

# Equality & Equity

## Sustainability Audit

This guide will help you actively engage with the theme of Equality and Equity at your school. Investigate, explore, reflect and start your Eco-School actions!



# EXPLORE EQUALITY & EQUITY WITH ECO-SCHOOLS

Equality offers everyone the same chances, while equity addresses the unique challenges faced by marginalised groups, such as those impacted by gender, disability or socio-economic disparities. In this theme, the focus is on inclusive participation and recognising that climate change and pollution disproportionately affect vulnerable communities. Equality and equity are essential to student wellbeing and long-term sustainability, as safe, informed, and respected students are better able to engage in learning, collective action, and environmental responsibility.



Your Eco-Committee can choose to focus on the theme Equality and Equity, or explore several themes at once. Forming sub-groups within the committee ensures continuity, with each group taking responsibility for a specific theme and developing expertise over time. Use the Eco-Schools Seven Steps to explore and weave the theme throughout every part of your school.

## SOME QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED...

### Local Practices and Equal Access

- What local beliefs and values currently ensure equal access to education and protection for everyone in our school and community?
- How do different groups in our school and community experience issues of fairness and equality, and what steps are being taken to address these?

### Gender Equality

- How does our school ensure that all genders are treated equally in environmental education and participation in sustainability initiatives?
- What actions are in place to promote gender inclusivity in decision-making and leadership roles within our Eco-School's projects?

### Support for Vulnerable Groups

- How are we addressing the needs of vulnerable populations in our school, such as those affected by socioeconomic challenges or disabilities?



Challenge assumptions, slow down, and really observe your surroundings. Your school has its own unique challenges and solutions that only sharp, curious minds will discover. Record what you see - notes, sketches, photos, or simple counts - at different times and seasons.

Ask critical questions: *What's here? What's missing? Why is it like this? What could change?* Use these insights to understand the current situation and move towards high-impact actions for Equality & Equity at your school.



# Equality & Equity Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<p><b>Diversity</b></p> <p>When you look around, do you notice people of different backgrounds, abilities, or ages using the same spaces?</p> <p>How many different languages can you count on posters around your school?</p> <p>Do you see artwork or decorations that reflect different traditions or identities? If yes, who and when where they created?</p> <p>Are there any signs, flags, or messages celebrating cultural diversity or inclusion? If yes, which ones?</p> <p>What events or days does your school host or participate in that celebrate different cultures, traditions, or identities?</p>		
<p><b>Accessibility</b></p> <p>As a group - walk around your school. If possible experiment with a blindfold, use a wheelchair or use crutches. Is every part of the school easy to reach (e.g. classrooms, playgrounds, gardens, entrances)? Take notice of which parts of your school grounds were harder to access and/or navigate and what made it easier. Share your reflections with other students that might have different abilities when moving around the school grounds. Some of the questions that might help you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there steps, slopes, paths, or barriers that make it harder for some people to move around?</li><li>• Where can you find ramps, lifts, or other signs of accessibility, and are they in good condition?</li><li>• Are corridors and entrances easy for everyone to move through safely?</li><li>• Does everyone have equal access to green or outdoor spaces?</li></ul>		



## Equality & Equity Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<b>Inclusion</b>		
Try sitting in different places in your classroom and talk to your classmates, find out if the classroom setups allow everyone to see, hear, and participate equally?		
Keep track of the canteen option for a week, are there choices in food that reflect different needs or cultures?		
Which areas around school or in your community feel most welcoming or comfortable?		
Go around your school and spot the different information signs or boards, are those written clearly and in languages everyone can understand?		
Talk to the people in charge of organising trips and extra school activities, can all students who want to participate in school activities and trips do so?		
Are resources (books, equipment, technology) shared fairly between classrooms or groups?		
Can you list how many additional facilities there are in place in your school to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are met?		
<b>Participation</b>		
How many students have dropped out of school this year? What are the reasons?		



## Equality & Equity Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
How many students have completed the highest grade of education this year?		
Do you have any policies in place that address equality in school? (For example regarding gender, culture, language, disability, or race). If yes, how many and where can you find them?		
<b>Community</b>		
Are there any areas, tributes, or mentions in the school building or surroundings that refer to important cultural events? If so, which ones and which one would you like to see displayed?		
What local issues of equity and equality are you affected by/aware of? What are the causes and what could be done to make things better?		
Are there any local groups or movements working for equality and justice? If so, does your school work with them?		
Does your school connect or facilitate the participation of students in volunteering or community action projects related to the theme of Equality and Equity?		



## Equality & Equity Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
<b>Gender</b>		
In what ways does your school promote gender equality?		
How does your school respond to gender-based bullying or discrimination?		
Does your school have dress code? Are dress code rules the same for all genders? If not, how are they different?		
Do students of all genders have equal opportunities to become class leaders or prefects?		
Are leadership roles dominated by one gender?		
Are students of all genders encouraged to participate in discussions and activities?		
Are students free to choose subjects and sports without gender-based pressure?		
Are school facilities (toilets, changing rooms, dorms, etc.) safe and appropriate for all genders?		
Does your school use gender-neutral or inclusive language in teaching and communication?		
<b>Sexual Education</b>		
Does your school provide sexual education? What topics are included (for example: consent, healthy relationships, boundaries, contraception, sexual health)?		
Do you feel the sexual education you receive is clear, respectful, and relevant to your life?		

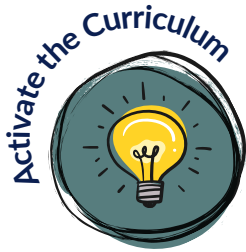


# Equality & Equity Eco-Schools Sustainability Audit

Questions	Your Answers	Reflections/Observations
Your questions		

# Choosing *Equality & Equity* as a key theme for action?

## Follow these next Eco-Schools steps...



What knowledge or skills do you still need to start putting your ideas into action? Take some time to identify what's missing and discuss it within your Eco-Committee. Then, reach out to your teachers and tell them what you'd like to learn more about, whether it's cultural diversity, different abilities, or practical ways to promote inclusion in your school. Together, you can build the knowledge and confidence needed to start real change!

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Use what you've learned from your lessons, your Eco-Schools activities, and your own observations, to take action! Work together to turn your ideas into real change by creating an Action Plan for Equality & Equity. Mobilise your Eco-Committee, teachers, school staff, parents, and the wider community to help you reach your goals. You could:



learn about past events



improve accessibility



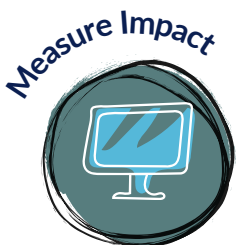
create inclusive emergency plans



celebrate different cultural events

Whatever actions you choose, make sure they are realistic, measurable, and long-lasting, so your Eco-Committee's work continues to grow year after year.

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Monitor your actions to see the difference you have made!

Use your Action Plan to check what's changed in your school and community. Have you added more ramps or signs in diverse languages? Are more people aware of diverse cultures? You could *note how many people joined your activities*. Measuring your impact helps you celebrate success and plan even better actions for the future!

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Make sure the whole school and local community are part of your Equality & Equity journey. Share your findings and actions through assemblies, newsletters, posters, or social media. Invite teachers, students, parents, and local experts to join activities or share their knowledge. By including different perspectives and experiences, your Eco-Committee will build stronger, more creative solutions that last.