



11 Environmental sustainability policy

Environmental sustainability policy was adopted by Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks on 14 January 2026.

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 Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks 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

Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks actively promotes environmental sustainability.

Our eco-sustainability lead who is the Climate Champion for our setting is: Jacqui Lewis

Changing perspectives – at Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks 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 Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks 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 Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks we support children to learn about sustainability - to respect and care for both the living and non-living environment.

Children have the opportunity at Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks to learn about and understand sustainability and environmental issues. They 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 boxes and containers.
- Encouraging families to supply waterproof wet bags for returning wet clothing rather than plastic bags.
- Reviewing suppliers to ones that offer more environmentally sustainable products.
- Obtain milk in large bottles not individual cartons.
- Use baby wipes that do not contain plastic and encourage families who supply their own to do the same.
- Source alternatives to craft materials – recycle materials and encourage parents to bring in recycling materials for art and creative activities, attend scrap stores to use the donated items for recycling, use natural items for craft 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:

- Increasing the use of 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.
- Encourage parents to donate pre-loved 'uniform' which can then be, recycled to new families.
- Encourage families to donate pre-loved clothes, books and bric-a-brac to our Happy School Bag collections for recycling and fundraising.
- When purchasing new resources, we look for natural rather than plastic and resources that are long lasting.
- Use natural resources such as water with care – ensure taps are turned off and any leaks fixed and that children are shown the importance of this
- 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.
- Minimise the use of tumble driers by hanging washing on clothes horses.
- Planning deliveries to buy in bulk to reduce the number of trips made to the setting by delivery companies.
- Invest in long lasting resources.

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.

- Using composting bins or local food waste disposal bins to reduce food waste going to landfill.
- Planning deliveries to buy in bulk to reduce the number of trips made to the setting by delivery companies.

Caring for the world we live in:

- We help children to explore nature through art and play.
- Educate children not to drop litter.
- Educate children regarding the careful use and consumption of resources
- 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

Early Years Alliance *'Supporting effective environmental sustainability in early years settings toolkit'*

This procedure gained staff consent on 08.12.2025

This policy was put to parent consultation between the 08.12.2025 and 19.12.2025

This policy was adopted on 14.01.2026

Confirmed on behalf of Acorn Pre-School & The Mighty Oaks Club

SignatureJ. Lewis.....

Name.....Jacqui Lewis.....

PositionChairperson.....

This policy will be read by the Management yearly and will be reviewed by January 2027 unless there are any immediate changes to telephone contacts or law.