



# THE PERSE SCHOOL CAMBRIDGE

## Environmental Sustainability Policy

MAY 2023





## About Us

The Perse School is a co-educational day school for children aged 3-18. Our aim is for every pupil to share a love for learning while developing a character of kindness and understanding towards one another and the environment. We value **intellectual curiosity and scholarship, endeavour, breadth and balance**, and **one another and the environment**. As a school, we are shaped by our values and believe that every student should be taught the importance of looking after each other and the environment around them. The future belongs to our students, with their actions impacting future generations to come. It is therefore imperative that we are visionaries, always looking forward as we shape the education we provide, equipping pupils with the knowledge and tools necessary to become responsible global citizens committed to sustainable development.

## Sustainable Development at The Perse School

As an educational institution, we have a responsibility to lead by example and ensure we are doing our best to protect the environment, mitigate against, and adapt to climate change. At the Perse we are committed to driving sustainable development and behaving in environmentally responsible ways.

This Environmental Sustainability Policy allows us to communicate our key sustainability commitments and the principles, which enable us to prioritise sustainable choices.

We believe that each of us play a vital part in creating a kind and considerate community, not just for us as individuals, but for the flora and fauna that make up our local and wider environment. It is important that both our staff and students understand the importance of looking after the world around them, and act to make positive changes that will impact future generations for the better.

A range of sustainability initiatives have already been implemented across our school grounds and buildings, and more will be implemented as we seek to improve our sustainability performance.

The Environmental Sustainability Policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure its continued relevance to all that we do.

## Strategic Areas of Focus: Alignment with the UN Sustainability Development Goals

The UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of seventeen sustainable development goals intended to enable global commitment to creating impact solutions and actions to challenges facing humanity across the globe. Since their creation and adaptation in 2015, governments, businesses and organisations of all shapes and sizes have increasingly adopted the SDGs and their indicators as part of their sustainability strategies.

The SDGs provide an opportunity to assess operational activities which have or can have a material impact for better or worse. At the Perse, we have identified five SDGs which have or can have the greatest impact, including providing *quality education*, encouraging *sustainable cities and communities*, promoting *responsible consumption and production*, taking *climate action*, and *protecting life on land*.



Provide our students with quality education on sustainability-related issues and topics to equip them with the awareness and knowledge needed to make sustainable choices and become responsible global citizens.



Improve our buildings by improving their sustainability performance and providing our staff and students with less carbon intensive commuting and travel options.



Prioritise goods and services with transparent sustainability standards and credentials and low environmental impact. Prioritise reuse, recycle and recover for physical products where feasible, before opting for safe disposal when necessary.



Reduce the school's carbon and wider environmental impacts through improving our buildings' energy and water performance, and reducing our reliance on fossil-based fuels for heating and transportation.



Improve the biodiversity of our sites through the repurposing of grounds to accommodate wildlife and green areas, reducing the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, and the implementation of other nature and biodiversity-promoting projects.

## Environmental Sustainability Principles

Building upon these five SDGs we have identified eight principles which underpin the School's environmental targets and action plan. The principles are:

- Reduce the environmental and carbon impact of our school buildings, using sustainable and energy efficient designs and materials for new builds and refurbishments.
- Promote sustainable and low-carbon modes of transport, including moving the school owned fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles.
- Reduce the environmental impact of our procurement practices, through careful selection of suppliers of goods and services.
- Reduce waste, promoting the importance of 'reduce, reuse, recover, and recycle'.
- Reduce water usage by adopting sustainable water practices.
- Reduce the environmental impact of school food, including sourcing local and seasonal ingredients and promoting dishes with a lower carbon footprint.
- Improve biodiversity and wildlife habitat across the school grounds by adopting sustainable land management practices.
- Provide up-to date and relevant education on sustainable development to staff and students at the Perse.

## **Sustainability Targets and Action Plan**

The eight environmental sustainability principles form the basis of environmental targets adopted by the school. These targets are set out at Appendix 1.

Progress against the targets, and the appropriateness of those targets, will be reviewed annually and impact will be measured.

## **Governor, Staff and Pupil Involvement**













Progress requires a shared vision and commitment from Governors, staff and pupils.







Governors will review the Environmental Sustainability policy on an annual basis, and the Board's Finance and General Purposes Committee will receive annual reports from the Bursar on the school's progress towards the agreed commitments and principles.





The Perse has created a Staff Sustainability Committee, chaired by the Bursar and comprising of individuals drawn from across the Upper, Prep and Pelican from a wide range of departments, to ensure the best representation possible. The Sustainability Committee is responsible for progressing the school's sustainability efforts, including reviewing the sustainability targets and action plan to ensure their relevancy and appropriateness as the school community works towards the agreed aims and objectives.





The Staff Committee in turn works alongside pupil eco leads – the Green Team at the Upper and the Eco Team at the Prep School. These pupil committees suggest initiatives and lead pupil engagement on matters relating to environmental sustainability.

## Appendix 1

Topic Area	KPI Indicator	Key actions	SDG
Carbon Emissions	Reduction in tCO <sub>2</sub> e (Scope 1 & 2) emissions intensity per sq. m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculate total sq. m of school buildings.</li> <li>- Annual calculation of total Scope 1 &amp; 2 emissions.</li> </ul>	
Energy Efficiency & Management	Reduction in kWh usage of electricity and gas per sq. m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gather baseline data, sq. m of buildings as at summer 2023 &amp; kWh consumption of gas &amp; electricity during 2022-23.</li> <li>- Establish action plan to drive down (i) electricity and (ii) gas consumption.</li> <li>- Repeat calculations on annual basis to measure progress towards target.</li> </ul>	 
	Year on year increase in the amount of energy generated within the school sites from renewable sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gather baseline data on kWh of electricity generated on the school site by renewable means.</li> <li>- Establish a plan to increase generation over time e.g., by installing additional solar panels.</li> </ul>	 
Building Certifications and Efficiency	Achieve EPC rating of 'C' or above for all school-owned buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All buildings to be assessed &amp; EPC rating confirmed.</li> <li>- Identify where improvements required &amp; establish a costed plan of works.</li> </ul>	 
	Achieve BREEAM Excellent for the new pool & sports centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with SWH to achieve the accreditation.</li> </ul>	 
Transportation	Reduction in the number of pupils & staff travelling to school by car, per annum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-establish annual travel survey of staff &amp; pupils.</li> <li>- Gather benchmark data summer term 2023 for annual comparison.</li> <li>- Identify actions to encourage changes in pupil &amp; staff mode of transport away from single occupancy car &amp; towards car sharing/public transport/walking/cycling.</li> </ul>	 
	Transition the school-owned fleet to electric vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider electric or hybrid each time a school owned vehicle (minibus or van) is due for renewal.</li> </ul>	

	Increase in passenger numbers on School shuttle busses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote the use of the School busses.</li> <li>- Consider additional stops and additional routes where there is evidence of sufficient demand.</li> </ul>	
	Reduction per annum in the annual non-electric road mileage for school travel and trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculate benchmark milage and continue to calculate and monitor on a regular basis. <i>Note: measured as the annual milage where the school is transporting pupils on school-owned minibuses, or journeys undertaken on hired-in buses (petrol and diesel vehicles only).</i></li> <li>- Review of journeys taken with the aim of reducing where feasible, including by taking fewer larger vehicles to sport fixtures, or arranging fixtures closer to Cambridgeshire.</li> <li>- Use electric vehicles where possible when hiring buses for school travel.</li> </ul>	 
Sustainable Supplier Procurement	Reduce the environmental impact of goods & services purchased by the Perse, & promote the use of suppliers which demonstrate high environmental standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the sustainability credentials including carbon impact and environmental targets, of the School's top 50 suppliers by spend.</li> <li>- Consider appropriate metrics to apply in future when deciding which suppliers to use, &amp; a process for applying these metrics &amp; reviewing supplier choices.</li> </ul>	 
Water Management	Reduction in water usage across all buildings owned & occupied by the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure water consumption.</li> <li>- Monitor consumption patterns and identify trends and improvement potential.</li> <li>- Develop and implement action plan to reduce consumption.</li> </ul>	 
	Achieve maximum BREEAM water credits for the new pool & sports centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with SWH to achieve maximum BREEAM water efficiency credits.</li> <li>- Ongoing: monitor water usage of the new building post completion to ensure efficient systems are operating effectively.</li> </ul>	 
Waste Management	Reduction per annum, in volume of waste going to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure volume of rubbish going to landfill.</li> <li>- Identify what is being disposed of to landfill.</li> <li>- Develop and implement an action plan to reduce, reuse and recycle.</li> </ul>	  

	Food waste – reduction in kitchen and counter waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily monitoring of kitchen waste and counter waste by weight.</li> <li>- Develop and implement an action plan to reduce kitchen and counter waste.</li> </ul>	
	Food waste – reduction in plate waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily monitoring of plate waste by weight.</li> <li>- Develop and implement an action plan to reduce plate waste.</li> </ul>	
	Paper – reduction in number of printed pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recording of number of pages printed/ photocopied in School.</li> <li>- Develop and implement an action plan to reduce paper usage.</li> </ul>	
Sustainable Food	Increase the take up of lower carbon main course dishes, including plant-based options. (Upper only initially)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure the carbon footprint of main course meals at the Upper, and grade dished A-E with an associated carbon measurement.</li> <li>- Focus on menu planning and chef training to ensure lower carbon options, including plant-based meals, are tasty and appealing.</li> <li>- Ensure at least 1 meal out of 3 on offer each day is graded A/B (out of A-E).</li> <li>- Eliminate main course dishes graded E, through menu planning and adapting recipes.</li> </ul>	 
	Reduce the carbon footprint of main course meals produced at the Upper (Upper only initially)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measure the carbon footprint of main course meals, per portion.</li> <li>- Calculate the total carbon footprint of main course meals, given quantities produced.</li> <li>- Amend recipes where appropriate to reduce the carbon footprint of dishes, whilst ensuring flavour is retained &amp; pupil &amp; staff satisfaction scores remain high.</li> <li>- Promote to pupils and staff the benefits of sustainable food choices.</li> </ul>	 
Biodiversity and Habitat Conservation	Improve biodiversity at the Prep site, creating an improved habitat for a range of wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a butterfly garden.</li> <li>- Cultivate a wildflower area.</li> <li>- Reduce mowing around the edges of the sports fields and reduce hedge trimming to enhance habitat.</li> <li>- Monitor wildlife including through the use of trail cameras.</li> </ul>	
	Improve biodiversity at the Upper site, creating an improved habitat for a range of wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce bird and bat boxes and monitor usage.</li> <li>- Review planting in garden areas, introducing species which require reduced water and/or which attract wildlife.</li> <li>- Reduce the use of chemicals across the site.</li> <li>- Reduce mowing, leaving a border around sections of the site to provide improved habitat.</li> </ul>	

	Improve biodiversity at the Abington site by repurposing the far playing field (beyond the old carriage track) as a wildlife area/ green camping site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cease to use chemical pesticides or fertilisers on this grass area.</li> <li>- Reduce mowing and hedge trimming, to improve habitat.</li> <li>- Formulate a vision for the future of the plot, which will meet the educational needs of key stakeholders (PE &amp; games dept, PES) whilst supporting biodiversity.</li> <li>- Monitor changes in the biodiversity and wildlife presence.</li> </ul>	
ESG Recognition: Awards and Achievements	Prep Eco Team to target the Green Flag Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify requirements of the award.</li> <li>- Gap analysis to develop and implement action plan to achieve the award.</li> </ul>	
	Upper Green Team to target the Gold Eco School Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify requirements of the award.</li> <li>- Gap analysis to develop and implement action plan to achieve the award.</li> </ul>	
Student Education on Sustainability Topics	Increased awareness of, & understanding of environmental issues taught across the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusion of environmental issues in the programme of 42 lectures.</li> <li>- Appreciation of natural spaces, wildlife, and biodiversity through involvement in PES.</li> <li>- Green Team &amp; Prep Eco Team continuing to meet &amp; help in progressing school-wide KPIs.</li> <li>- Identify Pelican eco lead/ point of contact.</li> </ul>	
Staff Education on Sustainability Topics	Increased awareness of, & understanding of environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote this work on sustainability across the staff group &amp; seek involvement of all staff in achieving the sustainability targets.</li> </ul>	