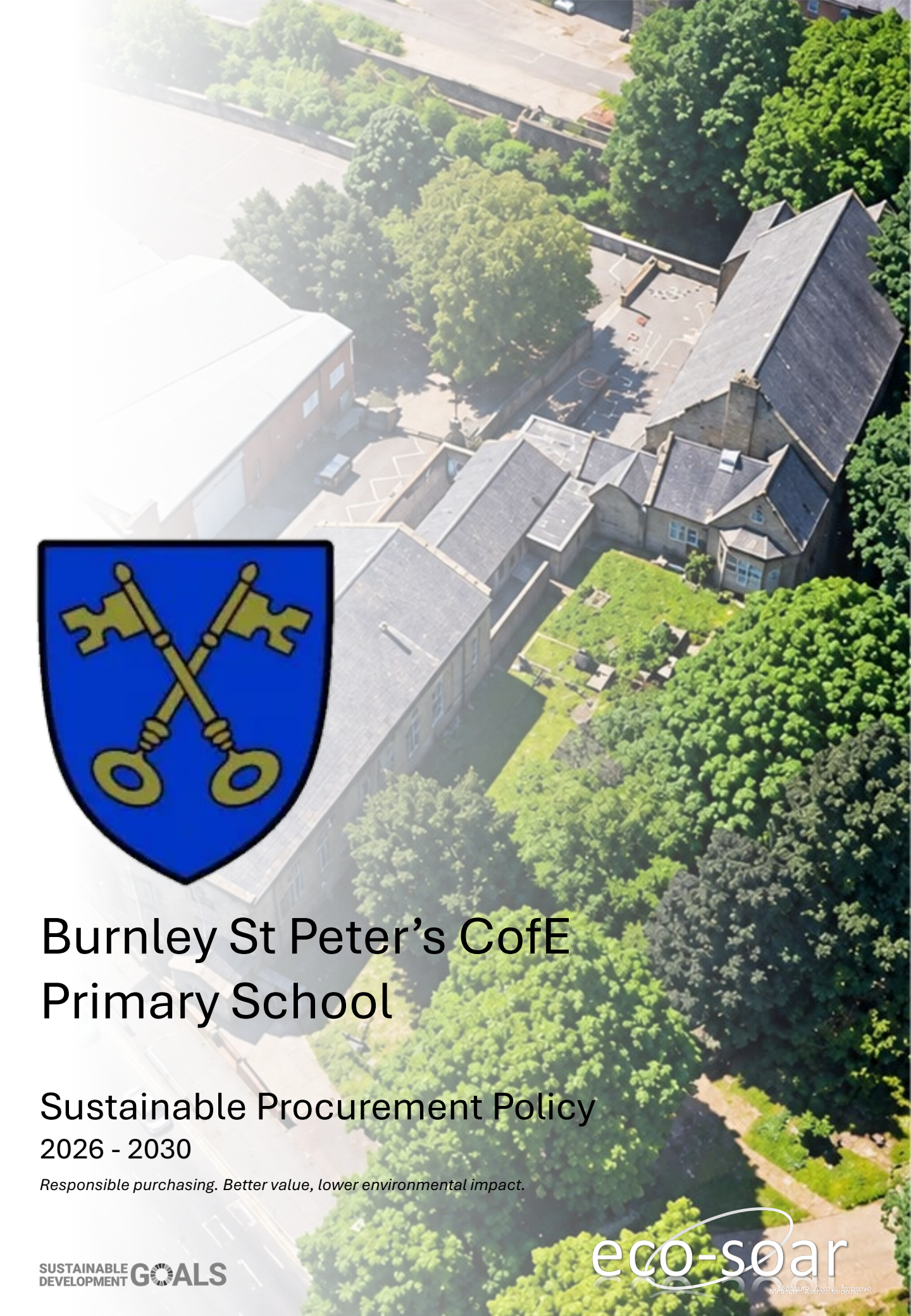


Burnley St Peter's CofE Primary School

Sustainable Procurement Policy

2026 - 2030

Responsible purchasing. Better value, lower environmental impact.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

eco-soar

Burnley St Peter's CofE Primary School

Sustainable Procurement

Policy & Purchasing Guide

Introduction

This Sustainable Procurement Policy sets out Burnley St Peter's CofE Primary School's approach to purchasing goods, works and services in a responsible, environmentally conscious and value-focused way.

Developed from the school's September 2026 Carbon Footprint Report, October 2026 Sustainability Audit and Climate Action Plan 2026–2030, it establishes clear principles for reducing the environmental impact of purchasing decisions. With procurement accounting for 45.2% of the school's carbon footprint, the policy prioritises whole-life value, reducing waste and emissions, and encouraging more sustainable supply chains. It recognises the school's financial and operational requirements, promoting practical, proportionate improvements that support its wider environmental commitments.

Document control	Detail
Policy period	2026-2030
Proposed effective date	Autumn term 2026
Policy owner	Headteacher
Operational lead	Business Manager
Approval body	Governing Body
Approval date	TBC
Next formal review	Autumn 2027, then annually
Related Documents	Carbon Footprint Report, Sustainability Audit, Climate Action Plan

1. Purpose and Policy Commitment

Burnley St Peter's CofE Primary School is committed to making responsible purchasing decisions that deliver good value, support high-quality education and reduce avoidable environmental impacts. Reflecting the school's commitment to caring for God's creation, this policy provides a practical approach to considering sustainability when goods, works and services are specified, purchased, used and ultimately disposed of.

The school's Carbon Footprint Report identified procurement as its largest emissions source, accounting for 45.2% of total emissions. The Sustainability Audit highlighted the need to strengthen sustainable purchasing practices, supplier expectations and procurement arrangements. The Climate Action Plan 2026–2030 therefore prioritises embedding sustainable procurement principles, introducing a practical purchasing checklist and engaging key suppliers. This policy provides the operational framework for delivering these commitments, whilst ensuring purchasing decisions remain fair, proportionate and financially responsible.

Policy objectives

- Avoid unnecessary purchasing and make best use of resources already available.
- Consider whole-life value rather than purchase price alone.
- Reduce waste, packaging, resource consumption and avoidable supply-chain impacts.
- Prefer durable, repairable, reusable, recyclable and appropriately efficient products where practical.
- Encourage suppliers to demonstrate responsible environmental and social practices.
- Ensure sustainability considerations remain proportionate to the value, risk and significance of the purchase.
- Maintain fair, transparent and value-for-money purchasing decisions.

2. Scope

This policy applies to staff involved in requesting, approving, specifying or purchasing goods and services on behalf of the school. It should be applied proportionately, with greatest attention given to significant, recurring, high-impact or strategically important purchases.

Use the full checklist	Use proportionate consideration	Routine low-value purchases
Significant equipment, furniture, ICT, appliances, catering contracts, cleaning products, estate works, major supplies and new/renewed supplier arrangements.	Recurring consumables, classroom resources, printing, events, grounds materials and other purchases where a more sustainable alternative may be available.	Normal day-to-day items may be purchased through approved arrangements without unnecessary administration, while still avoiding obvious waste.

3. Sustainable Purchasing Hierarchy

Before selecting a product or supplier, the purchaser should work through the hierarchy below. The aim is not to prevent necessary spending, but to challenge avoidable consumption and obtain better long-term value.

1. AVOID	Is the purchase genuinely needed? Can the requirement be removed, reduced or met in another way?
2. REUSE	Can an existing item be redeployed, shared between classes or sourced internally?
3. REPAIR	Can the existing item be maintained, repaired, upgraded or have a component replaced?
4. REFURBISHED / RECYCLED	Would a refurbished, remanufactured, recycled-content or second-life option meet the requirement?
5. BUY BETTER	If buying new, select an appropriate durable, efficient, responsibly sourced and lower-waste option.
6. USE WELL	Plan how the item will be stored, maintained and used to maximise its useful life.
7. END OF LIFE	Identify whether it can be returned, reused, donated, recycled or otherwise responsibly managed when no longer required.

4. What Sustainable Procurement Means in Practice

Consideration	Practical approach
Value and whole-life cost	Consider purchase price alongside expected life, energy/water use, consumables, maintenance, repair, replacement and disposal costs.
Durability and repairability	Where practical, favour products designed to last, with replaceable parts, warranties, servicing or repair options.
Energy and water	For equipment that consumes energy or water, consider efficient alternatives and whether the specification can reduce ongoing consumption.

Consideration	Practical approach
Materials and responsible sourcing	Consider recycled/recyclable content, responsibly sourced materials and avoidance of unnecessarily resource-intensive products.
Packaging	Seek reduced, reusable or recyclable packaging and avoid unnecessary single-use materials where practical.
Waste prevention	Avoid over-ordering, consider refillable, reusable or returnable options and plan for reuse or recycling at end of life.
Delivery and transport	Where practical, consolidate orders and deliveries, avoid unnecessary urgent deliveries and consider local supply where it offers appropriate value and quality.
Social value and ethics	Where relevant and proportionate, consider responsible employment, ethical sourcing, local/community benefit and supplier social-value commitments.

5. Sustainable Procurement Checklist

Use this checklist for significant purchases and when comparing material alternatives. It is intended to support judgement rather than create an automatic pass/fail test. Record brief notes where the consideration has influenced the purchasing decision.

Area	Question	Status	Notes / evidence
Need	Is the purchase necessary, and has reuse, sharing or repair been considered?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Specification	Can the requirement be specified in a way that uses fewer materials/resources without reducing the required outcome?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Whole-life value	Have operating, maintenance, repair, replacement and disposal costs been considered where relevant?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Energy / water	For consuming equipment, has efficiency been considered?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Materials	Is recycled, recyclable, reusable or responsibly sourced content available and suitable?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Durability	Is the product sufficiently robust and can it be repaired, maintained or upgraded?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Packaging	Can packaging be reduced, returned, reused or readily recycled?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Waste / end of life	Is there a practical reuse, take-back, donation or recycling route?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Delivery	Can deliveries be consolidated or unnecessary transport avoided?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Supplier	Can the supplier demonstrate appropriate environmental practices or provide relevant product information?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Social value	Where relevant, have ethical, local/community or wider social-value benefits been considered?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	
Decision	Does the selected option represent appropriate value for money when sustainability and whole-life considerations are taken into account?	☐ Yes ☐ No/ Action Required ☐ N/A	

Purchase / project:		**Estimated value:**	
Requested by:		**Date:**	
Selected supplier / option:		**Approved by:**	

6. Supplier Engagement

The school will use proportionate supplier engagement to improve environmental performance without placing unnecessary burdens on suppliers or restricting competition. Engagement should focus on key, recurring or environmentally significant suppliers and on areas where practical improvement is possible.

Supplier expectations

- Minimise unnecessary packaging and use recyclable or reusable packaging where practical.
- Offer lower-impact, recycled-content, refillable, reusable or energy-efficient alternatives where available.
- Provide relevant environmental or product information when reasonably requested.
- Support consolidation of deliveries and efficient logistics where practical.
- Provide take-back, reuse, repair or recycling options where these form part of the service offered.
- Demonstrate appropriate environmental management arrangements for the nature and scale of their activities.
- Where relevant, demonstrate actions being taken to measure and reduce carbon emissions associated with their activities, products or services.
- Support continuous improvement rather than treating sustainability as a one-off procurement exercise.

Key Supplier Sustainability Questions

Question	Supplier response / evidence	Follow-up action
Do you have an environmental or sustainability policy, objectives or management arrangements?		
What actions are you taking to reduce energy use, carbon emissions, waste or packaging?		
Can you offer lower-impact alternatives to the products/services we currently purchase?		
Can packaging or deliveries be reduced, consolidated, returned or reused?		
Do you provide repair, take-back, reuse or recycling options for relevant products?		
Can you provide environmental information or evidence for significant products/services where requested?		

7. Category Guidance

Category	Purchasing considerations
ICT & electrical equipment	Avoid over-specification, consider energy efficiency, refurbished equipment, expected life, warranty, repairability, upgrade options, consumables and responsible end-of-life routes.
Furniture	Prioritise durability, repairability and reuse, consider refurbished or recycled-content options where suitable, avoid replacement solely for cosmetic reasons.
Paper, printing & stationery	Reduce unnecessary printing and consumption, consider recycled-content paper and refillable/reusable stationery where appropriate, avoid over-ordering.
Cleaning & hygiene	Use products suitable for the task, consider concentrated/refill systems, reduced packaging and appropriate environmental credentials while maintaining hygiene and safety requirements.
Catering & food	Where within the school's control, consider food waste prevention, packaging, responsible sourcing, seasonal/local opportunities and efficient ordering.
Estates & maintenance	Consider whole-life performance, energy/water efficiency, durability, maintainability, materials, waste and future replacement when specifying works or equipment.
Grounds & biodiversity	Avoid unnecessary harmful materials, consider peat-free and nature-positive options where suitable and align purchases with biodiversity objectives.
Events & curriculum resources	Plan quantities carefully, favour reusable materials and avoid unnecessary single-use items where practical.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body / relevant committee	Approve the policy, provide strategic oversight and support proportionate sustainable procurement within the school's wider sustainability objectives.
Headteacher	Oversee implementation of the policy and ensure sustainable procurement is considered within appropriate school decision-making.
Business Manager / purchasing lead	Apply the checklist to significant purchases, maintain appropriate records, engage key suppliers and support value-for-money decisions.
Budget holders / staff requesting purchases	Challenge need, consider the purchasing hierarchy and provide sufficient information to enable sustainable options to be assessed.
Site / premises staff	Support specifications relating to energy, water, maintenance, waste, durability and end-of-life considerations for estate-related purchases.
Sustainability Lead	Review procurement progress as part of the Climate Action Plan and annual sustainability review.

9. Decision-Making Principles

Sustainability is one consideration within a sound purchasing decision, it does not automatically override quality, safeguarding, health and safety, educational suitability, legal requirements, availability or value for money. Decisions should be proportionate and evidence-based.

- Do not purchase an unsuitable product solely because it appears 'green'.
- Do not pay a material premium without considering whether there is a reasonable whole-life or sustainability benefit.
- Do not create unnecessary barriers to suppliers, ask only for information proportionate to the purchase.
- Where two options provide comparable quality and value, preference may be given to the option with stronger whole-life and sustainability performance.
- Where a more sustainable option is not selected, no lengthy justification is required, for significant purchases a brief note of the principal reason is sufficient.

10. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

The purpose of monitoring is to demonstrate that sustainable procurement is becoming part of normal practice, not to create a separate reporting burden. Progress should be reviewed alongside the school's Climate Action Plan.

Indicator	What good looks like	Review
Checklist use	Evidence that the checklist is applied to significant purchases.	Annual
Supplier engagement	Number or proportion of key suppliers engaged on relevant sustainability issues.	Annual
Waste / packaging improvements	Examples of packaging reduction, refill, take-back, reuse or recycling arrangements introduced.	Annual
Whole-life decisions	Examples where repair, reuse, refurbishment or more efficient equipment avoided unnecessary replacement or ongoing cost.	Annual
Procurement emissions data	Annual procurement data retained in a consistent form to support future Carbon Footprint reporting.	Annual