



Sustainability Strategy – First Steps 2023-26

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Version Control	Last reviewed and updated	by
Version 0.1	27/09/2023	Plymouth CAST
Version 1.0	06/10/2023	Plymouth CAST Board - Approved

Section 1 - CAST Overarching Sustainability Strategy

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.

Section 2 – CAST's First Steps

Advancing Towards Comprehensive Policy Implementation

In the pursuit of our shared vision to reduce our impact upon the environment, we acknowledge the prevailing financial challenges and operational constraints that stand before us as we aspire to introduce our comprehensive policy framework.

With a sense of purpose and determination, we affirm our commitment to the task at hand, understanding that the road to change is often met with hurdles. We embark on the initial steps of a pragmatic action plan which aims to build solid foundations and actively seek innovative and sustainable solutions, all the while remaining conscious of the budgetary constraints that govern our actions.

To this end, we are resolved to set in motion the initial phases of our action plan—a plan that is not only realistic but can also be adaptive. It takes into account our existing operational limitations, while simultaneously providing the flexibility to evolve and expand as circumstances permit.

Our commitment is not merely a statement; it is a pledge to work tirelessly towards our objectives.

Initial Areas of Focus

We envisage that we can proactively embark upon our activities and crucially momentum build through initially focussing on the following areas:

- 1- **Schools/Curriculum** - supporting all schools to sign up to the Eco Schools Programme
- 2- **Schools/Curriculum** - supporting all schools to sign up to the National Education Nature Park
- 3- **Buildings & Estate** - within CAST Operation Team's bandwidth and planned activities
- 4- **Procurement** - within CAST Operation Team's bandwidth and planned activities
- 5- **Reporting** – introducing reporting structure within CAST Operation Team's bandwidth and planned activities

Annexe A - CAST Sustainability Strategy Delivery Budget – First Steps

The following table is a proposal for funding the initial actions in support of our policy aims and goals.

Annexe A - PCAST Sustainability Strategy Delivery Budget (First Steps)	Unit £	23-24	24-25	25-26	Notes
Third party data review & SECR Verification	£500	£2,500	£1,500	£500	<i>Required to ensure accuracy and efficacy of PCAST data and reporting</i>
Data - Third Party - Baseline calculations, Target setting & ISO Accreditation Support	£2,500	£7,500	£7,500	£10,000	<i>Required to ensure accuracy and efficacy of PCAST baseline data</i>
Data - Power BI development	£750	£5,000	£5,000	£2,500	<i>Required to help link and analyse data for improved management decision making and reporting</i>
CLP (Carbon Awareness) Training	£190	£950	£950	£950	<i>Carbon awareness training delivered in line with the strategy</i>
3e Lead Consultancy Support	£500	£4,995	£4,995	£4,995	<i>To support the PCAST team in developing and delivering the strategy</i>
Eco Schools	£200	£6,800	£6,800	£6,800	<i>Green Flag application fee for all schools</i>
		£27,745	£26,745	£25,745	