



Eco-Schools are working with The Pod, an EDF Energy programme designed to help schools become more sustainable, to develop a range of Energy themed activities. If your school has identified Energy as an important theme in your Environmental Review then we would strongly recommend you register with the Pod and have ago at a Pod Activity. All the activities have been written with the help of the Eden project and have been Eco-Schools 'proofed', which means they all count towards your Bronze, Silver or even Green Flag award.

The amount of energy the world uses every day has trebled over the past century. To keep up with the growing demand for energy to heat and light our homes and power our industries, power stations are burning more and more fossil fuels. As well as using up limited natural resources, this process is releasing increasing volumes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) – the gas most responsible for global climate change – into the atmosphere.

Energy use will continue to increase. It has been calculated that, if present energy consumption trends continue, by 2010 global energy consumption and CO₂ emissions will rise by almost 50% above 1993 levels.

Increasing evidence supports global warming. Between 1949 and 1989, tropical ocean surface temperatures increased by half a degree Celsius. Since 1983, there has been an 8% decrease in snow cover on the continents of the northern hemisphere.

Energy and schools

The energy required for heating, lighting and powering equipment in an ordinary school classroom releases about 4,000 kg of CO₂ every year – enough to fill four hot-air balloons 10 metres in diameter. UK schools spend about £450m on energy each year, three times as much as they do on books, and about 3.5% of their budgets.



Some schools will spend four times more per pupil than similar schools in the same region. The difference is often to do with how effectively schools manage their energy use. Surveys show that, through simple low-cost and no-cost measures, schools can reduce their fuel bills by up to 10% while also reducing their CO₂ emissions. The chart shows how energy use is divided up in an average school. The percentages shown here will vary according to the types of appliance used in the school and any energy-saving measures already underway.

From October 2008 as part of the European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive all state schools with a floor area of over 1000m² are required to display a certificate which rates their energy use on a scale of A – G.

The new Display Energy Certificate (DEC) looks like the A-G rating you would expect to see when purchasing a new Fridge or Freezer. It is part of the Green Flag criteria to include your DEC with your application form. This is so Eco-Schools can collect data to establish any trends. Currently, if your school floor area is under 1000m², you are not required to submit your DEC. For more general information on DECs [click here](#).

Further information

All Eco-Schools are required to carry out an energy audit as part of their Environmental Review and then set targets for reducing unnecessary energy use through their Action Plan. Visit the Case Studies section for more details on how other Eco-Schools have tackled this issue. Visit the Pod it can provide advice and support for schools to help them reduce their energy and water use.