

CAT recruitment

WE NEED YOU! Join our Climate Action Team!

We have an absolutely incredible group of dedicated students who have worked tirelessly to make our school a greener, more sustainable place. Many of our most experienced members are now in Year 11, and they are really keen to welcome a new generation of climate champions to continue their fantastic work!

Whether you're passionate about wildlife, worried about climate change, interested in science and sustainability, or simply want to make a positive difference, **we would love you to join us!** You don't need any special knowledge or experience, just enthusiasm and a willingness to get involved.

Come along on Thursdays and be part of something brilliant! We are particularly keen to welcome students from Years 7, 8 and 9. There are lots of exciting opportunities to get involved, learn new skills, make friends and help shape the future of our school.

Chew Valley School Climate Action Team

NEWSLETTER

Welcome! A New Year of Climate Action!

Welcome to the first Climate Action Team newsletter of the 2026–27 academic year! It's fantastic to have our newsletter up and running again, thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of our brilliant Year 11 team, led by Iona.

Our Climate Action Team (CAT) has achieved so much over recent years, and we have another exciting year ahead, with several projects already well underway!

Recent updates

Incredible Green Flag Success – Distinction Again!

We are absolutely delighted to announce that **Chew Valley School has once again been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction!** This fantastic achievement recognises the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm of our Climate Action Team and the wider school community in making sustainability a priority.

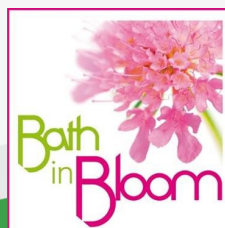
Receiving a Distinction for another year is something we can all be incredibly proud of. It reflects not just the projects we have completed, but our ongoing commitment to making meaningful, lasting environmental improvements across our school. A huge congratulations and thank you to everyone in-

involved and a special thanks to Alexandra for all her hard work on this.

Making the Most of Our Amazing School Grounds

We are delighted to have joined the **National Education Nature Park**, an exciting initiative encouraging schools across the country to improve biodiversity and connect young people with nature.

We are busy mapping the habitats and biodiversity across our fabulous 30-acre school site, identifying what wildlife we already support and exploring how we can make our grounds even better for nature. By recording our existing habitats, we can measure changes over time and see the real impact of our conservation efforts. We look forward to sharing our discoveries and progress in future newsletters!



Student articles

On the next page, you'll find a couple of fantastic articles written by some of our brilliant Year 11 students. These young people are at the heart of our Climate Action Team, giving their time, energy and enthusiasm to projects that are making a real difference, both within our school and beyond. Their passion, commitment and determination to create a more sustainable future are genuinely inspiring, and I'm incredibly proud of everything they are achieving. I hope you enjoy reading their contributions!

Could you write an article for us? We're always delighted to hear what you have to say, email Mrs Taylor (rtaylor@chewvalleyschool.co.uk) if you would like to submit an article for publication

Chew Valley School Climate Action Team

NEWSLETTER

Update continued

Keeping Our School Cool

With increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves presenting real challenges for schools, we are excited to be working alongside **MEER** to research the potential of reflective window films to reduce overheating in our classrooms during the summer months.

By reflecting some of the sun's incoming energy, these materials could help reduce indoor temperatures and make our learning spaces more comfortable. We're also investigating a range of other practical ways to help our school adapt to hotter summers. Watch this space!

Giving Nature a Helping Hand

Our **No Mow area** behind the music block has recently had its annual cut, and we are now busy removing the cut grass. This is an important part of managing wildflower grassland: removing the grass gradually reduces soil nutrient levels, helping to prevent vigorous grasses from dominating and giv-

ing a wider variety of wildflowers the opportunity to flourish.

More wildflowers mean more food and habitats for bees, butterflies and other pollinators, helping to boost biodiversity across our school site. We had a lovely time at the end of the summer term identifying dozens of different plants that have self pollinated there and observing the huge numbers of insect (and amphibious) life buzzing around the place. What a success!

Working with Our Community

We are also continuing our work with the community farm on its carbon audit, helping to understand where greenhouse gas emissions come from and exploring opportunities to reduce its environmental impact. It's wonderful to be able to take our climate action beyond the school gates and work with our wider community.



The Tilcayo Cat Discovery

Still no new cats in a century—wait, what's that tiny thing?

A new species of cat has just been discovered after 100 years of no new findings, and it's adorably small! The species called Tilcayo was found at the Senda Verde Wildlife Sanctuary in Bolivia, located where the eastern slopes of the Andes meet the Amazon. Their fur patterns look fairly similar to ocelots, but the colouring is much browner. The finding was published on September 17th, and co-authored by biologist Paola Nogales-Ascarrunz, with emphasis on the reminder that the natural world still has much to surprise us with, and we can assure you the Tilcayo is one adorable surprise!

Written by Bella Taylerson



Chew Valley School Climate Action Team

NEWSLETTER

Small Wings Big Impact

The average bumblebee is 1.6 inches long. It visits between 1,500 and 6,000 flowers in a single day, dances to communicate with other bees, and is responsible for one in three mouthfuls of human food. Without these small, fuzzy insects there would be no bread, rice, corn, soy, and potatoes. It is safe to say that everyone has a lot to be grateful for when it comes to bees. Not only do humans' lives depend on their hard work, but they also provide food and shelter for insects and small mammals in the form of sturdy, wild trees. This is because with their five eyes and sense of smell that is 50 times more powerful than a dog's, bees pollinate about 80% of wildflowers and 75% of leading global crops, helping plants produce seeds, fruits, and whole new generations of flora. With all of the looming issues that are casting shadows over us because of the climate crisis, it is easy to feel swallowed up. This is your reminder to not forget the small miracles that are busy spreading the colour that surrounds us on our beautiful planet. You can make a difference, and you should start with the bees. Due to humans, bees are now in danger and their species is terrifyingly dwindling in

numbers. At the Climate Action Team in Chew Valley School, we recognise the importance of protecting all of the animals who are suffering because of humans' impact on the world, big, and in this case, small. This is why we have established a No-Mow area in our school to help bees to thrive. Here are some ways that you could help too: In Spring, bees need an early and vital source of pollen, so planting crocuses and primroses is helpful. Bees also love Lavender, Borage, Foxgloves, Verbena bonariensis, and Sedum all year round, therefore making an effort to grow these plants would make a difference. Grow native plants, they provide the best nutrition for local bees. Mow less often as this allows hidden wildflowers to bloom. Avoid pesticides because these poison and disorientate bees. Build a bug hotel or let areas grow wild to help protect not only bees, but also other insects who help with pollination. Set up a safe watering station: fill a shallow dish or birdbath with pebbles or twigs so that bees can land and drink without drowning. Revive a tired bee: mix sugar with water to leave near an exhausted bee, never use store-bought honey, which can spread disease.

Written by Eden Collin O'Hare

