

Fact Sheet for Schools on MP Engagement

Purpose: To support teachers and students in understanding why engaging with MPs on climate change is timely, relevant, and part of the school's education and empowerment mission.

1. New Statutory Obligations: DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

The Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (DfE, 2022) outlines clear expectations for all schools in England. Key elements include:

- Development of a **Sustainability Action Plan**: Every education setting is encouraged to have a sustainability lead and a school-wide action plan by 2025.
- Increased focus on climate education: Sustainability and climate change should be integrated across the curriculum, including science, geography, and citizenship education.

This strategy positions schools as essential contributors to the UK's net zero future and other climate change commitments such as the UK's national climate action plan - its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) as part of its obligations under the UNFCCC's Paris Agreement (2015).

Engagement with official authorities and constitutional actors such as Members of Parliament (MPs), helps to educate students about their political system and civic duties, and this knowledge can help empower them to act on climate change and environmental issues.

2. Education Requirements: Law and Curriculum Standards

Schools have a duty to ensure that teaching on climate and sustainability is factual, objective, and politically impartial (Education Act 1996, Section 406). Educators must support pupils in developing critical thinking and active citizenship skills to engage with real-world challenges, including the climate crisis.

In addition, the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2021) require that teaching promotes high standards of personal and social conduct, including preparing students for life in modern Britain—an obligation that includes environmental awareness and civic engagement.

3. Why This Conversation Matters

Discussing climate change with MPs encourages democratic engagement, critical thinking, and student agency. Schools are uniquely positioned to help students understand the role of government, policy and legislation in climate action. By supporting

this dialogue, teachers empower pupils to become informed citizens who can shape a sustainable future (UNESCO, 2021).

4. How the Student-MP Climate Surgeries can support citizenship and climate action

The **Student-MP Climate Surgeries** were initiated by GLOBE Legislators (also known as GLOBE International) at the inaugural London Climate Action Week in 2019. They were developed as an educational response by GLOBE to the student climate strikes and surge in youth climate activism in 2018/2019. More here about the [origin of the Climate Surgeries](#) and their relevance in the London context.

The Student MP Climate Surgeries complement the Lesson Plan on “[Write to your London MP](#)”, which is part of the [LCAW London Climate Curriculum](#), a free resource shared annually with London’s schools, as preparation for London Climate Action Week.

The Climate Surgeries are an annual flagship event of **London Climate Action Week**, now the world’s largest whole-of-society climate mobilisation event. Both LCAW and the Surgeries have since gone global. LCAW has now inspired similar climate action weeks in **Auckland**, [Baku](#), [Bangkok](#), [Dublin](#), [Prague](#), [Rio de Janeiro](#) and [Sydney](#).

The Climate Surgeries have also been featured at Pavilions at **UNFCCC COP27 (Sharm El-Sheikh)**, **COP28 (Dubai)** and **COP29 (Baku)**. They are recognised as a pioneering way of engaging students and their elected members of parliament in informed conversations on climate change and democratic participation. They are intended as a mutually beneficial two-way dialogue and learning opportunity, making visible young people’s concerns and identifying solutions.

ABOUT GLOBE LEGISLATORS

[GLOBE Legislators](#) is an independent, non-partisan, cross-party organisation, founded in 1991 by Al Gore, John Kerry and their counterparts across the globe, working to promote legislative leadership on climate change and sustainable development.

GLOBE also serves as the **UNFCCC Focal Point for parliamentarians** bringing the world’s parliamentarians and parliamentary networks together at UNFCCC COPs and keeping them updated on developments.

The **Student-MP Climate Surgeries** are part of GLOBE’s educational mandate and help implement the ACE (Action for Climate Empowerment) obligation of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement. They link with GLOBE’s broader educational engagement with young people and the education sector, including the [LCAW schools action initiative](#), initiated by GLOBE in collaboration with national and international partners.

More at: <https://globelegislators.org/student-mps-climate-surgeries/>

References

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