



Climate and Nature Policy

1. Purpose

This policy is a statement of School Food Matters' aims to protect the environment and responsibly manage our impact on it. This policy recognises the climate and ecological emergency, and our commitment to addressing this crisis within our work

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, freelancers, volunteers and trustees working for School Food Matters. It covers all activity carried out by School Food Matters. This policy will be shared with contractors, suppliers and consultants as described in point 5 below.

3. Principles

School Food Matters:

- knows that we are in the middle of a climate and ecological emergency
 - knows that the climate and ecological emergency is a result of human activity
 - recognises that the food system contributes significantly to the climate and ecological emergency
 - understands that the climate and ecological emergency is having disproportionately negative impacts on people living in the global south and people from marginalised communities
 - understands that we have a responsibility to combat the climate and ecological emergency and work towards net-zero emissions
 - will consider the climate and ecological emergency in everything we do
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4. Action

We must all play a part in ensuring School Food Matters' work does not contribute to worsening the climate and ecological emergency. There are various areas in which we can all make a difference at work. We will take the following action.

Food

- Campaign for less and better meat and dairy in public sector catering
- Aim to only use plant-based, sustainably sourced, in-season produce at our events and in food education sessions. Where animal products are used, they should be organic and encourage regenerative and ethical farming practices.

Waste

- Recycle all waste possible
- Use reusable items wherever possible and commit to looking for opportunities to reuse items before recycling or disposing of them
- Not permit plastic bags to be used at work. Any brought into work must be taken home
- Avoid purchasing single-use plastic where possible
- Use electronic versions of documents over paper copies where possible
- Not allow single use bottles of water in work, and encourage drinking tap water
- Discourage food waste; encourage people to seek ways to redistribute food before binning it

Transport

- Encourage the use of human-powered transport, including using the Cycle to Work Scheme
- Encourage the use of public transport

Energy

- Use the most energy efficient settings on powered devices where possible
- Turn off powered devices when not in use, particularly outside of office hours
- Ensure our office is well-insulated and heating and cooling systems are used minimally while ensuring people's wellbeing
- Work with our landlords to ensure that our workplace reflects the ambition of this policy

Pensions

- Encourage staff to opt for ethical pension investments

Communications

- Discuss the climate and ecological emergency with the communities we work with
- Regularly communicate with staff news relating to the climate and ecological emergency
- Regularly release communications in relation to the climate and ecological emergency
- Proactively engage with networks of organisations working to address the climate and ecological emergency and raise awareness of their activity

5. Finance and Procurement

The Finance Manager will regularly review our banking choices, using ethical ratings such as those from ethicalconsumer.org, and update our banking accordingly.

When considering fundraising, including accepting donations to School Food Matters, the donor's funding sources will be evaluated against our commitment to combatting the climate and ecological emergency, in line with our [Ethical Funding Guidelines](#).

We will consider this policy when procuring goods and services for School Food Matters. When entering new agreements, we will request the environmental policies of potential suppliers or, if a formal policy is unavailable, request a description of planned actions to combat the climate and ecological emergency.

We will share this policy with all partners when entering new agreements, to indicate our commitment to action on the climate and ecological emergency and to encourage others to follow.

6. Measuring and Reporting

We are signed up to ACEVO's [climate leadership principles](#) to structure our work and provide light-touch accountability. As part of our commitment to the climate leadership principles, we will monitor our environmental impact and set targets to improve, which will be reviewed annually. We will measure the carbon footprint of our operations and make a plan to reduce this with realistic targets for a just transition to net zero. This plan will be published on our website.

7. Responsibilities

- This policy will be shared with anyone working with or for School Food Matters. It will also be published on our website.
- The Senior Management Team will be responsible for supporting staff in following this policy and will lead by example.
- The Chief Executive and Finance Manager will be responsible for updating the Board of Trustees and staff on our progress against this policy.
- All staff will make themselves familiar with this policy and take responsibility for their own impact on the environment.

8. Governance

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for this policy. The Trustees will review the intersection of our work with the climate and ecological emergency. This will include:

- Discussing how the climate and ecological emergency intersects with our mission, strategy and theory of change
- Discussing how the communities we work with will be affected by the climate and ecological emergency
- Considering how our work is impacting the environment and agreeing targets for improvement
- Discussing and ensuring the implementation of our strategies for combatting the climate and ecological emergency
- Updating the risk register to consider the impact of the climate and ecological emergency on our work
- Considering our financial procedures against this policy
- Ensuring we comply with all relevant legislation

The Trustees will provide a short statement in our annual report outlining the discussion above and any action we have taken, as well as our aims for the future.

9. Review

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where appropriate.
