

HELSEBY HIGH SCHOOL

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND ACTIONS

Introduction

Environmental awareness and sustainability have been part of governmental policy for some years. Many schools have devised a policy and programme to involve their school community in actions that deliver environmental benefits and embed the issue in the minds of students and their families. Helsby High School has progressed various initiatives over recent years without an overall policy document to guide and drive comprehensive action across the school. The Clerk to the Governors has researched some examples of sustainability policies in schools from which to draw ideas. This note sets out what a Helsby High School sustainability policy might contain, borrowing freely from those policies (from Long Eaton School, Forge Valley Community School, Rugby School and Guildhall School of Drama), the Eco Schools programme and Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd) (this latter no longer supported by the present government but still operational).

Rationale

Sustainability is a process of ensuring the wise use of all resources within a framework in which environmental, social and economic factors are integrated and balanced. We consider a suitable definition for sustainability for Helsby High School as being:

To meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Helsby High School has always been involved with the welfare of the community it serves and over recent years has recognised the importance of environmental issues. The issues around climate change affect the whole curriculum. Students need to understand the issues from educational and social perspectives in the interests of everyone's future.

Aims

Our overall aim is to pursue a coherent, consistent and achievable policy on sustainability issues throughout the school. In doing so, we aim to educate students, staff, parents and carers about the importance of good sustainability practices to the benefit of the planet and each of us.

Objectives

Helsby High School will devise an Action Plan to include:-

- (i) Set clearly defined sustainable development objectives and targets.
- (ii) Engage students and staff in a wide understanding of the impact of our individual actions on the environment locally, nationally and internationally.
- (iii) Promote high standards of care for our school, the local community and the wider world.
- (iv) Encourage behavioural changes, increase participation and communication across all users.
- (v) Minimise the adverse impacts of our school on the environment.
- (vi) Develop a responsible use of energy throughout the school, improving energy efficiency and giving preference to renewable energy when possible.

- (vii) Wherever possible use environmentally friendly products and practices and avoid the use of environmentally damaging products.
- (viii) Develop a sustainable transport policy for journeys to and from school.

Implementation

Numerous action points suggest themselves to deliver the vision, grouped broadly under six headings:-

- 1 Communication
 - (i) Develop the capacities of all staff to promote the understanding of the principles of sustainability.
 - (ii) Develop an ethos of sustainability by setting up a Student Eco-Council.
 - (iii) Share the Eco-code with the wider community through electronic and non-electronic means including notice boards, newsletters, e-mails and website development.
 - (iv) Take part in national and international programmes to support and enhance the work of the Eco-Council.
 - (v) Encourage our students to take their ideas home and share them with their family and friends.

- 2 Transport
 - (i) Promote car-sharing, public transport, walking and cycling to and from school to pupils, parents and staff.
 - (ii) Encourage the use of bikes by promoting safe cycling and secure cycle storage and safe crossing points.
 - (iii) Consider adopting carbon offsetting for medium and long-haul school travel wherever possible.
 - (iv) Review the School Travel Plan on a regular basis.

- 3 Recycling
 - (i) Maintain respect for natural resources by teaching and encouraging the most efficient use of materials and by using renewable, recycled and recyclable products wherever possible.
 - (ii) Encourage staff, students and parents to recycle as much waste as possible, in school and at home. Facilitate recycling in school by activities such as mobile phone collection points, recycling print cartridges, etc.

- 4 Procurement
 - (i) Ensure that we pursue a policy of best practice, local purchasing and the use of environmentally friendly products, where possible.
 - (ii) Aim to offer students the opportunity to become involved in growing fruit and vegetables and developing food technology skills.

- 5 Premises
 - (i) Ensure that school grounds are maintained to a high standard and are as litter free as possible.
 - (ii) Monitor gas, water and electricity and seek to reduce usage.
 - (iii) Use, wherever possible, renewable energy in school.

6 Strategy

- (i) Consider sustainability issues throughout the planning, design and construction of all capital and other projects.
- (ii) Consider adopting the Eco-Schools model and use the National Framework for Sustainability model as a basis for development within the school.
- (iii) Develop a global dimension within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitor and publish progress towards sustainability objectives through the regular meeting structure.