

Appledore School Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2026-2028

Introduction

This plan is based and structured accordingly on the principles of Decarbonisation, Biodiversity, Adaptation & Resilience and Climate Change & Green Careers. Appledore School has a core CAP team that includes the pupils and staff and this plan details current actions and will evolve over time.

In addition to the measuring tools detailed in the next section, and whilst not an exhaustive list, the following provide guidance and resources used by the CAP team:

- DfE strategy '[Sustainability and Climate Change: A Strategy for the Education and Children's Services Systems](#)'
- [Devon County Council sustainable schools](#)
- [Climate Ambassadors](#), funded by the DfE
- [Devon Local Nature Partnership](#) that includes a network of Environmental Educators in Devon
- [The Royal Society](#) schools engagement team
- [Northam Burrows Country Park](#)

The plan was first published on the school website in April 2026

Measuring

Appledore School uses two recognised tools to measure its climate action and carbon footprint.

1. [Greener Schools Index](#), developed by in partnership between the UK Schools Sustainability Network (UKSSN) Ops Group and Zenergi, is designed to support schools on their net zero journey. This includes a Green School Index in the form of percentage scores for different aspects and an overall school percentage.

Appledore School first completed the Greener School Index survey in December 2026 and recorded the following scores:

- Decarbonisation 48%
- Biodiversity 70%
- Adaptation & Resilience 100%
- Climate Change & Green Careers 67%

- Overall School Index score 57%

2. <https://www.countyourcarbon.org/> is a full-scope carbon footprint calculator, built for – and in collaboration with – nurseries, schools and colleges. It supports educational settings to calculate, understand, reduce and track carbon emissions.

What is our footprint?

3. **WOW (Watch our Waste)** project, in partnership with Devon County Council, ran in Appledore School during the 2023-2024 academic year. During the year, Appledore School pupils and staff committed to taking action on implementing sustainable practices and habits to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

The WOW project involved a baseline waste audit in September and a final waste audit in July following a year of devising and implementing improved reduce, reuse and recycling waste management practices.

	September baseline waste audit	July waste audit
Mass of daily waste our school sends to landfill	5.16 kg	1.22 kg
Mass of daily waste our school sends to landfill per pupil	25 g	6 g
Mass of organic waster per day	14.99 kg	18.84 kg
% of the school's waste BEING recycled or composted	82 %	94 %
% of the school's waste that COULD be recycled or composted	85 %	95 %

Despite this project being run a couple of years ago, Appledore School has sustained these good practices and habits.

1.Decarbonisation

Key questions the school considers when developing policies and practices to improve **decarbonisation** include:

What are the total carbon emissions of the school's operations?

How efficient are the school's buildings?

How could the school retrofit its estate and improve energy efficiency

Could the school reduce its waste and encourage reuse and recycling?

Does the school adopt sustainable procurement practices?

Does the school have food bins or compost their food waste on site?

Does the school have a travel plan which encourages staff and students to take zero and lower emission forms of travel to and from the setting?

The school's decarbonisation CAP team, consisting of a pupils, a governor and a teacher have a number of responsibilities that include:

- Collecting energy usage data by interviewing the school business manager and understanding how efficiencies can be made
- Auditing the school's waste management procedures, including meeting with the caretaker
- Discussing with the school office and kitchen sustainable purchasing
- Surveying pupils on how they travel to school
- Calculating the school's carbon footprint and setting targets
- Disseminating information (eg speaking to classes, assemblies etc)

2.Biodiversity

Key questions the school considers when developing policies and practices to improve **biodiversity** include:

Has the school mapped and recorded biodiversity on their campus?

Could the school site be managed differently to provide habitats that serve to enhance local biodiversity?

The biodiversity strand of the school's CAP is led by our Outdoor Learning teachers and includes the following activities:

- Every class participates in 'bio-blitz' in July each year where flora and fauna is audited in our pond, woodland, grass areas and hedgerows. Pupils are involved in the analysis of this information presenting it to the school community
- Through our Outdoor Learning initiative, Eco Rangers Club and as part of specific programmes of study in our curriculum, pupils are involved in activities that enhance our local biodiversity. Recent examples include:
 - pond improvement works
 - habitat mapping and improvement (eg in Year 2 and Year 4)
 - making bug boxes and bug hotels
 - tree and hedgerow planting and replacement (eg with support from local councils)
 - participation in the North Devon Hedgehog Project
 - Planting wildflower areas and supporting no mow areas

3. Adaptation and Resilience

Key questions the school considers when developing policies and practices to improve **adaptation and resilience** include:

Has the school undertaken an assessment of climate and weather risks and have a plan should remedial action be required?

What aspects of school life have been or could be affected by these hazards and do we have any vulnerable staff or students that could be at greater risk?

Who are the important people in the school with responsibilities for preparing for and responding to these events?

Responsibility for meeting the requirements of the adaptation and resilience strand of the CAP falls to the governing body, headteacher, school business manager and caretaker. These include:

- Working with the school community on planning to ensure safe access to school in extreme weather. This includes drafting, ratifying and implementing a School Emergency Management Plan and having appropriate risk management/assessment plans in place
- Health and safety site walks to identify areas to develop for extreme weather and regular site checks before and after extreme weather forecast
- School events are planned, organised and assessed to mitigate against climate and weather risks (eg sports day which is traditionally an all day summer event)

4. Climate Change Education and Green Careers

Key questions the school considers when developing policies and practices to improve **climate change education and green careers** include:

In what parts of the school's curriculum do our pupils learn about nature, climate change and the importance of sustainability?

Could this be broadened and developed and how could it be integrated across all subjects and educational stages?

How confident are teaching staff in delivering climate change and sustainability material?

How is learning in the natural environment part of the pupils' curricula or extra-curricular programme?

Are pupils made aware of the likely future career opportunities which exist in the green economy?

What are the skills that pupils will need to be able to develop to access these careers and how can these skills be embedded across the educational offer?

The teaching staff plan and deliver curriculum and extra-curricular learning and activities that meet the requirements of the climate change education and green careers strand of the CAP.

Examples of nature, climate change and the importance of sustainability programmes of learning in the school curriculum across the whole school include:

- Seasons; penguins adapting to a changing Antarctica; coasts, oceans and rivers; weather and environmental changes; deforestation; sustainability and water consumption; plastic in the oceans and climate change (geography curriculum)
- Seasons; living things and habitats (plants and animals) and evolution and inheritance (science curriculum)
- Responsibility for the environment (PSHE/values curriculum)
- Growing, harvesting and cooking produce in our WWII 'dig for victory' garden (history curriculum)
- Environment and natural world texts used in writing sequences and reading activities (literacy curriculum)
- Use of climate and other environmental data in maths data handling learning

Examples of extra-curricular activities undertaken in the natural environment by our Eco Rangers and or class Eco Ambassadors include:

- Polytunnel and growing areas activities
- Nature led play and exploration
- Using tools and working with natural materials
- Woodland maintenance (eg bug hotel, pond)
- Pond dipping
- BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) trial project recording birds on school premises
- Kelp growing seaweed project

All pupils in the school participate in organised Outdoor Learning that is timetable every Friday throughout the year. Just a few examples (of the many) activities children participate in include:

- Map work; team building; making fossils; woodlouse survey; natural crafting; bug hunts; pollination; pond dipping and how a steam engine works

Each year children participate in a climate scientists project, run in collaboration with the Royal Society, where they experience learning scientific skills whilst working alongside climate experts and environmental scientists. Activities include:

Working with experts (eg RSPB, Earth Action North Devon, Plastic Free North Devon)

- Year 1 pupils use aquatic species diversity to evaluate the health of our school pond
- Year 2 pupils survey and record seaweed on our local beach contributing to the Big Seaweed Search (Natural History Museum/Marine Conservation) data
- Year 3 pupils survey and record flowers on Northam Burrows for establishing Banded Carder Bee habitats
- Year 4 pupils survey and record birds in our school grounds
- Year 5 pupils undertake a full-day workshop collecting, analysing, applying and sharing environmental data within a local context
- Year 6 pupils survey the aquatic wildlife in the Pill, a tidal stream on Northam Burrows, prior to the commencement of new flood management plans
- All pupils develop skills in scientific mapping and surveying and work alongside experts from organisations such as RSPB, Earth Action North Devon, Plastic Free North Devon and Northam Burrows Rangers.
- In addition to learning scientific skills, the experts explain their jobs and the skills they need for them