

INCLUSIVE | MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

DOCUMENT DETAIL	
Approving Body	Executive Leaders
Author	James Roach, CEO
Date of Policy	February 2026
Scheduled Review	Annually
Next Review	February 2027
Applies To	All schools within the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust
Related Policies	Health & Safety Data Protection Behaviour Policy Staff Code of Conduct

What Governors Need to Know: Key Changes Since the Last Policy

Three significant developments shape this policy. The DfE now requires all trusts to have a named sustainability lead and a Climate Action Plan in place — embedded in the DfE Estate Management Standards and no longer advisory. The government's Curriculum and Assessment Review (2024) has confirmed that climate literacy will become a cross-curricular requirement across primary and secondary phases, strengthening our obligations around curriculum delivery. The NGA Greener Governance pledge formally asks governors to take personal responsibility for sustainability oversight. This policy responds directly to all three changes.

Statement of Intent

At the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust, we believe the children we serve deserve both an outstanding education today and a healthy planet tomorrow. Environmental sustainability is not an add-on — it is embedded in how we run our schools, what we teach, and how we show up in our community.

We encourage both pupils and staff to think about the environment and how their actions will impact upon their local surroundings, as well as the global environment.

Effective use of this policy will ensure pupils are taught about environmental sustainability, promote an eco-friendly attitude, and ensure that each school is as sustainable as it can be.

This policy replaces the separate Climate Action Plan (2024–2027) and Environmental Sustainability Policy (2025), bringing them together into a single working document with clear ownership and realistic actions.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Climate Change Act 2008
- Environment Act 2021
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Control of Pollution Act 1974
- The Ozone-Depleting Substances Regulations 2015
- Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013
- Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- DfE Sustainability and Climate Change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems
- DfE Climate Change Guidance (2023 updates)
- DfE and GEMS 'Tips to reduce energy and water use in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers

Roles and Responsibilities

Sustainability is everyone's responsibility. The table below sets out what we expect from each group.

Role	Key Responsibilities
Trust Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve and review this policy annually• Set and monitor Trust-wide carbon reduction targets• Ensure environmental impact is considered in all capital and building decisions• Receive termly sustainability progress reports• Bring an awareness of sustainability to the forefront of education, not only in curriculum but around school, in all activities and our general ethos
Local Governing Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and monitor each school's progress towards carbon neutrality• Champion sustainable procurement and waste reduction at school level

Role	Key Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor a curriculum which promotes the need for environmental sustainability • Support the school to reduce waste by increasing re-use and recycling
CEO / Trust Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead strategic implementation of this policy • Allocate resources, including a minimum 2% budget commitment to sustainability • Seek external funding and grant opportunities • Report annually to the Trust Board on progress
Trust Sustainability Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain the sustainability curriculum • Source grants and external funding • Brief the Trust Board and Governing Committees on projects and progress • Coordinate the annual Sustainability Summit aligned with COP
Headteachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall implementation of this policy within their school • Ensure staff have the knowledge to teach pupils about environmental concerns • Work with site managers to identify and deliver energy reduction measures • Ensure catering and site staff understand their sustainability responsibilities • Support pupils to cycle to school through Cycle to School training
Site Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record and report energy and water usage termly • Identify and implement practical energy-saving measures • Manage waste disposal, recycling, and WEEE compliance • Monitor shared spaces to ensure energy is used sustainably • Maintain clean, tidy, and environmentally safe premises
Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the need for environmental sustainability in lessons • Ensure classrooms use energy responsibly — lights, computers, and heating off when not in use • Support and encourage eco-council and pupil forum activities
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply learning at home and aim to be sustainable outside of school • Walk or cycle to school where possible • Use bins correctly and participate in litter picks • Use energy and water thoughtfully
Parents and Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote an eco-friendly lifestyle at home • Encourage children to walk or cycle to school where possible • Reinforce the learning the school implements about the environment

Strategic Aims

The Inclusive Multi Academy Trust recognises that addressing environmental sustainability requires a structured, long-term approach. Over the life of this policy we commit to the following strategic aims:

Aim 1: Measure and Reduce our Carbon Footprint

We cannot manage what we do not measure. We will establish a Trust-wide carbon baseline, develop simple tracking tools for each school, create standardised reporting templates, and set realistic reduction targets based on collected data.

Aim 2: Embed Sustainability in Curriculum and Culture

Every child who leaves our schools should understand the climate challenge and feel equipped to respond. We will weave sustainability across subjects, hold an annual Sustainability Summit aligned with COP, and give pupils genuine leadership through eco-councils.

Aim 3: Run our Trust in a Sustainable Way

We will lead by example — reducing travel between sites, digitising documentation, moving towards online meetings where appropriate, and making sustainable choices in everything we procure.

Aim 4: Build Community and Partnerships

We will share progress with families and the wider community, collaborate with our local authority and other schools, and actively seek partnerships that extend our impact beyond our own gates.

We acknowledge that this is a journey of continuous improvement. Each year we will review our progress, learn from our experiences, and adjust our approach as needed.

Action Plan 2025–2027

The following table sets out specific, deliverable actions that will make our strategic aims real. This table is reviewed and updated annually.

Area	Actions	Owner	By when
Energy & Carbon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish energy use baseline across all four schools Use smart meters to monitor consumption at each site Identify top 3 energy reduction measures per site Replace lighting with LED alternatives as bulbs are replaced Introduce motion-sensor lighting in high-traffic areas Audit and optimise heating schedules termly Register climate crisis on risk register and sign the NGA Greener Governance pledge 	Site Managers / COO	Spring 2026
Waste & Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure clearly labelled bins (general / recycling / food) in all areas Compost food waste from kitchens Make reusable water bottles standard across all schools Follow WEEE regulations for all IT equipment disposal Weekly in-school litter picks; monthly community litter pick Reduce unnecessary printing — digital communication by default 	Headteachers / Site Managers	Autumn 2025
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Trust-wide sustainable procurement guidelines Prioritise UK suppliers and those with environmental commitments Purchase recycled/eco-certified paper as standard Buy energy-efficient IT and office equipment Source furniture from sustainably managed forests Share resources between schools to reduce unnecessary purchasing 	COO / SBMs	Summer 2026
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote walking and cycling to school and communicate benefits to families Provide safe, secure cycle storage at all sites Encourage staff to car-share for training and inter-site travel Increase proportion of Trust Board and SLT meetings held online 	Headteachers / CEO	Ongoing
Curriculum & Pupil Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed sustainability across science, geography, English, PSHE and food technology 	Sustainability Team / Headteachers	2025–26

Area	Actions	Owner	By when
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an eco-council or pupil forum in each school Hold annual Sustainability Summit linked to COP conference Give pupils responsibility for monitoring school sustainability targets Develop growing/gardening projects in school grounds 		
Grounds & Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review school grounds for biodiversity enhancement opportunities Plant pollinator-friendly planting in at least two schools Support outdoor learning across all schools Use only peat-free, organic products in all gardening 	Site Managers / Headteachers	Summer 2026
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish annual sustainability update on Trust website Share progress in termly newsletters to families Display energy certificates prominently in each school Celebrate staff and pupil sustainability achievements 	CEO / Sustainability Team	Ongoing

Waste and Recycling

We will reduce the amount of waste we produce by:

- Writing and printing on both sides of paper wherever possible
- Using emails as much as possible to reduce paper waste
- Composting food waste from kitchens and food brought in by pupils
- Putting used paper in a scrap paper drawer and re-using it whenever possible
- Only printing documents when essential
- Ensuring all waste office equipment is correctly disposed of via re-use or recycling schemes

The school will ensure that there are water fountains available for pupils to drink from and refill their water bottles. Pupils will be encouraged to bring reusable water bottles into school. Any disposable plastic bottles brought in will be recycled.

There will be clearly labelled bins throughout the school for recycling, food waste and general waste. Any paper containing personal or sensitive information will not be re-used and will be disposed of in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

Teachers will encourage pupils to partake in weekly litter picking around the school grounds as well as a monthly litter pick in the local area. Litter picking volunteers will be in groups no larger than 10 and will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

WEEE is regulated to reduce the number of devices and equipment that is incinerated or sent to landfill. The school will safely dispose of electrical and electronic equipment including, but not limited to: desktop computers, servers, laptops, monitors, printers, projectors, scanners, interactive whiteboards.

The headteacher, in collaboration with the site manager, will identify a suitable registered partner to dispose of WEEE safely. Before disposal, the site manager will ensure data is securely deleted or backed-up in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

Littering

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, littering is a criminal offence. Every member of the school community has a duty to dispose of waste properly, use appropriate recycling bins, and assist the site manager and eco-council with the cleanliness of the premises.

The Site Manager takes overall responsibility for the cleanliness of the school premises and coordinates waste disposal.

The school appoints an eco-committee of staff and pupils, responsible for:

- Promoting awareness of anti-littering throughout the school
- Monitoring the school's anti-littering procedures
- Organising and recruiting volunteers for litter picking groups

Any individual known to have littered the premises will be required to dispose of the litter correctly. Pupils will be dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy; staff in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct; parents or visitors may be barred from the premises.

Transport

- Pupils and staff will be encouraged to walk or cycle to school where possible
- The benefits of daily exercise and active travel will be promoted throughout the school
- Teachers and staff will be encouraged to car-share for external training and inter-site travel
- Safe and suitable storage for bicycles will be available for staff and pupils at all sites
- Road safety will be taught in PSHE as part of active travel promotion
- The Trust will move towards low-emission vehicles for any Trust-owned transport

School Grounds and Energy

- The Local Governing Committee and site manager will monitor energy consumption, recognising where the school is wasting energy and implementing measures to reduce it
- Energy saving lightbulbs will be used throughout the school when lighting is replaced
- Motion-sensitive lighting will be introduced in high-traffic areas
- The governing board will monitor heating within the school, ensuring it is at an appropriate temperature and frequency
- When new buildings or refurbishments are planned, environmental impacts and energy-saving solutions will always be considered
- The site manager will consider, with the headteacher, the development of school grounds to develop biodiversity and outdoor learning opportunities

Energy

We will reduce our energy usage by:

- Switching off lights when not in use
- Keeping doors and windows shut in cold weather
- Turning off energy-draining appliances (computers, projectors, interactive whiteboards) when not in use
- Monitoring the temperature and frequency of heating and adjusting accordingly
- Conserving water by installing systems that reduce waste such as cistern dams and flow restrictors
- Insulating hot water pipes to reduce water waste
- Ensuring all systems work efficiently; breakages or leaks resolved as high priority by the site manager
- Auditing the amount of energy used each term
- Implementing reward systems for staff and pupils who comply with the school's energy saving ethos
- Displaying the school's Display Energy Certificate in plain sight

Curriculum

We aim to provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding in biodiversity and sustainability by embedding the topics across our curriculum. Individual school curriculum plans will outline how these topics are embedded.

- Science: animal extinction, ecosystems, deforestation and habitat loss
- Geography: renewable energy, climate change, sea defences and flooding
- English: nature writing and the environment in literature
- PSHE: healthy lifestyles, active travel, sustainable choices, road safety
- Food technology: seasonal produce, sustainable sourcing, food waste

The Trust Sustainability Team will liaise with outside organisations to develop and refine our curriculum offer.

The Trust will host an annual Sustainability Summit aligned with the Conference of Parties (COP) climate conference. This summit will bring together pupils from Trust schools and other local settings, enable young people to discuss climate action, feature student-led presentations and workshops, and result in a Youth Climate Action Pledge setting environmental priorities for the year ahead.

Healthy Living

We will promote an ethos of environmental understanding. Pupils will be taught to understand that their actions have a direct impact on the environment.

- We will encourage staff and pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, as healthy lifestyles often lead to a sustainable lifestyle
- We will ensure pupils complete a daily mile or equivalent exercise each day where possible
- We will teach pupils where food comes from as part of PSHE, including first-hand experience of growing their own fruit or vegetables
- School meals will be designed with due regard to seasonal produce and locally sourced food
- Where possible, local food suppliers will be approached for produce used in school meals
- Pupils will be taught about the importance of sustainable fishing and farming; any fish products in school meals will be sustainably sourced

Sustainable Procurement

The school will devote time to ensuring all product procurement is done in the most sustainable way. A purchasing team — including the SBM, catering manager and headteacher — will be responsible for managing an inventory of current stock and ensuring that orders are not processed with unnecessary purchases.

The purchasing team will ensure produce is cost efficient, sourced within the UK where possible, and bought from companies with an environmental ethos. Key commitments include:

- Paper: 100% recycled and eco-certified, produced through a process of low energy consumption
- Lighting: low energy alternatives; lighting controls to reduce consumption
- Office equipment: energy efficient models with a low environmental impact through their lifecycle
- Furniture: produced with environmentally friendly materials, partly or wholly from recycled/renewable sources, timber from sustainably managed forests
- Food and catering: organic or partly organic, seasonal, locally sourced, sustainably fished; kitchen appliances to be water and energy efficient
- Cleaning products: UK-produced, used at recommended amounts, minimising hazardous chemicals
- Gardening: peat-free products, organically produced plants, alternative methods of pest control to pesticides

Monitoring and Reporting

Progress against this policy will be monitored at multiple levels:

- Weekly: site manager operational checks on energy, waste and grounds
- Monthly: SLT sustainability review at each school
- Termly: energy and waste data submitted to COO; eco-council update to headteacher; progress reported to Trustees
- Annually: CEO sustainability report to Trust Board; policy review and action plan refresh; external verification of data sought as capacity allows

The Trust will establish a carbon baseline by Spring 2026 and set reduction targets thereafter. Stakeholder feedback will be gathered through annual surveys of staff, governors and families, and will inform the annual policy review.

Resources

The Trust commits to dedicating a minimum of 2% of the annual budget to sustainability initiatives. This includes:

- Staff time for eco-councils, sustainability curriculum and community activities
- Capital investment in energy efficiency measures as opportunities arise
- Pursuing external grants through the Trust Sustainability Team
- A green investment fund, developed over the life of this policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CEO and Trust Board. It will be updated to reflect:

- Progress made against the Action Plan
- Changes in legislation or DfE guidance
- New targets based on carbon baseline data
- Learning from what has and has not worked

This is a living policy. We are committed to continuous improvement — we will be transparent about what we have achieved and honest about where we still have work to do.