

# Invitation for School Leaders to Participate in PhD Study on Climate Change Education

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation to participate in my doctoral research at the University of Stirling. This briefing note shares more details about the purpose of the study, what is involved, and the time commitment.

The recent [Curriculum and Assessment Review in England](#) has identified the need to ensure that climate change is meaningfully addressed within the curriculum. Children and young people are asking more questions, seeking to understand the world around them, and looking to schools for guidance and clarity. School leaders play a vital role in shaping how climate change is understood and addressed through the curriculum and wider school life.

This research project invites a small group of headteachers and senior leaders from across England to help shape how climate change education can be embedded in schools in ways that are relevant, manageable, and impactful. **You don't need to be a climate expert to take part;** your leadership insight and experience are what matter most.

## Research Project Title - School Leaders' Imaginaries: Articulating the 'Education' in Climate Change Education

This research project invites a small group of school leaders from across England to explore the complexities of climate change education at a time when its impacts are increasingly visible and its relevance to schools is undeniable. Over six months, school leaders will engage with an immersive speculative methodology, a structured yet imaginative approach designed to help you think beyond short-term constraints and consider what climate change education could and should look like in your own setting. Speculation matters because it allows school leaders to explore possibilities before solutions are fixed, to ask, "what if?" and "what next?" in the face of uncertainty. This important research study will deepen understanding of the changing

landscape across education, society, and the environment, while contributing to professional learning, leadership development, and locally grounded approaches to climate change education.


## The aim of the study

School leaders will collaborate to reimagine policy and practice, using speculation to directly inform professional learning, pedagogy, and curriculum development for climate change education in schools in England.

## What is involved?

The fieldwork takes place between September 2025 and April 2026 across three interconnected phases. The approach is designed to be manageable but engaging and meaningful alongside your existing role.

### Phase 1: In-person professional learning day


 **Thursday 23 October 2025**

 **9:00 AM – 3:30 PM**

 **Sky Primary School, St Austell**

This day of professional learning will include expert input, provocations, and space for reflection on the pedagogies, leadership approaches, and whole-school practices that can support meaningful climate change education in your setting.

### Phase 2: In school reflection and storytelling

 **October 2025 – March 2026**

You'll engage with provocations and reflect on critical incidents from your leadership experience in your school setting. These might include challenges, turning points, or decisions that shaped your thinking and practice. You'll be invited to respond through short stories, imagined dialogues, or scenario-building. During this phase, you will be supported through an online learning platform, where you can access resources and receive guidance. This phase is flexible, self-paced, and will take place at your school.

## Phase 3: Final in-person workshop

 **Thursday 23 April 2026**

 **9:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

 **Online**

In Phase 3, you will collaboratively speculate on a reimagined version of the [Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy](#). Education policy rarely accounts for the affective domain – these are the feelings, values, and emotional responses that shape how people engage with issues, yet climate change and education is deeply affective. Combining your reflections from Phase 1 and 2, you will reflect on these dimensions more deeply within the DfE's strategy and explore implications for curriculum, teaching, and school leadership.

## About me

Before beginning my doctoral studies, I completed a Master's at the University of Stirling, where my research focused on school leaders' implementation of climate change education in England. I started my career working at the Environment Agency for over 10 years, researching the social impacts of climate change, including flooding, coastal erosion, and drought in England and Wales. I was previously Head of Science in a secondary school and have spent over seven years designing and delivering professional development for school leaders at all stages in England, including National Professional Qualifications with the Teacher Development Trust and Ambition Institute. I am also the Co-Founder of CAPE (Climate Adapted Pathways for Education), a UK-wide charity that supports schools in implementing climate change education.

## Supporting your professional learning

Once fieldwork is complete, as a thank you for your time and participation, I would be delighted to offer an optional and free professional learning session for your school on climate change education. This can be scheduled at a time that suits you and aligned with your school's existing priorities.

## **Participating in this important study**

If you can support this important research project, or know someone who may be interested, I would be very grateful if you could get in touch. I am happy to provide the full participant information sheet and consent form and can arrange a brief call to answer any questions you may have.

## **Interested in taking part or finding out more?**

Please don't hesitate to get in touch:

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