

# Environmental Sustainability Strategic Action Plan

Creating a sustainable future



**OUR LADY  
OF LOURDES**

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



# Introduction

The encyclical issued by Pope Francis in 2015 titled *Laudato Si*, highlighted the ecological emergency faced by the planet and called for the people of the world to take swift and unified action. In *Laudato Deum*, issued in 2023, Pope Francis highlights the inadequate response to the ecological emergency.

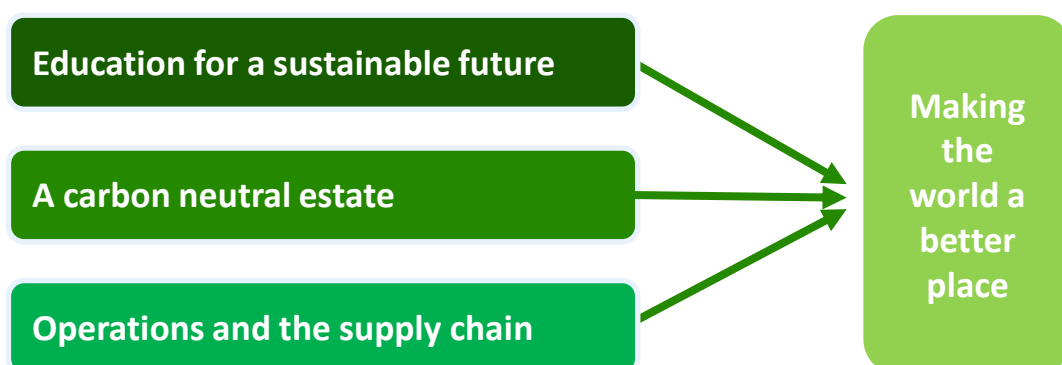
The Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust is committed to taking immediate action to create a sustainable future for our young people and in doing so protect the most vulnerable in our society and around the world. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, quoted in *Laudato Deum*, highlight that it is the most vulnerable people who suffer the most from the devastating effects of climate change. “Our care for one another and our care for the earth are intimately bound together. Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community. The effects of climate change are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world”

## Our Ambition

Our Trust will be place where we have a positive impact on the environment and where we instil in all, the courage to be an agent of change. We will be outward-facing and work to make the world a better place. We are committed to going beyond net-zero, ensuring our entire environmental footprint is carbon neutral without investing in external carbon offset initiatives. **We will work with our schools, pupils, diocese and beyond to develop Trust-wide sustainability. We will actively encourage others to share our values and to live them. In doing so, we will make the world a better place.**

## Key themes

Our environmental sustainability strategic action plan is divided into three key themes. Each of these themes contribute towards our overarching strategic objective to make the world a better place. For each area of the plan, we have detailed our objectives, our success criteria and established a road map, detailing the key milestones required to achieve our aims. Each area is intrinsically linked to the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development.



Education for a sustainable future



# Education for a sustainable future

## Our objective



Through the curriculum, we aim to cultivate a deep understanding of nature, sustainability, and the causes and effects of climate change, empowering students to translate this knowledge into meaningful action and solutions.



We envision an Eco Council/Parliament comprising pupil representatives from all schools within our Trust, holding both school and Trust leadership accountable for environmental stewardship and progress towards sustainability targets.



Our commitment extends to delivering, embedding, and enhancing activities that foster the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary for sustainable development among our students.

We prioritise providing professional development opportunities that equip our staff with the expertise and tools to integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into their teaching practices effectively.

Through strategic communication efforts, we strive to reinforce knowledge, skills, and attributes aligned with sustainable development, simultaneously spotlighting the impactful work undertaken by our schools and emphasising our Trust's commitment to sustainability.

Furthermore, we're dedicated to preparing our young people for future careers that acknowledge and prioritise sustainability and climate change mitigation efforts.

## Links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals



# Education for a sustainable future

## Success Criteria

### Curriculum Integration:

- ❑ Increased inclusion of nature, sustainability, and climate change topics within and across the curriculum – evidenced through quality assurance processes.
- ❑ 80% of students, through surveys, perceive they are gaining skills and knowledge to help understanding of sustainable development by 2027.

### Establishment of Eco Council/Parliament:

- ❑ Formation of Eco Council/Parliament with full representation from Trust schools.
- ❑ Execution of a minimum of three initiatives annually by the Eco Council/Parliament.

### Delivery of Sustainable Development Activities:

- ❑ Rise in sustainability-themed activities within both curriculum, and extracurricular programs – evidenced staff and student voice and through quality assurance processes.
- ❑ 80% of students, through surveys, perceive they are gaining skills and knowledge to help understanding of sustainable development by 2027

### Professional Development for Staff:

- ❑ Staff, from every school, engaged in sustainable development-focused CPD.
- ❑ Assessment of staff confidence in integrating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into teaching – evidenced through staff voice.

### Strategic Communication Efforts:

- ❑ Increase in communication channels promoting sustainability within the Trust.
- ❑ At least 80% of students and staff perceive our Trust as an environmentally sustainable organisation.
- ❑ Measurement of engagement metrics (e.g., website visits, social media interactions) to gauge the impact of sustainability communications.

### Preparation for Sustainable Careers:

- ❑ Establishment of partnerships with sustainability-focused entities.
- ❑ Increase in the percentage of students involved in sustainability-focused further education/apprenticeships, or career exploration activities.



Dear young people, you have it in you to shout. It is up to you to ensure that the noise is not an empty sound but a hopeful one.

Laudato Si, Pope Francis 2015





# Education for a sustainable future

## What are we already doing

7

of our schools have developed an edible classroom or school allotment and a food literacy curriculum



32

of our schools have focused whole school assemblies with a focus on the environment

24

of our schools have a Green Team or an Eco-council



7

of our schools have been awarded the green flag award

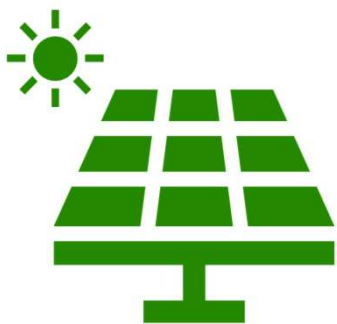
**A carbon neutral estate**





# A carbon neutral estate

## Our objective



We will work towards making the Trust estate carbon neutral through the adoption of green technologies, reducing waste, utilising renewable energy sources and reducing the amount of energy we use.



Through the use of emerging technology, we will strive to eradicate the use of fossil fuels to heat and power our school buildings. We will invest in renewable energy sources, installing solar panels and air source heat pumps to reduce our reliance on external energy sources. Where we do purchase energy, we will commit to purchasing green energy with the aim of eliminating the use of non-renewable energy sources by 2030.



By implementing a range of initiatives and utilising technology we will reduce the amount of energy we consume. We have already installed energy efficient LED lighting across the entire Trust estate and have commenced programmes to upgrade heating system controls and install energy efficient IT servers and power management systems across our IT networks.

All new builds will be carbon-neutral and sustainable, utilising new technologies and materials to ensure they have a net zero impact on the environment.

We are working to significantly reduce the overall waste produced in our schools, implementing effective energy and water conservation measures, reducing our consumption of products and services, exploring opportunities to reuse and increasing the percentage of waste that is recycled.

## Links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals





# A carbon neutral estate

## Success Criteria

### Eradicate the use of fossil fuels across the Trust Estate:

- ☐ **Air Source Heat Pumps:** Air source heat pumps installed at all schools removing the need for gas powered heating.
- ☐ **Solar Panels:** Solar panels installed at all schools reducing the need to draw on the grid for electricity.
- ☐ **Green Energy:** All energy purchased from the grid is from green energy sources.

### Reduce energy consumption:

- ☐ **LED lighting:** Install long life LED lighting across the estate to reduce consumption, reduce waste and limit light pollution.
- ☐ **Insulation:** All our buildings will be insulated, draft proofed and double glazed to reduce the amount of energy needed to heat our schools.
- ☐ **Equipment:** We will purchase energy efficient refrigerators, freezers, combi-ovens, convection ovens and steamers
- ☐ **IT Systems:** We will remove servers in our Primary Schools and reduce the numbers of servers in our Secondary Schools to significantly reduce our energy consumption. We will install power management systems across our networks and replace all low power efficient IT storage with solid state devices.

### Carbon neutral buildings:

- ☐ **New builds:** All new builds will be carbon neutral, built using sustainable materials and utilising green energy source.

### Reduce waste:

- ☐ **Waste management:** We will reduce the creation of unnecessary waste and we will live the principles of reduce, reuse, recycle, minimising the amount of waste that goes to landfill.
- ☐ **Water conservation:** We will reduce our water usage, exploring opportunities to utilise rainwater across the Trust estate.
- ☐ **Equipment:** End of use equipment will be refurbished to extend its life, be reused in a different environment or recycled.



“The problem is aggravated by a model of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the worldwide energy system”.

Laudate Si, Pope Francis 2015



# A carbon neutral estate

## What are we already doing

36

of our schools have energy efficient LED lighting installed

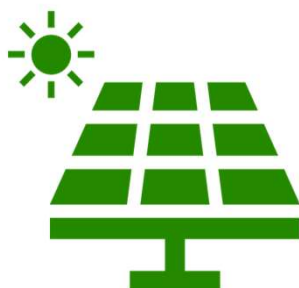
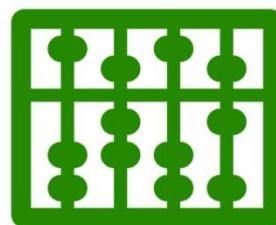


3

of our schools have air-sourced heat pumps in use with a further 5 in progress

6

of our schools have upgraded to energy efficient heating system controls

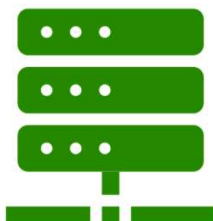


8

of our schools are generating their own electricity through a solar panel installation

1

of our schools is reducing their water consumption by using a rainwater harvesting system



9

of our schools have removed or reduced the number of physical IT servers



## Operations and the supply chain



# Operations and the supply chain

## Our objective



We will actively work to reduce our carbon impact by challenging all areas of the Trust and the wider supply chain to operate more sustainably.

We will become champions of the circular economy, regenerating nature, eliminating or reducing waste through proactive maintenance, reusing materials, refurbishing equipment and actively recycling and composting.



We are committed to reducing the number of commutes and miles travelled through work. We have established a working from home policy for our central team and we are looking at ways to expand this to our school-based colleagues. We encourage the use of online meetings and we have maintenance experts local to our schools to minimise travel. We will encourage the use of green technologies in our small maintenance fleet to reduce our carbon emissions.



We will challenge our supply chain, prioritising sustainability, the environment and ethical organisations when purchasing goods and services. Where possible we will look to buy local to reduce the carbon footprint of our procurement.

We place high expectations on our external partners and demand that they are committed to imbedding sustainable practices in their operations. We will ensure that our partners commit to our environmental goals and strategic aims as part of a supplier agreement.

## Links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals





## Success Criteria

### Circular Economy:

- ❑ **Regenerate nature:** We will participate in a calendar of initiatives that regenerate nature, such as 'no mow May', tree planting and urban agriculture.
- ❑ **Reducing waste:** We will minimise the amount of waste that goes to landfill by eliminating the purchase of single use plastics, composting and promoting the reuse and recycling of products.
- ❑ **Reusing equipment:** Where possible we will commit to purchasing refurbished equipment, reducing waste and the consumption of finite or environmentally harmful resources.
- ❑ **Recycling equipment and resources:** We will seek to recycle equipment and resources, either within our organisation or by donating equipment to those less fortunate than ourselves.

### Reduce vehicle emissions:

- ❑ **Hybrid working:** We will reduce the number of commutes by adopting hybrid working practices, utilising technology to work from home.
- ❑ **Online meetings:** We will embrace technology and encourage online meetings to reduce unnecessary travel.
- ❑ **Maintenance fleet:** We will look to adopt green technologies to reduce vehicle emissions from our small maintenance fleet.

### The supply chain:

- ❑ **Procurement:** We will ensure the environment and sustainability are prioritised in our procurement decision making.
- ❑ **Living wage foundation:** We will work towards becoming a living wage foundation employer and ensuring all our suppliers are committed to paying their employees a fair wage.

### Supplier Agreement:

- ❑ **Partnerships:** We will insist on our partners committing to a partnership agreement that ensures a commitment to the environment and sustainability.



“The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change”.

Laudate Si, Pope Francis 2015



# Operations and the supply chain

## What are we already doing

Adopted hybrid working, decreasing carbon emissions by reducing commuting to and from the office



26

We are challenging our catering partner at 26 of our schools to reduce food waste

12

of our schools are demonstrating their commitment to the circular economy by using refurbished IT equipment



21

Our cleaning partner across 21 of our schools was selected due to their commitment to pay the Living Wage Foundation amount to all employees

17

of our schools are using eco-friendly cleaning products





Making the world a better place





## Our objective



We will educate our young people to be aware of the global implications of climate change and encourage them to take action beyond the realm of the Trust and to make the world a better place, especially for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Through our Lay Chaplaincy provision, we aim to shape the minds and hearts of the young people in our Trust by weaving the principles of Laudato Si' and Catholic Social Teaching into our work. We will empower pupils to become not just aware of climate change, but active global changemakers through igniting awareness and empowering action.

## Success Criteria

### Knowledge & Awareness:

- ☐ **Integration of Laudato Si':** Young people demonstrate understanding of Laudato Si' and its key messages on ecological justice, integral ecology, and the common good. Our pupils are able to articulate the link between our theology and ecology.
- ☐ **Global solidarity:** Young people recognise the interconnectedness of climate change with poverty, migration, and other global challenges, echoing Laudato Si's call for "ecological conversion" (LS 218).
- ☐ **Care for Creation:** Young people appreciate the intrinsic value of Creation, inspired by Laudato Si's call to "hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (LS 49).

## Links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals



## Success Criteria

### Action & Engagement:

- **A Call to Action:** Pupils actively engage in local and global climate action initiatives.
- **Laudato Si' principles:** Young people's actions reflect Laudato Si' principles like the precautionary principle (LS 186), the principle of subsidiarity (LS 157 & 196), and the principle of intergenerational solidarity (LS 159).
- **Community Leadership:** Young people inspire and empower others within their communities to take action, embodying Laudato Si's call for "ecological citizenship" (LS 211).

### Long-Term Impact:

- **Sustained advocacy:** Young people remain committed to advocating for climate solutions across their lives, shaping a more just and sustainable future through ongoing projects, aligning with Laudato Si's vision of an "integral ecology" (LS 10).
- **Positive change:** Young people's actions contribute to measurable progress in mitigating climate change within their communities and build resilience to fulfil Laudato Si's call for "ecological conversion" (LS 218).
- **Faithful stewards:** Young people act as faithful stewards of Creation, demonstrating the care and responsibility envisioned in Laudato Si' and recognising God in creation (LS 116).

“

“Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community. The effects of climate change are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019

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# Making the world a better place

## What are we already doing



**LiveSimply**  
cafod.org.uk

Several of our schools  
have or are working  
towards the CAFOD live  
simply award

The majority of our schools  
are taking part in the  
CAFOD big lent walk to help  
fight global poverty

**THE BIG LENT WALK**



**33**

of our schools are  
implementing Catholic  
Social Teaching

# Environmental Sustainability

## Our Road Map to carbon neutrality

