

Environmental Sustainability policy

Introduction

At Brentwood Day Nursery, we recognise our responsibility to care for the environment and to support a sustainable future. We aim to embed environmental awareness into our daily routines, teaching even our youngest children how their actions can help protect the planet. This policy outlines our commitment to sustainability, decarbonisation, biodiversity protection, climate education, and building resilience for a changing climate.

Aims

Our setting aims to:

- Reduce our carbon footprint and support UK-wide decarbonisation goals.
- Protect and enhance biodiversity in our indoor and outdoor environments.
- Teach children the foundations of climate awareness through play-based learning.
- Introduce children, in age-appropriate ways, to ideas that support future “green careers.”
- Build resilience and adaptation strategies into our practice to prepare for changing weather and environmental conditions.
- Work collaboratively with families and the community to promote sustainable habits.

Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency

We will:

- Minimise energy use through efficient lighting, heating management, and switching off equipment when not in use.
- Use low-energy appliances where possible and consider renewable energy options as part of long-term planning.
- Explore ways to reduce emissions from transport by encouraging parents, children and staff to walk to nursery (where possible).
- Monitor and review our carbon impact and identify areas for improvement.

Biodiversity Protection and Nature Stewardship

We will:

- Maintain outdoor areas that support wildlife, such as bug hotels, bird feeders and natural play spaces.
- Involve children in gardening, planting, and caring for living things.
- Avoid the use of harmful chemicals and prioritise natural alternatives.
- Teach children to respect living creatures and their habitats.

Climate Education and Awareness

We will:

- Provide developmentally appropriate climate education through stories, nature walks, hands-on activities, and discussions about caring for the Earth.
- Encourage children to ask questions about the natural world and take part in problem-solving activities.
- Celebrate environmental events such as Earth Day, World Environment Day, and Biodiversity Week.
- Build early foundations for environmental literacy, helping children grow into environmentally responsible adults.

Foundations for Green Careers

While early years children are not yet considering careers, we introduce early concepts that support future green pathways by:

- Encouraging curiosity about nature, science, problem-solving, and caring for the environment.
- Showcasing roles in the community that help the planet (e.g., gardeners) through stories, role play, and visits.
- Encouraging STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) related exploration to build early interest in environmental problem-solving.

Resilience and Climate Adaptation

We will:

- Ensure the setting is prepared for extreme weather (heatwaves, heavy rain, strong winds) by reviewing risk assessments and updating procedures.
- Provide appropriate shade, hydration, and ventilation during hot weather.
- Maintain safe outdoor play spaces that can adapt to wetter seasons.
- Teach children simple resilience skills, such as caring for plants through seasonal changes and understanding different weather patterns.

Sustainable Resource Use and Waste Reduction

We will:

- Reduce single-use plastics and choose sustainable alternatives.
- Reuse materials for creative play.
- Recycle responsibly and teach children simple sorting and recycling activities.
- Choose sustainably sourced, non-toxic, and durable supplies wherever possible.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

We will:

- Work with families to encourage sustainable habits at home.
- Invite local environmental groups or green businesses to engage with the children when appropriate.
- Share resources, tips, and updates with parents about our sustainability initiatives.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff will model sustainable practices and support children in learning about environmental care.
- Management will provide training and ensure sustainability is included in planning and daily routines.
- Children will be encouraged to take age-appropriate responsibility, such as watering plants or helping with recycling.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. We will assess our progress in decarbonisation, biodiversity support, climate education, and adaptation efforts, and will set new goals each year to continue improving our environmental impact.

Designed on behalf of the nursery

<i>RL Austin</i>
