



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

1st December 2021

Robin Walker MP
Minister of State (Education)
Department for Education
20 Great Smith St London
SW1P 3BT

The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State (Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change)
1 Victoria St London
SW1H 0ET

Dear Ministers,

Eco-Schools

At a recent meeting of the Tidy Britain APPG, for which I am the Chair, we discussed how we can embed climate change in education and how we can harness the size of the school network to achieve carbon reductions at scale. The panel included representatives from Keep Britain Tidy, the Foundation for Environmental Education, the National Association of Head Teachers, and the Shadow Schools Minister Peter Kyle.

Our panel highlighted Eco-Schools as a proven framework to achieve a range of goals, such as reducing carbon emissions at scale, tackling eco-anxiety, educating young people about climate change and preparing them for jobs and lifestyles that will provide solutions to the problem.

We discussed at length whether the curriculum needs to change to include climate change. There was consensus on the panel that the national curriculum does not need to change, as Eco-Schools is a proven framework that sits within the existing curriculum.

The panel also highlighted how extraordinary carbon reductions could be achieved from widespread uptake of Eco-Schools in England. From meat-free days to uniform swaps to investing in renewable sources of energy, schools are the perfect place for small changes to have impact because they are such a huge network. Eco-Schools provides the tools for schools to make these changes.

There was also consensus about the need for a collaborative approach involving schools, Government, MPs and local authorities. Leicester City Council's approach was highlighted as exemplary. They are looking to save 2000 tonnes of carbon per annum through their schools' network and are planning to achieve this through mass uptake of Eco-Schools.

Eco-Schools is supported and partially funded by the devolved governments in Scotland and Wales, and I believe there is a compelling case for Eco-Schools to be more formally recognised and supported by Government in England.

Importantly, this is not about curriculum change, as the programme can be weaved into what we already have. Eco-Schools is the most efficient way of getting climate change on everyone's agenda, in the quickest possible time and with the biggest possible impact.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you more about how your departments could more formally champion the Eco-Schools programme and encourage a collaborative approach to widespread uptake in schools across England.

Yours ever



Kevin Hollinrake MP
Chair
Tidy Britain All-Party Parliamentary Group

A copy of the Tidy Britain APPG minutes from 24th November 2021 are available [here](#).