

Sustainability Policy

Promoting Environmental Responsibility in Early Childhood Education

Introduction

This sustainability policy outlines the commitment of our early years setting to fostering environmentally responsible practices. We recognise that instilling a respect for nature and an understanding of sustainability from a young age is vital for the well-being of current and future generations. Our policy is designed to support children to learn about sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the environment and to enable us to integrate practical, age-appropriate actions into daily routines, curriculum, and the overall ethos of our setting.

Policy Aims

- To minimise the environmental impact of our setting.
- To allow children to develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices by exploring solutions to environmental issues, learning about the world around them and how to protect it as well as watching adults role model sustainable practices.
- To engage staff, families, and the wider community in sustainable practices.
- To comply with relevant environmental legislation and guidance.

Environmental Practices

- **Resource Use:** Reduce, reuse, and recycle materials wherever possible. Use recycled products and minimise single-use plastics such as laminating sheets. Recycle materials for art and creative activities and encourage staff to bring these in.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Ensure lights, heating, and electrical devices are used efficiently. Turn off equipment and lights when not in use.
- **Water Conservation:** Promote water-saving practices, such as turning off taps when not needed and using water-efficient fixtures such as sensor taps. Collecting water in water butts for outdoor play and recycle water from the water play to water plants outside.
- **Carbon footprint:** Consider this when purchasing materials and shopping locally where possible.
- **Waste Management:** Provide clearly labelled bins for recycling and composting and teach children about proper waste segregation.
- **Sustainable Transport:** Encourage walking, cycling, or public transport for staff and families where possible

Curriculum Integration

- Include topics on nature, recycling, and caring for the planet in the curriculum.

- Support children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone, sand and recycled materials.
- Help children to explore nature through art and play.
- Support the environment by allowing children to learn how to grow and nurture plants in the garden and to discover all about the food cycle by growing, harvesting and cooking the food.
- Help children to learn about water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction through play-based activities and adult interactions.
- Organise activities such as gardening, nature walks, and upcycling crafts.
- Use storybooks, songs, and discussions to reinforce sustainable themes

Outdoor Learning and Biodiversity

- Maintain outdoor areas to support local wildlife and biodiversity.
- Plant native species and create habitats such as bug hotels or bird feeders.
- Encourage children to explore and care for the natural environment.

Staff Training and Engagement

- Provide ongoing training on environmental issues and sustainable practices.
- Empower staff to suggest and implement improvements.
- Recognise and celebrate achievements in sustainability.

Family and Community Involvement

- Share sustainability initiatives and tips with families.
- Encouraging parents and children to regularly walk to nursery to raise the awareness of caring for the planet.
- Encourage children to share a recycling ethos in the home environment.
- Work with local organisations to promote wider environmental awareness.

Review and Monitoring

- Regularly review the effectiveness of this policy and update as necessary.
- Monitor resource use, waste levels, and progress towards sustainability goals.
- Seek feedback from staff, families, and children to improve practices.

Conclusion

By embedding sustainability in our early years setting, we aim to cultivate environmentally conscious individuals and contribute positively to our community.

Sustainability lead

Charlene Stranix-Wright is our sustainability lead.

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