



St Patrick's RC High School - Sustainability Commitments

Provision of safe, effective and sustainable learning spaces is the responsibility of the Business and Finance Manager, alongside Governors who hold a specific commitment to sustainability. The care and attention given to our physical environment reflects the values of our school mission statement and our commitment to providing an environment in which all members of our school community can flourish.

Our Catholic character is demonstrated through our physical school environment and through our working partnerships. As a Catholic secondary school in the Diocese of Salford, we recognise our responsibility to care for God's creation and to act as responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us. This reflects the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST), particularly the principle of stewardship and care for creation, recognising our responsibility to protect the environment for current and future generations.

Our approach is informed by the Diocese of Salford's Guardians of Creation framework and the wider Catholic commitment to environmental stewardship. We seek to ensure that decisions about our buildings, grounds, energy use, procurement and partnerships reflect both our Catholic mission and our responsibility to the common good. Through supplier partnerships and sustainable practices, we aim to align our environmental responsibilities with DfE sustainability requirements, Catholic Social Teaching and the Guardians of Creation framework.

In this way, the school environment becomes an expression of our faith in action: demonstrating stewardship, service, responsibility and care for our common home, while creating safe, welcoming and effective spaces in which our pupils and staff can learn, work and flourish.

Physical Environment

As a recently re-built school through the PFI scheme our building and facilities are sustainable because PFI schools are governed by strict legally-binding contracts. We have access to precise data that normal schools lack, making it much easier to maintain sustainable ways of working. For example:

1. Structural and Thermal Efficiency

The U-Value Advantage: Built in 2013, our school complies with much stricter Building Regulations than older school buildings. Our modern insulation and double glazing significantly reduce thermal transmittance (U-values), requiring drastically less energy to heat.

Modern Air Permeability: Rebuilt facilities boast superior airtightness. This reduces drafts, prevents heat loss, and ensures that mechanical ventilation systems recycle heat efficiently.

2. Contract-Enforced Maintenance

No Lifecycle Backlog: Unlike standard public schools suffering from multi-billion pound maintenance backlogs, our PFI contract legally compels the provider to keep building elements in "as-new" condition.

Preventative Asset Management: Our building fabric is continuously optimised. Regular maintenance of double-glazing seals, roof membranes, and modern boilers prevents the efficiency degradation typically seen in aging buildings.

3. Operational Carbon Performance

Lower Energy Intensity: We can pull your actual energy consumption data (Display Energy Certificates - DECs) to show a lower Energy Use Intensity (EUI) per square meter than typical 1960s–1980s school estates.

Smart Building Systems: Our school features a Building Management Systems (BMS) that automatically optimise lighting, heating zones, and ventilation schedules. This means lights automatically switch off when a room is not attended and heat from warm areas of the school is pushed to colder areas to keep the temperature consistent whilst using less energy.

Suppliers

Our main supplier is Dalkia who provide our facilities management contract. They are also responsible for catering, cleaning and caretaking across our school. Their sustainability policy <https://dalkia.co.uk/information-legal/policy-statement-sustainability/> details their commitment to reducing their carbon footprint.

Key Alignments:

- Energy management and decarbonisation supporting DfE's net zero aims

- Waste reduction and sustainable food procurement
- Contributes to diocesan carbon footprint measurement
- Supports practical environmental management at school level

Procurement of a printing partner included the need to reduce photocopying across school through data management and increased cost transparency. Arena's commitment to sustainability as well as competitive pricing led to them being awarded the contract.

Through the efficiencies Arena have introduced, such as booklet printing, and our own efforts to reduce copying overall, we have made a significant reduction in our carbon footprint.

<https://www.arenagroup.net/workplace-evolution/enabling-sustainability>

Key Alignments:

- Energy-efficient equipment reducing electricity consumption
- Paper waste reduction through digital solutions
- Workplace evolution approach supports transformational sustainability change
- Equipment lifecycle management and responsible recycling

Next Steps:

The DfE's sustainability strategy sets out 4 main aims: excellence in education and skills for a changing world, net zero, resilience to climate change, and a better environment for future generations. To keep improving our sustainability efforts we are working towards reducing paper usage in the school office, a new payroll system and changes to our finance processes has made a real difference here. Our next project is waste management so we can reduce our impact on our environment. We are working with Biffa who partner with Dalkia to improve in school recycling and reduce waste.