



Our Climate Our Future

A Global Schools' Guide to COP26

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Share your results to receive a certificate, and so that we can share your school story and student voices with world leaders and the public around COP26: tinyurl.com/OurClimateOurFutureForm

Introduction

This pack provides everything you need to inform and engage your students around climate change and COP26, and then to take positive climate action as a school community.

This pack is the result of collaboration between expert organisations, convened by WWF, with input from the UK Government.

Contributors

WWF	Oxfam
The Climate Coalition	PECT
Twinkl	Primary Engineer
Ashden	Soil Association
British Council	Trust for Sustainable Living
CAFOD	World's Largest Lesson
Climate Action Project	Young Climate Warriors
Christian Aid	Zero Waste Scotland
Fairtrade Foundation	ZSL
Global Action Plan	

What Is COP26?

COP26 is a UN conference for world leaders that takes place in November 2021 in the UK, where they will discuss how nations can work together to tackle climate change.

COP stands for 'Conference of the Parties'. By 'parties' it means the 197 countries that have signed up to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, which was established in 1994 with the aim of preventing human activity from causing dangerous levels of climate change. Every time the member nations meet to look at the current state of the climate and to discuss actions they will take to address climate change, it is called a COP. This November will be the 26th of these meetings – so you'll see the event described as 'COP26' as well as the 'UN Climate Change Conference'.



Back in 1994 there was less scientific information around to show how serious the issue of climate change was, or to suggest what the solutions would be. However in 2015, at COP21 in Paris, the nations signed an agreement that set out an ambitious plan to tackle climate change, based on more

recent scientific data. In ‘The Paris Agreement’, nations agreed to act together to restrict global temperature increases to 2C and begin efforts to limit warming to 1.5C.

The Paris Agreement instructed Governments to renew their *Nationally Determined Contributions* to climate change every five years, each time becoming more ambitious. New NDCs are due to be set by countries at COP26, so it is an important moment for the planet.

Why Should You and Your School Get Involved?

We face a climate crisis, and our planet is at breaking point. Young people are increasingly aware of this threat to their future, and many are anxious of what this means to them, and keen to know if there is a role they can play in dealing with the issue.

The challenges we face are huge, but children should not feel helpless. The changes we make over the next decade will not only prevent disaster; they will reshape the world into one where we live in balance with nature. Defining and shaping this new world is an exciting and positive mission, and children can play an important role if they are given the opportunity to take action, speak out, and build the skills that will enable them to play a positive role in the future.

As a teacher, you are leading and inspiring young people in education today. You have the power and responsibility to equip our children with the knowledge, skills and courage needed to help overcome the challenges of climate change, and to shape the world into one in which humans can live in harmony with nature. By doing so, you ensure that your students have the knowledge and skills to make strong choices about their lifestyle and career, increasing their chances of a successful and rewarding life in this new future.

The eyes of the world should be on the world leaders attending COP26. We want you and your students to be part of this important moment for people and planet. They deserve to be informed about this conference and to be heard and recognised as the most important stakeholders in its outcomes. Only by teaching our children about climate change, its causes and effects and the significance of COP26 can we empower them to form a positive vision of the future, share it, and start working towards achieving it now and as they become the decision makers of the future.



Schools hold a special position in the lives of pupils and communities, meaning that they have the power to help shape the future. They can take real action on the biggest issues of our time. What happens in school doesn't stay there – it can bring change to the local community, wider society and the planet itself, helping in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss. By taking action as a school, you can speak out with a much louder voice than as individuals to engage local decision makers and businesses. You can also make changes that lower the carbon footprint of the school – which has a much greater impact than changes you might make as an individual or at home. The changes that a school makes are seen by the thousands of people connected to a school community and can send ripples of positive change across society.

Get Informed

Not confident about teaching about climate change? WWF and Climate Action project have collaborated on a **Foundational Climate Change Curriculum** to give you the information and confidence needed to plan effective lessons and respond to student questions.

www.climate-action.info/download-curriculum-2020

Get Involved

Use the resources in this pack to bring COP and the issues it seeks to address to life for your students, and to ensure that they have the opportunity to speak out to communities and decision makers locally and globally about the issues that affect them the most.

Get Active

Use the toolkit provided to come up with a school action plan for sustainability, and join schools all around the world in leading the way towards a sustainable future.

For guidance and inspiration on embedding a whole-school approach to sustainability in your school register for **Education For A Sustainable Planet** – a free online course for teachers and school managers from WWF: bit.ly/wwfesdcourse

Get Connected

Register for the Climate Action Project to connect with teachers and students in schools all around the world as you take a 6-week educational journey through climate change issues.

www.climate-action.info



Three Steps to COP

Included within this pack are all the resources you will need to explore climate change, COP26 and the role that you and your school community can play in solving environmental problems and shaping a sustainable future.

1. Learn

Presentation

A detailed walkthrough of COP26 is provided as a slide deck, with speaker notes to guide you in presenting the information in a way that is suitable for your age group and knowledge level.

Our Climate Our Future - Mini Summit

If you have time, you can use the fact sheets and discussion cards provided to guide children through their own mini climate summit, helping them understand the complex and interconnected issues that need to be balanced to tackle climate change.

See below for full instructions.

2. Act

Through this workshop, supported by the slide deck provided, students will reflect on the global issues and solutions they have learned about, and identify what action could be taken by them and by the school community to play a part in addressing climate change. They will also capture the actions and promises they want to see made by world leaders.

See below for full instructions.

3. Share

Share your students' voices, school action plans and visions of the future with us to be part of the story of school action around COP26. Join schools all around the world in forming a **Forest of Promises** on November 5th 2021, sending an important message to world leaders and your local community that we must all play our part if we want a future that is positive, fair and sustainable.

See below for full instructions.



LEARN: Presentation and Mini Climate Summit

Supporting resources

- Introduction slide deck (speaker notes for Primary and Secondary)
- Issue information sheets and discussion cards: Biodiversity, Business & Finance, Energy, Food & Farming, Forests, oceans, Social Justice, Transport (Primary and Secondary)
- World leader briefing pack (Secondary)
- Climate Witness briefing pack (Secondary)

The Our Climate Our Future slide deck will help you cover the key facts and concepts that are important for your students to understand the *what, where, why* and *who* of COP. This could be shared with a class, year group or even the whole school to introduce the topic and would work as the basis for an assembly or introduction for an event with members of the wider community.

The slide deck can be covered in 15 minutes as a briefing before running the mini summit exercise below, or it can be used on its own as the basis for a longer discussion-based lesson.

The mini summit will help your students gain insight into the interconnected issues that need to be considered when planning action on climate change.

Mini Climate Summit Lesson Plan

Primary (Suggested for ages 7-11)

This activity can be split across multiple lessons, and small group discussions, self-guided research and presentation tasks can be introduced if appropriate.

1. Introduction (15 mins)

- Run through the slide deck provided to give context and introduce the activity.
- Explain to the class that they are playing the part of world leaders, and must come up with a plan for the future based on information about the issues currently being caused by climate change.

2. Summit (30 mins +)

- Introduce a discussion card and read it out to the class (or ask a student to read it out loud).
- Ask students to reflect and contribute thoughts and ideas in response to the prompt.
- Draw on the relevant fact sheet to introduce additional information to help students understand the issue and consider potential solutions.
- As a group, come up with one or more actions that you feel world leaders should take to address the issue.
- Build up a list of actions on the board or screen.
- When you have finished introducing discussion cards, review the list as a class and discuss if you think anything is missing, or if any actions on the list conflict with others.
- As a class, identify which of the actions you have on your list you feel should be the priority for world leaders at this year's COP26. You could conduct a sticker vote for students to select the ones they think should be addressed most urgently.



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Secondary (Suggested for ages 12-16)

Preparation

- Split the class into small groups. Ideally you would have 4 or more groups of 2-6 students.
- One group is allocated the role of 'world leaders' and given the World Leader Briefing Pack.
- The other groups allocated the role of 'climate witnesses' and are each given one issue discussion pack each. Optional role cards are provided, to be used at your discretion.

1. Introduction (15 mins)

Run through the slide deck provided to give context and introduce the activity.

2. Research and Planning (30 mins+)

The World Leaders and Climate Witnesses work in their groups to research and discuss the issues, and to prepare their presentations (further instructions below).

3. Summit (40 mins+)

The World Leaders present their priorities and initial action plan. (5 mins)

Each group of climate witnesses then presents about their issue and puts forward their recommendations to World Leaders for actions, changes and investments that will protect their planet and benefit human society and wildlife. (5 mins each)

After all the presentations, all the groups are given 10 minutes to discuss the information they have heard and consider their position for the reactions or round table discussion.

4. Round Table Discussion (30 mins+)

The Chair opens the round table discussion by explaining the format and ground rules for the discussion. They may wish to explain the 'three C's':

- **Courteous:** Input should be respectful, polite and delivered in a non-aggressive way
- **Considered:** Opinions should be well thought-out, based on evidence, and relevant to the discussion.
- **Constructive:** All contributions should aim to move the discussion forward positively by suggesting a way forward rather than simply undermining another idea.

The World Leaders then respond to the information they have heard and present any changes they are considering making to the initial plan set out at the beginning. Their list of international agreements and policies is displayed openly in the centre of the table or on a screen to allow all contributors to see what is covered and what might be missing.

The President then facilitates a discussion to ensure that everyone with a contribution has the opportunity to input, before time runs out. If the World Leaders agree to any changes or additions to their plan these are made in real time on the display.

President tip: Give each group one blue and one green card. If they wish to make a new point they raise the blue card, and if they want to build on a live discussion or ask a question of someone who is speaking they raise the green card. This ensures that the President can prevent the discussion from jumping away from a topic before all relevant contributions have been heard.

The final version of the action plan is reviewed, and each group of Climate Witnesses responds to say if they are satisfied or concerned about the future. The class considers if the planet would be better or worse off in 10 years' time as a result of this plan.



ACT: Climate Action Planning Workshop

Small-Group Discussion

Split students into small groups to discuss the focus areas below. For each, they should consider individual actions that they and other individuals could take, and what policies and practices the school could introduce or improve to drive change within and beyond the school.

Ask the students to come up with three things for each area:

1. **Personal:** A #PromiseToThePlanet that they could make to help tackle climate change or help nature.
2. **Local:** An action that could be taken by school to help out the planet, or to encourage the school community or wider community to be climate champions.
3. **Global:** A promise they would like to be made by world leaders (their own national leader or those of other countries). This could be one of the actions that was raised in the Mini Climate Summit.

Whole-Class Feedback and Discussion

Invite each group to present their three points, answer any questions and receive feedback. Each school action idea should be added to a list on a whiteboard, flipchart or post-it display. Promises of individual action and world leader actions can be added on either side of a leaf (students can make one themselves out of card using the templates provided, or write on a real fallen leaf).

These can be tied up onto a tree and displayed for the school community or wider community to join those created by schools and youth groups all over the world and form a Forest of Promises during COP26. See below for full details.

School Promise To The Planet

When every group has contributed, the ideas generated can be used to create a school plan for action on climate and sustainability. Bring up the slide from the deck to show how an idea can be turned into a plan for real change. Each idea can be discussed in small groups or together. A vote can be held on which ideas to include in the final plan. Decide before starting whether a majority vote is sufficient or if it needs to be unanimous.

The best way to ensure that your School #PromiseToThePlanet will lead to real action and won't just be a list of ideas is to include school management – and perhaps even external decision-makers or community members – in this stage of the process. This can ensure that the people who can make changes happen are bought into the plan from the start, and that it is informed by those who may know about opportunities to make change happen quickly and effectively.

Participants could be asked to vote on each suggestion in turn, or they could be written up on posters and fixed around the room to allow students to indicate their favourites with a sticker or by adding a tick.

When the School Promise To The Planet is agreed, it could be signed by all those who took part in the workshop. This could be the start of a petition to show support for the plan across the school or wider community, which can be a good way of persuading school management or local decision-makers that they should respond and consider supporting the plan. If those people are present, their signature gives the plan weight from the start.



SHARE: The Forest of Promises at COP26

Share details and photos of your COP26 activities to receive an official certificate of participation for your school, and to allow us to take your story to COP26: tinyurl.com/OurClimateOurFutureForm

The Forest of Promises: 5th November 2021

#PromiseToThePlanet is a campaign led by the World Organisation of the Scouts Movement, aiming to bring as many people around the world as possible on board with the mission of finding solutions to the climate crisis. On 5th November, the Friday of week 1 of COP, schools are invited to be part of a 'Forest of Promises'.

To take part students make leaves from paper or card (or find fallen leaves) and write a #PromiseToThePlanet that they wish to make on one side (it could be that you want to cycle to school so that your parents use the car less, or that you will have three meat-free days a week so that you have less impact on the planet from what you eat). On the other side, they write a promise they want to see made by world leaders, sending the message that we all need to be part of the change, but none of us can do it alone.



On 5th November, during COP26, schools all over the world are asked to display their leaves on a real tree, or one they have made, and invite parents, local decision-makers and the whole community to see what young people want to change in order to shape a future in which they can thrive with nature. Make sure you share what you are doing on social media with #PromiseToThePlanet #ForestOfPromises, and invite your local press. At this event, you can launch your School #PromiseToThePlanet climate action plan.

For full details and resources to support the activity visit WWF-UK's website: www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/cop26

Share your plan for the future

- Send us your School Climate Action Plan and you'll receive a certificate of achievement for display in your school, or to distribute to each student. Your vision of the future will contribute to the showcase of student voices and ideas from across the UK at COP26 and online.
- Create a short video (no more than 2 minutes, shot in landscape format, at 1080 x 720px or higher, .mov or .mp4) presenting your students' plan for the future, and send it to us with a model consent form (below) confirming student and parental approval for public display of the video. Your video could be shown at COP26 as part of a showreel for world leaders and online as part of a public communications campaign.



Teacher Briefing: Considering Mental Health

Climate change can be a frightening thing for students to learn about and discuss. There is a big focus in campaigns and the media on the scale of the threats and the urgent need for action. This can make students feel anxious, or give them a sense of helplessness in the face of such big problems – especially when the focus is just on what needs to be done in the next few years when students may feel they have no power to help make the changes needed.

To avoid causing anxiety and hopelessness, don't just talk about climate change... **HEAR.**

- Hope
- Empathy
- Action
- Relevance

Hope: it is important to focus on hope to avoid eco-anxiety but also because there is cause for hope. That message is much more engaging and motivating for young people and gives them a better sense of how they can be part of shaping the future.

Empathy: consider the particular circumstances of your students. They may be prone to anxiety or may identify aspects of their family's lifestyle that are not conducive to sustainability. Don't focus on individual responsibility or blame – especially if this might cause some students to feel guilty or ashamed for family behaviours that they have no control over.

Action: one of the best ways to make hope feel grounded in reality, and to counter feelings of helplessness, is to show what can be done. It's fine to give some examples of lifestyle changes if they are within your students' power to change but don't shy away from saying that it is leaders who need to act. Remind children that their voices can be drivers of change, especially when they are in unison. Changes to school practice, or having an influence via your local decision-makers, are most effective.

Relevance: the issues can seem far off and the actions, therefore, irrelevant so ensure you stress that climate change affects everyone and everyone has a role to play. Our children's future will be this new world and by being prepared now, they can have the best possible opportunities.

While climate change needs to be addressed with urgent action, the key message to get across to children when introducing this topic is that there are positive solutions to the issues, and that although all humans can contribute, it is not the responsibility of any one individual, school, family or community to solve the problem.



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Teacher Briefing: Climate Justice

Climate change affects us all, but it will hit the poorest people and the least developed countries on our planet the worst. This means that those who did the least to cause global warming are the ones who will suffer most from its effects.

Those in communities who make a living farming the land or fishing in coastal waters are most directly affected when climate change causes harvests or marine ecosystems to fail, and often have no savings that allow them to cope with one bad year or change their livelihood. Likewise, rising temperatures can lead to the spread of diseases, and poorer families are less able to afford medication or equipment that protects them such as mosquito nets.

Unfairly, it is estimated that 50 of the lowest income countries contributed between them only about 1% of the greenhouse gases that have caused global warming. Richer nations that did more to cause the problems will be affected less, unless they choose to take some responsibility for ensuring the health and wellbeing of those affected by climate change in poorer nations. In most cases the more prosperous countries have strong economies in part because of activities which caused global warming, and can now use their wealth to protect their populations from the effects of climate change while poorer nations are less able to do so. At the same time these low income countries could find it harder to develop because they have to focus on addressing the challenges caused by climate change.

It is essential when planning how to tackle climate change that the rights of the most vulnerable people on the planet are respected and protected not only because they will face risks from the effects of climate change, but also because they could be missed out when support is provided for people in society to overcome the challenges it brings.

Help children and young people to see that the world of the future can be rebuilt to allow for social justice, diversity, equality, respect for nature and for life.



Teacher Briefing: Focus on the Future

While climate change needs action, the key message to get across to children is that there are positive solutions to the problems and that, though all humans can contribute to tackling the issues, it is not the responsibility of any one individual, school, family or community to fix this problem.

To support the mental health and wellbeing of young people and avoid the development of eco-anxiety, reinforce the idea that the future will look different to the world we live in now and that this could be a positive change. Change brings opportunity for those who can come up with ideas for new ways of doing things in sustainable ways, or those who build the skills that allow them to fill the new jobs that will arise. The result of this change could be a more beautiful, fairer and healthier world for all of us.

Providing case studies that not just activists (such as Greta Thunberg) and more like Bren Smith, who changed his profession from cod fisherman to 'regenerative ocean farmer' (Video (5:30): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eTvs5182Zo>), may help young people who want to play a positive role in bringing change but are not comfortable with the idea of putting themselves into the public eye or challenging powerful authority figures. It can help them to understand how one person can make a change that impacts positively on the world, while also being successful and happy in their life.

WWF's **Future Visions Challenge** for young people aims to inspire young people to consider how the world could be changed rather than what is wrong with the world now. A powerful cgi-enhanced video of a possible future is provided as inspiration for young people to imagine the future they would like to work towards. www.wwf.org.uk/futurevisions

The film **2040** is another source of inspiration that can be brought into the classroom to help students to focus on the future: <https://whatsyour2040.com/schools-get-involved/>

Generation Earthshot encourages students to start leading the way to this future now, by coming up with the solutions that will shape the world, with a chance to win a globally recognised prize for innovation: <https://royalfoundation.com/the-earthshot-prize-launches-generation-earthshot/>



Our Climate Our Future: Model Consent Form

Thank you for letting us share your actions and/or perspectives through photographs/video (images) in order to show world leaders and the public how much schools and students are committed to being part of the solution to climate change.

We will use these images, and accompanying text that you supplied where relevant, to enhance and promote schools resources focused on COP26, and to share the story of schools engagement with world leaders and public audiences via display materials at COP26 and online communications including social media and email newsletters. Your images may be included as embedded content in resources created for classroom or assembly use in schools, featured on YouTube and web pages promoting the schools pack and supporting schools to participate in action around COP26, and featured in press coverage of schools action around COP26. Your images and words may therefore be featured in magazines, newspapers, other printed materials, on the internet, on social media such as Facebook and Twitter, on television, in our advertising and in other ways. People from all over the world may be able to see your pictures and hear your story as may your friends and neighbours.

We will keep your contributions securely and we may reuse them in future communication materials.

If you agree to these terms and understand all of the below then please provide your details and sign this form.

What you agree to (the legal details):

1. You grant to WWF-UK the right to distribute free of charge the specified photograph/video, and for WWF-UK and the WWF global network to use your contributions in any media (whether already known or developed in the future) throughout the world and without any payments.
2. WWF-UK and the WWF global network may edit, adapt or translate your contribution and you confirm that you waive all 'moral rights' to enable the uses set out above.
3. WWF-UK will credit your photograph/video in accordance with your specification (see below) and you retain full copyright in your work.
4. WWF-UK and the WWF global network may also share your materials with trusted partners (eg Twinkl, Together For Our Planet, Fairtrade Foundation etc) and your images and words may appear in their communications for the same purposes as outlined above.

If you are signing on behalf of a child, then you are:

1. declaring that you are the parent/legal guardian (please delete as appropriate) of the child(ren) named below who is/are under the age of 18 and that you are also over the age of 18. If you are under 18, please ask a parent/legal guardian over the age of 18 to sign on your behalf; and
2. confirming that you have read this agreement and are satisfied that it is clearly in the interest of the child(ren) named; and
3. to the extent of your interest in the agreement on behalf of your children/your charge/ward, you are granting and confirming to WWF-UK all rights, consents and waivers granted under the agreement; and
4. agreeing that you will remain responsible for the child/ children at all times.

We need consent for anyone recognisable in the photo/video.

This section should be filled out by an adult, aged 18 or over.

Note: If the parent is under the age of 18, please ask a parent/legal guardian who is over the age of 18 to sign.

Please fill out this form in CAPITAL LETTERS.

- I am filling out this form for myself (adult aged 18 or over) and/or
 on behalf of a child/children (I am the parent/legal guardian and I am over 18)

Full name (adult):
Descriptor (eg job title):
First name(s) of child/children only:
Email (adult):
Telephone (adult):
Address (adult):

I confirm I have authority to assign rights to use of this photo.

Signature of adult:

--

Are you happy for us to use your real name/s? (delete as appropriate) **Yes** **No**

We will automatically change your name if we feel we need to for your safety.

Restrictions:

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The consent that you give can be changed or withdrawn at any time by contacting the WWF-UK Supporter Care team. They are here to help and can be contacted on: +44 (0)1483 426333 Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Please note that for training and quality purposes, your call may be recorded.

Please note that we cannot withdraw images from the public domain where they are already published.

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