



Gillibrand Primary School

Climate Action Plan

2025 - 2026

Written July 2025 by Hannah Clark (Headteacher)

and Stephanie Szalata (Sustainability and Geography Lead)

Last Updated: August 2025

Introduction:

At Gillibrand, one of our core values is to Make a Difference – to each other, to our community, and to the wider world. Our Sustainability Climate Action Plan builds on this value, setting out how we will work together to reduce our environmental impact and equip our pupils with the knowledge, skills, and values to thrive as responsible global citizens.

We believe that sustainability is not just about what we do on our school site, but about how we connect with and influence the world around us. Through this plan, we aim to:

- Engage our community – working with families, local organisations, and our governing body to bring about meaningful change.
- Look outward to the wider world – aligning our work with the Department for Education’s Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, and recognising the role we play in tackling global environmental challenges.
- Build cultural capital – giving our pupils the chance to experience and lead sustainability initiatives that broaden their horizons, deepen their understanding of global issues, and inspire them to take action both now and in the future.

Our Climate Action Plan is therefore more than a set of targets; it is a commitment to live out our school value of Make a Difference by embedding sustainability across our curriculum, daily practices, and community partnerships. Together, we will create a greener, healthier, and fairer future for our pupils and for generations to come.

What is Climate Change?

The dictionary definition is:

“A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards, and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.”

There are many factors that influence the Earth’s temperature, making it warmer or colder, including:

- Greenhouse gases caused by human activity.
- Deforestation, where vast areas of land have been cleared or paved over.
- Damage to the ozone layer, trapping more heat closer to the Earth's surface.
- Air pollution, which affects the atmosphere in different ways.

The challenge of climate change is formidable. For children and young people to face it with determination—and not despair—we must offer them not just the truth, but also hope. Learners need clear, knowledge-rich education about climate change. But they must also be given opportunities to see themselves as agents of change: through hands-on activities in school, through local community projects, and as they grow, through pathways that may lead to green careers in the future (DfE, 2023).

What Can We Do?

The Department for Education has called on all schools to create a Sustainability Climate Action Plan to show how we can support both national and international efforts to protect the planet through direct climate action.

As a school, we have an important role to play. This means:

- Working to reduce our environmental footprint and moving towards net zero.
- Giving all children, young people, and adults the knowledge and skills to thrive in a greener economy.
- Supporting the restoration of nature and biodiversity in our local environment.

Through our Sustainability Climate Action Plan, we will engage directly with children and young people who are passionate about the natural world. Together, we will encourage them not only to protect it but also to influence their families and wider communities to make sustainable choices.

Through their learned and lived experiences from Early Years to Year 6, our children will develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the importance of nature, sustainability, and the causes and impact of climate change. Just as importantly, they will be encouraged to translate this knowledge into positive action and real solutions.

Guided by the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, our action plan is built around four key areas:

- Decarbonisation – taking action to reduce carbon emissions and becoming more energy efficient.
- Adaptation and Resilience – preparing for and reducing risks such as flooding, overheating, or extreme weather.
- Biodiversity – protecting and enhancing our natural environment, including active engagement with the National Education Nature Park.
- Climate Education and Green Careers – providing knowledge-rich teaching about climate change and inspiring pupils to consider future pathways in green careers.

Connecting Children with Nature

Creating opportunities to connect with nature from an early age is essential if children are to value and protect it. Our plan ensures that pupils will:

- Spend regular, meaningful time in nature and develop curiosity about the world around them.
- Take an active role in improving their local environment through projects and eco-initiatives.
- Understand that time in green spaces has proven benefits for both physical and mental health.

1. Decarbonisation - Energy and Travel

| Action | Steps | Timeline for the action | Resources/Staffing | Highlight box when actioned |
|--|--|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Remove the panels for the KS2 communal area ceiling to allow more light in | Add action to IAMCompliant | September | J.Holland H.Clark | |
| Ensure decarbonisation is part of the school's annual sustainability day. | Plan the day with decarbonisation explicitly featured for a targeted year group. Update website and report to parents via school newsletter to profile. | September 2025 | S.Szalata | |
| Understand the school's carbon footprint by identifying where your emissions come from. | Use an online tool such as Keep Britain Tidy's to get a breakdown of carbon emissions. | October 2025 | S.Szalata Count Your Carbon - Eco Schools (eco-schools.org.uk) Energy-walkabout-guide_Guide.pdf (southwarkclimatecollective.co.uk) | |

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| <p>Understand your school's energy efficiency by conducting a review of energy use.</p> | <p>Review the Recommendation Report from your Display Energy Certificate [DEC] to understand the schools' energy efficiency.</p> | <p>October 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata E.Carpenter Energy efficiency: guidance for the school and further education college estate - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> | |
| <p>Hold Eco -Council meeting to identify strategies to actively support decarbonisation.</p> | <p>Update action plan to include pupil voice. Ensure minutes of meetings are available on website.</p> | <p>October 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata M.Wilson</p> | |
| <p>Actively take part in walk to school week</p> | <p>Sign up to walk to school week Communicate to parents about the event Establish a recording method for pupils who have walked to school. Celebrate the week and impact in assembly, on school website and social media.</p> | <p>April 2026</p> | <p>Walk to School Week S.Szalata</p> | |

2. Biodiversity

| Action | Steps | Deadline for the action | Resources/Staffing | Highlight box when actioned |
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| Ensure biodiversity is part of the school's annual sustainability day. | Plan the day with decarbonisation explicitly featured for a targeted year group. | September 2025 | S.Szalata | |
| Run a gardening club that promotes pupil growing produces e.g. cress, beans, tomatoes, herbs | Ensure gardening club is on the clubs annual 'menu'. Ensure gardening club is ran at several times a years. | Autumn 1 | S.Szalata A.Warren | |
| Involve after school in maintain the reading garden | Pupils to once a week support an after school member to weed and water the garden | Ongoing | S.Szalata G.Smith | |
| Identify any grants or findings that could be accessed to support biodiversity including the use of local business to support with donations. | Eco Committee to write letters to local business to ask for donations. Identify fundraising activities to support the running of gardening club. | Termly | S.Szalata A.Warren | |
| Visit other schools e.g St James to develop a clear vision for developments of growing and using own procedure. | Contact school to arrange a date with DHT - Andrew. | November 2025 | S.Szalata A.Warren | |

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| | <p>Visit the school to identify good practices. Liaise with HT and update action plan.</p> | | | |
| <p>Introduce composters for each playground to dispose of fruit waste including Eco Council Leading an assembly to promote.</p> | <p>Monitor the use of current composters/recycling across school through liaising with SBM and site supervisor. Source new bins and order. Lead an assembly alongside the Eco Committee to introduce and support the use of the bins whilst promoting biodiversity. Update website and report to parents via school newsletter.</p> | <p>January 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata M.Wilson</p> | |
| <p>Create a timetable for litter picking in the community to ensure</p> | <p>Each class to conduct litter picking once Incorporate litter picking into Acorns 'My Travel Program'</p> | <p>September 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata</p> | |
| <p>Increase biodiversity on school property by rewilding areas of school's grounds - linked to OPAL play.</p> | <p>Select an area of school ground suitable for rewilding.</p> | <p>Summer 2025</p> | <p>B.Thomas H.Clark</p> | |

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| | <p>Decide what type of rewilding (wildflower field, pond, insect hotels etc.).</p> <p>Buy native plants, stop using chemicals/ pesticides.</p> <p>Let the area grow.</p> <p>Educate staff and students on their maintenance.</p> | | | |
| <p>Hold Eco -Council meeting to identify strategies</p> | <p>Update action plan to include pupil voice.</p> <p>Ensure minutes of meetings are available on the school website.</p> | <p>January 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata M.Wilson</p> | |

3. Climate Education and Green Jobs

| Action | Steps | Timeline for the action | Resources/Staffing | Highlight box when actioned |
|--|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <p>Introduce an annual sustainability day with progressive teaching and learning outcomes from Reception to Year 6.</p> | <p>Plan the day with decarbonisation explicitly featured for a targeted year group.</p> <p>Update website and report to parents via school newsletter to profile.</p> | <p>September 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata</p> | |
| <p>Include a pupil voice to launch sustainability day to identify what the children already know , what they perceive as issues and what they already know - use to plan</p> | <p>Identify an effective and time efficient way to collate pupil voice.</p> <p>Support staff in carrying out pupil voice.</p> <p>Hold staff to account to ensure the pupil voice is actioned fe</p> | <p>September 2025</p> | <p>Kahoot/Google Forms</p> <p>S.Szalata</p> | |

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| | Collate and share results with sustainability team and SLT. | | | |
| Promote Green careers to pupils, highlighting jobs that could inspire pupils to make a difference to sustainability as a job | <p>Consider a termly assembly on sustainability with a guest speaker to promote dreams and aspirations linked to school vision.</p> <p>Link to House Team Captain - Greta Thunberg</p> | Termly | Eco Active's Green Influencers Scheme Energy Garden Climate Ed Education Business Alliance – Education Business Alliance (southwarkeba.org.uk) S.Szalata | |
| Promote supporting climate change through sustainability ambassadors. | Consider the daily role of pupil sustainability ambassadors to support promoting learning and knowledge of sustainability practices e.g turning off lights and promoting recycling. | September 2025/Ongoing monitoring and review of role | S.Szalata B.Thomas | |

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| <p>Identify where and when decarbonisation is taught explicitly in the curriculum.</p> | <p>Review curriculum to understand where climate change/ careers features/ could feature.</p> | <p>November 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata J.Edgar Our City, our world Conceptual milestones And key vocabulary (ourcityourworld.co.uk) Tracked changes project</p> <p>Teaching for Sustainable Futures</p> <p>Brighton and Hove's Our City Our World tool</p> <p>Teach the Future website</p> | |
| <p>Ensure sustainability is explicitly highlighted within the school's ASPIRATION Curriculum.</p> | <p>Produce a separate page of the ASPIRATION Curriculum to show the progression in the teaching and learning of sustainability and climate change.</p> | <p>July 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata J.Edgar</p> | |
| <p>Hold Eco -Council meeting to identify strategies to support the teaching and</p> | <p>Update action plan to include pupil voice.</p> | <p>July 2025</p> | <p>S.Szalata M.Wilson</p> | |

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| learning of sustainability including a review of learning. | Ensure minutes of meetings are available on the website. | | | |
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4. Resilience and Adaptation

| Action | Steps | Timeline for the action | Resources/Staffing | Highlight box when actioned |
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| Introduce an annual sustainability day with progressive teaching and learning outcomes from Reception to Year 6. | Lead a short staff meeting to inform staff on the vision, outcomes and expectations of the day. | September 2025 | Climate Ready Places: Lesson Plans - Adaptation Scotland These resources allow students to think about their place and different environments and how a changing climate might impact this. S.Szalata | |
| Assess the school's risk and vulnerability to climate change. | Use tools to assess your climate risk. Vulnerability analysis to identify the most at-risk areas of the school, such as aging infrastructure or vulnerable student populations. | October 2025 | S.Szalata Climate Risk Mapping - London Datastore This provides a map of your heat and flood vulnerability Local Climate Adaptation Tool (lcat.uk) | |

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| | | | <p>This provides information on health and community impacts of weather hazards in your local area</p> <p>Climate Just maps Understand how health, social and economic inequality and other vulnerabilities impact your local risk.</p> <p>Local Authority Climate Service Understand weather impacts for your school</p> | |
| Promote the pre-loved uniform shop with the specific focus on increasing donations | <p>Set up a donation drop box at the front of school</p> <p>Regularly advertise on newsletter and via dojo</p> <p>Seek volunteers to support organising the uniform.</p> <p>Ensure uniform is available to buy at key parent events e.g. parents evening.</p> | Ongoing | <p>S.Szalata H.Clark S.Whittam A.Warren</p> | |
| Increase our school's knowledge of resilience and adaptation by promoting water conservation practices. | <p>Run a campaign within school. This could include posters or newsletters about conserving and not wasting water.</p> <p>Identify areas where water butts can be used to support watering of plants</p> | July 2025 | <p>The Pod Water Week (jointhepod.org) Conserving water / RHS Campaign for School Gardening</p> | |

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| | Source and order water butts and ensure usage or reusing rain water. | | | |
| Support the OPAL play team with ensure pupils are protracted from the risk of extreme weather | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clothing and well storage is available to ensure pupils are adequately stressed for outdoor play.ie - Use of PP money to source additional wet weather items e..g wellies and waterproofs. - Advertisement of donations of wellies and waterproofs. - New outdoor 'beach hut' order and accessible for use on bottom field. | November 2025 | B.Thomas S.Szalata | |
| Hold Eco -Council meeting to identify strategies to support and promote adaptation and resilience. | <p>Update action plan to include pupil voice.</p> <p>Ensure minutes of meetings are available on the school website.</p> | Summer 2025 | S.Szalata M.Wilson | |

Review of Impact and Termly Updates

(what actions have taken place and how has this impacted on improving sustainability?)

Autumn Term

Spring Term

Summer Term