

## Tips for sustainability in schools

### Background

This collection of top tips suggests practical ways for schools to become more sustainable, whilst at the same time saving money.

Sustainable development means meeting the needs of all people now – including protecting the natural habitats that are essential to our survival – without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Multiple sources of evidence suggest that being a sustainable school raises standards and enhances young people's well-being.

Research supports the idea that this is because sustainable schools engage young people in their learning, thereby improving motivation and behaviour, and promote healthy school environments and lifestyles. Saving resources such as energy and water can also save schools significant sums of money. There are also physical and psychological benefits related to walking or cycling to school, eating more healthily and spending time in nature.

Saving energy saves money. Current school energy costs are estimated to increase to £652m per year, and this is predicted to rise still further. The average cost of energy per school is £27,000. Electricity increased by 31% primarily due to greater use of ICT and the extension of school hours.

The 2008 Climate Change Act requires the UK to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 34% below 1990 levels by 2020 and by at least 80% by 2050.

### Top Tips for sustainable printing

1. Buy energy efficient consumer goods and ICT equipment
2. Look for alternatives to mainstream products.
3. Share best practice, if you have made a good sustainable deal let other schools know about it.
4. Think about an energy audit at your school.
5. Energy use in school buildings is very much under the control of the individual school. Every school should know how much electricity it uses.
6. Start with the basics, e.g. switching off lights and electrical equipment when not in use. Many schools have groups of 'eco-champions', who check at the end of each day for



equipment or lights that have been left on, switch them off and place penalties (e.g. a 'red-card') on those responsible

7. The use of ICT in schools is growing rapidly. ICT equipment not only uses electricity directly, but often places further demands on electricity needed for lighting and cooling. The electricity used by ICT can be significantly reduced by selecting energy efficient equipment and enabling power management features.
8. Engage pupils with meter readings, energy management statistics and comparisons of numerical data, it helps them not only to improve numeracy skills but also to develop their own understanding of energy and how it is used.



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