



## **11. Environmental Sustainability Policy**

### **Introduction**

At St Mary's Nursery, we are committed to promoting environmental sustainability and fostering in children a deep respect and care for living and non-living environments. We recognise our responsibility to future generations and aim to minimise our environmental impact while educating children about sustainable practices.

This policy outlines our approach to environmental sustainability, both in our educational program and our operational practices, aligning with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2025, Ofsted requirements, and broader environmental principles.

### **Legal Framework and Guidance**

This policy has been developed with consideration of:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2025
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Climate Change Act 2008
- Waste Regulations 2025
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework

### **Aims and Objectives**

Through this policy, we aim to:

- Provide children with opportunities to learn about and connect with the natural world
- Develop children's understanding of environmental issues and sustainable practices
- Reduce our nursery's environmental footprint
- Role model sustainable behaviours and attitudes
- Create an environmentally conscious culture among children, staff, and families
- Support children's understanding of the interdependence between people and the environment

### **Educational Approach**

We promote a holistic, open-ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for



environmental sustainability by:

### **Connecting with Nature**

- Helping children to explore nature through art, play, and sensory experiences
- Going on regular nature walks and learning about plants and wildlife in the local area
- Creating opportunities for outdoor learning in all weather conditions with appropriate clothing
- Supporting children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone, sand, and recycled materials
- Encouraging respect for living things and habitats

### **Understanding Natural Systems**

- Supporting the environment by learning how to grow and nurture plants in the nursery garden
- Discovering the food cycle by growing, harvesting, and cooking food
- Learning about seasonal changes and weather patterns
- Exploring lifecycles of plants and animals
- Investigating local ecosystems and biodiversity

### **Sustainable Practices**

- Helping children to learn about water conservation, energy efficiency, and waste reduction through play-based activities and adult interactions
- Developing a recycling area and encouraging children to share a recycling ethos in the home environment
- Teaching children about the concepts of reducing, reusing, and recycling through practical activities
- Encouraging parents and children to regularly walk to nursery to raise awareness of transportation impacts
- Discussing environmental issues at an age-appropriate level

### **Operational Sustainability Practices**

As a nursery, we will embed sustainability into all aspects of our operations including:

#### **Resource Use and Waste Management**

- Implementing a comprehensive recycling system with clearly labelled bins

- Recycling materials for art and creative activities and encouraging parents to bring in their recycling materials for the same use
- Ensuring parents recycle children's take-home recycled material models if they do not keep them
- Composting food waste
- Reducing single-use plastics throughout the nursery
- Carefully monitoring our waste output and setting reduction targets

### **Energy Conservation**

- Turning off equipment and lights when not in use
- Using energy-saving light bulbs and LED lighting where possible
- Not leaving any equipment on standby
- Conducting regular energy audits and addressing inefficiencies
- Considering renewable energy options where feasible

### **Water Conservation**

- Incorporating water-wise strategies such as ensuring taps are turned off and leaks fixed promptly
- Using water butts for outdoor water play and garden watering
- Recycling water from indoor water play to water plants outside
- Installing water-saving devices where appropriate
- Teaching children about the importance of water conservation

### **Sustainable Procurement**

- Considering our carbon footprint when purchasing materials
- Shopping local where possible to reduce transportation emissions
- Choosing eco-friendly cleaning and art supplies when available
- Using suppliers with strong environmental credentials
- Purchasing products with minimal packaging

### **Food Sustainability**

- In order to encourage children not to waste food at mealtimes, we discourage the use of food as a play material; instead, we encourage activities which involve preparing and tasting different types of food
- Learning about food origins and sustainable food production



## **Climate Change and Global Impact**

We recognise that our activities contribute to broader environmental challenges, including:

- Global warming and climate change through greenhouse gases emitted by burning fossil fuels
- Pollution of air, land, and water
- Loss of forests, soils, fish stocks, and other resources through unsustainable harvesting

We commit to continually improving our practices to address these challenges by:

- Assessing our nursery's environmental impact on a regular basis
- Implementing procedures to counteract identified impacts
- Setting annual environmental targets and monitoring progress
- Staying informed about environmental best practices in early years settings

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Management Team**

- Develop and review the Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Set environmental targets and monitor progress
- Ensure adequate resources for environmental initiatives
- Lead by example in sustainable practices
- Communicate environmental commitments to Trustees

### **Staff**

- Implement sustainable practices in daily operations
- Incorporate environmental education into activities
- Role model sustainable behaviours for children
- Suggest improvements to environmental practices

### **Children**

- Participate in sustainable activities and practices
- Learn about their impact on the environment
- Develop care and respect for the natural world
- Share environmental learning with families

### **Parents/Carers**

- Support the nursery's environmental initiatives



- Reinforce sustainable practices at home
- Participate in environmental projects and events
- Share ideas for improving sustainability

### **Monitoring and Review**

We will:

- Assess our nursery's environmental impact annually
- Review this policy annually to ensure it reflects current best practices
- Monitor our progress against environmental targets
- Gather feedback from staff, children, and parents on environmental initiatives
- Update our practices based on new environmental research and guidance

### **Partnership Working**

Working together with all our parents and partners will help our environment to be more sustainable and make it a better place for our future generations to grow up in.

We will:

- Engage with local environmental organisations and initiatives
- Share our environmental learning with other early years settings
- Participate in community environmental projects
- Invite environmental experts to visit the nursery
- Collaborate with parents on sustainability initiatives

### **Conclusion**

St Mary's Nursery is committed to improving the quality of life of both the local and wider community now and in the future. Our policy recognises that quality of life in the longer term is dependent on the health and quality of the local and global environment. Through our educational approach and operational practices, we aim to contribute to a more sustainable future for all.



This Policy was adopted by	St Mary's Nursery, Camberley,	<i>(name of provider)</i>
	_____	
	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025	<i>(date)</i>
Last reviewed On	_____	
	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2026	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	_____	
Signed on behalf of the provider	_____	
Name of signatory	Andrew Knowles	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Chairperson	