

Environmental

Purpose

We are committed to the protection of the environment and to reducing our carbon footprint. All the children enjoy helping us work towards a greener world, so wherever practically possible, we implement eco-friendly practice. This includes supporting children to learn about sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment, and working together with all our parents and partners to help our environment to be more sustainable and make it a better place for our future generations to grow up in.

A key focus of our guidance is to enable 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 and watching adults role model sustainable practices.

Guidance

We promote a holistic, open-ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment by:

- helping children to explore nature through art and play
- supporting children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone, sand, and recycled materials
- supporting the environment by learning how to grow and nurture plants in the nursery garden and discovering all about the food cycle by growing, harvesting, and cooking food for our nursery menu
- helping children to learn about water conservation, energy efficiency and waste reduction through play-based activities and adult interactions
- going on nature walks and learning about plants they see in the local area
- encouraging parents and children to walk to nursery once a week / month to raise awareness of caring for the planet
- developing a recycling area and encouraging children to share the recycling ethos into the home environment.

As a Company we will nominate an 'environmental champion' at each nursery site who will be responsible for supporting and embedding sustainability into all aspects of the operations including:

- recycling materials for art and creative activities and encouraging parents to bring in their recycling materials for the same use
- when children take home models from recycled materials, ensuring parents recycle these materials if they do not keep them
- provision of recycling bins in the nursery for children to access and recycle materials
- considering our carbon footprint when purchasing materials
- shopping locally where possible
- turning off equipment and lights when not in use
- using energy saving light bulbs where possible
- not leaving any equipment on standby where possible
- unplugging all equipment at the end of its use/the day
- using energy saving wash cycles on the washing machine

- composting food waste
- incorporating water-wise strategies such as ensuring taps are turned off and leaks fixed
- using rainwater butts for outdoor water play
- recycling water from the water play to water plants outside
- using food that we have grown in nursery meals
- reducing the use of single use plastic e.g. purchasing large pots of yogurt and avoiding the small pots which equate to more plastic
- using tin foil instead of clingfilm where possible in all our kitchens (large pieces of tin foil are recyclable). The use of reusable silicone lids is also encouraged
- using reusable cleaning materials, such as silicone sponges and bamboo dish brushes
- only using PPE where necessary, e.g. plastic aprons are not required for every nappy change or for the serving of food
- using only bio-degradable glitter and a 'zero tolerance' ban on the use of plastic straws
- encouraging and supporting the use of 'real nappies' with families
- encouraging our team, children, and families to adopt a Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle attitude, through information sharing, training and collaboration.

We assess our nursery's impact on the environment on a regular basis and put procedures in place to counteract this impact.

Play using real food

This can provide enhanced learning opportunities, particularly supporting and extending sensory and maths learning. It also allows children to become acquainted with unfamiliar foods. However, you need to consider the following prior to incorporating food into play:

- Consider any potential allergies or intolerances and general safety risks, including choking hazards.
- Consider any cultural or parental food preferences.
- Food is to be used in a meaningful, purposeful manner to promote learning.
- Consider what food you are using – can it be composted or given to parents for pets/animals at home? (e.g. hardy fruit and vegetables).
- Use food that is near its sell by date, or make frugal choices such as 'value' ranges.
- Refer to SAFE Practice Poster for foods which should not be used.
- Do not use raw beans as these can be toxic if not cooked

DfE have produced the following 'Help for Providers' information regarding activities with food:

[Help for early years providers : Planning food activities with children \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-for-early-years-providers-planning-food-activities-with-children)

Associated documents:

- [SAFE Practices poster](#)
- [Food Allergens guidance](#)