

# Footprints

Step by step together

THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Norwich

Your newsletter from the Diocesan Board of Education

April 2023



## Net Zero Carbon



**Paul Dunning**  
Diocesan Director of Education

***'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it' resounds Psalm 24 v1. This verse is quoted in the Church of England's 'Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030' which extols us to treasure God's creation, recognising that 'the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation, and unjust to the poor and future***

***generations. It is the context into which we are called to live and preach the Gospel.'***

We know our children and young people take the call to tackle climate change very seriously and are so often courageous advocates in their schools, homes, and communities. It is essential that schools are at the forefront of this work not least because 52% of the Church of England's carbon emissions by building type are from schools. This is not surprising as many of our schools are listed or Victorian buildings that may look beautiful but were designed to share God's grace rather than save energy costs! The four schools featured in this edition of Footprints are examples of the good work currently going on to reduce carbon emissions –

and I know there is much more going on across the Diocese. Thank you!

I hope everyone has seen our resource 'Our School: Our World: How can we help to care for the planet?' available on our website. It is more than an RE resource as it contains practical ideas and teaching resources that are valuable for all.

And if you are not already involved in Eco schools or other similar accreditation schemes such as PECT, then can I encourage you to look at this in your planning for next year. Collectively we can give young people the support and confidence they need to make informed choices, challenge systems and create change as stewards of God's amazing creation.

## Nicola Kay

Headteacher

Swaffham Primary Academy

**At Swaffham C of E Primary Academy (SPA) our journey to achieve net zero carbon emissions began in September 2021 as World Leaders met at COP 26 and the pupils of SPA asked, 'how can we make a difference?'**

All classes explored this question during Collective Worship through the theme of Hope, and through our wider curriculum, each class taking a different theme including waste, air and water pollution and energy. Pupils made a video and we shared this through the competition being run by the Diocese of Norwich. We were delighted to come 2nd, but the children of SPA didn't stop there.

Dougie, Charlotte and Rosie in Year 5 wrote to me and said, 'we need to do more as a school to save energy and look after our environment for future generations.' They met with Joanne Oxborough, our



School Business Manager and talked about what we could do as a school to save energy and be 'better stewards of our school and our world.' This was the start of our Eco Warrior pupil group. They successfully applied for a grant to improve our outdoor area and led a whole school sunflower planting project.

Inspired by the Eco Warrior's drive and enthusiasm, Mrs Oxborough successfully applied for £10,000 through the Green Community Grant with Breckland Council to replace our traditional light fittings

with energy efficient LEDs. We were able to replace 127 light fittings, an estimated saving of £187.17 a month!

We now have a team of 19 Eco Warriors who regularly meet with school leaders to plan our continuing work to reduce our carbon emissions. They were recently interviewed on Radio Norfolk! Pupil Voice is very important to us at SPA where every day we see our pupils **SHINE, LEARN, BELIEVE** and **BELONG** and live out our motto that **'with knowledge anything is possible!'**

## Alex Griffiths

Executive Headteacher

Brooke VC & Hempnall Primary Schools

**"A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted" (Ecclesiastes 3:2).**

This generation of young people deserve to be thankful for the legacy they are left with on our planet Earth. Too often, schools can seem to operate in their own bubbles, we forget how resourceful our communities are in their own personal lives and homes. We do not always practice what we preach or indeed even believe in.

At the partnership of Brooke CE VC Primary School and Hempnall Primary School, we have been engaged in a programme with Cool Food Pro to increase sustainable practice and promote long-term behavioural change in our catering offer to our children and staff.

What does this mean for our schools? Well, we carefully monitor the food waste during lunch service, staff (who are given free lunches if they choose to eat in the dining room with the children) encourage children to eat everything on their plate – or at least one more bite! – before they finish. During our audits and food waste weigh-ins, we found that initially between 10% and 30% of served food was wasted

in the dining room.

We engaged the children in how they can work to reduce this, action-planned and strategized as a staff team, with children and with the leaders of the project and then measured again. We found that over three weeks, we had encouraged our children sufficiently to save the equivalent in Carbon Dioxide emissions to 55km of travel by car – from our school in Brooke to Sizewell B Power Station.

These are small steps, but our engagement as two schools in a sustainable project has led to action, planning and dialogue between staff and the wider community about what more we could do from this starting point. We have never been afraid of growing slowly, only of standing still.



**LET'S GO ZERO WASTE**

**#1 Reduce our waste and recycle 100%**

Source items carefully, looking at the sustainability of the items being purchased and the waste implications. Deliberately purchase from companies with shared environmental and sustainable aims and appropriately recycle 100% of what can be recycled.

**#2 Reduce carbon and reduce food waste**

Continue working with PECT to monitor and reduce our food waste. Use the Cool Food Pro carbon calculator tool to make positive changes to minimise our impact on the planet.

**#3 Pupil led action on sustainable development**

Use opportunities for the school community, and pupils to have a say on the actions that they would like to take to make our school a more sustainable place.

**IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION!**

If we work together - we can reduce and recycle more, improve and make our school a more sustainable place.

[www.brooke-nschools.co.uk](http://www.brooke-nschools.co.uk)



## Robert Plant

Chair of Governors  
North Elmham VC Primary

**Although the original building at North Elmham school is coming up to its 150th anniversary, the Governors and Senior Leadership Team are keen for the school to be up to date when it comes to reducing the environmental impact the school has.**

Following an audit of the premises by environmental consultants SaveMoneyCutCarbon the following areas were identified where we could reduce our carbon footprint and save money;

lighting, hand dryers and basin taps. The project cost around £20,000 and was 50% funded by the Diocese as part of a pilot project for VA schools to help reduce energy consumption.

During February half term 2022 all of the fluorescent lights in the classrooms, corridors, offices and the main hall were replaced with LED light units, the basin taps in the cloakrooms were upgraded to have aerators and restrictors and all hand dryers were replaced with more efficient ones.

The anticipated savings from replacing the lights and hand dryers was 11,730kWh of electricity and an annual carbon saving of 3.7 tonnes.

The upgrade to the basin taps resulted in a 10% reduction in the amount of water being used and a small annual carbon saving of 0.1 tonnes.

With the significant rise in energy costs in the past 12 months, the project will have helped protect the school from even larger rises in electricity bills than we have seen.

Following completion of the project, teaching staff at the school asked pupils for their feedback and they said that they really like the new hand dryers because they dry their hands quicker and don't keep stopping like the old ones did. The children also like the new lights as the classrooms are brighter now.



## Darcie

Year 5  
Cawston CE Primary Academy

**At Cawston, we are committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2030. The term net-zero is important because for CO2 at least, this is the state at which global warming stops.**

We have been doing things at home and school for many years as part of our journey to get the green flag.

I have been an eco-ambassador for a number of years and I have taken part in lots of activities like:

- Saving water – turning off taps
- Recycling as much as possible – food waste, plastic, batteries, paper, etc
- Turning off lights – to save electricity
- Walking to school – to save exhaust emissions
- No power days

Our school has lots of solar panels on the flat roof, giving us electricity from a renewable form of energy.

We know that our planet is a very precious place. It is the only planet in the universe capable of supporting life as we know it. They say that we have been treating Earth, our home, unwisely and selfishly. At Cawston we ask for children to make a pledge, once a year to be a guardian of the planet, as part of our curriculum.

We also have a green footprint to record all the activities we have taken part in. It is not just our home today, but it must also be home for all the people who will live here in hundreds of years time.

**What sort of world are we going to leave for them?**

## Governor focus



**Hannah Monk**  
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## The journey to Net Carbon Zero by 2030

**In 2020 the Church of England General Synod voted in favour of an ambitious target for all parts of the church to work to become carbon 'net zero' by 2030. This includes schools and as leaders, governors have an important role to play.**

For governors, this work can be split into two areas:

- What is happening in your school to reduce the school's negative impact on the environment?
- How are environmental themes and being carbon "net zero" explored with pupils?

Both areas can be considered through the lens of the governing body's responsibility for ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and

strategic direction. For example, does the school have a clear strategy to take it on a successful journey to 2030? If you're working with an academy this might be part of a wider trust strategy, but your school leaders should have input and understand the role they will play.

The National Governance Association has produced some excellent resources for governors to use in their role as school leaders within their "Vision, ethos and strategy" guides. you can view them at: [www.DofN.org/NGA](http://www.DofN.org/NGA).

Governors could also work with school leaders to make a Greener Governance pledge ([www.DofN.org/greener](http://www.DofN.org/greener)) – a National Governance Association initiative that aims to enable governors to focus on to:

- reducing carbon emissions at your school or trust;
- putting your school's or trust's contribution to environmental sustainability on the agenda; and
- ensuring a climate action plan is developed to make this happen.

Looking more closely at work with the pupils, governors can ask leaders to explain how the school's environmental/ climate/net zero plans are communicated

with the children and included in the curriculum. Is there a thread you can follow through different curriculum areas?

Children can be leading lights in the journey to net carbon neutral and gathering pupil voice is a really important tool for governors. Why not join the two together and invite pupils to present to your governing body on their hopes and aims for their school and their world in combatting the climate crisis and achieving net carbon zero.

In July 2022 Governors for Schools published an interesting article entitled 'The rise of eco-anxiety: How can governors support school leaders to confront big problems?' ([www.DofN.org/eco-anxiety](http://www.DofN.org/eco-anxiety)). As leaders, we can't talk about Net Carbon Zero without acknowledging how societal issues like climate change can impact on pupils' wellbeing. Do the curriculum elements of your school's work provide an opportunity for pupils to express their anxieties and even take positive action?

Carbon 'net zero' by 2030 is ambitious. Working together across our school improvement and governing community I am confident that we can make a real difference.

## Welcome

### Headteachers starting

**Leigh Goodhew**  
Alburgh with Denton Academy  
(permanent headteacher)

## Farewell

### Headteachers leaving

**Titus Cotton**  
The Belfry VA Primary, Overstrand

## SIAMS congratulations

Congratulations to the following schools that have had their SIAMS inspections this term.

**Good**  
Hethersett VC Primary

**Excellent**  
Neatishead VC Primary  
Acle VC Primary

## REQM congratulations

**Silver Award**  
St Nicholas Priory VA Primary

## Partnerships

**Scole Academy with Diss Academy,  
St Benet's MAT**

## Federations

**The Ark Federation – Peterhouse  
and Moorlands academies, DNEAT**