



Vita et Pax Preparatory School

Sustainability Plan

Policy Originator	<i>Helen Lynch</i>
Governor Responsible	Pushkar Acharya
Status	Non- statutory
Last reviewed	15/01/2025
Review period	Annually

The main purpose of our Environmental Policy is to give our children the opportunity to examine and interpret the environment from a variety of perspectives - physical, geographical, biological, sociological, economic, political, technological, historical, aesthetic, ethical and spiritual. Environmental Education is cross curricular and opportunities are provided for learning **about, in, through,** and **for** the environment in the following ways:

- Education **about** the environment - to develop a sound base of knowledge, understanding and skills that children will need to make sense of environmental issues and how to support the environment for our future.
- Education **in** the environment - to give children first-hand experience of various local environments.
- Education **through** the environment - to provide stimulus for learning a wide range of skills.
- Education **for** the environment - focuses on sustainable solutions to environmental problems, taking into

account that there are conflicting interests and different perspectives.

We are proud to have an outside environment at Vita et Pax Preparatory School and Nursery that supports us in allowing the children to explore Learning Outside The Classroom, giving them the opportunity to explore these topics first-hand.

Aims and Objectives

It is important for the school community to have an awareness and understanding of the effects of their actions upon the environment in which they live, work and relax. In order to do this, we need to take responsibility for our own actions and we need to have a sense of duty and care for the world in which we live.

We encourage both staff and pupils to think about their environment and how their actions impact upon the national and global picture. To this end we encourage and reinforce environmental education in all aspects of everyday life and the wider community.

The ways in which we will strive towards this goal is to **reduce** the amount of materials we use and waste we produce, **recycle** and **re-use** materials wherever possible, **restore** what is deemed to have been destroyed and **respect** our neighbours and our environment.

Reduce

Energy

- We will switch off lights when they are not in use.
- We will keep outside doors shut in cold weather.
- We will make sure we turn off taps when they are no longer needed.
- Classes will appoint eco representatives who are passionate about our environment to carry out a variety of duties.
- The eco representatives will audit the amount of energy used with the support of our site manager.

Paper

We will

- Writing and printing on both side of the paper whenever possible.
- Filing photocopies for use at a later date.
- Using text messaging service where possible to inform parents.
- Each class has and uses a labelled paper recycling bin.
- Printing things two to a page where able.
- Display paper will only be changed if necessary, or taken down carefully and re-used wherever possible.
- Paper will be re-used within the classroom. Each class will have a box of partially used paper that can be used again.

Transport

- We will continue to encourage children to walk to school or use an economical form of transport by following the Walk on Wednesday scheme.
- International Walk to School Month supports the launch of Walk on Wednesday and we will encourage walking throughout the month of October, along with observations of our environment and the creatures within it.
- We will continue to take part in the Bikeability scheme to encourage safe cycling.
- We will encourage staff to share transport when going on courses etc.
-

Re-use

Fruit

- Many children bring their own fruit. We will endeavour to compost the remains of the fruit. We have a food waste caddy bin on each playground, staffroom and in the EYFS classrooms. We also have several compost bins on site.
- Leftover fruit that is in good condition will be donated to children on site after school.

Gardening

- Gardening waste will be put into the school compost bins.
- Gardening waste (where possible) will be placed under bushes and shrubs away from the playgrounds to promote biodiversity and give our wild creatures and mini-beasts a natural environment in which to thrive.

Donated materials including containers

- We will try to find uses for donated materials. This may be to help with storage or for use in art.
- Where uses cannot be found, we will endeavour to recycle it. **Recycle**

The school recycles a range of materials:

- Paper is collected in boxes in every class room and office area.
- There are clearly labelled bins in each classroom indicating the everyday materials which can be recycled.
- Cartridges from computer ink and photocopiers will be collected in a labelled bin.
- The PFA will annually run a collection of old clothes with the Bags2School scheme which helps raise money for the school and makes use of unwanted textiles.
- The PFA regularly hold uniform sales for all parents and carers to encourage the recycling of pupil uniform.
- We recycle everyday materials.
- The school will participate yearly in the Big Battery Hunt where we encourage children, parents and staff to bring in their old batteries to be recycled. This also continues throughout the year.
- The school staff and children are encouraged to recycle their crisp packets in school so that they can be donated.

The eco representatives will continue to evaluate our recycling schemes and will endeavour to join and support others where we can.

Restore

- We have several wildlife areas around the site for children to investigate and explore living things and their habitats.
- Children will be encouraged to return all living creatures to their original habitat.
- Areas disturbed by sport, by accident, or by malicious damage will if possible be restored to its original condition.
- Children will be encouraged to treat all school equipment with respect. Books and other equipment will be repaired wherever possible.
- Animals homes/feeders and bird baths will be cleaned and repaired where needed in order to extend their usage.

Respect

- Our first and most important school rule is that we will respect one another. This rule will permeate throughout all we do whether it is discussing global issues, welcoming people of different races, faiths, abilities, or dealing on a daily basis with each other.
- We will extend this respect to the environment and all living creatures.

Outdoor Environment

Research shows that opportunities within school grounds have a significant positive impact on children. These grounds are an external environment to which all children have regular access, and for some of our children they provide the only regular experience of the outdoors. They may provide unique experiences, opportunities and motivations for teaching and learning in a safe and supervised external environment. We aim for our grounds to be a stimulating and enjoyable place for work and play. We have developed all of our key stage outside areas and believe our outdoor environment provides the following benefits to the children's learning:

- Enriches all areas of the curriculum, particularly Science by providing a unique and varied context for learning; stimulates motivation and curiosity, encouraging creativity and helps pupils to develop a broad range of skills, competencies, knowledge and understanding;
- Affords opportunities for pupils to work together with adults for the common good, thus encouraging a sense of pride, ownership and responsibility.
- Allows children to experience wildlife in its natural habitat with the creation and regular maintenance of wildlife areas and ponds. Feeders, nest-boxes, bird baths, bug hotels and a variety of animal homes

allow for the children to witness and understand the importance of the community in its support of nature in order for it to thrive.

The school has planters and hanging baskets in order to provide an aesthetic visual effect as well as a way of encouraging a range of insects, particularly bees, to feed and flourish. The school also has a greenhouse that will allow classes to explore planting and growing their own fruits and vegetables. This will allow them to understand how our food is grown, what cultivating food entails and will provide them with an opportunity to use their own produce in their cooking, giving them first-hand experience of 'soil to plate'.

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework

The importance of educating children about their environment is also a key element within the Specific Areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. It is important for our children in nursery and reception to understand and talk about their own environment and a range of others. It allows them the opportunity to make observations of their environment, of animals and plants and helps develop their communication skills, support their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

National Curriculum

Environmental education is directly referred to in the National Curriculum for KS1 and KS2 in Science, Geography and PSHCE. At Vita et Pax Preparatory School and Nursery, environmental education is not taught in isolation, but is linked to all areas of the primary curriculum, for example; Geography, Science, English, Mathematics, Art, D&T, Music, History, PSHCE, Drama and PE.

Planning

Implementation of environmental education is carried out by cross curriculum reference through the Key Stages of the National Curriculum and the EYFS Statutory Framework. Each year group plans collaboratively to decide which topics they will participate in throughout the year, identifying links within subjects to allow children to access their learning in a more holistic approach.

The children in Reception and Year 1 have block placements at Manor House's Forest School. This provides the children with an opportunity to go 'into the wild' and see first-hand the homes and habitats of our creatures, great and small. This experience gives the children the ability to learn alongside the wildlife within the forest and allows the children to build a wonderment and respect for our natural world. The activities that are undertaken at Forest School support this view and give the children an opportunity to bond with animals and learn from adult modelling how to take care of the environment, giving respect to not only the animals, but the plants and trees also.

Equal Opportunities and Additional Educational Needs Statement

By using learning strategies that enable the children to make use of all their senses, we can support all learning styles. It is easier to remember what you have heard, seen, touched, tasted and smelled. The outdoor environment enables teachers to make learning as practical and 'hands on' as possible, giving experiences that they will not forget.

All children will have access to effective learning opportunities surrounding our environment irrespective of issues of race, gender, social and economic circumstances or ability.

All teachers will differentiate their teaching to meet the individual needs of the child.

Health and Safety

All activities will be conducted in accordance with the current Health and Safety Policy. For further information, please see our Health and Safety Policy.

ICT Links

As environmental education is a cross-curricular subject, there are many opportunities to use ICT. The eco representatives have used ICT to create presentations to the whole school to launch new initiatives; to input data for the Big School's Bird Watch and the 'What's Under Your Feet?' initiative; and to create blogs on our page on The Pod and documents for our website. ICT can be used in various ways to aid and develop skills in our education of the environment and vice versa.

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader's role is to:

- Understand the requirements of the subject.
- Prepare policy documents and providing ideas to support learning in the curriculum areas which link to the environment.
- Encourage staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils, to develop valid activities appropriate for children at different stages of development.
- Effectively manage the allocated budget and ensure the effective, responsible and safe use of resources.
- Hold regular eco meetings where the representatives from each class can gather and put forward their voices to aid and develop our environment.
- Give the eco representatives a voice and the determination and courage to stand up to their views and convictions in order to go out into the world with
- Follow nationwide initiatives and support the eco representatives with the implementation of ones that they are eager to participate in.
- Add entries of our endeavours to the website and our blog on The Pod website.