

Written evidence submitted by Teach the Future

Context

1. Teach the Future is a youth-led campaign to urgently repurpose the entire education system around the climate emergency and ecological crisis. The campaign is hosted by the education charity, [SOS-UK](#) and is led by over 40 school students and is supported by a teachers network and adult advisory board. Our adult advisory board includes education and policy professionals, including experience within schools, the UK's Universities' Council for Teacher Education and the Association of School and College Leaders. We have made great strides in achieving our goals, having written our [Climate Education Bill](#), and were key influencers in the publication of the [Department for Education's sustainability and climate change strategy](#). We have [conducted research](#) with secondary teachers across the UK and we work with, and are supported by NEU and UCU which helps to ensure teacher's perspectives are integrated into our campaign.
2. We welcome this inquiry and hope this evidence from students at Teach the Future, which is informed by our research with teachers, will inform the Education Committee about teacher recruitment, training and retention.
3. Secondary school children report that they aren't being taught about the solutions to climate change or being prepared to face the frightening effects of climate change, and teachers report that they are not being prepared to teach about it. [Our research](#) with UK teachers via Teacher Tapp shows that:
 - 92% of teachers are concerned about climate change
 - 89% of teachers report issues regarding climate change are relevant to their subject area
 - 70% of teachers feel they haven't received adequate training to educate students about climate change

"Climate education for teachers is essential so they have the confidence to broach the subject accurately, avoid the pitfalls and support their students sensitively."

Dr Meryl Batchelder, Science Teacher, Corbridge Middle School

What the Government can change

4. Learning about the climate and ecological emergency should be a substantive and compulsory part of Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework and Early Career Framework for newly qualified teachers. This should include the science of the climate and ecological crises, the system changes required to abate them and training to enable staff to identify and support pupils suffering from eco-anxiety.

The benefits of the proposed change

5. Teachers will be better prepared and feel more confident to educate students across subject areas about the climate and ecological crisis, including the causes, impacts and solutions. [Our approach](#) shows that there doesn't need to be an additional time requirement and burden on teachers. This will help improve retention of teachers.
6. The mental health and wellbeing of teachers will likely improve when 92% of teachers are concerned about climate change, thus helping with retention of teachers.
7. There will be improved employability for future school-leavers who will be better equipped for a green economy and green jobs. Teachers will feel their teaching is more engaged with today's society and relevant to students, increasing the likelihood of them feeling valued and positively influential.

8. There is an opportunity for teachers to be celebrated and acknowledged for their efforts and input in progressing climate education, and for being key change makers in shifting society to low-carbon ways of living. This would contribute to building confidence and ownership amongst teachers.
9. Training and [teacher education for sustainability delivered by other other countries](#), such as Italy, shows the interest from and benefits for teachers, and that the change is possible.

Teach the Future is supported by 150+ organisations, including NEU, UCU, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, Association for Science Education, Association for Citizenship teaching.

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