

Saving Creation

A Toolkit for Schools



A guide for church schools on how to make a real difference environmentally

We are all well aware of the issue of climate change and the impact it is increasingly going to have on our lives. When we speak to children in our schools, it frequently comes up as one of their greatest worries for the future.

In 2020, the UK Government set the target of reaching net zero for all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In the intervening years, there has been much debate about meeting this target, and some significant action. The Church of England, for its part, has set an even more ambitious carbon net zero target. Its goal is that the activities of the church, including its church schools, will reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. We are determined that the Diocese of Leeds will be leading the way in achieving this.

But targets of these kinds will only be achieved by real action being taken at ground level, by individuals and organisations changing the way they do things to reduce their environmental impact. As school communities, many of us have looked for ways of making a difference, but these often seem to be just scratching the surface. We would like to do more but there are so many competing demands on our time. If only there was something that signposted us towards realistic steps we could take to make a significant difference. We hope that, over the course of this year, this resource will build into just that.

The first step, however, is the decision that action must be taken and the commitment to do so. We hope that many schools will take this first step and join with us to make a real difference to the world in which our students will live.

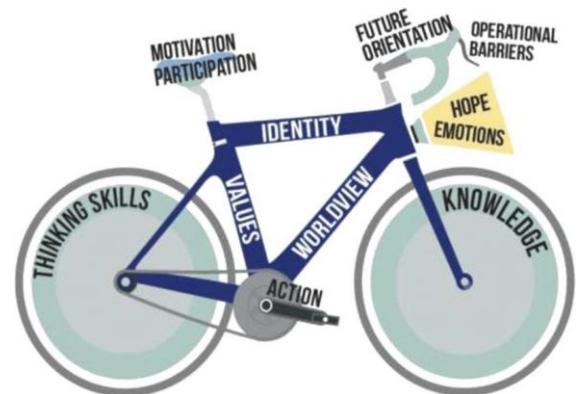
The Saving Creation Toolkit for Schools

The toolkit is comprised of Action Sheets and other resources. Each Action Sheet looks at a different area, setting out a series of possible actions you can take to make a real impact. Links to organisations that can help you are included.

The Toolkit Resources include:

- # Introduction
- # Action Sheet 1 – Getting Started
- # Action Sheet 2 – Action on Energy
- # Action Sheet 3 – Action on Food
- # Action Sheet 4 – Action on Travel
- # Action Sheet 5 – Action on Consumption
- # Action Sheet 6 - Action on Grounds
- # Action Sheet 7 – Action on Learning
- # Collective Worship Resources
- # Sustainable Buildings - guide to decarbonising your school
- # Explainer on Sustainability leadership & Climate Action Plans

In 2019, Cantell et al. put forward the 'bicycle model' as a representation of the interrelatedness of the elements with sustainability and climate change education. It emphasises the importance of structural elements, such as school culture and values, as well as the strategic view, aspirations and hopes of the school. However, even more importantly, it demonstrates that the bike won't move unless **you get on the saddle (motivation & participation)** and **start pushing the pedals (actions)**.



The Theology of Environmental Action

It is fair to say that the Church has not always spoken up loudly about the environment. However, the theology behind environmentalism comes from the very heart of the Christian faith. Christians believe that humankind was created to live in right relationship with God, right relationship with each other and right relationship with the natural world. We were commanded to rule over creation, but not in the sense of cruel oppression and exploitation of it. We are called, as images of God, to rule as Jesus rules, sacrificially, with love and joy, in order that the natural world might flourish under our care, as God had planned.