



11. Environmental sustainability policy

Environmental sustainability policy was adopted by Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives on 16.12.2025.

The Department for Education (DfE) strategy states that: 'By 2025, all education settings will have nominated a sustainability lead and put in place a climate action plan'. The 4 key pillars that represent aspects of addressing climate change to foster a sustainable future are:

- Decarbonisation
- Biodiversity
- Climate education and green careers goals
- Resilience and adaptation

For Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives these pillars inform our activities in terms of:

Decarbonisation: Our activities to reduce plastic use;
Our activities to reduce utility usage;
Encouraging sustainable transport to and from the provision.

Biodiversity: Fostering children's empathy with nature through exploration;
Engaging with flora and fauna in the setting and outings to local community spaces.

Climate education: Sharing books, stories and songs with the children on nature and the environment;
Weaving environment and climate topics into the EYFS areas of learning;
Encouraging parents to engage with sustainability topics at home.

Resilience and adaption: Reviewing all aspects of our setting's environment to assess what sustainability and climate adaptations can be made;
Actively considering the risk of extreme weather events on our children, families and provision.

Aim

Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives actively promotes environmental sustainability.

Our eco-sustainability lead who is the Climate Champion for our setting is: Kasia Kowalska, Sarah Wassall (Haddenham setting) and Lauren Godfrey (Chearsley setting).

Changing perspectives – at Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives we will:

- Educate ourselves, our children and our families on what sustainability means and how to respect our planet.
- Weave sustainability into our daily lives and decisions – ask ourselves could this be done in a more sustainable way.
- Display our sustainability policy and educate and inform others on the steps that we are taking.

Objectives

At Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives we are committed to protecting our planet for the next generations to the best of our ability by:

- Reducing the use of plastics – in particular single use plastics (SUPs) in our everyday lives.
- Cutting down on waste by reducing, reusing and recycling (the 3Rs).
- Minimising food waste.
- Caring for the world we live in.
- Changing perspectives and developing understanding in ourselves, our families and our children.

At Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives we support children to learn about sustainability - to respect and care for both the living and non-living environment.

Children have the opportunity at Chearsley and Haddenham Under Fives to learn about and understand sustainability and environmental issues. They will observe adults' model sustainable practices, learn about the world around

them and how to protect it. Together we will support the children to develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices.

Our curriculum encourages children to explore ideas and practices that promote environmental sustainability and to understand the interdependence between people and the environment.

Examples of ways that we will embed sustainability into daily life and our curriculum include:

Reducing the use of plastics:

- Reducing the use of plastic bottles and bags as much as possible by finding alternatives and encouraging families / staff to use reusable lunch and drinks containers in lunch boxes.
- Switch suppliers to ones that offer more environmentally sustainable products.
- Buy milk in large bottles not individual cartons.
- Source alternatives to craft materials – recycle materials and encourage parents to bring in recycling materials for art and creative activities.
- Look for resources that are not just plastic representations when real alternatives are available.
- We support children to experience the natural environment through natural materials.

Cutting down on waste by reducing, reusing and recycling:

- Introduce recycling bins - following the local recycling scheme guidance.
- Reduce the amount of paper printing.
- Ensure printer and toner cartridges are recycled.
- Recycle any electronic equipment – where possible using an environmentally friendly disposal scheme.
- When purchasing new resources, we look for natural rather than plastic.
- Use natural resources such as water with care – ensure taps are turned off and any leaks fixed.
- Recycle water from water play by using it to water plants.

Minimising food waste:

- Made links and have a box so that donations for the local food bank can be collected.
- Plan snacks carefully to reduce food waste for example using foods that are in season and being aware of portion sizes.
- Introduce composting bins.

Caring for the world we live in:

- We help children to explore nature through art and play.
- Educate children not to drop litter.
- Care for the setting environment indoors and out.
- Discover the importance of wildlife to the environment and eco system.
- Use natural resources.
- We shop locally where possible.
- We encourage families to walk, cycle, scoot to our setting.
- We go on nature walks and learn about plants we see in our local area.

References

The Department for Education's Sustainability and climate change strategy:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy/sustainability-and-climate-change-a-strategy-for-the-education-and-childrens-services-systems>

Further guidance

To support you, the Alliance has developed the 'Supporting effective environmental sustainability in early years settings toolkit' This is available via EYA Central and costs £58.00 for members. The toolkit is divided into five sections and includes top tips, links and a range of resources for use by both providers and families. The toolkit also includes a climate action template onto which providers can record their current position, achievements to date and set actions to be achieved.