



Lancashire Schools Sustainability Forum
SUSTAINABILITY LEARNING CONFERENCE 27th June 2024
Blackburn Rovers Football Club in association with BRFC Trust

On Thursday the 27th of June, the 15th Sustainability Learning Conference was hosted at Blackburn Rovers Football Club with support from the Blackburn Rovers Community Trust. It was delivered by the Sustainability Learning CIC and members of the Lancashire Schools Sustainability Forum and supported by other environmental groups. It was another successful schools' conference, focusing on promoting the 'pupil voice', peer to peer, and cross generation learning.

As in previous years, this learning beyond the classroom initiative was focused on learning for sustainability. It attracted interest from schools from Lancaster to Wigan, Manchester to Blackpool. Forty-three primary schools were represented and fifteen high schools, including four special schools bringing pupils with varying SEND needs who were supported by their own carers. The event offered children and young people a range of hands on, learning beyond the classroom opportunities not covered by statutory curriculum funding. It promoted, outdoor education programmes including forest schools' activities, and showcased 'green' career prospects for students. It provided teachers, senior leadership team members and governors with continued professional development opportunities.

The Conference was run as a not-for-profit event and was dependent on securing sponsorship. Support was gratefully received from the BRFC Trust who provided classroom accommodation, commitment, enthusiasm, and general input, and Sodexo (The Clubs contracted Catering Company) for allowing us to use the Legend Suite rooms.

Blackburn Rovers Community Trust's Events, Partnerships and Facilities Manager, Ryan Loftus: "We are really delighted with how successful this year's Sustainability Learning Conference Northwest was.

"To have so many likeminded organisations in the same place at the same time coming together to host engaging activities focused on the importance of sustainability is fantastic.

- Aqua Leasing provided the Production Line winning school prize, bonuses and employees' wages.
- Solar for Schools to meet the cost of running the three CPD sessions.
- The Co-op donated Fairtrade tea and coffee for marketplace groups, and compostable bags used as school conference bags.
- Onward Homes sponsored some of the running costs of the STEM activity and the bamboo mugs.
- Findel donated the money for the two winning STEM teams.
- Prospect Foundations offered sponsored places to all schools in Hyndburn.
- Other sponsored pupil-places were provided by Power and Energy Fields Ltd and National Education Speak Carbon Collective (Speak Carbon Earth).
- The Bee Centre donated fudge for the marketplace bags.

Registration fees helped meet the general running costs, including complimentary lunches for marketplace personnel. conference bags and administration costs.

The aims of the event were to provide

- an effective, stimulating learning environment where a targeted audience of high school students and Key Stage 2 pupils, from schools in Lancashire and beyond would add to their knowledge linked to education for sustainable development.
- workshop and marketplace learning experiences for everyone, and school team competitions, workshops, and challenges for high school students.
- a platform for environmental groups to promote their services to school and to share good practice and inform school staff with environmental groups delivering learning activities linked to Global Citizenship, Healthy Living, Biodiversity, School Grounds, Water, Marine, Waste, Energy, Litter and Transport in the marketplace. There were strong curriculum links including, Technology, Literacy, Maths, and creative subjects.
- an invite to specialists within their field of expertise, to share their knowledge during the adult CPD sessions.
- an invite to high schools to showcase some of their ESD linked projects. (This year St Christopher's CE Academy's Eco-Group, Christian Pountain and Young Green Britain Challenge members had displays in



the marketplace, manned by students. St James CE Primary School from Chorley showcased it's beekeeping activities.

There were over thirty marketplace stands, each providing short leaning activities for pupils and students.

Separate schedules were run for school staff, KS2 children and KS3/4 students. This information was emailed to the named main contacts but not necessarily read by the adults attending the event. The schedules were displayed around the marketplace and in the reception area. Other signage was made and displayed by Ryan Loftus from Blackburn Rovers Community Trust.

Time	KS2 Group A	KS2 Group B	Production Line Teams	STEM Teams	Curriculum CPD	Governors CPD	Leadership
9.00	Registration & meet guide	Registration & meet guide. Hand in garments and posters	Scavenger Hunt and marketplace activities until 10.20	Investigate marketplace until 9.45	Passport activity in the marketplace	Marketplace exploration and Passport activity	Marketplace exploration
9.30	Hand in garments and posters Scavenger Hunt Marketplace	9.30 Scavenger Hunt		10.00 STEM Challenge Legends 1 2 hours			
10.00	Mad Science 45 minutes presentation Legends 2						10.30 Coffee Ground floor classroom
11.00	Scavenger Hunt continued Marketplace	11.15 Mad Science 45 minutes presentation Legends 2	10.30 Production Line Dance Studio - ground floor 90 minutes		10. 50 CPD start Legends 1	Coffee in Conference Room first floor 10.30 CPD start 10.45 90 minutes	CPD
12.30	Zero Waste Lunch -Stand Collect conference bags	Zero Waste Lunch Collect conference bags	Zero Waste Lunch	Zero Waste Lunch	Adults back to collect children an supervise lunch		Adults back to the children to supervise their own zero waste packed lunches
13.00	Last chance to look round the marketplace						
13.20	Afternoon session						
14.20	Conference end						

Key Stage 2 watched a Mad Science presentation.

Approximately three hundred children watched one of two a Mad Science presentation and had access to all thirty-four marketplace learning activities.

Children built on their existing knowledge and left with innovative ideas to share with others in their schools. There were opportunities for talking about good practice using cross-generation learning from marketplace personnel.

High school students learnt through engaging with team challenges and marketplace learning activities.

The Production Line roleplay activity transported Year 7 and 8 students into Mrs Jagatia's sweatshop in a newly developed industrialised country. No fair trade here; no minimum wage, pensions, or union representation; no national health service or free education. Quite an eye-opener.

This learning activity was sponsored by Aqua Leasing from Blackburn. Eight teams of six Y7/8 high schools students worked for Mrs Jagatia to earn wages in her sweat shop. The winning team was from Balshaws CE High School in Leyland.

Vital-Energi Town STEM Challenge

The Vital-Energi Town STEM Challenge was delivered by Helen Heggie from STEMFirst with excellent support from STEM Ambassadors from the Blackburn based company Vital-Energi



Some of the running costs were met by Onward Homes. Two cash prizes were awarded by Findel. Unfortunately, Information regarding the competition winners wasn't received.

Upcycled Trashion Competition

There were twenty St Christopher's Trashion Show models and thirty primary school entries into the Upcycled Garment/Trashion Show Competition. The winning school was Cottam Primary School.

Zero Waste Packed Lunch Challenge

This was compulsory. The Zero Waste Poster Competition winners were St Anthony's RC Blackburn, St Joseph's RC School Chorley and Deepdale Community School Preston.

Continued Professional Development (CPD) Opportunities

Three well attended adult professional development sessions delivered by experts in their field, covering curriculum, leadership and governance topics. Adults increased their understanding of learning for sustainability; taking away ideas to introduce in their school from September 2024

Leadership CPD for SLT members and Headteachers

Facilitated by Lydia Meryll, Senior Fellow of Knowledge Exchange, Institute of Education, University of Manchester.

Content Included-

- The DfE expectations regarding Sustainability Education Leaders- who owns their Climate Action Planning Process?
- Curriculum links and transition on to post 16 'green skills'
- Upskilling school staff and liaison with local FE courses
- Using national 'Transform our World' resources and format for plans.
- Engaging with Net Zero Support

Desired outcomes-

- Shared Progress on Climate Action Plans: Carbon Reduction
- Identifying allies and local expertise
- Local Authority support and Green Ward Plans. How can this help?
- Next steps together: clusters and chains
- What do their eco-teams want to see changing in their schools?

Curriculum CPD for teachers. HLTAs and TAs

Presentations included-

- Gina Parker (Mullarkey) Little Chatters- Outdoor Learning for the Outdoors- a time to reflect.
- Adam Flint, National Manager Eco-Schools England- Eco-Schools Carbon Calculator.
- Other areas covered included curriculum and transition to the next stage of learning
- Adults, parents, staff training opportunities
- Net Zero and Transform our World [Transform Our World: bringing environmental action into the classroom with quality-rated resources \(transform-our-world.org\)](https://www.transform-our-world.org/)

Adults were asked what positive change they could introduced when back at school.

These included-

- Highlighting all the sustainability work, teaching and learning outcomes in a scheme of learning
- Adapting the curriculum to broaden the range of sustainability links.
- To establish a CLIMATE Action Plan for the school using the Eco-Schools carbon calculator x2
- Each class to grow vegetables
- Introduce Eco-Schools programmes of study
- To establish a bigger eco-team within school and promote the 'pupil voice'.
- To audit what we do with regards to learning for sustainability in our school and plan a way forward,
- Measure carbon footprint and save money by targeting an area.



Governors CPD

Session leaders included

- Lorrimer Russel-Hayes. Chair of Governors Penwortham Girls Grammar School
- Alison Lazenby. Ashden Organisation, Lets Go Zero

Content included.

- The DfE context. Climate Action planning, appointment of Sustainability Leads
- What local government will support and how to access local resources and work towards working in clusters and chains for procurement and expertise
- How to use the 'Transform our World' format.
- Investigating school energy efficiency, with links to learning.
- Involving the School Councils and key allies and members of staff.
- Identifying barriers and scope for action.
- How to do a skills audit.

Conference strengths

- Several participants indicated in their feedback that this had been a very good conference that has inspired pupils, senior leadership team members and governors to act.
- Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and Football Club hosted the conferences again. There was general help and encouragement from Ryan Loftus and Martin Winters
- The support provided by Lancashire Sustainability Learning Forum members was much appreciated.
- There was excellent support and input from Balshaw CE High School (Leyland), Pleckgate Academy (Blackburn) St Christopher's CE High School (Accrington), Darwen Aldridge Community Academy and St Bede's RC High School whose students took on the important role of group-guides.
- Time management included designated time for school staff to explore the marketplace without their pupils. (Something to be developed further next year.)
- All the marketplace learning activities were linked to learning for sustainability, the range of topics covered included Energy, Waste and Water Management, Biodiversity, environmental education, including Forest Schools activities and developing school grounds. The updating of old school buildings with 'green' technology. There were topics linked to science, maths, geography and the creative arts.
- Marketplace supervision allowing for peer to peer learning and child direction rather than adult led groups.
- St Christopher's TRASHION SHOW was once again well received. There were more KS2 entries this year.
- The complimentary lunches prepared by St Christophers catering manager, Peter Gardner and staff seemed to be appreciated, although confusion was generated when some 'want to be helpful folk' helped themselves to lunch bags labelled for other groups. (Such is life!)
- 'The Brew Crew' keeping up with the demand of teas and coffees from the Stewards' Room.
- Excellent technical support was provided again by David Reid and Alex Jeffery.

Areas for improvement identified in 2023

To continue to attract more Headteachers Governors and SLT staff- the people who manage school budgets. In 2024 this year was achieved by offering additional places for SLT members and governors so they could attend the Leadership CPD session which were well attended.

Area for improvement 2025

- To attract and book more eco-focused organisations into the marketplace.
- To attempt to give more time for school personnel to investigate the marketplace.
- To continue to attract more school governors.
- To simplify the on the day registration
- To involve more training providers in Climate Action and in-set training.
- To invite university students following a teacher training programme to attend the event,



Martin Winters
Ryan Loftus



Dan Green
Rob Hall
Lee Bolam
Myke Bell



Samantha Leigh
Amber Bogumil
Mathew Thompson

Earth Cubs

Michelle Parkes
Kelly Vanaudenarde



Clive Rushmore

Louise Gregory Daniel Brogan

National Education Nature
Park

Jenny Lobo

Simon Colderley



Adam Flint



Grow Your
Mind Set
Liz Conshaw
Gemma
Sanchez



David Savage



Jane
Wood



Libby Shaw-Davis
Louise Barron
Jenny Hanley

James, Mark,
Amy & Steve



Solar for Schools



Ama
Chaney



FINDEL

Jo Rowbotham Tom Ellen &
Gavin

Vital -Engeri STEM Ambassadors
Elly, Mansi ,Alex Lisa, Dainy



Alison Cross



Susan
Kate



Susan Murphy
Joanna Fianu



Helen Heggie



Gina Parker
(Mullarky)



Gemma
Sarigu



Simon & Kath
Cordingley
Ethan



Little Bats
Learning CIC
Elanor
Gordon,

Samantha, Sarah &
Emma



TRASHION

Anne Morrison
Head of Textiles +
students/models



Denise Hayhurst Rachel Webble

National
Education Speak
CarbonCollective



Production Line

Sheila Booth Nadya
Booth & Kylie
Wilkinson

BREW CREW

Peter & Trevor



St James' C.E. Primary School
Committed to excellence; inspired by Christ

St Christopher's Eco-Group
Dom Allan History
teacher/Eco
Donna Singleton Eco



Marketplace Support
Team

Rachel-creator Ann
LACVS,
Clare Flash Bang
Science
creator/university
lecturer r
Rachel-Anne – Children's
author
Amelia Litherland -
Sustainability Learning
CIC Director
Nadya Booth
Sustainability Learning
CIC Director

St Christopher's Catering
Department

Pete Gardener



St Christopher's CE Academy
Support Team

John Gerrard Geography & Head of
Y9

Jordan Smith science teacher
Head of Biology

Beth Ince Assistant Head Science
Tom Maryon Head of Physics
Rob Costigan Head of Biology



FEEDBACK informed the writing of this report.

Usefulness of the event

Comments from Organisations

The variety of topics covered was amazing (though running an information stand, I only got to glimpse the extent of the content. I would be very interested to find out more about other activities. Thank you for the opportunity to participate and to sell Fairtrade chocolate and other items. – [Susan Murphey Fair Trade stall](#).

We enjoyed engaging with the students. We were a late joiner this year so with a little more preparation we can outshine 2024 in 2025. We also enjoyed talking to teachers about teaching about sustainability and which resources they would like. [Jo Rowbotham. Rossendale Valley Energy](#).

It was great for organisations to share and connect. [Louise Gregary Rossendale Valley Energy](#).

There was a steady flow of foot tread which meant some valuable conversations rather than an influx and missing people. The opportunity to set up the day before was helpful. There was a good variety of primary and secondary schools. [Liz Cronshaw Grow Your Mind Set](#)

The guides taking small groups of pupils worked well. It was manageable speaking to small groups when they came to visit my stand. The timings worked well. I had several teachers express an interest in visiting the Eco-Station after hearing about what we offer at Community Railway Lancashire- [David Savage](#)

I'm not sure how they achieve it on an annual basis but they do – a mass gathering of schools across the North West to convene for an action-packed eco day where commitment-to-cause meets 'can do'. A plethora of stalls and stakeholders offer advice, ideas and experiences and workshops and presentations keep the energy levels high. It can be a little chaotic at times but this only seems to add to the positive and fun atmosphere. [Ian Hodgson Hyndburn Leasure](#)

The various stalls were very informative. The networking CPD sessions were brilliant. [Danielle Burns, School Business Manager](#)

Absolutely brilliant event. Talked to 100s of children and teachers. Great to network with all the other exhibitors. Really good. We will come again next year [Food for Life Team](#)

Comments from Teachers

The split for heads, governors, and teachers in the CPD sessions, provided us with three different overviews that we aim to bring together. We all felt that our own area of focus was well covered. [Sarah Bradley teacher and LEAD Eco-warrior, St Mary Magdalen RC Primary School. Penwortham](#).

I really enjoyed the marketplace. I thought it was superb being able to see so many organisations in one area. I know the children we brought thoroughly enjoyed the interaction with other schools. [Andrew Clark Deputy Headteacher Chorley- St James CE](#)

The guides were fantastic and the workshop style morning, followed by the trashion event in the afternoon ensured that everyone was busy and felt productive. [Rachel O'Brien Science Lead, St Augustine of Canterbury Burnley](#)

The children enjoyed the activities and inspired them to want to do new things in school. [Phil Turner, Headteacher, Great Harwood CE Primary School](#)

It was a fantastic day. I think, it was the best conference yet. I really enjoyed it, and it filled me with lots of hope for the future. [Anne Morrison Head of Textiles, St Christophers CE Academy](#)

I loved it all as always. [Lorimer Russell-Hayes Governor Penwortham Girls High School](#)

Our students had an exciting time in the marketplace and enjoyed the challenges. Our guides were pushed out of their comfort zones and excelled which was great to see. As teachers, the CPD was excellent and has given us lots of ideas to implement. [Lisa Morris DACA](#)



The children loved the interactive stalls in the marketplace and enjoyed chatting to different companies and getting a wealth of ideas for school. The Curriculum CPD session was so helpful and again gave me a wealth of ideas **Alexandra Sprakes teacher/ECO-COUNCIL GROUP LEADER, St Leonards CE Walton de Dale**

It was an excellent event! Networking and learning from sustainability experts were very helpful. The format of the CPD provided a useful opportunity to discuss ideas and share experiences. I loved the variety of stalls in the marketplace **Rachel Lord.**

Great organisation. Marketplace provided opportunities to network and collect useful information. STEM challenge really inspired the pupils to think about sustainable solutions and it was great that they were encouraged into looking into 'green' careers. **Michael Blair teacher**

It was very thought provoking and a brilliant experience.

I met some inspirational truly wonderful people who are on the same journey of sustainability. Can't wait for the next conference. **The next generation were inspiring.'**

Promoting the event

Ric West (St Christopher's) designed posters, flyers and was busy taking photography to reflect the day's activities.

Glynis Goldsbrough and Wendy Litherland tweeted regularly about the forthcoming conferences and picked up some useful new contacts; some of whom attended. #SLC24 (@Sch_ESD_Conf.) Our Twitter Account was used to keep followers informed about organisations supporting the conference. Delegates were encouraged to tweet comments about the event and activities. This provided useful feedback.

The Sustainable Schools Conference Facebook Page attracted visitors.

www.facebook.com/schoolsustainabilityconferences. The page included pictures, organisations' logo, flyers and comments. It proved useful in keeping viewers updated about behind the scenes planning activities.

Glynis Goldsbrough (Conference Facilitator) worked behind the scenes from October 2023 and was on hand on the 26th and 27th of June to liaise with attending schools, workshop, and marketplace providers.

Wendy Litherland, and Ryan Loftus were responsible for 'front of house' duties

The Sustainable Schools Website will be updated by David Reid in September 2023. This report and a gallery of pictures will be added to the Site. www.school_sustainability.org

Our effective learning environment- just a few pictures that reflect the day

Learning for Sustainability. Learning beyond the classroom.





The Sustainability Learning CIC and Lancashire Sustainability Learning Forum thanks everyone who supported this event and made it a great place to learn lots about Education for Sustainability.

The date and venue for the 2025 conference is yet to be confirmed.

Please email schoolssustainabilityconferences@btinternet.com to reserve a place in the marketplace or to offer a workshop or CPD session. We hope that readers of this report will want to be part of the next event. The timetable/Schedule was emailed to all schools.

Blackburn Rovers Community Trust's Events, Partnerships and Facilities Manager, Ryan Loftus The conference continues to grow each year and we can't wait to host next year's event" Ryan Loftus.