Prime 7
Multi Academy Trust

Environmental Sustainability Strategy Document

Updated November 2026

1. Purpose and vision

Prime7 Multi Academy Trust is committed to providing safe, inclusive and inspiring environments in which every child can learn, flourish and develop an understanding of their responsibilities to others and the natural world. Sustainability supports educational quality, pupil wellbeing, responsible stewardship of public resources and long-term resilience.

This strategy sets the Trust-wide direction for environmental sustainability between 2026 and 2029. It applies to Middleton Cheney Primary Academy, King's Sutton Primary Academy and Chipping Warden Primary Academy, including specialist provison. It is supported by a proportionate climate action plan and school-level implementation priorities.

We will pursue achievable improvements based on evidence, affordability and educational impact. Essential health and safety, safeguarding, accessibility and statutory compliance take precedence when resources are constrained.

2. Policy context and principles

The DfE expects education settings, including multi-academy trusts, to nominate a sustainability lead and maintain a regularly updated climate action plan. Its guidance is non-statutory, but sustainability leadership and planning are embedded in estate management expectations and referenced by the Academy Trust Handbook 2026. The Trust will address the four DfE climate action pillars through its existing Four Cs approach.

Adaptation and resilience: prepare for extreme weather and risks to buildings, operations and vulnerable learners.
Biodiversity and nature: protect and improve habitats, outdoor spaces and access to nature.
Climate education and green skills: provide accurate, age-appropriate and inclusive learning and participation.
Decarbonisation and net zero: measure and reduce energy, resource use and greenhouse gas emissions where practicable.

Our approach will be evidence-led, inclusive, financially responsible, collaborative and proportionate. We will avoid unsupported claims about carbon savings and will not set arbitrary emissions targets before establishing reliable baseline information.

3. Strategic alignment

Environmental sustainability will be embedded within the Prime7 Business Plan 2026-2029 and the Estates Vision and Asset Management Plan. It will support inclusion and wellbeing, educational standards, financial stability, community engagement, risk management and responsible growth. Sustainability considerations will be incorporated into business cases for maintenance, capital works and proposed specialist provision, rather than treated as a competing standalone programme.

The Trust's values provide a clear foundation: Respect and Community encourage care for shared environments; Resilience supports adaptation; Ambition and Inspire support pupil learning and leadership; Trust requires transparent stewardship; and Enjoyment recognises the value of nature and outdoor learning.

4. The Four Cs: a whole-Trust model

Four Cs	Prime7 application
Curriculum	Sequenced teaching, practical enquiry, outdoor learning, pupil voice and inclusive climate education.
Campus	Safe buildings, energy and water management, grounds, biodiversity, waste, procurement and resilience.
Community	Families, local partners, active travel where realistic, shared learning and responsible communication.
Culture	Leadership, staff and pupil behaviours, governance, accountability, value for money and continuous improvement.

Each DfE pillar will be considered across these four dimensions. School improvement and curriculum leaders will identify relevant opportunities within existing plans, avoiding a separate or excessive curriculum burden.

5. Governance and accountability

Role	Responsibility
Trust Board	Approve strategy and receive annual assurance on progress, climate risks, investment and value for money.
CEO	Accountable for delivery, alignment with Business Plan, oversight of risks and reporting to Trustees.
Trust sustainability lead/CFO	Coordinate the climate action plan, baselines, cross-school activity, progress reporting and external guidance. Appointment to be confirmed.
CFO/Admin/Estates	Lead operational evidence on energy, water, contracts, procurement, capital planning and building resilience.
Headteachers	Own school-level implementation, staff engagement, curriculum links and pupil participation.
Local School Committees	Consider school-level progress, inclusion, pupil voice and community engagement within delegated remit.

School champions /Council / Pupils	Support practical activities, observations and feedback.

6. Priority 1: Adaptation and resilience

Prime7 will identify and manage environmental risks affecting the safety, continuity and accessibility of education. Each school will review risks associated with overheating, ventilation, severe weather, water ingress, drainage, heating failure and disruption to utilities. Findings will inform the Risk Register, relevant emergency procedures, Business Continuity Management Plan and estates priorities.

Review site-specific climate and building risks at least annually and after significant incidents.
Ensure emergency and continuity planning considers pupils with SEND, medical needs and sensory sensitivities.
Use condition surveys and competent professional advice to prioritise roof, heating, ventilation, electrical and building-envelope works. Consider thermal comfort, shade, drainage, accessibility and operational resilience when planning works.

7. Priority 2: Biodiversity and nature

The Trust will protect and improve the educational and ecological value of its school grounds, balancing biodiversity with safeguarding, accessibility, maintenance and safe play. Schools will identify realistic opportunities such as planting, habitat areas, pollinator-friendly spaces, outdoor learning and pupil-led observations.

Establish a simple baseline of existing green spaces and nature opportunities at each school.
Identify at least one suitable biodiversity or nature-learning improvement per school by summer 2028, subject to site constraints.
Make activities accessible to pupils with SEND and those who benefit from sensory and practical experiences.
Use local community and expert partnerships where they add value without creating significant costs.

8. Priority 3: Climate education and green skills

Climate education will be accurate, balanced, hopeful and appropriate to pupils' age and stage. Schools will map existing opportunities in science, geography, personal development and wider learning, avoiding unnecessary duplication or additions to an already demanding curriculum.

Review existing curriculum coverage and progression, identifying gaps and opportunities for meaningful practical learning.
Provide appropriate outdoor and nature-based experiences, including accessible participation for pupils in specialist provision.
Promote pupil agency through eco-councils, class representatives or equivalent existing pupil leadership structures.
Support staff through carefully targeted resources or professional learning where required.
Approach environmental concerns sensitively, avoiding unnecessary anxiety and emphasising constructive actions.

9. Priority 4: Decarbonisation and net zero

Prime7 will work towards reducing avoidable greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs while protecting educational provision. The first step is to establish credible data for electricity, heating fuels, water and other

material sources. Performance will be reviewed in context, including weather, occupancy, building condition and changes in specialist provision.

Collect and review available energy and water consumption data for each academy, establishing an agreed baseline and data quality limitations.
Investigate practical low-cost controls, maintenance and behaviour changes before committing to major investment.
Consider whole-life cost, energy efficiency, repairability and environmental impact alongside procurement rules and value for money.
Review renewable energy and low-carbon heating opportunities only where technically feasible, affordable and compatible with building condition and future plans.
Record estimated and actual savings separately; do not claim carbon reductions without a transparent calculation method.

10. School-specific estates and sustainability priorities

10.1 Middleton Cheney Primary Academy

Priorities include roofing condition, longer-term heating efficiency and fire-door requirements. Sustainability assessments should accompany relevant condition works, including opportunities to reduce heat loss and improve resilience. Any future specialist provision using available rooms should consider ventilation, thermal comfort, accessibility and whole-life costs.

10.2 King's Sutton Primary Academy

The ageing fan-assisted heating system, availability of replacement parts and potential energy inefficiencies require review. Decisions must account for safe temperatures, ventilation, sensory comfort and the needs of pupils in the Autism Resource Unit. Grounds-based learning and biodiversity improvements should be inclusive and proportionate.

10.3 Chipping Warden Primary Academy

The existing buildings, fire safety and electrical infrastructure are important condition priorities. The Trust will consider climate resilience and environmental performance alongside its CIF work and the School Rebuilding Programme, subject to decisions and funding. Any redevelopment proposal should address educational suitability, inclusion, energy efficiency, thermal comfort and opportunities for nature. No funding outcome is assumed.

Across all three schools, environmental enhancements will be considered within the existing prioritised estates programme. The Trust will not defer urgent safety works to pursue sustainability improvements.

11. Sustainable operations and community engagement

The Trust will review waste and recycling, purchasing, food-related practices, water use, travel and communications where proportionate. Digital communication may reduce unnecessary printing, while recognising accessibility and family needs. Active travel will be encouraged where safe and realistic for rural catchments; families will not be disadvantaged where car travel is necessary.

Schools will seek feedback from pupils, staff, families and Local School Committees through existing mechanisms. Partnerships may include local authorities, environmental organisations and DfE-supported initiatives. Engagement will focus on practical opportunities and measurable benefit rather than additional events for their own sake.

12. Financial management and procurement

The CFO will ensure that proposed sustainability measures are evaluated alongside statutory obligations, building condition, affordability, whole-life cost and the Trust's procurement and delegated authority requirements. Energy purchasing will follow current applicable DfE requirements and Trust procurement procedures. Funding opportunities, including relevant capital programmes, will be considered but will not be assumed until confirmed.

Business cases for significant investment should state the educational and operational need, options considered, risks, estimated costs, expected benefits, maintenance implications and monitoring arrangements.

13. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The Trust sustainability lead (CFO) will maintain a consolidated climate action plan, with Headteachers contributing school-level evidence. Progress will be reviewed annually through existing management arrangements and reported annually to Trustees. Local School Committees will receive proportionate school-level updates.

Evidence: named leadership, climate risk review, curriculum mapping, pupil engagement, site priorities and approved investment decisions.
Measures: energy and water consumption, cost trends, completed actions, identified risks, pupil participation and biodiversity improvements where measurable.
RAG ratings: Green - completed/on track; Amber- progressing with manageable barriers; Red - overdue or significant risk; Grey – not yet assessed.
Annual review: achievements, impact, unintended consequences, affordability, remaining risks and next-year priorities.
Targets for consumption or emissions reductions will be set only after baseline data has been validated. The strategy will be reviewed annually and refreshed earlier if there are significant policy, estate or funding changes.

Appendix A – Trust Climate Action Plan 2026–2029

Action / DfE pillar	Lead	Target	Evidence
Confirm sustainability leadership and school contacts / all	CEO	Autumn 2026	Named roles and reporting lines
Baseline energy, water, grounds and climate risks / all	CFO + HTs	Spring 2027	School baseline summaries
Link climate risks to business continuity and risk register / resilience	CFO + HTs	Spring 2027	Reviewed site risk records

Map existing curriculum and pupil opportunities / education	HTs	Summer 2027	School curriculum mapping
Review estate projects for efficiency and resilience / net zero, resilience	CFO	Ongoing	Capital options and decisions
Identify one nature improvement per school / biodiversity	HTs	Summer 2028	Site evidence and pupil feedback
Agree measurable consumption targets after baseline / net zero	CFO	Autumn 2027	Approved metrics and methodology
Annual Trust report and refreshed action plan / all	CEO + lead	Autumn annually	Trustee minutes and updated plan
Evaluate three-year impact and next strategy / all	CEO + Board	Summer 2029	Evaluation and revised strategy

Implementation dates are proposed for approval and should be adjusted where necessary to reflect the actual date of adoption and resource availability.

Appendix B – School-level monitoring template

Area	Baseline / current position	Action / owner	Deadline	RAG / evidence
Climate resilience	To be completed	To be agreed	TBC	Grey
Biodiversity and grounds	To be completed	To be agreed	TBC	Grey
Curriculum and pupil voice	To be completed	To be agreed	TBC	Grey
Energy, water and emissions	To be completed	To be agreed	TBC	Grey
Procurement and waste	To be completed	To be agreed	TBC	Grey

Each Headteacher should complete this template annually with the Trust sustainability lead. Evidence should be brief and drawn from existing documents wherever possible.

Appendix C - Annual Trustee assurance questions

Is a named sustainability lead in place, supported by appropriate school contacts?
Does the climate action plan cover all four DfE pillars and all three schools?
What measurable progress has been made, and what evidence supports it?
Have climate and building risks been reflected in estate and continuity planning?
Are actions affordable, inclusive and consistent with educational priorities?
How have pupils and stakeholders been involved, and what has changed as a result?
What barriers, risks and priorities require Trustee decisions next year?

Appendix D - Key guidance and related documents

DfE: Sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainability-leadership-and-climate-action-plans-in-education

DfE: Academy trust handbook 2026:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-handbook/academy-trust-handbook-2026-effective-from-1-october-2026

DfE: Academy trusts governance guide:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-trust-governance-guide/academy-trust-governance-guide

DfE: Education Estates Strategy:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-estates-strategy/education-estates-strategy-a-decade-of-national-renewal

Prime7: Business Plan 2026–2029; Estates Vision and Asset Management Plan; Inclusion Strategy; Business Continuity Management Plan; Trust Risk Register.