



The Faith and Belief Forum

Belief and Environment Ambassador

Handbook

Name: _____



Congratulations on being selected as an ambassador to lead on your class project! Along with your fellow ambassadors, you will be responsible for putting the project your class came up with into practice. This will play a key role in contributing to your school and communities' action for the environment.

In this handbook you will find lots of things to help you with your project, including:

- How to set safe and brave spaces
- Project planning guidance with objective setting and template plan
- Guidance on checking-in with yourself and your team throughout the project
- Guided project review

and your teacher will be on hand to support you as well.



What are the aims of this ambassador role?

- To represent the values of my class, making sure that our project is inclusive to, and led by, the diversity of faiths and beliefs that are present.
- To ensure that our project is carried out beyond the 'idea' stage into the 'doing' stage.
- To work together to create realistic goals and timelines that will create a positive impact for the environment.
- To gain skills in project planning and management, interfaith dialogue and social action that will benefit me in the future.

Setting my personal goals

Before starting to agree with your team on the goals for the project, take some time to reflect on your personal goals for taking on this ambassador role.

Why did I put myself forward for this role?

What are two changes in my school or community that I would like to see happen as a result of this role?

What are three things that can make this change happen?

Creating a safe and brave space

As we have seen in the three sessions we did as a class, it is really important to set a safe space when talking about our identity, faith and beliefs.

As a group of ambassadors, consider how you will continue to have a safe space as you work on your project. You should think about the class agreement you came up with together in the first session.

We agree that we will continue to create a safe space for everyone to work on this project together by...

Planning your project

1. Project Title

What will you call your project? It should give people a general idea of what your project is about – for example ‘Year 8’s against single-use plastic’

Our project title is:

2. Project vision

This should be a couple of sentences about what you would like to achieve, it should be more or less written already in your Class Manifesto so make sure you are using this!

Our vision is:

3. Project Objectives

Now we are getting more specific and practical, outlining the exact steps we need to take in order to make our vision a reality. We can do this by using the SMART method.

Specific – You should be specific about what you want to achieve and how you’re going to do it. To make it as specific as possible you can think about the 5 W’s:

- **Who** – who will be involved? This may be specific people, ambassadors, teachers or other school staff members, or other members of your class.
- **What** – what are you trying to achieve? You should think about what you’d like to have done when you finish the objective.
- **When** – when will you start and finish the objective? You should also think about how this fits in with your other school work and free time.
- **Where** – where do you need to go to achieve the objective? Will this all be undertaken in school, will you need to go to different areas of the school or will any of it take place at home, in nature or in your community?
- **Why** – why are you setting this objective? It’s important to understand why you are doing each objective and how it fits into the bigger picture of your project.

Measurable – It’s important to make sure you can track and measure each objective as you are going along with your project, otherwise it will be difficult to track progress. Some examples of how you might measure an objective are:

- If you need to talk to different people in school as one of your objectives, you could set a target for a specific number of people you’d like to speak to, then at the end date of this objective you can measure how many people you ended up speaking to vs. your target number.

- If you wanted to raise money for part of your project, you could have a target number you'd like to reach and track your progress as you get donations. Or if you'd like to have a petition, you could similarly have a target number of signatures that you can track.
- If you wanted to do something practical out in nature as part of your project you could set goals that can be measured. For example, if you were completing a survey of a natural habitat or conducting a piece of research into threats to your local wildlife then you could ask specific questions that when answered means you have completed the objective.

Achievable – It can be easy to get carried away when we are passionate about something, but it's important to make sure that our objectives are realistic!

You should consider the 5 W's when thinking about if an objective is realistic, especially thinking about the amount of time you will have to work on this alongside other responsibilities; the amount of support you will get from your classmates and school; and the scope of your vision. If you are aiming high with what you want to achieve you will need to think carefully about how to realistically achieve your goals. Remember that this is a group project, and everyone should be working together so that it is not all the responsibility of one or a few people.

If something is not achievable then work together to think about how to make it achievable!

Relevant – Another thing to remember when setting objectives is that you should keep them relevant to the vision you set out at the beginning. Make sure to refer back to your class manifesto and don't add objectives that don't directly relate to what you're trying to achieve. It may be useful to look at the 'why' from the 5 W's.

Time-bound – Finally, setting deadlines is important. You will have a specific timeframe that you need to complete this project in and you should fit each objective into this timeframe with a specific start and end date. This will help to keep you on track and make sure that each objective fits into the overall plan.

Use this table to start planning your objectives:

Objective	Who, What, When, Where and Why?	How will you measure this?	How hard will this be to achieve?	Why is this relevant?	How long will this take and when will you do it?

Now lets put all of this into a project plan which can be updated as you progress with the project:

Action	Outcome	Who's responsible?	Dates	Progress
<i>Example: Create and distribute a survey for fellow pupils</i>	<i>To get at least 30 pupils' opinions on how environmentally friendly our school is</i>	<i>Ambassadors create survey, fellow class members will fill it in and help distribute it to the rest of the school</i>	<i>10th September – 10th October</i>	<i>20 surveys received</i>

Examples of project components

If you're stuck with some of the steps to achieving your vision, here are some examples you might want to include in your project plan:

- Research – if you need to find out more about anything related to your project you could plan to have a research phase where you answer key questions. This could include researching on the internet, talking to people who have knowledge on the subject, such as a teacher, your peers, an environmental organisation, etc. For example, finding out more about the threats to your local water body or woodland by talking to the people who look after it; or researching alternatives to single-use plastics by searching on the internet.
- Fundraising – if you decide you need some money for your project, such as to buy seeds or to make posters or hold an event, then you might want to fundraise. Remember to get your whole class involved in this! You could sell raffle tickets, have a cake sale or do a sponsored walk.
- Networking – you might need to involve other people in your project and you should set aside time to meet with them both initially to introduce yourselves and your project, and throughout your project, depending on how much help you need from them. This might include other people in school such as the headteacher, prefects, other pupils and teachers; or it might be people outside of school such as parents, environmental organisations or charities, or religious leaders. When you are thinking about the 'who' of the five W's, think about what you need from each person and the best way of communicating with them.
- Implementation – this will vary a lot depending on what your project is. Make sure to build in plenty of time to actually do the bulk of your project, especially if it involves practical elements.

Continued check-ins and meetings

Throughout this project it is important that you continue to check in with:

- ✓ Yourself
- ✓ Your ambassador group
- ✓ Your teacher
- ✓ Your class

Self check-in:

You should do this regularly, perhaps before and/or after a meeting with your group, teacher or class; or before and/or after you work on an action point.

Some feelings that are coming up for me now are...

I feel that my beliefs and values are being respected and included by...

Group meetings:

You should arrange regular meetings with your ambassador group to discuss your action points, progress that has been made, and what you need to do next. You can also use this time to work together on anything that requires group work, such as drafting a letter.

Make sure to plan your meetings in advance at a time which works for everybody in the group. You should fit your meetings around your project plan, deciding when it will be necessary to meet based on the action points and deadlines you have set.

It is a good idea set an agenda before meeting – this is a list of things that you will cover during the meeting – to keep you on track. You could take it in turns to take on different meeting roles such as:

- Chairperson – this person will keep the meeting on track by making sure the agenda points are the focus of discussion and everyone gets a chance to contribute.
- Minutes-taker – this person will take notes of the main points that come out of the meeting.
- Time-keeper – this person will make sure that the meeting runs to time and that each agenda point has an appropriate amount of time.
- Space-keeper - this person will ensure that the safe space principles are respected throughout the meeting.

Teacher meetings:

Your teacher is there to support you throughout this project so make sure to book in regular meetings in which you can ask questions, get support on specific actions, get access to other members of staff (e.g. headteacher) or other parts of school, or anything else you might need help with. You should also update your teacher with the progress you have made and what your next steps will be.

Class updates:

Finally, you should remember that this is a class project, so make sure to keep your classmates involved!

You can present your ideas to them for feedback, give them regular updates on the progress you're making, and assign different actions to people in the class (with their input).

You should also regularly look back at the class manifesto and check in with whether you are still encompassing the beliefs and values you wrote down together:

We're including everybody's faiths, beliefs and values by...

The bigger picture...

It can be easy to get lost in the detail when you are working on your objectives and action points, but don't forget to take a step back and remember why you're doing this! You should always have your vision in mind and think about the **positive impact you want to have on the environment.**

Making a lasting impact

Although we have planned for a project with a definite start and end date, try to think about how you can continue your vision after the end of your project to make a lasting impact.

This might be something which is already obvious, for example installing a refillable water station in school that will continue to have an impact for years. Or you may have to do some thinking around this and whether it will be a project which is repeated each year or if there will be follow-up projects, etc.

Reviewing your project

Once you have completed your project, it is useful to review how it went so that you can learn from what went well and what didn't. As a group consider the following questions:

Did we meet all of our objectives? If so, how did we do this?

If there are objectives we didn't meet, did it affect our overall project and why weren't we able to meet them?

Is there anything we would do differently next time?

What was the impact of our project?

How will we make this a lasting impact?

Personal review

Finally, take some time to reflect on your role as an ambassador in this project:

Did the 2 changes I wanted to see happen?

What did I enjoy about being an ambassador?

What skills did I learn as part of this role?

How will I take what I learned forward to keep having a positive impact on the environment?

Survey

If you could take a couple of minutes to fill out [this survey](#) (QR code below) about how you found the whole experience then it will help us a lot with the development of future resources for schools!

