

Using Energy Sparks to support climate ambitions at Aspire Academy Trust, Cornwall

Case study



Problem: Aspire Academy Trust has big ambitions to slash its carbon footprint, but to do that they need academies to engage with energy saving.

Solution: A Trust-wide energy saving initiative, using Energy Sparks to boost engagement and improve reporting.

Results: In just one year (May 2025-May 2026) 73% of Aspire schools reduced their electricity consumption. Across those schools, the Trust saved almost £20,000 and 15,000 kg CO₂.

Tackling climate change at Aspire: from ambition to action

Aspire Academy Trust is a large MAT made up of 37 primary academies across Cornwall. These range from very small village schools in older buildings to larger, more modern academies.

Aspire has embedded sustainability within its five-year strategy and throughout its organisational structure. The Trust Estates Manager regularly attends UK Schools Sustainability Network (UKSSN) meetings and Aspire now has two members of staff with dedicated time for sustainability, as well school sustainability leads who support their own Eco Councils.

Alongside this (and reflecting their belief that every person can be an agent of change), they

have a Trust-wide sustainability working party that welcomes anyone who would like to help.

This team has been working hard to weave energy saving into daily school life, using Energy Sparks as a key tool to engage staff and pupils.

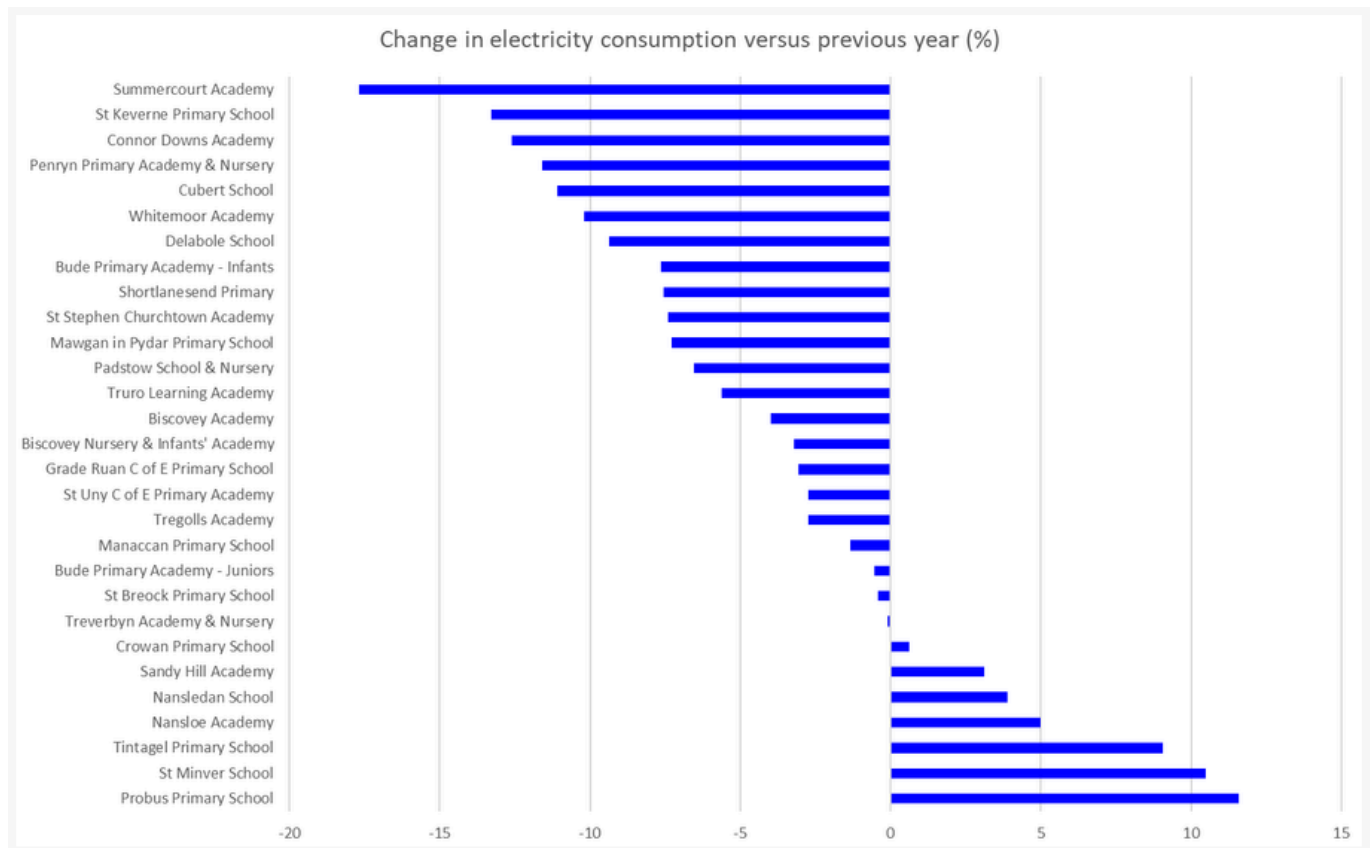
Aspire academies are encouraged to complete certain Energy Sparks programmes and actions at particular times of year, which means that all their academies are working on the same initiative at the same time.

Between May 2025 and May 2026, **73%** of Aspire schools reduced their electricity consumption and across those schools, the Trust saved almost **£20,000** and **15,000 kg CO₂**.



Energy Sparks

Helping schools fight climate change



▲ The majority of Aspire's academies have reduced their electricity use significantly over the last 12 months.

“Energy Sparks has enabled our Trust to build understanding, confidence and collective action around sustainability, providing guidance, support and training that have helped drive change across our schools.

Eco Councils have been empowered through analysing school energy data, while programmes such as 'Get Energised' have supported leaders and staff to develop engaging sustainability initiatives across both individual schools and the wider Trust.

The dedicated Energy Sparks team has been readily available to offer guidance and support when needed, which has been a real strength in supporting our sustainability development strategy. ”

Helen Bingham MBE, MEd (Dist), NPQEL
EYFS & Sustainability Lead - Aspire Academy Trust



Spotlight on Summercourt Academy: a community of Energy Warriors

Soon after joining Energy Sparks, Summercourt Academy identified that poor energy awareness around the school was affecting their carbon footprint.

They therefore tasked everyone who uses the site with acting as an 'Energy Warrior', and being more observant about switching off lights and equipment when it is not in use.

The eco-leads have also implemented effective switch-off routines and, as a result, their out-of-hours electricity use is rated as 'exemplary' when compared with other similar schools - a fantastic achievement.

In September 2025, the school set itself a 5% annual electricity reduction target, and by May 2026 was recording an 18% annual decrease.

In fact, since they joined Energy Sparks, staff and students at Summercourt have **reduced annual electricity use by 24%**, which in turn has cut the school's carbon emissions by **1,860 kg CO₂** each year and saved more than **£1,600** over 12 months.

Summercourt's Head of School, Louise Savage, told us:

"We are incredibly proud of the commitment shown by our entire Summercourt Academy community in achieving these impressive results.

"From our pupils and staff to our dedicated Eco Warrior team, everyone has played a vital role in embedding sustainable habits into daily school life.

"This achievement is a real team effort and reflects the strong sense of responsibility our school community holds for protecting our environment."

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Find out how Energy Sparks can help your school or Trust:

www.energysparks.uk
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Energy Sparks
Helping schools save energy