

Policy 15:

Sustainability and Environmental Concern Policy

Updated: October 2025

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Section 1

What is the specific information about this Policy?

What other Policies are relevant to this Policy?

Most other Policies are relevant to this Policy; however, these are particularly relevant:

- Staff Policy – Policy 1
- Care, Learning and Play – Policy 2
- Health Policy – Policy 7
- Meal-times, Menus and Nutrition Policy – Policy 8
- Parent and Carer Partnership Policy – Policy 12

What does this policy do?

This Policy ensures that the Registered Person and Staff actively promote sustainability and environmental concerns and support conservation, whilst enabling children to understand the fragile nature of the planet and use of valuable environmental resources and unsustainable resources.

Who does this Policy apply to?

This policy applies to the Nursery as an entirety. All staff, whatever their designation are included. The Policy has a broader remit applying to all children and visitors.

Who has responsibility for implementing this Policy?

All staff including permanent, temporary, agency, students, and visitors have responsibility for this Policy. The Manager is responsible for overseeing of the Policy and reducing environmental waste.

Who is responsible for monitoring the Policy?

The Manager is responsible for the day to day monitoring of this Policy. This will be done on an informal basis. Should concerns arise that require more formal monitoring this will be decided by the Nursery Manager and the Nursery Director and Nursery Co-Ordinator.

Who is responsible for reviewing this Policy?

The Nursery Director, Nursery Co-Ordinator and Managers are responsible for overseeing and developing this Policy which will be reviewed when required.

Who can have a copy of this Policy?

Parents, students, professional visitors and visitors can view this Policy on our website.

Section 2:

What are the aims of the Policy and the Policy Statement?

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What is the Sustainability and Environmental Concern Policy Statement?

The Nursery as a community aims to ensure that the Nursery uses resources appropriate for every activity, whilst minimising waste, upcycling waste and recycling whenever possible. Waste applies to all consumables that the Nursery discards; waste should be upcycled where possible. The global focus has increased dramatically over the last few years, and we have an enormous responsibility to future generations and the environment to manage both biodegradable and non-biodegradable resources and not to squander the earth's precious gifts or to use resources in a way which compromises these gifts. Single use items do not fall within this remit, neither do messy play items which are disposed of; the exception is single use biodegradable nappies and wipes.

What are the aims of this Policy?

The Policy aims to ensure that every member of the Nursery Community understands the need to care for the wider environment and use resources in an environmentally friendly way. The Policy seeks to minimise the impact the Nursery has on environmental damage by waste. This means wherever possible resources are upcycled, recycled, donated or reused so limiting the amount of non-recyclable and non-biodegradable resources that are used at Nursery. The nurseries aim to be as sustainable as possible and will continue to .

What Guidance does the policy follow?

National Guidance – Department for Education (DfE)

- The DfE's "Sustainability leadership and climate action plans in education" guidance states that by 2025 all education settings (including early years) will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan.
- It emphasises a whole-setting approach: leadership; operational practice; teaching & learning; partnership with the wider community.

Section 3:

What do we do to as a Nursery Community?

What happens in Nursery to save energy and resources and prevent waste?

Saving energy and environmental resources takes some time, investment, thought and commitment. Some strong starting points are:

- Taps are turned off when not in use to save water,
- Push taps are used for children where possible so that the flow of water is sufficient for handwashing before automatically turning off,
- Children's taps are thermostatically controlled to prevent the waste of water,
- Everyone is encouraged to care for Nursery physical environment and resources,
- Recycle whatever possible, whenever possible,
- Donate unwanted usable equipment to local charities and recycling centres.
- Keep windows and doors closed during the colder seasons, except in the bathrooms,
- Turn off electrical equipment at the wall sockets rather than leave them on standby,
- Turn off lights in unused and or in sunlit rooms,
- Use free flow curtains to encourage garden free-flow and minimize heat loss,
- Use high quality low unfriendly fume Dulux paint for Nursery redecoration,
- Purchase as many resources as possible which are made from natural materials, such as wood, metal, sugar cane and bamboo.
- Choose and prepare Nursery food with the minimum of environmental concerns, which are as natural as possible and constantly update and review portions, meat is limited, fish, soya and beans are excellent sources of protein.
- Choose organic foods where the budget allows,
- Email policies, welcome packs, newsletters, invoices and other information to parents or staff when needed
- Double side printing for office documents, policies and parent information when paper copies are needed, printing single page invoices rather than the purchases on line and minimise paper use.
- Use emails whenever possible,
- Use rechargeable batteries for cameras and electronic resources,
- Parents must take shoes off rather than use shoe covers,
- Use scrap project resources whenever possible rather than buy new, <http://childrensscrap.co.uk/>

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- Encourage parents to use their buggies when transporting their children to and from Nursery. We provide buggy and bike seat storage at each Nursery. All Nurseries are within minutes walking distance from public transport into London.
- The Nursery uses reusable natural and biodegradable wipes for children's hands and faces. Each is washed after single use.
- The Nursery uses biodegradable nappies and wipes.
- The nursery uses the Family app as much as possible to reduce paper forms.
- The nursery managers visit the Scrap Project to source recycled resources for creative and loose parts play.
- Use biodegradable pet bedding where possible.
- Use low energy light bulbs,

What else can be upcycled or re-used?

Many resources can be upcycled or re-used either in Nursery or elsewhere, here are a few ideas of what Nursery aims to do:

- Both sides of a piece of paper,
- Cut scrap pieces of paper or card into creative shapes for collage and play,
- Use unwanted packaging which can be played and created with i.e. junk modelling and box play,
- Use old storage stationary, folders, envelopes etc.
- Unwanted paperwork is shredded and is used in sand trays and for other play,
- Remnants of fabrics and materials for play and creativity. Used include collage, den making, seating, table tops and other play.
- Large delivery boxes can be used as dens, transport vehicles and the children can paint and play with them.
- Sourcing resources from The Scrap Project. <http://childrensscrap.co.uk/>

Section 4

What are the day to day and long term responsibilities of the Nursery?

What are the Manager's responsibilities?

The Manager must monitor use and waste of resources to ensure that the Nursery has the minimum of environmental impact. This includes:

- Sourcing objects and resources for open ended play which are made of natural materials.
- Ensuring that the children use materials in the Nursery such as paper, tissues, paint, and other consumable resources without waste.
- Ensuring that food portion control is managed via the Chef and that there is always enough food without unnecessary waste.
- Ensuring that materials and resources are recycled wherever possible via local schemes, The Children's Scrap Project, charities or via the Nursery Director.
- Ensuring that resources are biodegradable wherever possible.
- Considering supporting an annual charity event which directly benefits the wider global environment.
- Participating in any local initiatives which benefit the environment.
- Minimising the use of chemicals which are damaging to the environment, whilst maintaining outstanding levels of hygiene and cleanliness.
- Pre-school children using food waste bins and learning about recycling and composting.
- Using safe equipment and resources from recycling projects such as the Children's Scrap Project.
- Significantly limited purchasing of single use items such as stick-on plastic items.
- Embedding sustainability into the nursery curriculum.
- Have a sustainability action plan for continued work on Environmental Concern and Sustainability.
- We are a no glitter Nursery. Glitter is a source of environmental pollution. More can be read here:
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/22/glitter-environment-microplastics-hazard>
 - Or here: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/glitter-ban-nurseries-children-pre-school-care-top-days-environment-damage-microbeads-a8274136.html>
 - And here: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/11/glitter-plastics-ocean-pollution-environment-spd/>

What else does the Company do?

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- Children-First bank with the Co-Operative Bank due to their Environmental Policy.
- Uses the Family app at the Nurseries, for children's records rather than multiple folders with paper documents and photos,
- Uses professional products in refurbishment and decoration with a low carbon footprint, longevity and low odour professional quality paint finishes,
- Goes out of the way to upcycle used resources, e.g. transporting by land with an aid package, circa 200 used children's sleep blankets and sheets to an orphanage in the Ukraine.
- Donates all used uniform to Save The Children who sell them as rags to a recycling company, creating revenue for this charity.
- Provides parking spaces for buggies or bikes to encourage walking to Nursery,
- Complies with statute in relation to environmental issues.

What are the practical requirements to ensure continuing development to protect the environment?

Staff members and Managers must refer to the Policy and develop it over time to ensure that an ongoing assessment of the Nursery's environmental impact is monitored, developed and limited. Environmentally and sustainable products will be chosen where appropriate.

Section 5:

How does the Nursery work in partnership with children, carers and parents to support our Sustainability and Environmental concern policy?

How do we support the children to be environmentally friendly and sustainable?

Teaching children about the results of environmental damage and protecting the planet and its wildlife is essential in the Nursery. This includes:

- Teaching the children about recycling,
- Using recycling bins in the Nursery,
- Trips out into the local community, looking at healthy areas of woods and eco systems.
- Talking about wildlife in the woods and the parks,
- Looking after small creatures or fish in Nursery.
- Learning about the ideal conditions some endangered animals and creatures need,
- Teaching and learning about how animals, sea life and creatures survive and thrive,
- Talking about how walking and exercise helps keep you healthy,
- Taking the children out into the natural environment and litter picking for recycling using non-contact litter pickers,
- Collecting natural items such as leaves, flowers, conkers and pinecones for learning, play, art, craft and creative activities.
- Support older children to use food waste bins and learn about composting.

How do we embed our Sustainability and Environmental Concern Policy into the nursery curriculum?

The Nursery Director, Nursery Co-Ordinator and Managers lead by example with a passion for environmental concern and sustainability. This is flowed through and taught to the team and then to the children. Children are never too young to learn good habits and understanding; we support children with this in terms of environmental concern and sustainability.

We support the children with the curriculum to:

- Foster a love of nature,
- Explore recycled materials and loose parts,
- Engage with children to learn the language of environmental concern and sustainability,
- Take part in the growing of fruit vegetables and herbs,
- Explore books and literature regarding environmental concern and sustainability,
- Eco Active workshops
- Embed sustainability themes across the curriculum: nature, recycling, food, energy, transport, and fairness.
- Use stories, songs, and play to teach care for living things and shared responsibility.
- Encourage critical thinking and problem-solving around real-life environmental issues (age-appropriate).
- Provide daily opportunities for outdoor exploration and connection with nature.

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- Maintain a garden or planting area where children can grow fruits, vegetables, and flowers.
- Encourage observation of wildlife, mini-beasts, and seasonal changes.
- Link outdoor activities to EYFS learning goals in Understanding the World.
- Participate in or host “Eco-Days” or “Green Weeks” to promote environmental awareness.
- Managers must think before they buy, is there something more sustainable that we can chose?

How do we support carers and parents to be involved with our environmentally friendly and sustainability policy?

The following are in place to help parents and carers support our Policy and their children's understanding of the need for mindful use of non-renewable resources and resources which can be recycled.

- Use of fabric Nursery bags instead of single use plastic bags,
- Parents and carers to recycle resources for junk modelling etc.
- Inviting parents on trips in the local community on foot,
- By using the Famly app to view images and videos, rather than printing many photos and pieces of paper.
- Providing a space where parents and carers can park, buggies, scooters etc and encourage their children to get to Nursery on foot.
- Encouraging parents to donate unwanted safe kitchen utensils, pots and pans for our mud kitchens and outdoor play areas,
- Collecting natural things from the woods and other local environment for use in art, crafts, science maths and messy play,
- Continuous review of our Developmental Sustainability and Environmental Audit with Action Plans.