

## England Asks 2023

Following publication of the Department for Education's (DfE) Sustainability and Climate Change strategy in April 2022, we have revised our original asks to take into account the progress made on implementing many of our original asks. You can read our [reactive to the DfE's draft strategy](#) and [the final strategy](#) on our [policy documents page](#).

### **1. Review and revision of DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change strategy to include measurable targets and provision of sufficient funding to deliver it**

The final version of the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change strategy has very few measurable targets, and many of the commitments do not have deadlines. Moreover, although we welcome the recommendation for a sustainability lead in every education setting, and for each setting to produce a climate action plan, we are concerned that these points are guidance rather than requirements, and that no additional funding is provided for the sustainability lead role. We are also worried that there is insufficient budget to adequately implement the strategy in its entirety.

**OUR ASK: An updated version of the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change strategy that includes measurable targets with deadline dates; a requirement for sustainability leads and climate action plans; the publication of an annual progress report on the strategy; and a ministerial commitment to provide sufficient budget for the full implementation of the strategy.**

**OUR ADDITIONAL ASK, ONCE PUBLIC FINANCES ALLOW: New substantial multi-year funding committed to properly resource the sustainability lead roles in education providers, relative to the size of the institution.**

## 2. Adoption of our Climate Education Bill by Government

Our [Climate Education Bill](#) has cross-party support, including backing from the Chairs of four relevant select committee<sup>1</sup>. If passed into law, it would amend the Education Act 2002 to include the climate and ecological emergency. For more information, you can read our [Climate Education Bill Briefing](#), which gives some background on why it is needed and what it would mean.

**OUR ASK: Support from the Secretary of State for Education for our Climate Education Bill, resulting in it becoming law in this parliament.**

## 3. Inclusion of the climate emergency and ecological crisis in teacher training and a new professional teaching qualification

Learning about the climate and ecological emergency should be a substantive and compulsory part of all teaching education courses, from primary upwards, for both new teachers and existing teachers through continued professional development. This should include the science of the climate and ecological crises, the system changes required to abate them and training to enable staff to identify and support pupils suffering from eco-anxiety.

There were good commitments on this in the first draft of the DfE strategy<sup>2</sup>, but sadly they did not appear in the final version. The only commitment to teacher education in the strategy is to *“Continue to work with higher education to identify opportunities to work together to further enhance best practice in teacher training”*. This commitment is hard to measure and of limited use given that the majority of initial teacher training now happens outside of higher education.

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<sup>1</sup> Our Climate Education Bill has the support of the Chairs of the Environmental Audit Select Committee, the Education Select Committee, the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committee and the Science and Technology Select Committee (all as of February 2023)

<sup>2</sup> All of the following copy was in the first draft of the DfE strategy, which was published at COP26, but did not appear in the final version of the strategy: *“England will have the best trained, best supported teachers in the world, teaching a broad and balanced, knowledge-rich curriculum to give all pupils the knowledge and skills needed to build a better and fairer world for future generations”. “Every early-career teacher will have access to free, high-quality training and support. This will be underpinned by the Early Career Framework”. “All teachers and school leaders will have free access to a new National Professional Qualification to prepare them for the next stage of their career”*

**OUR ASK: Inclusion of climate emergency and ecological crisis Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework and Early Career Framework for newly qualified teachers and a new National Professional Qualification for teachers on the climate emergency and ecological crisis, including supporting students with eco-anxiety.**

#### **4. Substantial investment for the retrofitting of existing educational buildings**

Schools should be practical teaching and learning resources of how the built environment needs to be adapted to respond to the climate crisis and ecological emergency.

Whilst we welcome the DfE's strategy's requirement for all new schools in England to be built to net zero standards from 2024, the related requirement that all English educational entities will need to have a Climate Action Plan by 2025, and the additional capital funding for energy efficiency announced in December 2022<sup>3</sup>, most of the c33,000 schools in England remain on the timeline to be retrofitted to net zero by the legislated date of 2050, rather than the 2030 that we have been calling for.

We have recently updated our costings document — view our [new costings for this work](#), (2023) and [our original set of costings](#) (2020), produced by Energise.

**OUR ASK: Treasury to commit £14.5bn, over the parliaments between now and 2030, for the retrofitting of all English schools to net zero before 2030.**

**OUR INTERIM ASK: The immediate prohibition of the installation of new or replacement fossil fuel heating systems in schools. A new repayable finance solution for energy efficiency measures to replace the gap left by the withdrawal of the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. Better coordination between the Condition Improvement Fund and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.**

**Teach the Future  
24<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

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<sup>3</sup> £10,000 per school plus a further £20 per pupil for energy efficiency projects.  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-capital-funding>