



THE BELLBIRD PRIMARY SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

2026–27

Small actions • shared responsibility • lasting impact

Sustainability Lead	Sarah Osborn
Link Governor	Dr Tim Wreghitt
Pupil leadership	Eco-Committee
Programme	Eco-Schools
Plan period	September 2026 – August 2027
Review	Termly; full annual review Summer 2027

CARE: Curiosity • Ambition • Respect • Empathy

1. Our commitment

At The Bellbird Primary School, sustainability is part of how we care for our pupils, our community and the world around us. We aim to reduce our environmental impact, strengthen the resilience of our school, improve biodiversity and give pupils the knowledge, confidence and practical experience to make thoughtful choices for the future.

Our CARE values support this work: Curiosity helps pupils investigate environmental challenges; Ambition encourages us to improve; Respect extends to people, places and the natural world; and Empathy helps us understand how environmental change affects others.

2. DfE framework and purpose of this plan

The Department for Education's sustainability and climate change strategy expects education settings to have a named sustainability lead and a climate action plan. Current DfE guidance organises an effective whole-setting plan around four key pillars:

- Decarbonisation and net zero
- Adaptation and resilience
- Biodiversity and nature
- Climate education and green skills

This plan brings Bellbird's existing Eco-Schools work into that strategic framework. It retains the practical strengths of the 2025–26 action plan while making responsibilities, timescales, measures and intended impact clearer.

The plan is deliberately a living document. It should be reviewed termly by the Sustainability Lead and Eco-Committee, with progress reported to senior leaders and the link governor.

3. What we are building on

The 2025–26 plan already established a broad and energetic programme of activity across energy, travel, water, biodiversity, waste and curriculum. In particular, Bellbird has:

- formed an Eco-Committee and joined the Eco-Schools programme;
- promoted paperless parent communication and double-sided printing;
- encouraged walking, cycling and scooting, including Walk to School Week and Bikeability;
- used water butts and developed pupil understanding of water conservation;
- developed the wildlife area through planting, habitat creation, bird feeding, pond care, wildflowers and reduced mowing;
- encouraged second-hand uniform, recycling and reduced use of single-use plastics;
- linked sustainability to assemblies, gardening, science, farming, national campaigns and curriculum planning;
- given pupils opportunities to influence wider environmental thinking, including the Eco-Committee's 2025 meeting with Pippa Heylings MP.

4. How the 2025–26 plan can be improved

Area	What I noticed	Recommended improvement
Move from activity list to strategic plan	The existing plan contains many good actions, but some are one-off ideas rather than measurable priorities.	Organise all work under the four DfE pillars and identify a smaller number of high-impact priorities.
Add baselines and measurable targets	Several outcomes use broad phrases such as 'raise awareness' or 'positive culture'.	Record a starting point and define a measure: energy use, travel mode share, waste volume, biodiversity observations, curriculum coverage or survey results.

Clarify accountability	Many actions are led by the Eco-Committee, but ownership is not always explicit.	Name a lead for each action and identify where pupils, site staff, teachers, caterers, governors or families contribute.
Use a clear review cycle	The existing plan does not consistently state when progress will be reviewed.	Use Autumn baseline → Spring progress review → Summer evaluation, with RAG/status reporting.
Connect curriculum and operations	The plan has both practical and curriculum activity, but the connection could be stronger.	Make pupil learning part of operational projects: pupils measure, analyse, communicate and evaluate real school sustainability work.
Prioritise impact and feasibility	The plan contains a very large number of possible actions.	Choose achievable annual priorities and keep longer-term aspirations in a development pipeline.
Strengthen climate resilience	Water and shade are included, but resilience can be broader.	Include overheating/extreme heat, water management, flooding/weather disruption, planting for shade and estate resilience.
Strengthen governance and evidence	Impact reporting is not consistently defined.	Provide a termly summary to the link governor and use evidence such as photographs, pupil voice, bills/meter data, surveys and curriculum mapping.

5. Strategic objectives for 2026–27

- Establish reliable baselines so Bellbird can demonstrate improvement rather than simply record activity.
- Reduce avoidable energy, paper, waste and transport emissions through practical behaviour change.
- Make the school site more resilient to hotter weather and water pressures.
- Increase biodiversity and pupil contact with nature through purposeful management of the grounds.
- Map sustainability across the curriculum and strengthen climate education and green-skills opportunities.
- Ensure pupils have a meaningful leadership role through the Eco-Committee.
- Engage families, governors and the wider community in visible, achievable sustainability action.

Pillar 1 – Decarbonisation and net zero

Priority / action	Baseline / rationale	2026–27 target	Lead	Timescale	Evidence of impact	Status
Establish a carbon/energy baseline using available bills, meter data and a recognised school carbon tool.	The previous plan proposes Count Your Carbon and a climate-friendly audit but does not record a baseline.	Complete baseline by end of Autumn term and identify the three largest practical reduction opportunities.	Sustainability Lead / SBM / Site team	Autumn 2026	Baseline completed; priorities recorded; termly energy comparison where data allows.	Not started
Reduce avoidable energy use.	Existing plan identifies positive culture and heat-loss concerns, including strip-curtain ideas.	Eco-Committee energy campaign; termly spot checks of lights, equipment, doors and heating behaviours; agree at least two operational changes.	Eco-Committee / Site team	Autumn–Summer	Audit results; pupil campaign evidence; energy trend where comparable.	Not started
Reduce paper and consumables.	Double-sided printing and paperless parent communication are already embedded.	Maintain double-sided defaults; review printing volumes; increase use of reusable/recyclable classroom resources and reduce unnecessary laminating.	Sustainability Lead / Office / staff	Whole year	Printing/paper purchasing comparison; staff review.	Ongoing
Promote lower-carbon travel.	Walking/cycling, racks, Bikeability and Walk to School Week already feature strongly.	Run two travel surveys and use the results to set a realistic	Eco-Committee / PE or travel lead	Autumn baseline; Summer review	Mode-of-travel survey comparison; Bikeability participation.	Ongoing

Reduce food-related waste.	Meals are pre-ordered and salad is served flexibly to reduce waste.	improvement target for active travel. Work with caterer to sample/measure food waste and identify one practical reduction action.	Sustainability Lead / Caterer / Eco-Committee	Spring 2027	Food-waste sample and agreed action; pupil communication.	Planned
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Pillar 2 – Adaptation and resilience

Priority / action	Baseline / rationale	2026–27 target	Lead	Timescale	Evidence of impact	Status
Strengthen the school's response to extreme heat.	Existing plan recognises shade from trees and water conservation; recent school experience shows the importance of heat resilience.	Review hot-weather arrangements before Summer term, including shade, hydration, ventilation, use of cooler spaces and outdoor timetable decisions.	SLT / Site team / Sustainability Lead	By April 2027	Reviewed heat plan; staff awareness; lessons from hot-weather periods recorded.	Planned
Improve water stewardship.	Water butts are used and Water Week has been proposed.	Audit water-saving opportunities; maintain water butts; run pupil-led water campaign and track one simple measure.	Eco-Committee / Site team	Spring–Summer	Audit; campaign; pupil voice; water-use evidence where available.	Ongoing
Use planting to improve resilience.	Native trees, flowers and shrubs already support shade and air quality.	Identify where additional planting can improve shade, cooling, drainage and habitat without compromising site use.	Sustainability Lead / Site team / Eco-Committee	Autumn planning; planting season	Site map/photos; planting completed; survival check.	Planned
Consider sustainability in estate decisions.	Previous plan is mainly activity-based rather than linked to long-term estate planning.	Add resilience and decarbonisation as considerations in relevant premises/maintenance decisions and long-term estate planning.	Headteacher / SBM / Governors	Whole year	Minutes/plans show sustainability consideration in relevant decisions.	Planned

Pillar 3 – Biodiversity and nature

Priority / action	Baseline / rationale	2026–27 target	Lead	Timescale	Evidence of impact	Status
Complete a biodiversity baseline through the National Education Nature Park or equivalent mapping.	The school already has a wildlife area, pond, allotment, native planting, wildflowers, logs, bird feeders and habitat ideas.	Map existing habitats and select 2–3 measurable improvements for the year.	Eco-Committee / Sustainability Lead	Autumn 2026	Baseline map/photos; chosen improvements recorded.	Not started
Improve the wildlife area and pond.	The existing plan contains extensive practical ideas including pond care, logs, bee habitat, wildflowers and working parties.	Prioritise a manageable programme: pond health, pollinator habitat and one family working party.	Sustainability Lead / Eco-Committee / families	Autumn–Summer	Before/after photos; species observations; working-party participation.	Ongoing
Support pollinators and birds.	Wildflower sowing, bulbs, bird feeders/boxes and reduced mowing are already planned.	Maintain/extend pollinator planting and bird-support measures; complete seasonal pupil observations.	Eco-Committee / classes	Seasonal	Pupil records; photographs; simple species counts.	Ongoing
Grow food and connect pupils with food systems.	Pupils use allotments/planters and produce can	Plan at least one grow–harvest–use cycle linked to curriculum learning.	Gardening staff / teachers / Eco-Committee	Spring–Summer	Produce grown/used; pupil learning evidence.	Planned

support cooking learning.

Pillar 4 – Climate education and green skills

Priority / action	Baseline / rationale	2026–27 target	Lead	Timescale	Evidence of impact	Status
Map sustainability across the curriculum.	The 2025–26 plan asks subject leaders to identify existing opportunities.	Complete a concise whole-school map showing where climate, sustainability, nature, food, resources and green skills are taught from EYFS to Y6.	Sustainability Lead / Subject leaders	By Spring half term	Completed curriculum map; gaps identified.	Not started
Use real school sustainability projects as learning.	Existing work includes air quality, water, wildlife, farming and national campaigns.	At least one year group per term uses real school sustainability data/project within curriculum learning.	Sustainability Lead / teachers	Termly	Examples of pupil work/data analysis/presentations.	Planned
Develop pupil leadership through the Eco-Committee.	Eco-Committee is established and has already engaged in school and wider environmental issues.	Meet at least half-termly; pupils help audit, choose priorities, communicate actions and evaluate impact.	Sustainability Lead / Eco-Committee	Half-termly	Minutes, pupil voice, assemblies/newsletter contributions.	Ongoing
Broaden understanding of green careers and community action.	Previous plan includes farming, wildlife organisations and external visitors.	Provide at least two encounters with people whose work connects to environment, nature, sustainability or green skills.	Sustainability Lead	By July 2027	Visitor/virtual encounter records and pupil reflections.	Planned
Participate selectively in national campaigns.	The previous plan references Big Garden Birdwatch, 30 Days Wild, Water Week and Open Farm Sunday.	Choose a small number of campaigns that directly support plan priorities rather than trying to do everything.	Eco-Committee / teachers	Annual calendar	Participation evidence and link to priority outcomes.	Planned

6. Eco-Committee and pupil voice

The Eco-Committee will be central to the plan rather than an add-on. Pupils should help identify problems, gather evidence, propose solutions, communicate with the school community and evaluate whether actions have worked.

- Representatives gather ideas and feedback from classes.
- Meetings take place at least half-termly.
- Pupils contribute to audits, travel surveys, biodiversity observations and campaigns.
- The committee provides at least one update each term through assembly, newsletter or website.
- Pupil voice is included in the annual sustainability evaluation.

7. Governance, monitoring and reporting

When	Review activity	Output
Autumn 2026	Confirm baselines; agree priority actions; establish Eco-Committee calendar; curriculum mapping begins.	Baseline dashboard and agreed priorities.

Spring 2027	Review progress against targets; identify barriers; adjust actions; report to link governor.	Mid-year RAG review.
Summer 2027	Evaluate impact; gather pupil/staff/family evidence; identify unfinished work and next priorities.	Annual impact summary and draft 2027–28 plan.

8. Sustainability dashboard *(to be completed over 2026-7)*

Measure	Autumn baseline	Summer outcome	Direction sought
Energy use / carbon estimate	_____	_____	Reduction where comparable
Paper purchased / printing volume	_____	_____	Reduction
Active travel share	_____ %	_____ %	Increase
Sampled food/general waste	_____	_____	Reduction
Biodiversity indicator / species observations	_____	_____	Increase / improvement
Curriculum sustainability coverage	_____	_____	All phases mapped
Eco-Committee pupil voice / participation	_____	_____	Strong and sustained

9. Longer-term development pipeline

The following should be explored where evidence, affordability and estate priorities support them. They are not presented as funded commitments for 2026–27:

- further energy-efficiency measures and heat-loss reduction;
- renewable-energy opportunities where feasible and value for money;
- improved summer shading and passive cooling;
- further water-efficiency measures;
- enhanced habitat connectivity and biodiversity monitoring;
- procurement choices that reduce waste and whole-life environmental impact;
- greater integration of sustainability considerations into the school's long-term estates plan.

10. Key references and support

- Department for Education: Sustainability and climate change strategy.
- Department for Education: Sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education (guidance updated 30 October 2025).
- Department for Education: Education Estates Strategy and long-term estates planning guidance (2026).
- Sustainability Support for Education.
- National Education Nature Park.
- Eco-Schools.
- Climate Ambassador Programme / Let's Go Zero support.

Appendix A – One-page Bellbird sustainability model

LEARN → ACT → MEASURE → IMPROVE

DECARBONISE

Use less energy and fewer resources • reduce waste • travel actively • make thoughtful purchasing choices

ADAPT

Prepare for heat and changing weather • conserve water • use shade and planting • build resilience

RESTORE NATURE

Protect habitats • improve the wildlife area and pond • support pollinators and birds • grow food

EDUCATE & EMPOWER

Teach climate and sustainability well • develop green skills • give pupils a real leadership voice

Our test for every action: What difference will this make, how will we know, and what will pupils learn from it?