

09 Early Years Practice

Environmental Policy

Following The Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy goals for all education sectors, including early years, Castor and Ailsworth Pre-school are committed to teaching children about the environment and sustainability.

One of the key aims of our environmental policy is to integrate good practice into daily pre-school life, including exposure to sustainable concepts from an early age.

We are reducing, reusing, and considering good environmental practices in the following ways:

Water – thinking about how we can reduce water use in our setting but also how this can be communicated to everyone, including staff and children. For example, children are made aware to turn the tap off on our portable sink or are supported in doing this. In our toilets we have automatic taps that turn off when not in use.

Recycling – making sure that we are recycling (or reusing) everything that we possibly can, and in the most effective way. We use a recycling bin for paper waste for example.

Reusing – where possible we use recyclable cloths for drying hands that are taking home by staff and washed. Children are supported to put these cloths in a clean, separate bin. Many of pre-school's toys and books are donated to us by parents and Castor and Ailsworth residents. When we do buy toys, we buy good quality items that will last. We make many of our own craft supplies where possible, for example by using recyclable materials. We use refillable glue sticks. Pre-school use shredded paper for sensory activities.

Transport – Many of our staff and parents often walk or cycle to our pre-school. We encourage car sharing for staff when attending trips outside of our setting.

Food – We have a pre-school allotment that we visit and grow vegetables and fruit on. We regularly talk to children about healthy eating habits. We also discuss food packaging and how this can be recycled. We regularly plant seeds with the children for them to bring home, which communicates how vegetables and fruit are grown. Preschool promotes reusable containers for lunch and snacks to cut down on single-use packaging.

Nature – an important part of environmental learning is encouraging respect for animals and nature. We routinely visit local nature areas which give pre-school the opportunity for natural learning. We discuss the

insects and animals we see on our walks and how we need to treat animals and their habitats with respect. We have visits from the community to talk to the children about animals, to encourage their interest in them.

Energy – we make sure to switch off lights when not needed, or the rooms are not in use. We pull down the blinds in the main hall to make the room cooler in the warmer months. We are aware of conserving energy by being mindful of when we use the heating in the winter months.

Practitioners use simple and engaging activities to develop children's learning about the environment and to demonstrate that they can make positive changes to the world around them.