

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Schools Climate Action Grant

Application Guidance

April 2026



Definitions

- 1.0 Purposes of the scheme, background, and funding
- 2.0 Eligibility criteria
- 3.0 Awards
- 4.0 Excluded organisations
- 5.0 The effective date
- 6.0 How will grants be provided to schools
- 7.0 Subsidy control
- 8.0 Decision making
- 9.0 Complaints
- 10.0 Taxation
- 11.0 Managing the risk of fraud
- 12.0 Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid
- 13.0 Data protection and use of data

Definitions

The following definitions are used within this document:

Schools Climate Action Grant: the name of the scheme, providing grants to schools to decarbonise their operations.

Climate Emergency: refers to the climate emergency declared by the Council in July 2019

Effective Date: That is schools will need to have been in operation in the borough before this date to be eligible for this Scheme. For this Scheme that date is 01 April 2026.

End Date: refers to the final deadline for project completions, being 31 January 2027.

1. Purpose of the Grant

1.1 The purpose of this document is to determine your eligibility for the Schools Climate Action Grant.

1.2 This grant scheme has been developed by the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) , building upon our previous grants, that have supported businesses and community groups to take climate action over the past few years. This grant delivers against our Borough Climate Change Strategy and supports schools in delivering against the Department for Education’s leadership and climate action plans initiative.

1.3 This purpose of the Schools Climate Action Grant Scheme is to provide local schools with dedicated funding to support them on their decarbonisation journey. Schools are eligible for **up to £2,500 of grant funding**, to be spent on interventions such as:

- LED installation
- Solar PV installation
- Insulation installation
- Replacement of gas heating and cooking appliances
- Bespoke energy efficiency improvement solutions
- Double glazing
- Allotment
- Tree planting/grounds regeneration works
- Water saving measures
- Emissions reporting services
- Decarbonisation feasibility studies
- Decarbonisation plan development
- EV charge point installation
- EV purchase (only for school purposes e.g. staff pool vehicle)
- Replacement of fossil fuel powered tools.

1.4 Tunbridge Wells has allocated £10,000 to go towards this grant scheme.

1.5 The Scheme will provide **grants of up to £2,500** towards the costs of a schools sustainable project/s, subject to terms and conditions.

2. Eligibility Criteria

2.1 Applicants must operate a school with a registered address in Tunbridge Wells borough.

2.2 Applications will only be considered if the name registered matches the name provided on the application form.

2.3 Applicants must either own or have a long-term tenancy agreement (minimum 2-year lease) on the property where the project will take place.

2.4 Applicants must set out what their project entails and how it improves energy efficiency / reduces the carbon footprint of their premises / operation.

2.5 No grant shall be paid for any work carried out prior to an award having been made – grants cannot be awarded retrospectively.

2.6 Projects must have received all necessary permissions before applying for the Scheme.

2.7 The Scheme **will not cover any of the following costs:**

Any cost incurred prior to the completion of a funding agreement with the Council to receive a grant for a successful application.
VAT.
Statutory works or duties.
Costs related to arranging, financing, or securing additional funding for a project.
Existing and new staff costs and salaries.
Contingency costs.
Costs related to any permissions secured for the project (i.e., Planning).
Existing fixed overhead costs.
Research costs.
Repairs and maintenance work.
Like for like replacement of existing items.
Purchase of land or buildings.
Advance payments.
Insurance costs.

3.Awards

3.1 The Schools Climate Action Grant is a one-off award specifically to support eligible and successful proposals set out by applicants.

3.2 Under the Scheme, schools are entitled to apply for up to £2,500 towards their eligible project costs.

3.3 Applications will be reviewed and a decision on funding will be made within 1 month of a completed submission. This timeframe will be extended where additional documentation and clarifications are required.

3.4 We will look to prioritise schools in areas of deprivation and those most in need of funding.

4.Excluded Applicants

4.1 The following is a non-exhaustive list, and it is at the discretion of the Council which applicants **will not** be eligible for funding under the Scheme:

Businesses / Social Enterprises.
Town and Parish Councils.
Community Groups.

5.The Effective Date

5.1 The effective date for eligibility is determined as 1 April 2026. That is schools will need to have been operating in the borough before this date to be eligible for this Scheme.

6.How will the grants be provided to schools

6.1 The Council is fully aware of the importance of these grants to assist schools to reach net zero. The Schools Climate Action Grant Scheme represents a significant intervention from the Council to support schools in their efforts to be more sustainable.

6.2 In all cases, schools will be required to confirm that they are eligible to receive the grant via the application process. An application for a Schools Climate Action Grant is deemed to have been made when a duly completed application form is received in the Council's Sustainability Inbox at sustainability@tunbridgewells.gov.uk.

6.3 Applicants are under an obligation to notify the Council should they no longer meet the eligibility criteria for the Schools Climate Action Grant.

6.4 The council will conduct its due diligence, thus the Council reserves the right to request supplementary information from applicants, and they should look to provide this, where requested, as soon as possible.

6.5 Successful applicants will receive confirmation of grant funding from TWBC through a Grant Offer Letter (GOL). A copy of this letter must be signed by the applicant's project lead within ten working days of receipt. TWBC will withdraw applications should the GOL not be returned within ten working days.

6.6 The GOL will outline the terms and conditions for grant recipients to deliver their projects. This includes the grant start and end dates, the project funding profile, monitoring and reporting information, specific conditions and TWBCs terms and conditions.

6.7 Grant contribution payments will not be made retrospectively. As such, only on production of evidence that the proposals have been delivered, such as via receipted invoices from contractors and photographs of completed works, will grant funding be paid out.

7. Subsidy Control

7.1 If you have had previous public funding, it is important that you let us know so we can check that you are within the Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) limits. The current threshold for MFA (subsidy) is £315,000 in a three-year rolling period. If you have received funding over these limits, we may need to limit the amount of the funding you can receive, to comply with the state aid rules. You must notify us of all your subsidies over the last three years.

7.2 Compliance with Subsidy Control rules and regulations is a requirement for receipt of a Schools Climate Action Grant. To ensure your school is compliant, please visit the Government's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime>

8. Decision Making

8.1 TWBC officers will administer the Scheme and make recommendations for the consideration of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, Head of Housing Health and Environment and Sustainability Manager. These recommendations will be based on a scoring matrix linked to the outputs, outcomes and deliverability of proposals.

8.2 All decisions made by the Council shall be communicated to the applicant in either writing or by email. A decision will be made as soon as is practicable after the **22nd May deadline** for applications has passed.

9. Complaints

9.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Council's website) will be applied in the event of any Complaint received about this Scheme.

10. Taxation

10.1 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to the applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.

11. Managing the risk of fraud

11.1 The Council will not accept the deliberate manipulation of the schemes or fraud. Any applicant caught falsifying information to gain grant money, proceeding without the necessary permissions, or failing to declare entitlement to any section of the Grant Scheme will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered from them.

11.2 For the avoidance of doubt, the Council will undertake pre- and post-payment checks for all Schools Climate Action Grant applications in order to ensure the monies distributed by the Council have been allocated to the intended initiatives.

12. Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

12.1 If it is established that any award has been made incorrectly due to error, misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

13. Data Protection and use of Data

13.1 All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices, which are available on the Council's website.