

# Thinking about climate change education, policy and justice

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**Conversations for Change: The Future of Education for Global Climate Justice**

**2 November, 2022**



# Outline

Climate change education policy context

What is climate change education?

Opportunities for enacting justice through CCE policy

# Climate Change Education Policy

- Environmental and climate crises are intensifying (IPCC, 2022)
- Related education is marginalised in policy and practice (Reid, 2019; Greer, King and Glackin, 2021)
- Causes of marginalisation are not well understood
- Future programmes are just as likely to be side-lined unless we can understand the causes of this marginalisation

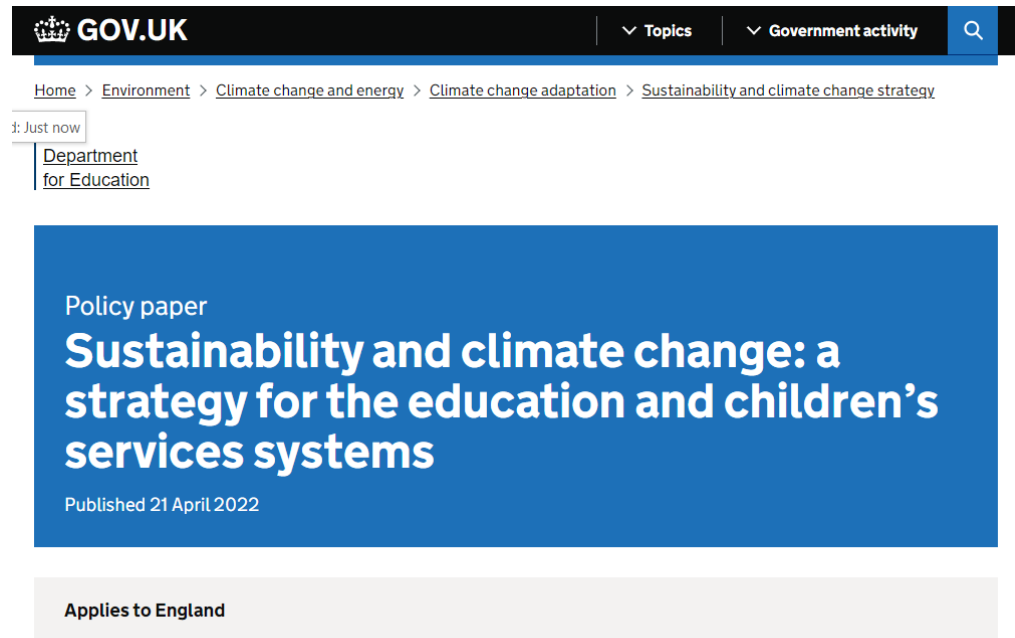


# In England...

- **Policies have been attending elsewhere**
  - CC has a low profile in ed policies
  - Education has a low profile in CC policies
- **Responding to the ‘crisis’ is overlooked in education**
  - Curriculum and inspection
- **Economic orientation of the policy landscape**
  - Economic growth is an unquestioned objective
  - Education policies are oriented to work; accountability and management: ‘digital futures’, ‘technology futures’ ‘work futures’ rather than, e.g. ‘sustainable futures’



# A new sustainability and climate change strategy



GOV.UK

Home > Environment > Climate change and energy > Climate change adaptation > Sustainability and climate change strategy

Just now

Department for Education

Policy paper

**Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems**

Published 21 April 2022

Applies to England

[DfE Policy Paper](#)

Critique: Dunlop and Rushton, 2022

## Five action areas:

- Climate education
- Green skills and careers
- Education estate and digital infrastructure
- Operations and supply Chains
- International

## Three initiatives:

- National Education Nature Park
- Climate Leaders Award
- Sustainability Leadership



# International policy



**A C E**  
ACTION FOR CLIMATE  
EMPOWERMENT



## ARTICLE 6

### EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

In carrying out their commitments under Article 4, paragraph 1(i), the Parties shall:

- (a) Promote and facilitate at the national and, as appropriate, subregional and regional levels, and in accordance with national laws and regulations, and within their respective capacities:
  - (i) The development and implementation of educational and public awareness programmes on climate change and its effects;
  - (ii) Public access to information on climate change and its effects;
  - (iii) Public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses; and
  - (iv) Training of scientific, technical and managerial personnel.
- (b) Cooperate in and promote, at the international level, and, where appropriate, using existing bodies:
  - (i) The development and exchange of educational and

**Article 6 of the [UNFCCC](#): Education, Training and Public Awareness**

**Article 12 of the [Paris Agreement](#) (COP21, 2015)**

## Article 12

Parties shall cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information, recognizing the importance of these steps with respect to enhancing actions under this Agreement.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Image: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/>

### Goal 13: Climate Action

*Target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning*

### Goal 4: Quality Education

#### Target 4.7

*...by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development*

**“We want more!”**



More of what?

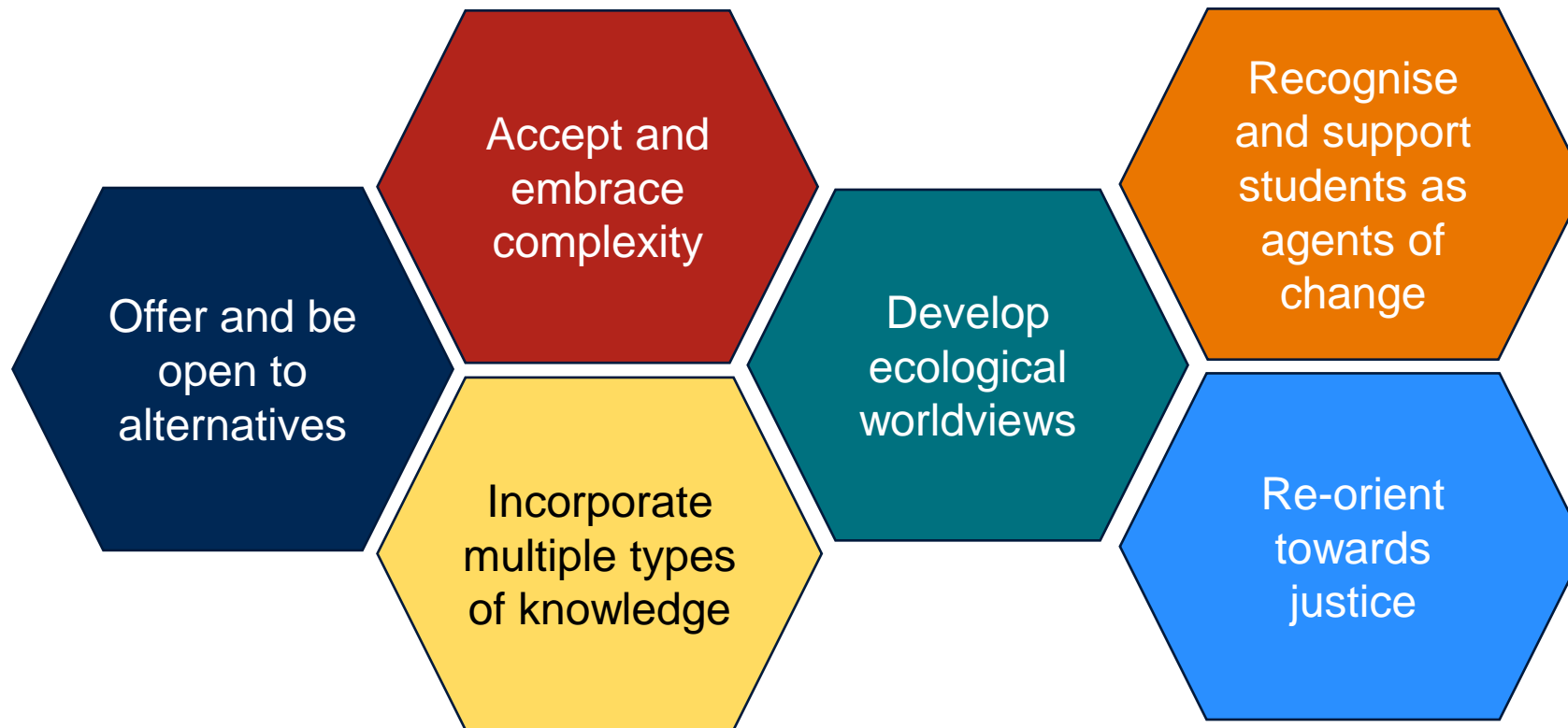


A vibrant, multi-colored mosaic background composed of small, irregular tiles in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, arranged in a pattern that suggests a globe or a celestial body.

# **What is Climate Change Education?**

# CCE Mosaic

Qualities of a meaningful educational response to climate change



(Greer and Glackin, 2021)





Offer and  
be open to  
alternatives

## **Alternative visions of the future**

- Unwedded to perpetual economic growth
- Promote living that achieves equity and sufficiency among humans and all species on the planet  
(e.g. Sterling, 2017)

## **Alternative approaches to education**

- Unshackled from narrowly defined outcomes and assessment procedures  
(e.g. Kagawa 2013)

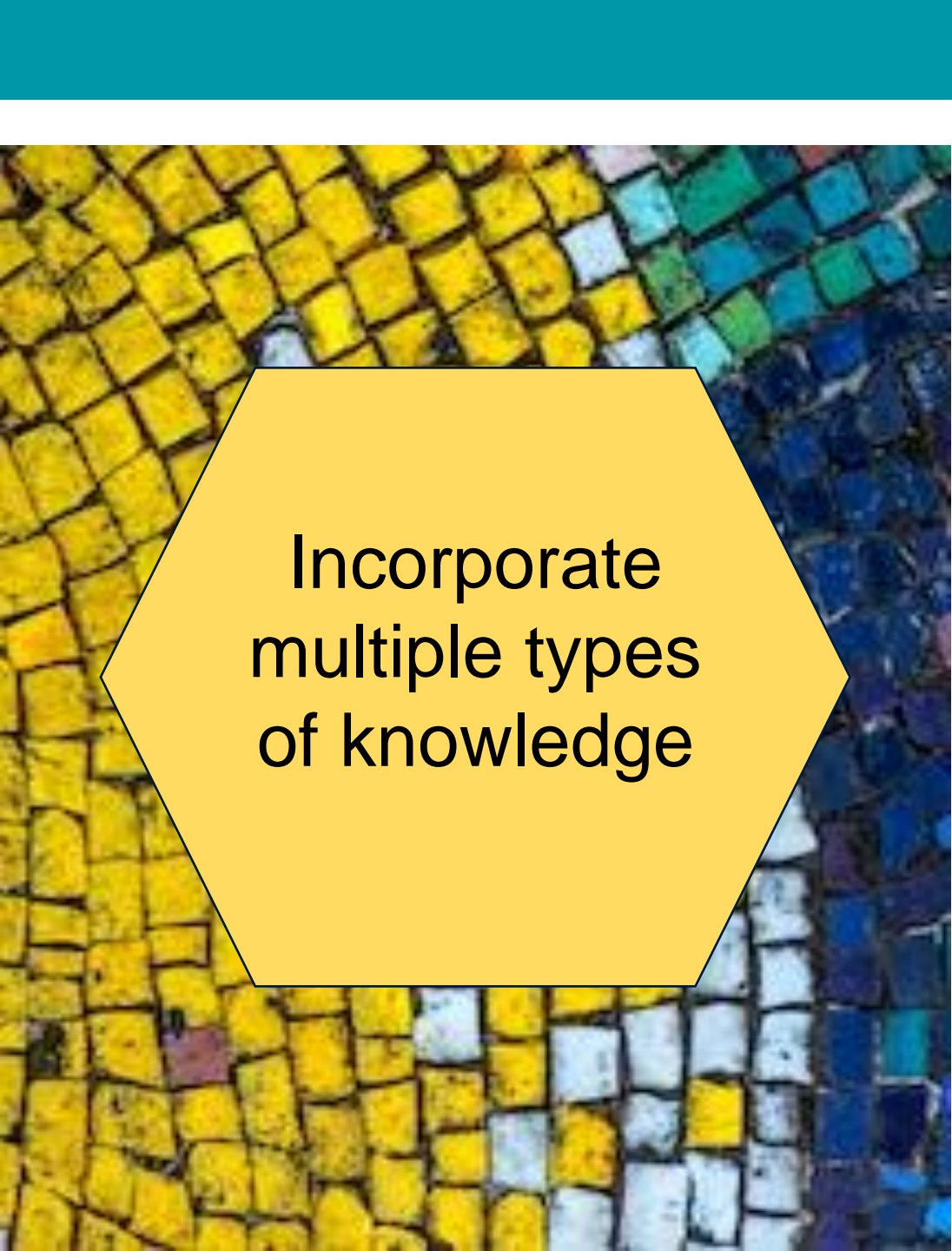


Accept and  
embrace  
complexity

- Climate change is an inherently complex issue
- Multifaceted causes, impacts and solutions
- Recognise the trade-offs associated with mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk and social justice

(e.g. Stevenson, Nicholls and Whitehouse, 2017)





Incorporate  
multiple types  
of knowledge

- Disciplinary knowledge
- Wide range of disciplines - bridge disciplinary boundaries
- Spiritual and emotional knowledge
- Ability to critique knowledge and its sources
- Skills to tackle complex problems

(e.g. Kagawa and Selby, 2010; Ojala, 2016)

- More than learning *about* the natural world and more than learning *in*
- Revisiting and transforming the relationship between humans and the more-than-human world
- Recognise the rights of other species, for their own and future generations' survival


(e.g. Sterling, 2017)

A vibrant, multi-colored mosaic of small square tiles in shades of blue, green, red, and orange. Overlaid on this mosaic is a large, teal-colored hexagon with a thin black border. Inside the hexagon, the text "Develop ecological worldviews" is written in white, sans-serif font, centered and arranged in three lines.

Develop  
ecological  
worldviews



- A shift in the way students are viewed:
  - **From:** recipients of information and observers and future inheritors of climate change-related problems
  - **To:** participants in society's response to climate change and collaborators in society's transformation
- Action-oriented approaches and authentic engagement  
(e.g. Rousell & Cutter-Mackenzie-Knowles, 2020)



Recognise and  
support  
students as  
agents of  
change

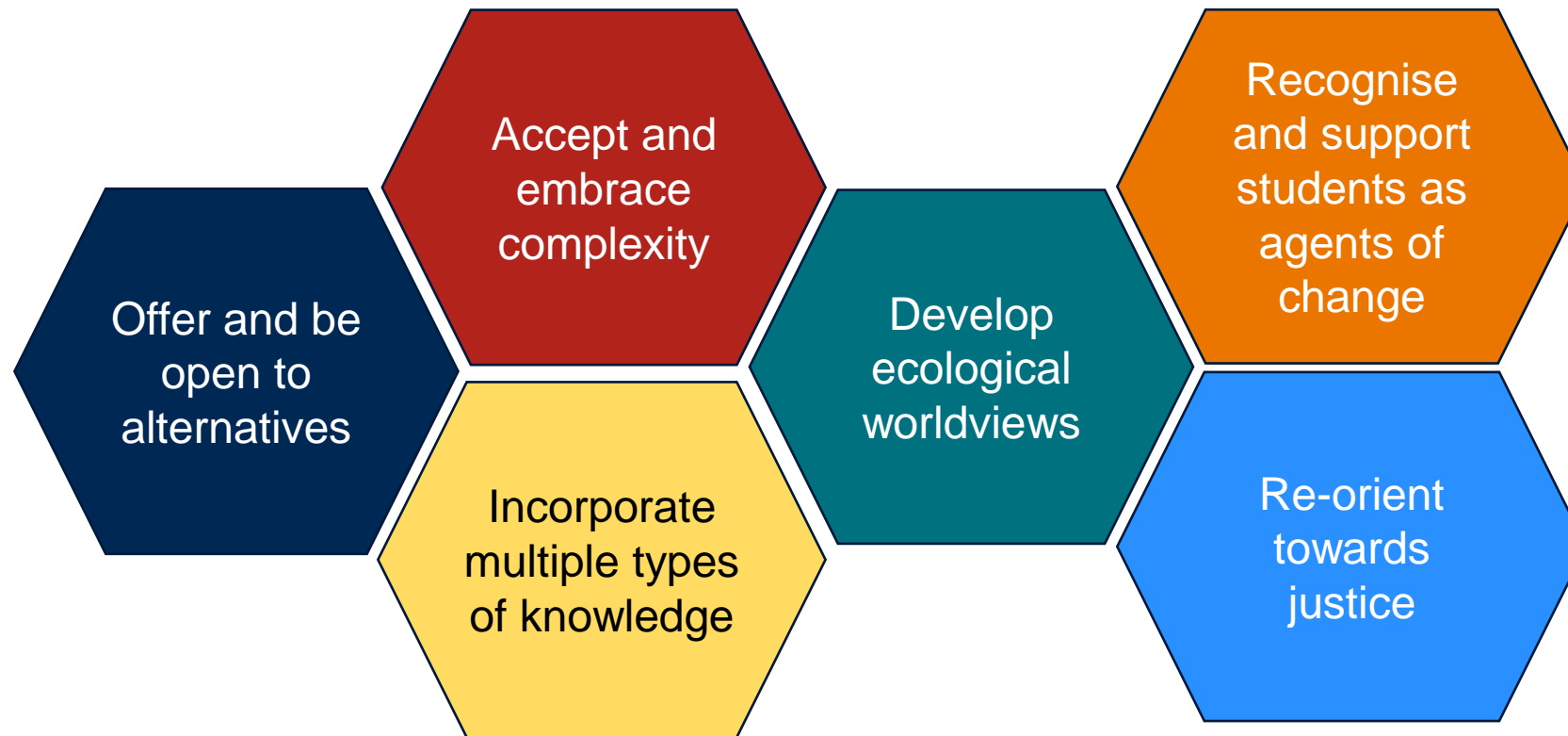
- Climate change is an issue of:
  - inequity among humans
  - inequity between humans and other species
- Recognising global and local perspectives: that everyone shares the risk
- Local participatory learning: local solutions are fundamental to a global response
- Enabling students to live in a climate change world

(e.g. Lotz-Sisitka, 2010)





# Climate Change Education Mosaic





Where are there opportunities for enacting justice through CCE policy?

THE WORLD IS  
LOOKING TO YOU COP26



MB

JCDecaux



Advance unedited version

## Decision -/CMA.3

### Glasgow work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment

*The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement,*

*Recalling* Articles 4 and 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement,

*Also recalling* decisions 15/CP.18, 19/CP.20, 17/CP.22, 15/CP.25 and 17/CMA.1,

*Further recalling* decisions 17/CP.22 and 17/CMA.1, in which it was decided that efforts related to implementing Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement should be referred to as Action for Climate Empowerment,

*Reaffirming* the importance of all six elements of Action for Climate Empowerment – education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information and international cooperation on climate change – to achieving the objective of the Convention and the purpose and goals of the Paris Agreement,

*Recognizing* that Action for Climate Empowerment plays a key role in promoting the changes in lifestyles, attitudes and behaviours needed to foster low-emission, climate-resilient and sustainable development,

*Reaffirming* the key role that a broad range of stakeholders, such as national, regional and local governments, educational and cultural institutions, museums, the private sector, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, decision makers, scientists, the media, teachers, youth, women and indigenous peoples, play in ensuring Action for Climate Empowerment,

*Acknowledging* the importance of linkages between activities undertaken to support



## Policy texts

- What do they say, and what discourses do they carry?
- How are more-than-humans represented?
- How are differential impacts and causes recognised?

## Policy-making

- Who is engaged?
- Who has opportunity to voice concerns?
- Is the natural world present?
- How are future generations being represented?

## Policy influencing

- Who is engaged?
- Whose views are highlighted?
- Are panels representative of diverse perspectives?
- Who can access the material/ideas?

How *will* we shape education in view of the climate crisis and in ways that enacts justice?





“What does Climate Change and Sustainability have to do with me?”  
A survey of teachers in England



## Thank-you

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