



ACS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOLS

## Sustainability Charter

*Adults keep saying we owe it to the young people, to give them hope, but I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.*

Greta Thunberg

At ACS we have recognised our responsibility to foster a sustainable future for many years. We have had processes in place for recycling waste and are mindful of our energy use and carbon footprint in all our operations but recognise that we now need to become *active*. Our commitment now is to integrate all aspects of sustainability into our operations, teaching, and community engagement. We have partnered with experts who are guiding us towards being Net-Zero by 2030, using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a template. We aim to inspire members of local, national, international, and global communities who are able understand the world's critical environmental challenges, and who are ready to act as the world's next global thinkers and doers of sustainability.

## Our Values

ACS Core Values inform this essential work, setting out our intention and ambition to live sustainably as an organisation and function as a learning community grounded in sustainability.

**Imagine Better** - we look for innovative solutions and explore new ideas

**Aim High and Make it Happen** - we have high standards and expect each other to meet and exceed them.

**Welcome Everyone** - We believe every person has unique contributions to make to each other and to the world.

**Work Together** - we collaborate eagerly, with each other, with our partners, and with local and global communities.

**Act with Kindness** - we act with kindness, transparency and compassion.

## Our Guiding Principles

### **Environmental Stewardship:**

We are committed to reducing our ecological footprint through responsible resource use, waste management, and promotion of biodiversity.

### **Social Responsibility:**

We strive to create inclusive and equitable environments that respect cultural diversity and promote fairness and equality of access.

### **Economic Viability:**

We aim to operate efficiently, ensuring that our sustainability efforts are financially responsible, providing value to our stakeholders and acting as faithful stewards of our heritage.

### **Educational Excellence:**

We integrate education for sustainability into learning and teaching across the curriculum, equipping students with knowledge, skills, values and agency to address interconnected global challenges (including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources, and environmental inequality.)

### **Global Perspective:**

We inspire our students and staff to act as responsible members of local, national, international, and global communities—empowering learners of all ages to make informed decisions, take individual and collective action to change society, and care actively for the planet.

## Our Key Commitments

### **Environmental Impact**

- **Energy and Water Conservation:**
  - Reduce energy consumption by implementing energy efficient technologies and practices.
  - Promote water conservation through the installation of water saving devices and sustainable landscaping.
- **Waste Reduction:**
  - Implement comprehensive recycling and composting programs.
  - Minimise single-use plastics and promote the use of sustainable materials.
- **Sustainable Transportation:**

- Encourage carpooling, public transportation, and the use of bicycles among students and staff.
  - Invest in low-emission or electric school transportation options.
- Biodiversity and Green Spaces:
  - Maintain and expand green spaces on school grounds to support local biodiversity.
  - Implement programs to educate students about the importance of ecosystems and biodiversity.

### **Social Responsibility**

- Equity and Inclusion:
  - Promote diversity and inclusion within the school community.
  - Ensure equal opportunities for all students and staff, regardless of background.
  - Nurture equity in access to the natural world, mindfulness of climate inequality (SDGs)
- Community Engagement:
  - Partner with local organisations to support community sustainability projects.
  - Encourage student involvement in social and environmental initiatives.
- Health and Wellbeing:
  - Provide healthy and sustainable food options in school dining services.
  - Promote mental and physical wellbeing through a supportive school environment.

### **Economic Sustainability**

- Sustainable Procurement:
  - Prioritise purchasing from suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to sustainability.
  - Implement sustainable practices in all aspects of school operations, from classroom materials to infrastructure projects.
- Financial Responsibility:
  - Ensure that sustainability initiatives are cost-effective and provide long-term benefits.
  - Explore funding opportunities and partnerships to support sustainability projects.

## **Our Implementation and Accountability Plan**

### **Governance:**

- Establish a Sustainability Committee at each school, comprising staff, students, and community members, to oversee the implementation of this charter.
- The committee will report annually on progress and set goals for the following year.

### **Education and Training:**

- Provide ongoing training for staff and students on sustainability practices.
- Integrate sustainability into the school curriculum across all grade levels, including circular economies
- Inspire students with learning in natural environments
- Develop opportunities to learn from sustainable practices in other educational contexts
- Create opportunities for students to explore sustainable technologies (including climate adaptation strategies), innovative practices in sustainable industries
- Galvanise an interest in political engagement and responsible civic activism that addresses climate change, energy, biodiversity, food security, environmental quality, and global [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

### **Monitoring and Reporting:**

- Develop metrics to track progress towards sustainability goals.
- Publish an annual sustainability report that highlights achievements, challenges, and future goals

### **Continuous Improvement:**

- Regularly review and update the Sustainability Charter to reflect new challenges and opportunities
- Encourage innovation and creativity in developing sustainable practices

### **Stakeholder Engagement:**

- Involve parents, alumni, and local communities in sustainability initiatives.
- Organise events and workshops to promote awareness and participation in sustainability efforts

### **Global Collaboration:**

- Foster partnerships with other schools, NGOs, and international organisations to share best practices and collaborate on global sustainability projects

## **Our Inspirations**

<https://se-ed.org.uk>

<https://www.outdoor-learning.org/>

<https://www.unesco.org/en/sustainable-development/education>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy>

## **Our Partners**

[The Eden Project](#)

[ecoDriver](#)

[ACS Partnership Schools Network](#)

[YESFest Sustainable Advantage](#)

This Charter represents our collective commitment to education for sustainability and a sustainability-minded organisation.. By working together, we can create positive change that benefits our natural and human-engineered environments, societies, and descendants. We pledge to uphold these principles and continuously strive towards a more sustainable world as the heritage of future generations.