holders and procurement staff</p> <p>8.5 Include sustainability criteria in all procurement activities</p> <p>8.6 Include sustainability criteria in all performance management regimes for service and supply contracts</p>	<p>2023/24</p> <p>2024/25</p> <p>2025/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of a new Sustainability section in the CAST finance policy and a standalone Sustainability Procurement policy ▪ 30% of Procurement activities including Sustainability Criteria & KPIs ▪ Initial carbon footprint baseline ▪ 75% of Procurement activities including Sustainability Criteria & KPIs ▪ 100% of Procurement activities including Sustainability Criteria & KPIs ▪ Updated and accurate baseline carbon footprint and setting of near-term Science Based Targets
9 – Food & Catering	<p>9.1 Use the lessons learned from the recent Catering Carbon Footprint Pilot project to improve data collection and analysis across all service providers</p> <p>9.2 Use the lessons learned from the recent Catering Carbon Footprint Pilot project to make improvements to all catering services and agree a 10/5 year on year reduction target</p> <p>9.3 Calculate a baseline footprint for all catering services and introduce a three-year, third-party assessment process to measure, track and verify progress</p> <p>9.4 Develop a plan to achieve 0% food waste going to landfill</p>	<p>2023/24</p> <p>2024/25</p> <p>2025/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calculate a Trust wide and individual school food and catering carbon footprint ▪ Agree a 10% year on year reduction target with all schools and catering service providers ▪ 10% year on year emissions reduction across all catering services ▪ 75% reduction in food waste going to landfill ▪ 10% year on year emissions reduction across all catering services

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set Science Based near- term targets ▪ 100% reduction in food waste going to landfill
10 - Biodiversity	10.1 Initial biodiversity baseline and trust wide management plan 10.2 Improve data collection and analysis across all sites 10.3 Introduce sustainability considerations into all grounds maintenance regimes 10.4 All Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity & School Grounds Topics 10.5 All schools to register for the NENP	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial biodiversity baseline and trust wide management plan. ▪ 90% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity Topic ▪ 90% of Schools to sign up for the NENP programme
		2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in biodiversity over the baseline – target to be set in 23/24 ▪ 95% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity Topic ▪ 50% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – School Grounds Topic ▪ 95% of Schools to sign up for the NENP programme
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in biodiversity over the baseline – Target to be set in 24/25 ▪ Near term and long-term targets set ▪ 100% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity Topic ▪ 100% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – School Grounds Topic ▪ 100% of Schools to sign up for the NENP programme
11 - Communication, Governance & Culture	11.1 Implement Eco Steering Groups 11.2 Implement cyclical reporting to Governors 11.3 Implement annual reporting to the public 11.4 Implement public awareness campaigns	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Form trust and school level Eco Steering Groups ● At end of Year 1 the trust level Eco Steering Group will provide the first annual report to the CAST Board of Directors ● At end of Year 1 the school level Eco Steering Groups will provide the first annual report to the Local CAST Boards ● The Trust will publish the Sustainability Policy and associated information on the CAST website together with the Annual Report ● Schools will publish the Sustainability Policy, Eco Schools, and Eco Council information on school websites together with the Annual Report
		2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trust and school level Eco Steering Groups ensure that a

			<p>termly sustainability report is included in the CEO's / Headteacher's Report to the CAST Board / Local CAST Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports to the Boards becomes established practise at the end of the year and are published on websites • Opportunities for celebrating and publicising milestones achieved are maximised
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAST considers opportunities to engage in public awareness raising campaigns to share knowledge and learning acquired and become a beacon of good practise.

Section 2 - CAST Sustainable Estates, Energy, Water & Biodiversity

2.1 Background & Commitment

Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust consisting of thirty-four Catholic schools and one nursery. Our organisation operates across three counties, encompassing a diverse range of buildings with varying conditions. In our commitment towards sustainability and environmental stewardship, we have implemented numerous initiatives and strategies to address key areas of focus.

Electricity Supply

To reduce our carbon footprint, Plymouth CAST has adopted electricity supply contracts that source 100% renewable energy accompanied by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGOs). By prioritising renewable sources, we aim to support the transition to a cleaner and greener energy sector.

Efficient Heating Solutions

Recognising the environmental impact of fossil fuels, we have embarked upon a project to replace the most inefficient gas heating systems within our buildings. These replacements will utilise non-fossil fuel solutions, promoting sustainability and reducing our reliance on traditional energy sources.

Data-Driven Decision Making

CAST places a strong emphasis on data collection, accuracy, and utilisation in strategic decision-making processes. By incorporating sustainability data, we can effectively inform our estates' priorities and make informed decisions regarding energy consumption and resource management.

Change in Management Practices

We have already implemented several measures to drive sustainability within our estates. This includes adopting new management practices that leverage sustainability data to inform decision-making processes. By aligning our priorities with sustainability goals, we aim to improve the overall environmental performance of our buildings and estate.

Energy and Carbon Savings

To fund sustainability initiatives, we have utilised annual capital maintenance funding and reserves. Through collaborative partnerships with organisations such as the TDA and HDS Decarbonisation, we will leverage lease finance options that allow savings over time to contribute to the upfront capital investment. This approach will enable us to make energy and carbon-saving measures financially viable and sustainable in the long run.

Grant Applications and Projects

CAST has achieved success in 2022 – 2023 by securing a grant through the Salix PSDS (Public Sector Decarbonization Scheme). This grant has enabled us to implement a project aimed at reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions for St. Mary's Primary School in Penzance.

SECR Intensity Ratio

We have focused on consistently driving down our Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) intensity ratio year after year. Through ongoing efforts and the implementation of sustainable practices, we strive to reduce our environmental impact and demonstrate continuous improvement in our energy efficiency performance.

Water Conservation

In line with our commitment to sustainability, we are actively exploring strategies to promote water conservation within our estates. Details regarding our water-saving initiatives and their impact will be discussed further in this document.

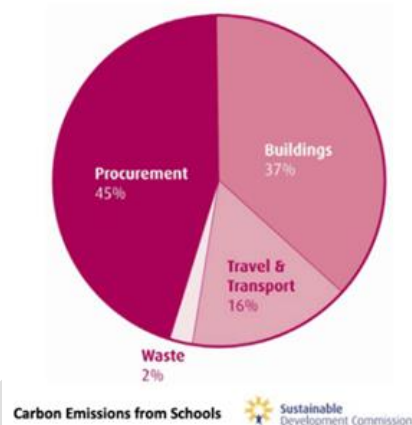
Biodiversity and Grounds Maintenance

Our journey towards environmental stewardship also extends to biodiversity conservation and grounds maintenance. Although these efforts are in the early stages, we are dedicated to implementing measures that support biodiversity and enhance the overall ecological balance of our estates.

By prioritising sustainability and responsible resource management, CAST aims to be a role model in fostering a greener and more environmentally conscious educational community.

2.2 Sustainability Context

The UK's built environment is responsible for 25% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. The Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) warned in May 2022, that to date there has been a lack of Government impetus or policy levers to assess and reduce these emissions. In an education and school's context then the carbon contribution from buildings is typically around 40% of the total carbon footprint and so clearly very significant.



The accepted norm is that up to 15% of the energy consumption related to the management and use of buildings can be saved through changes to behaviour and through the use and automation of better control systems.

Water use in schools is an area that historically has not received much in the way of focus, however as water resources become scarcer, each litre of water becomes more precious, and each litre consumed carries a carbon footprint. Careful water management, together with an education programme, has shown that water use in schools can be reduced significantly (in some cases by as much as 25%) and when a large secondary school might be spending as much as £20,000 per year on water there not only a is a clear environmental gain in consuming less but a clear financial gain also.

In a wider sustainability context then, biodiversity and well-functioning ecosystems are critical for human existence, economic prosperity, and a good quality of life. They play an important role in providing food, energy, shelter, and medicines; sustaining water and soil quality; regulating the Earth's climate; and providing opportunities for recreation, recuperation, and inspiration. For many people nature also has deep intrinsic value itself, and yet, measures show biodiversity is declining at a faster rate than at any time in human history.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. The State of Nature report (Environmental audit Committee June 2021) has shown that since the 1970s 41 per cent of all UK species surveyed have declined, while 15 per cent of species within the UK are said to be threatened with extinction. The abundance of the species of greatest conservation concern; the UK's priority species, have declined by 60 per cent.

In response to this the DFE, in partnership with the Natural History Museum, is due to launch a national programme during the academic year 2023 - 2024 to support all education settings and schools to improve the biodiversity of their grounds and provide hands on opportunities for students to engage with and learn more about nature.

2.3 Approach & Implementation

We will use the principles and priorities set out in section 1 of this strategy document, along with DFE guidance and internationally recognised conventions such as the Green House Gas Protocol to develop and deliver our Estates Sustainability Strategy. We have a new Estates Strategic Vision that will be completed by the end of this academic year, and this align with the short term (2024 - 2025), near term (2032) and long term (2050) sustainability goals and horizons outlined in this strategy document.

Energy

From an Energy perspective we will continue to procure 100% renewable electricity supply contracts using Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) in the short term, and proactively explore the options and opportunities at a local and national level for contracting directly with Renewable Energy Providers through Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). We are aware that Plymouth University has entered just such a PPA agreement, for example. We will also look to install as much on site generation of electricity as possible, for example by expanding our use of solar PV.

We will proactively explore all options for sourcing the most sustainably and ethically produced gas and wherever possible and economically viable, we will look to move away from using gas as the primary source of heating our schools.

Energy Data

We have a good level of accurate annual energy consumption data for all schools and the Trust overall. However, only a small percentage of our schools have SMART electricity or gas meters that would provide half hourly consumption data which is useful in providing a more granular level of data for developing decarbonisation plans, fine tuning control systems and energy saving management practices. Consequently, upgrading all our meters to be SMART is one of our goals and currently a deliverable of the existing energy supply contract.

Another source of data and control is provided by our Building Management Systems (BMS) which we have in operational in approximately 58% of our schools. These allow us to centrally monitor, control and manage key building systems including heating, ventilation, water, and other systems. The data these systems provide is invaluable in understanding energy consumption trends, faults, technical issues, and system problems and therefore react in real time or over time to rectify and maximise our operational energy efficiency. Increasing the coverage of BMS into many more of schools and their use to monitor, automate and control a greater number of systems is a core part of near- and longer-term strategies.

Through the digitisation of our buildings into the Revit CAD software platform and the use of Power BI we are increasingly able to bring all our energy, buildings, condition, and usage data together to be able to analyse and fine tune our day to day and strategic management planning. This we believe is an important part of ensuring we can meet the challenge of reducing our Scopes 1 & 2 building related SECR Year on Year.

Energy Saving Measures (ESMs)

Currently we have Heat Decarbonisation Plans (HDP) for approximately 20% of our schools; our goal is to reach 100% as quickly as possible. Each HDP will provide information on the status and performance of the building fabric, lighting, windows, insulation, heating,

ventilation, and control systems. The plan should identify possible Energy Savings Measures (ESM) that the Trust could consider, including the retrofitting of renewables to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

For each potential ESM there should be an energy and carbon savings calculation, estimated cost and return on investment. It should also highlight any interdependencies and a logical sequence of investment including achievable short-term gains and longer-term projects. Once the Trust and schools have the survey information and HDP this information can be used to develop a 'Whole School' approach to maintenance, operations and investment and use this information in its grant applications.

One key ESM that will significantly reduce electricity consumption, and therefore carbon emissions, is the conversion of all lights and lighting systems to a more energy efficient LED solution, including intelligent control systems wherever possible to maximise the energy savings. Therefore, an important part of the short-term estate sustainability plan is to conduct a pilot LED lighting project for two schools by the end of 2023 and to incorporate the lessons learned into an estate-wide replacement programme starting in 2024. A co-benefit of this lighting project will be an improved teaching and learning environment as the quality of light will also be designed to suit the environment.

Another area of focus will be Information Technology (IT). Typically, in an education setting, IT can contribute as much as 40% of all electricity consumption and of this nearly 30 per cent of the electricity consumed by IT is consumed out of hours – either at night, at weekends, or during the holidays.

Therefore, as part of its ongoing strategic IT planning, the Trust should carry out a detailed sustainability review of its entire IT provision and develop a comprehensive IT management plan, ensuring that wherever possible energy efficiency is designed into the procurement, deployment, and management of all systems. This plan should ensure that all energy saving features are utilised and policies and processes are put in place including user training, to ensure that energy use is minimised.

Behaviour change

Through the Eco Schools programme, and in particular the Energy topic, we hope to work with our schools to realise up to 15% potential savings that can be unlocked through greater awareness and behaviour change. We will also explore the potential benefits to be gained by our schools signing up for, and working with, the DFE funded and approved 'Energy Sparks' programme. This is a service (currently free) that helps schools to become more energy efficient via the use of an online, school-specific energy analysis tool and energy education programme (<https://energysparks.uk>)

Funding

In addition to our annual capital maintenance grants, we will continue to have a rolling programme of annual grant applications targeting 3 x priority schools. Applications are focused on the following available schemes: -

- The Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) that provides grants for public sector bodies to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures. (We will be applying in September 2023 when the PSDS3C application window opens)

- The National Lottery - with the help of specialists we are also exploring National Lottery grant funding for solar and renewable schemes.

Water

Water management is a new area of focus for the Trust. 2 schools have BMS systems which actively record water consumption, but in all other schools it is a manual process to read and record consumption.

We acknowledge that the first task is to understand current consumption levels and as such we will look to gather and consolidate the consumption data for all our schools over the course of the 2023 - 2024 academic year. We will also engage specialist support to help produce a baseline carbon footprint and explore the most cost-effective ways of carrying out a comprehensive water audit at every site and automating the data collection at every site.

Once we have the data, we will develop a consumption reduction plan including goals and targets at both trust level and for each school. We will also reassess our options for water providers and select the provider that we believe has the best sustainability credentials and offers the best level of service and sustainability support.

Through the Eco Schools programme and the water topic, we will work closely with our schools to raise awareness, change behaviours, and promote the efficient use of water resources to minimise waste.

We will encourage our schools to adopt water-efficient technologies and practices wherever possible and support them in raising awareness about water conservation, sustainable water practices, and the importance of water stewardship among staff, students, and our wider community.

We will work collaboratively with our water provider and the DFE to collectively address water-related challenges and adaptation needs.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is another new area of focus for CAST. We understand that the first task is to understand the current health and biodiversity status of our estate and have commenced gathering all our estates and grounds maintenance management plans. We will look to gather and consolidate all available grounds data for all our schools over the course of the 2023/24 academic year. We will engage specialist support to help produce a high-level trust wide biodiversity management plan and explore the most cost-effective ways of carrying out a comprehensive estates wide survey to be able to produce a baseline biodiversity footprint.

We fully support and welcome the DFE's new National Education Nature Park (NENP) initiative in partnership with the Natural History Museum, which is designed to increase biodiversity across the entire UK education estate and will encourage all our schools to register and take part in the programme.

Through the Eco Schools programme and the Biodiversity and Schools Grounds topics, we will work closely with our schools to raise awareness and promote new management practices and develop an action plan to improve the health and biodiversity of all our schools' sites. These plans will aspire to deliver the following benefits:

- Year on year improvement in the health, biodiversity, and available habitats within our grounds
- Management practices that are 100% free from nitrogen-based fertiliser use
- Management practices that are 100% free from harmful chemical pesticides & herbicides
- Management practices that encourage the 100% use and growth of indigenous plant species.

At Trust level we will also explore the best ways of co-ordinating the way we deliver grounds maintenance to meet the twin aims of best value and increased biodiversity.

2.3 Goals, Objectives & Targets

As detailed in the guiding principles in section 1 of this document, we will develop meaningful and Science-Based Targets over a three-year period but have set the following aspirational goals as a starting point:

- **Long Term** – CAST Estate to be operationally NetZero % by 2037
- **Near Term** – Reduction in Scope 1 & 2 SECR intensity rating Year on Year – 2032 Target to be set by no later than the end of the 2024/25 Academic Year
- **Short Term Goals** – as detailed in the table below.

Goal	Details & Description	Year	Measure or Target
Estates & Energy			
1 - Data	1.5 Data specification, capture and reporting methodologies assessed and verified by specialist third party. 1.6 Accurate Carbon Footprint baseline for scopes 1 & 2 at both Trust and individual School level. 1.7 Improved Data collection, Data quality & Data Analytics. 1.8 Establish accurate and verified systems to monitor, measure, track, and report on our progress.	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a detailed data review and data improvement plan • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1 & 2 (DFE compliant) • 10% reduction in SECR Scope 1 & 2 intensity rating at Trust level from 2022 baseline • 60% of schools reporting accurate data via a BMS system • 25% of schools having SMART meters installed. • 25% of schools evidencing energy consumption savings through behaviour change
		2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1 & 2 (DFE compliant) • 20% reduction in SECR Scope 1 & 2 intensity rating at Trust level from 2022 baseline • 70% of schools reporting accurate data via a BMS system • 100% of schools having SMART meters installed. • 75% of schools evidencing energy consumption savings through behaviour change
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% accurate & verified SECR Scopes 1 & 2 (DFE compliant)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% reduction in SECR Scope 1 & 2 intensity rating at trust level from 2022 baseline • SECR (Scope 1&2) Independently verified Science Based Targets to be set at trust level and for individual schools. • 90% of schools reporting accurate data via a BMS system • 100% of schools accurately reporting consumption data via smart meters • 100% of schools evidencing energy consumption savings through behaviour change
2 - Energy Saving Measures	3.5 Develop and maintain a Decarbonisation plan for all CAST schools and sites.	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a current Decarbonisation plan for 30% of all CAST schools and sites. • Develop whole school decarbonisation action plans for 30% of all schools including building fabric, lighting, windows, insulation, heating, ventilation, and control systems. • LED replacement pilot completed, and an estate wide programme developed. • A comprehensive IT management plan including an energy consumption baseline and energy efficiency and sustainability targets and measures
	3.6 Develop whole school decarbonisation action plans for all CAST schools including building fabric, lighting, windows, insulation, heating, ventilation, and control systems.		
	3.7 LED replacement programme developed and implemented across all CAST schools.		
	3.8 The development of a comprehensive IT management plan including an energy consumption baseline and energy efficiency and sustainability targets and measures	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a current Decarbonisation plan for 60% of all CAST schools and sites. • Develop whole school decarbonisation action plans for 60% of all schools including building fabric, lighting, windows, insulation, heating, ventilation, and control systems. • LED replacement in 50% of all CAST schools • 25% reduction in IT energy consumption compared to 2023 baseline.
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a current Decarbonisation plan for 100% of all CAST schools and sites. • Develop whole school decarbonisation action plans for 100% of all schools including building fabric, lighting, windows, insulation, heating, ventilation, and control systems. • LED replacement in 100% of all CAST schools • 35% reduction in IT energy consumption compared to 2023 baseline
3 - Water	3.9 Collect and collate water meter and consumption data from all schools.	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% schools - water consumption figures collected and collated. • Initial baseline and trust wide carbon footprint.
	3.10 Establish a 2023 baseline consumption and carbon footprint.	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% schools water audits completed and assessed. • Assess water provider options

	<p>3.11 Carry out water audits at every school.</p> <p>3.12 Support all schools to develop a Water Use and Reduced Consumption action plan.</p> <p>3.13 Select the best water provider to meet service quality and sustainability requirements</p>	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% schools to complete the Eco Schools Water topic. • 100% Schools to have a water reduction action plan in place. • Select the best water provider to partner with in each region. • An accurate CAST wide system implemented for reporting water consumption and tracking progress against targets
4 - Biodiversity	<p>4.1 Initial biodiversity baseline and trust wide management plan.</p> <p>4.2 Improve data collection and analysis across all sites.</p> <p>4.3 Introduce sustainability considerations into all ground's maintenance regimes.</p>	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial biodiversity baseline and trust wide management plan. • 90% of Schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity Topic • 90% of Schools to sign up for the NENP programme. • Introduction of sustainability considerations into Grounds Maintenance plans for every school
	<p>4.4 All schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity & School Grounds topics</p> <p>4.5 All schools to register for the NENP.</p> <p>4.6 Establish a net positive plan for each school including woodland, wetland (where appropriate) and site wide biodiversity.</p>	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of schools to have a net positive biodiversity plan including woodland, wetland (where appropriate) and site wide biodiversity. ▪ Increase in biodiversity over the baseline – Target to be set in 23/24 ▪ 95% of schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity topic ▪ 50% of schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – School Grounds topic ▪ 95% of schools to sign up for the NENP programme. ▪ Introduction of sustainability considerations into Grounds Maintenance plans for every school
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in biodiversity over the baseline – Target to be set in 24/25 ▪ Near term and long-term targets set ▪ 100% of schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – Biodiversity topic ▪ 100% of schools to Complete Eco Schools programme – School Grounds topic ▪ 100% of Schools to sign up for the NENP programme. ▪ Management practices that are 100% free from nitrogen-based fertiliser use ▪ Management practices that are 100% free from harmful chemical pesticides & herbicides ▪ Management practices that are encourage the 100% use and growth of indigenous plant species.

Section 3 - CAST Sustainable Procurement of Goods and Services

3.1 Background & Commitment

Plymouth CAST has two strategic goals that have shaped and guided how each school and the Trust procures its goods and services:

- **Goal 6.** *The Trust will provide a high-quality central service offer to enable school leaders to increasingly focus on their core educational purpose.*
- **Goal 8.** *Effective and efficient governance structures will be refined to provide a robust framework to ensure that expectations of governance are aligned across central and Local CAST Boards.*

In a procurement context this has meant that over time the Trust's central procurement team has taken on more ownership for procuring and managing central contracts on behalf of, or in support of, each school.

CAST is also focussed on Strategic Goal 9:

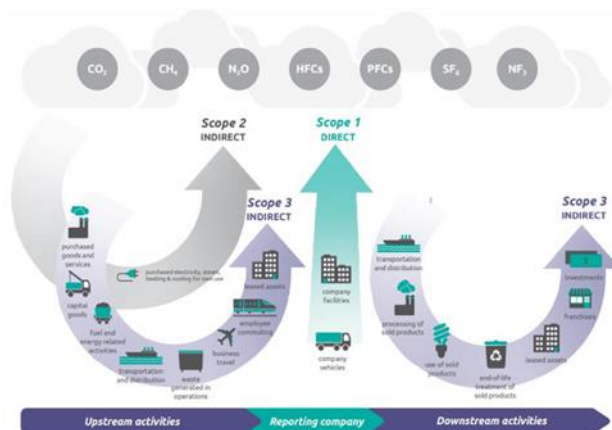
- **Goal 9.** *Minimise the Trust's impact on the environment through year-on-year reductions in its carbon footprint towards net Zero, and to implement sustainability within the curriculum through the embedding of Laudato Si.*

In support of Goal 9, CAST is now looking to introduce sustainability thinking into all procurement processes, no matter how large or small. Whereas sustainability criteria have clearly been part of many procurement decisions across the Trust, there are no formal or consistent procurement or financial guidelines, processes, or policies currently in place to ensure that sustainability considerations form part of the decision-making process.

3.2 Sustainability Context

Procurement tends to represent the biggest component of an organisation's 'Scope 3' carbon footprint (Typically over 50% in an education setting). Inevitably, the choices of product and services that are made, and the levels of consumption that this facilitates, can have a far reaching and global impact, whilst these choices also tend to receive the least amount of scrutiny, focus and attention.

In the specific context of CAST a recent project (entered into as part of the performance management regime for the recent Catering Contract) to determine the carbon footprint of our food and catering services in twelve of our schools, revealed that their combined catering related carbon emissions exceeded the total, combined emissions from the buildings of all of our schools!



Scope 3 emissions often receive a lack of focus as they are notoriously difficult to measure and track, however the CAST procurement team have shown that this need not be the case as the recent Catering Contract has demonstrated.

3.3 Approach & Implementation

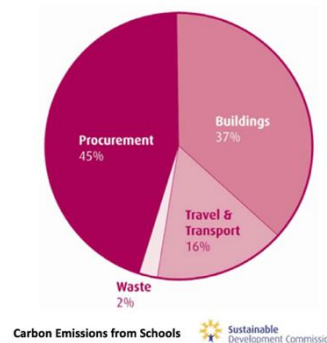
CAST is committed to procuring goods, services and works responsibly and in a way that enhances and protects our environment, economy, and society. We will use the principles and priorities set out in section 1 of this strategy document, along with DFE guidance and internationally recognised conventions such as the Green House Gas Protocol to develop and deliver our Procurement Sustainability Strategy.

We will include short-term (2024 - 2025), near-term (2032) and long-term (2050) sustainability goals and horizons and develop a procurement policy and set of guidelines to be used in every buying decision, however large or small. To enable this, we will ensure that:

1. Social, environmental, and economic considerations in the purchase of all bought goods and services will be adopted across the Trust. This will ensure that purchasing practices include considering a whole-life basis in terms of generating benefits, not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to environmental, social, and ethical issues.
2. Sustainability criteria & guidelines will be agreed and added into the Finance Policy, and in particular sections 9, 17.3 & Appendices B & D, making sure that these are aligned with this Sustainability Strategy.
3. Sustainability criteria and guidelines will apply to all staff to ensure everyone embeds environmental and sustainability features into procurement decisions consistently and uniformly, and to encourage supplier behaviour to help us achieve our sustainability objectives.
4. The Trust will equip purchasing decision-makers with the carbon skills necessary to influence tenders and contracts and encourage them to share good practice, and report progress. Therefore, all staff involved in procurement will be given the opportunity to attend a Carbon Literacy training course.

We will introduce an updated Finance Policy alongside a new Procurement Policy and guidelines during the academic year 2023 - 2024 and provide staff training and support over the course of the first two terms to help embed these new policies.

The new CAST Sustainability Procurement guidelines will support the delivery of the CAST Sustainability Strategy 2023, *Laudato Si*, UN Sustainability Goals, the DFE Sustainability Strategy 2022, as well as reinforcing our other strategic priorities and strategies, including those relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion.



The goal will be to procure goods and services in ways that maximise efficiency and effectiveness while minimising social and environmental impacts and risks. Therefore, all procurement decisions however large or small will include the following principles:

- Sustainable procurement considerations should be proactive rather than reactive to drive change and demand the highest possible sustainability standards from suppliers/supply chains.
- All procurement evaluation criteria should include sustainability criteria, have a significant evaluation weighting and '£ cost-evaluation' criteria should be clearly defined to include absolute and whole-life cost elements.

The new Procurement Policy and guidelines are currently under development with a plan to have these agreed and signed off by the end of the academic year 2023 - 2024.

We will seek specialist support to help produce an estimated 'Scope 3 including procurement' carbon footprint in the academic year 2023 - 2024 and then embark on a longer-term programme of capturing more detailed and accurate data in a small number of key areas each year until we have established a complete and accurate carbon footprint.

It is noted that the scope and depth of the policy objectives incur a significant commitment to developing new areas of workplace focus which the Trust does not currently undertake. It will be essential to make adequate staffing resource available within the Trust's Operations Team to ensure that our policy objectives progress without detracting from our business-as-usual operations and our Trust's commitment to the wider strategic aims and goals.

3.4 Goals, Objectives & Targets

As detailed in the guiding principles in section 1 of this document, we will develop meaningful and Science-Based Targets over a three-year period but have set the following aspirational goals as a starting point:

- **Long-Term** – 75% Scope 3 Net Zero by 2037
- **Near-Term** – Year on Year Scope 3 reduction in Carbon emissions – 2032 Target to be set by no later than the end of the 2025/26 Academic Year
- **Short-Term Goals** – as detailed in the table below.

Goal	Details & Description	Year	Measure/Target
1 - Data	<p>1.9 Data specification, capture and reporting methodologies assessed and verified by specialist third party.</p> <p>1.10 An initial estimated Scope 3 Carbon Footprint baseline at both Trust and individual School level refined over a three-to-four-year period.</p>	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a detailed data review and data improvement plan • An initial estimated Scope 3 Carbon Footprint baseline at both Trust and individual School level

	<p>1.11 Improved Data collection, Data quality & Data Analytics</p> <p>1.12 Establish accurate and verified systems to monitor, measure, track, and report on our progress</p>	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate carbon footprints for Food & Catering, Cleaning & Paper & Print • Near-term targets set for Food & Catering, Cleaning & Paper & Print
		2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate carbon footprints for Travel, Water & Stationary/Consumables • Near-term targets set for Travel, Water & Stationary/Consumables
2 - Policies	2.1 Initial carbon footprint baseline for all Scope 3 procurement activities	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction of a new Sustainability section in the CAST Finance Policy and a standalone Sustainability Procurement Policy ▪ 30% of procurement activities to include sustainability criteria & KPIs
	2.2 Improve data collection and analysis across the top ten procurement activities by spend.		
	2.3 Introduce sustainability considerations into the CAST Finance Policy and develop a standalone Sustainable Procurement Policy and guidelines.	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 75% of procurement activities to include sustainability criteria & KPIs
	2.4 Provide Carbon Awareness training and support for all budget holders and procurement staff.	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of procurement activities to include sustainability criteria & KPIs ▪ Updated and accurate baseline carbon footprint and setting of near-term Science-Based Targets
	2.5 Include sustainability criteria in all procurement activities.		
	2.6 Include sustainability criteria in all performance management regimes for service and supply contracts.		
3 – Food & Catering	3.1 Use the lessons learned from the recent Catering Carbon Footprint Pilot project to improve data collection and analysis across all service providers.	2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calculate a Trust-wide and individual school food and catering carbon footprint. ▪ Agree a 10% year on year reduction target with all schools and catering service providers
	3.2 Use the lessons learned from the recent Catering Carbon Footprint Pilot project to make improvements to all catering services and agree a 10/5 year on year reduction target.	2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10% year on year emissions reduction across all catering services ▪ 75% reduction in food waste going to landfill
	3.3 Calculate a baseline footprint for all catering services and introduce a three-year, third-party assessment process to measure, track and verify progress.	2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10% year on year emissions reduction across all catering services ▪ Set Science Based near-term targets. ▪ 100% reduction in food waste going to landfill
	3.4 Develop a plan to achieve 0% food waste going to landfill.		

Section 4 - CAST Engaging and influencing staff & pupils.

4.1 Background & Commitment

We understand that our success in gaining stakeholder buy-in will contribute significantly to the overall success of this strategy and its environmental and social impact. We will therefore play an active role in engaging staff, governors, pupils & parents in sustainable behaviour change and ensure that achievements are celebrated at an individual, School and Trust level as we strive to embed long-lasting change.

An essential part of this strategy and the engagement with our staff and pupils will be the adoption of the Eco Schools programme in year 1 and subsequently the DFE, NENP, and Climate Leaders awards as they are launched later in 2023. We will develop a communications plan based around the steps required to:

- register and sign up all our schools to the Eco Schools programme.
- establish Eco Councils as part of the Eco Schools programme; and
- establish the CAST Eco Steering group and governance processes as detailed in section 1 of this strategy document.

We will also plan for a CAST Sustainability launch campaign to be timed for the first term of the new academic year and ongoing on an annual basis.

4.2 Proposed Sustainability & Net Zero Launch Event

Background

The September 2023 - 2024 intake of primary school children, and the Year 7 intake into our secondary schools will have up to seven years of Catholic education within a Plymouth CAST school. This will also leave the Trust with up to seven years to set and achieve several key sustainability targets by 2030.

In September 2023, the Trust will launch its sustainability strategy to the 2023 intake and will make pledges to improve schools transforming them into more sustainable and environmentally friendly spaces by the time they leave in 2030.

Implementation

During the Autumn Term 2023, we will support all our schools to sign up and take part in the Eco Schools programme and we will hold our first annual Trust-wide Environmental & Sustainability Conference. We will invite representatives from each school to attend the conference and the representatives invited would consist of the following: -

- A foundation stage child just enrolled (or an Early Years Teacher to represent the reception children). For secondary schools, a Year 7 child would attend.
- A current year 6 child, or for secondary schools, a Year 11 and a Year 13 child would attend.
- The school's Headteacher or Senior Leader Sponsor.
- A school governor or the school's Eco Lead(s)'.

At the conference we will discuss strategy, share information, and set targets for the next 12 months. The Year 6, 11, and 13 children, supported by the school, will pick an Eco Schools project or task that the school will implement and maintain for that year. Everything to deliver that project will be provided by the Trust working in conjunction with Eco Schools.

At the following year's conference, the Headteacher or Senior Leader Sponsor, the governor, Eco Lead, and the former foundation child (now in Yr.1), or the former Year 7 child, now in Year 8, will again attend for consistency, along with a new Year 6 or Year 11 / 13 child representative. Reports on progress made in the previous 12 months will be given and celebrated, information will be shared, and a new project will be initiated by the Year 6 or Year 11 / 13 representative for the forthcoming year.

Legacy

This process then repeats itself for a further 5 years, leading up to the 2030 conference. At this conference, the former foundation child, now in Year 6, or the former Year 7 child, now in Year 11 /13 would attend along with a new foundation child or Year 7 child, where progress and achievements would be celebrated.

This would be an opportunity for the Year 6, 11, and 13 children to leave behind a legacy to the new intake and contribute to the improvement of the school environment and the implementation of Laudato Si'.

4.3 DFE Resources & links with the wider community

We will be collaborating with our external partners to access training and educational resources which can be accessed and utilised by our schools in addition to, and as part of, the flexible Eco Schools programme. For example, we can work with a Catholic partner such as CAFOD and CARITAS as they produce a wide range of educational documents to help us on the journey.

We will also keep a watching brief on the resources and support that is due to become available from the DFE towards the end of 2023. Each chosen Eco School topic area for the schools to implement will be linked to the schools' curricula wherever possible, so that our sustainability and educational aims align.

Where possible and relevant, further links to wider community and Parish projects will be explored in terms of further collaboration to support in all relevant sustainability and net-zero goals.

4.4 Media & Promotion

At the entrance to each school, there could be a display to publicise the project and the work that the school is doing for that year together with the goals, challenges, and achievements that they have faced along the journey.

Each school will utilise its website and social media accounts to promote and celebrate the achievements made and future ambitions in our drive for a sustainable school environment.

We will learn from, and build on, the successes of the community engagement aspects of the recent sustainability projects to fulfil our role as community sustainability leaders using a broad mix of media and signage.

In addition to the above engagement, communications will be shared on achievements made with parents/carers, the Diocesan network, local school communities and stakeholders.

4.5 Training Plan

We will develop a training plan, implemented to help support and equip all staff with a higher level of carbon and sustainability awareness so that they can incorporate this into their everyday decision making. This will help lay the foundations for the cultural and behavioural changes necessary to achieve a Sustainable Trust.

The Carbon Literacy Project have developed an accredited training course specifically for School and Academy Trust operational and senior leaders. This course is typically a five-hour online self-directed learning CPD commitment, plus a 3 hour on-line or in person workshop that is designed to provide an education context and practical advice for all school leaders, so they are better prepared to meet the decarbonisation challenges in their schools. Each delegate will receive a Carbon Literacy Project Certificate and the course can be tailored to support and reinforce the specific aims and goals of the CAST NetZero programme. It will create a common understanding, common language and a greater awareness of the Trust wide challenges and the plans to meet those challenges and hopefully inspire a sense of urgency to help overcome the biggest barrier of all inertia.

“This enFrame course is fantastic, very detailed and well thought out. Learners will benefit from the blend of self-guided learning and the final workshop/webinar. This course has included all details, with the relevant information for the location and the sector, focusing on how educational leaders can educate students on the climate emergency. I think this course will be very beneficial to both leaders and the influence they will have on the people around them once they have completed the training.” Rebekah Clarke Carbon Literacy Project



The plan would be to run a CAST-specific course with an initial cohort as detailed in Sections 1, 2 & 3 of this strategy. Then a wider-cascaded training programme should be designed to spread carbon and sustainability awareness throughout the organisation and become included in the usual Induction process for new starters.

It is noted that the scope and depth of this area policy objectives will require a dedicated training budget. Further, it will be essential to make adequate staffing resource available within the Trust’s Operations Team to ensure that our policy objectives progress without detracting from our business-as-usual operations and our Trust’s commitment to the wider strategic aims and goals.

Annexe A - CAST Sustainability Strategy Delivery Budget

The following table is a proposal for additional funding required to deliver the aims and goals of this policy.

Annexe A - CAST Sustainability Strategy Delivery Budget	Unit £	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	Notes
Extra in-house resource & support (Graduate including on costs)	N/A	£45,000	£46,350	£47,741	£49,173	Required to provide the additional support and focus that the CAST central team will need in the delivery of the sustainability strategy.
Communications - Launch/PR/Signage/Web	N/A	£7,500	£17,000	£17,000	£5,000	Funding for the initial launch in academic year 23/24 and to deliver a CAST communication plan, including school signage
Third party data review & SECR Verification	£500	£2,500	£1,500	£500	£500	Required to ensure accuracy and efficacy of CAST data and reporting
Data - Third Party - Baseline calculations, Target setting & ISO	£2,500	£12,500	£15,000	£18,000	£5,000	Required to ensure accuracy and efficacy of CAST baseline data
Data - Power BI development	£750	£5,000	£5,000	£2,500	£1,500	Required to help link and analyse data for improved management decision making and reporting
Carbon Reporting Software Platform	£25,000				£25,000	Implemented in year 3 or 4 as per the strategy and as the CAST data sets are collected and increase in accuracy
CLP (Carbon Awareness) Training	£190	£7,600	£2,850	£1,900	£1,520	Carbon awareness training delivered in line with the strategy
3e Lead Consultancy Support (in addition to current proposal CAST-	£500	£12,000	£4,995	£4,995	£4,995	To support the CAST team in developing and delivering the strategy
Eco Schools	£200	£6,800	£6,800	£6,800	£6,800	Green Flag application fee for all schools
		£98,900	£99,495	£99,436	£99,488	