

11 Environmental sustainability policy + Climate Action Plan

Environmental sustainability policy was adopted by **St Joseph's Pre-school** in September 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 St Joseph's Pre-school 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

St Joseph's Pre-school actively promotes environmental sustainability.

Our eco-sustainability lead who is the Climate Champion for our setting is: **Jacky Addicott**

Changing perspectives – at **St Joseph's Pre-school** 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 *St Joseph's Pre-school* 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 *St Joseph's Pre-school* we support children to learn about sustainability - to respect and care for both the living and non-living environment.

Children have the opportunity at *St Joseph's Pre-school* 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.
- Use alternatives to baby wipes that contain plastic.
- 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.
- Take steps to reduce the junk mail sent to the setting.
- 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.
- If the setting has a 'uniform' for children, recycle to new families.

- Encourage families to donate pre-loved clothes, books and toys to charity shops, refugee support groups or to the setting.
- When purchasing new resources, we look for natural rather than plastic.
- Switch to reuseable resources (e.g. mini hand towels) rather than single use/disposable alternatives
- 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.
- Using energy saving light bulbs.
- Use energy saving wash cycles when using the washing machine.

Minimising food waste:

- Plan snacks and meals carefully to reduce food waste for example using foods that are in season and being aware of portion sizes.
- Introduce composting bins or sign up for a local composing bin service to reduce food waste going to landfill.

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

We have purchased the Alliance developed '**Supporting effective environmental sustainability in early years settings toolkit**' 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.

Our Climate Action Plan

Below outlines what actions we can take as a setting both as staff and with the children

Category	What we can do (adults)	What we can do (with/teach the children)	By when/by whom
1 Decarbonisation and reducing emissions	<p>Discuss energy usage and energy saving ideas with the landlord committee</p> <p>Use heating only when necessary... discuss with Landlords</p> <p>Use of curtains, floor coverings, and draft excluders where necessary/possible</p> <p>Discuss with landlord the installation of solar panels before 2028 – How can we contribute to this?!</p>	<p>Encourage children by remembering to turn off lights and any electrical items when not in use. (voice when and why we are doing this)</p> <p>Talk to the children about conserving heat by keeping doors closed or keeping warm with extra clothing</p>	<p>Immediately (Sept 2025) and ongoing. All staff</p> <p>Immediately (Sept 2025 onwards) CW + all staff</p> <p>Jan/Feb 2026 CW + All staff</p> <p>March 2027 SN, IC, and CW</p>
2 Adaptation and Resilience	<p>Provide a water butt in the garden to collect rainwater for use of watering plants etc rather than the tap. Use 'water tray' used water on plants</p> <p>Create shared areas in the garden using sail shades and gazebos to protect staff and children from the sun</p> <p>Liase with landlord to ensure maintenance of gutters and drains to reduce the risk of flooding</p> <p>Implement our Sun protection policy in hot weather</p>	<p>Weather related activities – Circle time weather board</p> <p>Involve children in helping to water plants when 'play' has finished.</p> <p>Talk to children about why we drink more water in hot weather. What they need to keep safe – hat, suncream, clothing</p> <p>Talk to children about clothing in different weathers cold weather</p>	<p>Feb 2026 CW to purchase more watering cans/repurpose jugs April 2026</p> <p>May 2026 CW + IC</p> <p>Ongoing CW + IC</p> <p>All staff Summer 2026 and ongoing</p>

3 Improving the Environment and Biodiversity	Use peat free compost for garden projects Place bird feeders in the garden (and refill) Create small holes at the bottom of fencing to allow for movement of hedgehogs	Create a wildflower area with the children Make and place bug hotels and bird boxes with the children Use of small green house and raised beds to grow plants, vegetables and herbs Children to replenish bird feeder and water with staff	CW + All staff/children Sept 25 + Ongoing April 2026 JC + all staff and children
4 Climate Education and Green Careers	Placement of recycling bins for adults and children Signage at sinks for use of water and turning off taps	Activities to help children be aware of environmental issues Teach children what goes into the recycling bins – Use of labels and pictures Reading of books and stories reflecting environmental issues (age appropriate)	Sept 2025 JA + all JA + all staff JA + All staff

This Action Plan is ongoing and will be added to and adapted as some plans are achieved or become common practice and more opportunities to become more sustainable arise.