



Climate Action Schools Impact Report 2025/2026



Scotland is beautiful

With children and young people's empowerment at its core, Climate Action Schools is a programme of international award programmes, lessons, training and project-based learning opportunities through which we support learners, educators and learning settings to embed and bring to life Learning for Sustainability, take action on climate change, connect and look after nature, and improve their communities.

"The Education and Learning Team at Keep Scotland Beautiful is extremely lucky in that we get to work on something that we strongly believe in and that comes right out of our hearts."

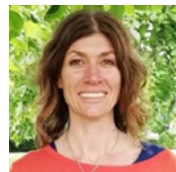
"There is not a single day that we are not inspired by, and are in awe of, the amazing work taking place across our schools, nurseries and local authorities thanks to passionate educators, children and young people working relentlessly to make the world a better place."

We feel privileged to be in a position where we are able to support this work ensuring we are all moving forward as a nation towards a climate friendly, sustainable and nature positive future."

The number of people we've engaged over the years shows just how much appetite there is for learning about real life issues and sustainability, feeling part of the solution, and connecting to nature and our communities."

This report is a celebration of the fantastic work being done across the country. It is also a testament to our small and mighty team delivering in every local authority in Scotland."

The Climate Action Schools Programme provides a framework for empowering future generations to take action on climate change; it is vital we are ready to support their learning and this report shows what we can achieve together."



Andrea Gabriel
Education and Learning Manager
Keep Scotland Beautiful

Contents

Page:

- 4** Our impact
- 5** Our goals
- 7** Supporting the movement towards Sustainable Learning Settings
- 13** Helping practitioners in their understanding and delivery
- 17** Empowering children and young people
- 20** Looking forward

Climate Action Schools is managed by Keep Scotland Beautiful and funded by the Scottish Government

 Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Collaborative - Ambitious - Positive - Innovative - Influential - Professional



1,146

settings took part in one or more activities



87

hours of Live Lessons, workshops and training sessions delivered



32

local authorities had schools engaging in one or more activity



4,227

primary aged pupils from 15 local authorities trained through Climate Ready Classrooms



1,457

young people taught by our Gaelic officer in person



164

educators attended teacher training



1,624

young people took action through being part of their settings Eco-Committee



22,800

pupils attended one or more Live Lessons



677

responses received to a wide-ranging consultation

Our goals

Our focus for 2025/2026 was based around three key goals:



- ✓ **Support the movement for all learning settings to become Sustainable Learning Settings by 2030** through supporting local authorities and offering frameworks, resources and initiatives that help settings take positive action.



- ✓ **Help practitioners in their understanding and delivery of Learning for Sustainability and climate education** by delivering training, offering support and developing resources.



- ✓ **Empower children and young people** to understand issues around climate change and the environment, and to become active citizens by taking positive action and speaking up to make change happen.

Supporting the movement towards Sustainable Learning Settings

The Eco-Schools Programme offers learning settings a proven methodology through which they can embed Learning for Sustainability. By taking a whole-school approach settings can become more sustainable, with children and young people deciding on, and driving, change.



In the last year we have celebrated **340** schools being awarded their Green Flag awards with **18** schools receiving commendations for excellence in their work, including for showing true commitment to Learning for Sustainability throughout their setting, for excelling in involving their community in their work, and for clearly demonstrating that pupil voice is key.

We asked Eco-Committee members to tell us

"What is most important to you about being involved in your Eco-Committee?"

They said:

"Helping the environment and having fun with my friends"

"I really want to learn about how to make changes to the environment, and it's really nice knowing that I am not the only person who cares about the environment."

"Making sure we have a good future!"

"I thoroughly enjoy being able to see the positive impact that we are having in our school and the wider community."



856
current Eco-Schools

28%
of local authority settings
are active Eco-Schools

Listening to local authorities' individual needs and challenges with regards to Learning for Sustainability and climate action targets to offer the appropriate support has continued to be a central part of our work.

As such, the support we offer is varied and wide-ranging, and this year included delivering bespoke training sessions to educators, attending leadership and network meetings, preparing workshops for youth climate conferences, and delivering a local authority networking event bringing together officers from 23 local authorities, Education Scotland and the Scottish Government to discuss the challenges associated with delivering national ambitions.



"I just wanted to thank the KSB Team for hosting such a wonderful and unique event bringing together Education and wider Council Teams to discuss and consider an LA Approach to Target 2030. I think the event will be a real catalyst in reigniting conversations and collaborative actions in LAS to enhance support for schools and settings to become sustainable Learning settings."

Gillian Eaves, Education Support Officer STEM and Learning for Sustainability, Fife Council

Case study:

Gartocharn Early Education and Childcare Centre LfS Commendation

Gartocharn Early Education and Childcare Centre in West Dunbartonshire were awarded a commendation for Learning for Sustainability for the exemplary way that they approached all aspects of the Eco-Schools process.

This included using their Eco-Schools work as a way to deliver the curriculum, reflecting on the personal development of children as they carried out their work and engaging positively with the whole nursery community.

The centre's focus on the Food and Environment topic was highlighted for special praise. They created engaging, real-life learning experiences including pressing their own fruit juice; exploring where food comes from via a visit from a local farmer and his lambs; seasonal hunts for berries; making jam; growing, harvesting and cooking their own food; and taking part in litter picks which also involved parents and carers.

"One of the best parts of our Eco-Schools work was seeing our nursery community come together."

"The children absolutely loved learning how to care for their environment, and they did it while having so much fun... It was wonderful to see how much confidence they gained through activities, speaking up about their ideas, leading projects, and taking pride in the difference they were making, especially for being so young."



72%
of educators said they are aware that the Eco-Schools Programme supports the delivery and achievement of Target 2030



58%
of educators strongly agreed/agreed to the statement 'I feel supported by my setting's management team to deliver LfS'



44%
of educators feel the learners in their class receive their LfS entitlement

63%
of educators said the Eco-Schools programme provides a framework that facilitates climate action and behavioural change

Case study:

Understanding and supporting local authority needs

In October 2025 we launched a consultation to help us understand the level of awareness of key government targets on Learning for Sustainability and climate education, as well as to assess how well Eco-Schools is perceived for delivering such priorities. We invited practitioners, educators, local authority education officers and Eco-Committee members to share their views with us.



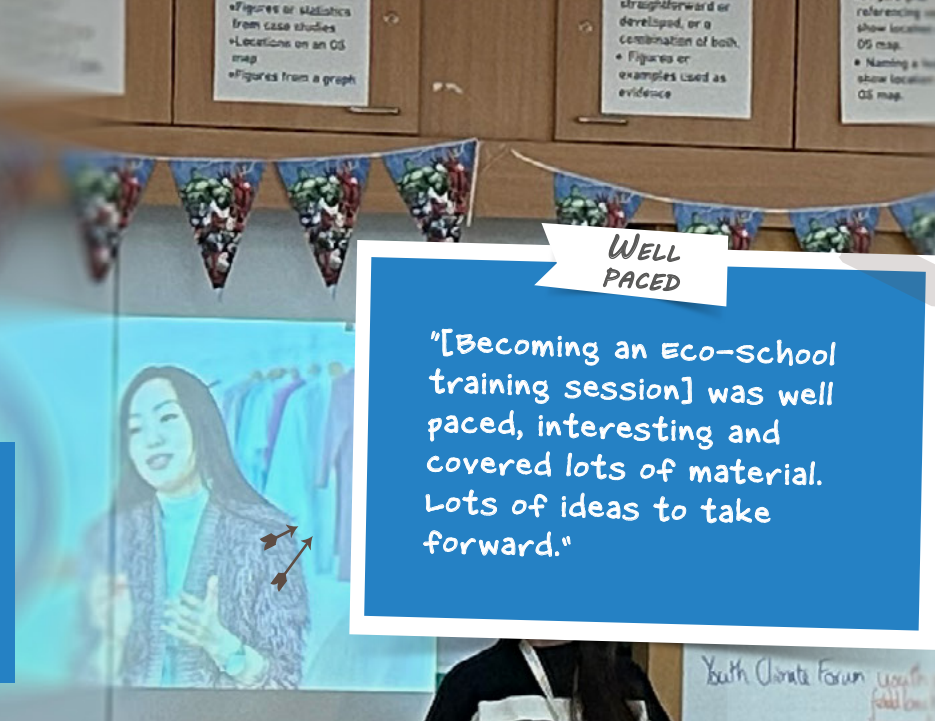
Sharing initial results of the consultation was vital to the discussions held at our local authority networking event which saw officers from various services, including education and sustainability, come together to discuss the opportunities and barriers that learning settings have in becoming Sustainable Learning Settings, and the importance of a whole local authority approach.

Helping practitioners in their understanding and delivery

Climate Action Schools offers many opportunities for educators to develop their understanding of both the topics that we educate young people on and the programmes we offer.



This includes training sessions to complement our Climate Ready Classrooms pupil lessons, giving educators the confidence to discuss the climate emergency, lesson plans and resources to accompany our Live Lessons and take learning further, and a structured SQA accredited course focussing on biodiversity.



100%

of educators surveyed after their class took part in Climate Ready Classrooms agreed or strongly agreed that the sessions supported their teaching for Learning for Sustainability and Climate Education

100%

of educators surveyed after attending Eco-Schools teacher training agreed or strongly agreed that the content was interesting and relevant

Case study:

Delivering practitioner training through Climate Ready Classrooms

Climate Ready Classrooms (CRC) is a climate literacy programme aimed at upper primary classes. By tailoring content to ensure examples are local authority specific, and by co-delivering workshops and activities with each class teacher, we create something unique: several schools from the same region coming together to explore and learn about climate change, what their authority is already doing, and how they as schools can help.

Effective delivery of CRC requires class teachers to be actively involved, so we work with Scotland's Development Education Centres to provide teacher training sessions in advance of pupil teaching. These sessions are vital to equip teachers with ideas and resources to take climate education further.

Some local authorities are embedding CRC as part of their annual programme offered to schools, recognising the benefits of pupils and practitioners feeling they are part of a community taking action, and sharing ideas on how to make their schools and local authority a better place.



FEELING EMPOWERED

"Climate Ready Classrooms gave our P7s a real sense of purpose. They developed a strong understanding of climate change and finished the sessions feeling empowered and ready to take action."

Educator, Argyll & Bute



"We support the Climate Ready Classrooms programme through providing professional learning exploring 'The Climate Emergency' through a Global Citizenship Approach. Our training provides practical methodologies and tools for teachers to bring these ideas into the classroom, exploring concepts such as justice, power and active hope. Teachers have communicated that the course has improved their confidence in exploring climate change and have expressed gratitude for the many educational resources signposted throughout the session to help inform their next steps."

Sarah-Jane Anderson, Global Citizenship Education Advisor, ScotDec

Empowering children and young people

Helping children and young people share their voices to influence local and national environmental policies, and supporting their development as active and positive citizens who care for the environment and their communities, lies front and centre of what we do.

Alongside the awards, lessons and training we deliver, where pupil voice and involvement is strengthened, our work this year has included: supporting local authorities with their youth climate events; working directly with youth forums and Eco-Committees helping them to organise their thoughts into plans of action and voicing their concerns through effective campaigns; and bringing together young people with decision makers to facilitate dialogue and for their ideas and concerns to be heard.

MORE
RESPONSIBLE

"By joining Live Lessons on Keep Scotland Beautiful and watching videos, our awareness and behaviours towards climate change become more responsible."

P3 pupil, West Lothian

Case study:

Young Reporters for the Environment

This year saw us continue to deliver the Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) competition which gives young people the opportunity to have a voice and share their views on environmental issues that concern them through photography, writing and video.

Entries for the 2026 competition saw young people investigate subjects ranging from litter to Gaelic music, Pokemon to fast fashion, and with photos of places and scenes they consider to be beautiful telling us why they want to keep them that way. Every entrant clearly demonstrated care and passion for our environment.

We were thrilled to hear that one of our Scottish winners, Amellie McKay, also won first place in the Written Article - 11 to 14 category in the international competition with her entry The Loss of Wildlife in Our Garden.

"Being involved in judging some of the submissions highlighted just how effectively young people are using technology to raise awareness of both local and global environmental issues. Each piece demonstrated the passion and creativity behind their work. It also highlighted the important role young voices play in driving positive change, while also building skills for the future"

Steph Johnstone, Sustainability Lead for the Scottish Public Sector, HP



HP is providing funding in 2026/2027 to specifically support our new 'Helping Scotland Reach Target 2030' project adding value to, and focussing activity, around the Young Reporters for the Environment programme.

Engaging and empowering children of all ages is crucial, whether that's children in early years settings taking part in the Pocket Garden Design Competition, hearing stories from authors in our Live Lessons, or secondary school pupils learning about positive changes they can make through our Biodiversity Action course.

We are also passionate about enabling learners to take part in Climate Action Schools activities through the Gaelic Medium and last year saw us visit schools in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Argyll & Bute, Highland and central Scotland delivering workshops addressing climate change, nature and heritage. We were delighted to support young people to create entries to our Young Reporters for the Environment competition in the Gaelic language and the assemblies at the end of our Live Lesson focusses are now bilingual with schools choosing whether to receive the commentary in Gaelic or English.



ENGAGING AND
INTERACTIVE

"The class loved how engaging and interactive the [PI-3 Environment workshop] was. We look forward to any further opportunities to work together and learn from [your Gaelic officer]."



Case study:

Pocket Garden

This year our Pocket Garden Design Competition asked young people aged 3 - 18 to design a miniature garden inspired by the theme of fresh water. The competition celebrated its 10th birthday in 2026 and this milestone formed one of the features that young people were invited to include in their designs, as well as considering food for people, and a habitat that is good for wildlife.

More than 170 entries from 24 local authority areas across Scotland were submitted, representing the work of whole classes or whole learning settings, all capturing fantastic imagination and creativity. A total of 26 winning designs were chosen with the winning settings encouraged to build and grow their gardens highlighting fresh water as a precious resource that sustains life, and shapes so much of Scotland's landscape, history and culture.

Photographs of the completed gardens were displayed in an online showcase where the public were invited to vote for their favourite designs whilst a panel of judges chose winners in three categories: Gardening for Wildlife, Food for People, and Fresh Water.

"The garden encouraged curiosity, problem-solving, teamwork and a deeper connection with nature and how living things grow."

Ardnahoe Nursery, Glasgow

"It is impossible to measure the benefits, both physically and mentally, that this experience has brought to the children involved in this project. I believe that the elements of planning, teamwork, commitment and perseverance will be carried on into their future school years and beyond. The pupils quite literally, brought something to life and the pleasure they have taken from that achievement has been the best seed we could have planted."

Beith Primary School, North Ayrshire

Looking forward

Keep Scotland Beautiful is committed to delivering climate education and supporting communities and businesses to engage in positive actions for climate and nature as set out in Our Strategy 2026-2031.

Our Education and Learning Team are pivotal in ensuring young people and educators are well equipped to understand climate change, express their feelings and take positive action.

As we look to the coming year, we will continue to progress the three goals we set out at the start of this report – supporting the movement for all learning settings to become Sustainable Learning Settings by 2030, helping practitioners in their understanding and delivery of Learning for Sustainability and climate and nature education, and empowering children and young people.

As the only organisation in Scotland delivering climate education at scale across all educational settings, including in Gaelic, we remain dedicated to making our support as accessible to as many people as possible.

Our vision is for every setting in Scotland to be an Eco-School. Over the coming year we aim to expand and grow our role in leading and delivering climate education and contributing to national outcomes and targets. We will do this in collaboration with the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, local authorities, and schools across the country.

Additionally, we will continue to identify partners and funders who can support us to deliver on our ambition.

If you want to be a part of this movement then please get in touch with us.

E: education@keepscotlandbeautiful.org

W: www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/climate-action-schools

Collaborative - Ambitious - Positive - Innovative - Influential - Professional

"With nearly 900 Eco-Schools in Scotland, every local authority engaged in our activities and thousands of pupils trained through Climate Ready Classrooms, the passion young people have for environmental education is clear."

"I'm so proud of what we have been able to achieve in this past year: there is a huge appetite for climate and nature education, and we are ready to meet this desire with our enthusiasm and expertise."

Barry Fisher, CEO of Keep Scotland Beautiful



Thank you for keeping Scotland beautiful from our Education and Learning Team.



We support the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful inspires environmental action.

Support us to combat climate change, tackle litter and waste, restore nature and biodiversity and improve places.

Donate ✕ **Partner** ✕ **Sponsor**



T: 01786 471333 **E:** info@keepscotlandbeautiful.org

Follow us on social media



www.keepscotlandbeautiful.org

