SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2026 - 2027

The Nursery School Company

Policies & Procedures

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OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

At The Nursery School Company, we are committed to creating a more sustainable future for our children, families and communities. We recognise the important role early years education plays in helping children develop an understanding of the natural world and the importance of caring for our environment.

The UK Government has committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. To support this ambition, the Department for Education introduced its Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, encouraging education settings, including nurseries, to take meaningful action towards a more sustainable future.

Our Climate Action Plan supports these ambitions and provides a framework for introducing positive and achievable changes across our nurseries.

During our staff INSET day, colleagues came together to reflect on our existing practices, share ideas and identify opportunities to further reduce our environmental impact.

We believe sustainability is a shared responsibility, and everyone has an important role to play. To support our Climate Action Plan, we have introduced Eco Champions across our nursery settings. These are designated members of staff who will help lead and promote sustainable practices within their nurseries, encouraging children and colleagues to get involved in environmental projects and everyday activities.

Our Eco Champions will work closely with our Sustainability Lead, nursery managers, practitioners, chefs, wider staff teams and families to introduce positive changes, share ideas and monitor our progress towards becoming more sustainable.

We also aim to inspire children to become curious, responsible and caring individuals who understand that even small actions can make a positive difference to the environment.

Our Climate Action Plan will continue to evolve as we introduce new initiatives, reflect on our progress and work together towards a greener and more sustainable future.

OUR FOUR SUSTAINABILITY PILLARS

Our Climate Action Plan is guided by the four pillars of the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

Through these pillars, we have identified key priorities that will help us improve how we recycle and reuse resources, reduce food waste and plastic consumption, conserve energy and create more

opportunities for children to care for the natural environment through planting, growing and composting. We also aim to develop outdoor environments that can adapt to changing weather conditions.

1. BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE

Our Aim Is To:

Encourage planting, growing and composting across our nurseries to support biodiversity and help children develop an understanding of the natural world.

What We Currently Do

We provide children with opportunities to explore and connect with the natural world through Forest School, Beach School, outdoor learning and enrichment trips. Children take part in nature hunts, observe life cycles and develop an understanding of plants, wildlife and the environments around them.

What We Aim to Improve

We aim to help children understand the importance of caring for the natural world and protecting its resources for future generations. Through meaningful, hands-on experiences, we will provide opportunities for children to grow their own food, care for plants, explore composting and learn how natural resources can be reused rather than wasted.

How Families Can Get Involved

We encourage families to become part of our nursery community's sustainability journey, working alongside our Eco Champions to inspire children to care for the natural world. Families can get involved through planting and growing projects, sharing ideas and supporting sustainable practices both at nursery and at home.

2. CLIMATE EDUCATION AND GREEN SKILLS

Our Aim Is To:

Improve how we recycle and reuse resources while helping children understand the importance of reducing waste and making sustainable choices.

What We Currently Do

Across our nurseries, we are beginning to introduce recycling and reusing materials as part of our everyday practices. Through Forest School, outdoor learning and enrichment visits to places such as farms and garden centres, children are encouraged to explore the natural world and develop an understanding of how we can care for our environment.

What We Aim to Improve

We aim to introduce child-friendly recycling bins across all our nurseries, encourage the reuse of materials such as cardboard, plastic containers and tubs in everyday activities, and help children understand what happens to our waste and why recycling is important. Through hands-on experiences, we will encourage children to sort materials, care for resources and develop everyday habits that help protect the environment. Including STEM in out curriculum and teach children about climate change.

How Families Can Get Involved

We encourage families to support our recycling and reusing initiatives by donating clean, suitable recyclable materials, such as cardboard boxes, tubes and plastic containers, for use in nursery activities. Families can also encourage children to recycle and reuse materials at home, helping to develop sustainable habits beyond the nursery.

3. DECARBONISATION AND NET ZERO

Our Aim Is To:

Reduce food waste, minimise plastic consumption and explore ways to conserve energy across our nursery settings.

What We Currently Do

Across our nurseries, we have introduced food waste compost bins in all rooms to encourage responsible waste disposal. We are also working towards reducing our use of disposable plastic gloves where appropriate, encouraging effective handwashing with soap and water as part of our everyday hygiene practices.

What We Aim to Improve

We aim to reduce our environmental impact by making more sustainable choices across our nurseries. These include:

- Reducing the use of disposable wipes, unnecessary PPE and plastic gloves, while maintaining appropriate hygiene and safety standards.
- Saving energy by switching off lights and electrical equipment when rooms are not in use.
- Reducing unnecessary heating and reviewing how we use energy across our settings.
- Reducing paper consumption and unnecessary printing.
- Exploring more sustainable nappy disposal options, including suitable nappy recycling schemes.
- Encouraging staff and families to walk, cycle or car share where possible.
- Reducing food waste in play and learning activities by introducing alternative sensory materials.
- Reducing plastic craft materials and using natural, recycled and reusable resources wherever possible.
- Reducing unnecessary water use during play and encouraging children to conserve water.

How Families Can Get Involved

We encourage families to support our sustainability efforts by reducing single-use plastics, using reusable water bottles, donating suitable recyclable materials for nursery activities and choosing to walk, cycle or car share where possible.

Families can also contribute by donating or exchanging pre-loved clothing or uniform, sustainable materials and books, reducing unnecessary packaging and making small changes at home to save energy and reduce waste.

4. ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

Our Aim Is To:

Develop outdoor environments that can adapt to changing weather conditions through improved shade, tree planting and water conservation.

What We Currently Do

We plant trees within our woodland areas to provide natural shade and support the environment for future generations. Although shaded areas are currently limited outside our woodland spaces, we encourage children to wear appropriate clothing for different weather conditions, ensure regular access to drinking water and maintain our outdoor environments to provide safe spaces for learning and play.

What We Aim to Improve

- We aim to create more climate-resilient indoor and outdoor environments by:
- Introducing additional sunshades and sheltered areas within our nursery gardens.
- Planting more trees to provide natural shade and support biodiversity.
- Developing planting areas with suitable plants that can adapt to changing weather conditions.
- Reviewing water play areas to reduce unnecessary water consumption.
- Using smaller, low-level water trays and containers to minimise water waste.
- Introducing lidded water containers to help conserve water during outdoor play.
- Introducing suitable blinds or solar shading to prevent nursery rooms from overheating during warmer months.
- Exploring energy-efficient cooling solutions, including improved ventilation, appropriate use of fans and solar-control window film.
- Monitoring indoor temperatures and considering sustainable alternatives before introducing air conditioning units.

How Families Can Get Involved

We encourage families to support our sustainability efforts by providing suitable clothing for warmer and colder weather, helping children stay comfortable and safe outdoors throughout the seasons. Families can also get involved in tree-planting initiatives, contribute plants or seeds to our nursery gardens and encourage water conservation at home.

Plan adopted on: 1st September 2026 Date for review: 1st September 2027

Signed on behalf of the nursery:

C Potton