

Putting sustainability at the heart of all we do



Instil an ethos and ability to care for the natural environment now and in the future, to become carbon neutral and one of the most sustainable school trusts in the country.

[At the heart of our strategy](#)

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Chris Berry - Windsor Academy Trust [WAT]

- talked about sustainability as a core driver.

We asked him to outline what such a strategy looked like.

When we talk about sustainability, as a trust, we want to ensure that “we are meeting the needs of the present without compromising our ability to meet the needs of future generations”.

We started our journey to become one of the most sustainable multi-academy trusts in the country in 2020 and since then, extensive work has been carried out to **align our education, operations and estate to ensure sustainable practice across everything we do**. As part of this process, we developed a dedicated sustainability strategy and a 10 year decarbonisation plan with an aspirational target of becoming net carbon neutral by 2030.

Our sustainability strategy is closely aligned with:

- ◇ DfE [Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#);
- ◇ United Nations [Sustainable Development Goals](#);
- ◇ the framework set out in the [One Planet Living principles](#).

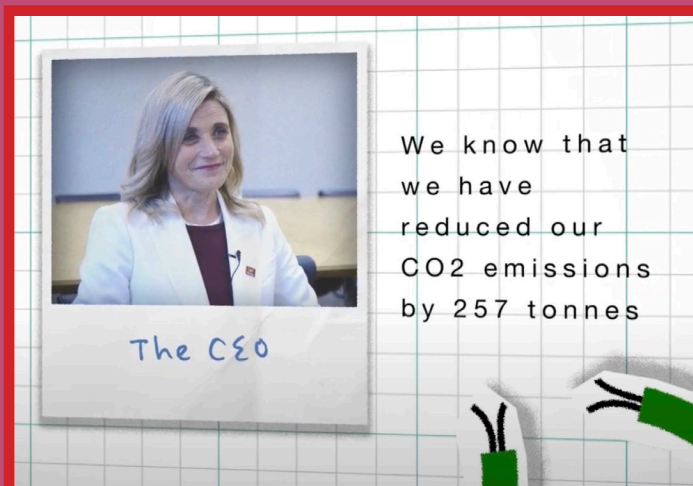
For us, **developing a sustainability strategy was not just a tick box exercise - we wanted to develop a clear roadmap to drive lasting change**. As such, we have made sustainability a key agenda point at each of our weekly Executive Team and monthly Leadership meetings to keep us on track, and we have also appointed a trustee champion for sustainability at Board level.

Our supporting 10 year decarbonisation plan, developed through the use of an energy and decarbonisation portal, clearly details our energy consumption and CO2e reduction targets to achieve net zero. In line with this, we have made a capital investment of £4m over the last two years to decarbonise our school estate, through investment of our School Condition Allocation funding and support from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. [See short [video](#)]





Students and staff from across the Trust, and the wider education community, worked collaboratively on a series of presentations and workshops. In the morning session staff and students followed separate programmes. They came together in the afternoon to share perspectives and start planning action.



Now by 300 tonnes. [See video clip](#)

Funding has helped us to deliver a range of projects including upgrades to heating infrastructure and installation of solar PV panels across our estate, and the introduction of 1:1 devices (iPads) across key stages 2, 3, 4 and 5. This investment has allowed us to reduce our reliance on textbooks, paper and photocopying as well as minimise our impact on transport emissions through reduced deliveries from suppliers. Furthermore, implementing a new energy management dashboard has increased our understanding of energy usage data, including when our energy is consumed.

At a school level, we have worked with each of our nine schools to develop action plans aligned to our overarching strategy. These have been embedded into our School Improvement Plans, and sustainability is now an integral part of our primary and secondary curricula.

On the journey, we have made a concerted effort to engage staff and students in sustainability action including a trust-wide WAT COP sustainability summit engaging one hundred of our student advocates, collaboration at the [Schools for the Future: Sustainable Education Summit](#), and working with our [Student Senate](#) to develop dedicated Eco committees in schools.

As a result, the whole WAT family is engaged - in part, because we provide everyone with the opportunity to influence change.

The positive changes we have made to date are significantly improving energy efficiencies and reducing our reliance on non-renewable energy sources. In turn, we are reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. Since April 2021, we have reduced CO2 emissions by over 300 metric tonnes, generated over 630,000 kWh of sustainable clean energy for our schools (the equivalent of powering 150 homes for a year), and reduced our annual energy consumption by 693,000 kWh (12%).

Through further planned investment in solar panels across our schools and reducing reliance on fossil fuels our aim is for 100% of our energy to be provided from sustainable sources and green energy suppliers.

[Windsor Academy Trust](#). A Midlands-based trust made up of five primary schools and four secondary schools

Chris Berry is Director of Operations for the Trust.

