

Sustainability and Climate Action Report: Lark Hill Community Primary School

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Introduction

Lark Hill Community Primary School has laid important foundations in its sustainability journey, demonstrating growing awareness, commitment, and action in key areas. While some initiatives are still emerging, it is clear that sustainability is becoming part of the school's culture. This report celebrates current strengths, highlights good practice, and links actions to the Department for Education's (DfE) Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, showcasing how Lark Hill is developing its Climate Action Plan.

Leadership and Governance

Lark Hill shows strong emerging leadership in sustainability. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is actively involved in key environmental conversations around recycling, reducing waste, and adopting more sustainable alternatives. While a formal sustainability lead has not yet been appointed, there is notable staff interest in the area.

There are initial discussions about forming an Eco-Council, which could become a vital platform for pupil voice. Parental engagement is beginning through initiatives such as *Beat the Street* and paperless communication.

Key Achievements

- SLT is engaged in practical sustainability efforts.
- Active School Council with plans to launch an Eco-Council.
- Parents involved through travel initiatives and digital communication.

DfE Link: These early leadership structures align with the DfE's emphasis on whole-school engagement and fostering pupil and community voice in sustainability efforts.

Decarbonisation

Lark Hill is taking several positive steps to improve energy efficiency. Through its energy SLA with the local authority, the school ensures best value and has already completed significant upgrades such as new roofing and lighting in many areas. While renewable energy options have been deemed currently unviable by the LA, staff continue to look for low-cost ways to enhance energy use and procurement practices.

There is an opportunity to grow awareness and pupil involvement in energy-saving habits as part of the broader culture shift.

Key Achievements

- Upgraded lighting systems through a rolling programme.
- Strategic energy procurement via local authority SLA.
- Growing consideration of sustainable procurement methods.

DfE Link: These steps support the DfE's objectives to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions across the school estate.

Adaptation and Resilience

The school adopts a practical, real-time approach to risk management related to climate change. Though not in a flood-prone area, Lark Hill adapts daily routines in response to weather extremes—for example, modifying playtimes and ensuring pupils are reminded to bring weather-appropriate clothing.

While the school does not yet have a dedicated climate-related emergency preparedness plan, many of the required elements are present across existing policies and procedures. This provides a strong base on which to build a more comprehensive and centralised approach.

Direct water conservation measures include the use of push taps in pupil toilets. More advanced interventions, such as water butts, have been assessed but are not suitable for the site due to health and safety constraints.

Key Achievements

- Proactive responses to extreme weather through operational flexibility.
- Key elements of emergency preparedness embedded in wider school documentation.
- Water-saving fixtures implemented where appropriate.

DfE Link: These efforts reflect the DfE's focus on enhancing climate resilience and adapting learning environments to future conditions.

Biodiversity

Despite past challenges with the site—including historic field damage—Lark Hill is now actively rebuilding its approach to biodiversity. New saplings and planters have been introduced, and there is a clear aspiration to manage the land more sustainably once full control returns to the school. While there is not yet a formal habitat or biodiversity programme in place, there is momentum building toward one.

There are also pockets of great outdoor learning practice, particularly in EYFS and the resource base, which could be expanded across the school.

Key Achievements

- New tree planting and planters installed.
- Outdoor learning and sensory spaces well used in some phases.

- Educational visits to RHS Bridgewater support wider biodiversity learning.

DfE Link: These steps reflect the DfE's priority for schools to enhance biodiversity and utilise outdoor learning spaces more meaningfully.

Climate Education and Green Careers

Lark Hill integrates climate content into the curriculum through science, geography, and themed assemblies. Year 6 pupils benefit from PSHE lessons that now include green careers. While staff currently rely on national curriculum materials, there is recognition that further development and partnerships would strengthen climate literacy across all phases.

Gardening clubs and climate projects are emerging areas of growth for pupil involvement.

Key Achievements

- Climate content integrated through science, geography, and assemblies.
- Green careers introduced through enhanced PSHE in Year 6.
- Gardening clubs available in good weather for pupil engagement.

DfE Link: These practices align with the DfE's call to embed sustainability across the curriculum and inspire pupils to consider careers in the green economy.

Conclusion

Lark Hill Community Primary School is making steady and commendable progress on its sustainability journey. There is clear evidence of growing staff engagement, developing pupil involvement, and practical improvements across key areas such as energy use, biodiversity, and curriculum coverage.

With a clear understanding of its current position and next steps, the school is well placed to implement a meaningful and effective Climate Action Plan. This will ensure compliance with the Department for Education's 2025 expectations, while also embedding sustainability more deeply into school life for the benefit of pupils, staff, and the wider community.



Adam Anderson

Senior Consultant

EcoEd Solutions