

Oyster Bay Nursery

Sustainability Policy

Date written: October 2026

Date of last update: October 2026

Date agreed and ratified by October 2026

Date of next full review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

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Nominated Individual	Debra Hines
Nursery Manager	Grace Sidders
Chair of Governors	Nikki Mattin

Policy Statement

At Oyster Bay Nursery, we are committed to creating an environmentally responsible, healthy and socially conscious early years setting. We recognise our responsibility to protect the environment and contribute towards a sustainable future for the children, families and communities we serve.

We believe that sustainability should be embedded into all aspects of nursery life, including our daily operations, curriculum, purchasing decisions, outdoor environment and relationships with families and the wider community.

We aim to develop children's understanding of the natural world, encouraging them to respect living things, care for their environment and develop positive habits that will support a more sustainable future.

We recognise that even small, everyday actions can make a significant difference when consistently adopted by staff, children and families.

1. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- Minimise the environmental impact of Oyster Bay Nursery through responsible use of resources.
- Reduce waste, energy consumption and unnecessary water usage.
- Promote recycling, reusing and responsible purchasing.
- Provide children with opportunities to learn about sustainability, nature and environmental responsibility.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles through nutritious food choices and outdoor learning.
- Develop children's awareness of biodiversity and the importance of protecting wildlife and natural habitats.
- Involve staff, parents, carers and the local community in sustainable practices.
- Ensure sustainability is considered within nursery leadership, management and decision-making.
- Continually review and improve our environmental practices.

2. Our Sustainability Principles and Commitments

2.1 Waste Reduction and Recycling

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to reducing unnecessary waste and encouraging responsible disposal of materials.

We will:

- Reduce the use of single-use plastics wherever reasonably possible.
- Provide clearly labelled recycling facilities for appropriate materials.
- Encourage staff and families to use reusable lunchboxes, drinks bottles and containers.
- Reuse suitable resources, packaging and materials for children's creative activities.
- Avoid unnecessary printing and use digital communication wherever practical.
- Dispose of waste responsibly in accordance with local waste collection arrangements.
- Encourage children to understand the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling through everyday activities.

Children will be supported to participate in age-appropriate recycling activities, helping them develop an understanding of how their actions can protect the environment.

2.2 Energy and Water Efficiency

We aim to use energy and water responsibly throughout the nursery.

We will:

- Switch off lights, heating, electrical equipment and appliances when they are not required, where safe and appropriate.
- Use energy-efficient lighting and equipment wherever possible.
- Make good use of natural daylight.
- Ensure doors and windows are managed appropriately to reduce unnecessary heat loss.
- Encourage children and staff to avoid wasting water.
- Turn off taps when water is not needed.
- Monitor water usage and report leaking taps, toilets or other maintenance concerns promptly.
- Use water responsibly during activities such as gardening, outdoor play and cleaning.

Staff will act as positive role models by demonstrating responsible energy and water use.

2.3 Sustainable Procurement and Purchasing

We recognise that our purchasing decisions can have an impact on the environment.

Where practical and financially appropriate, we will:

- Prioritise environmentally friendly, ethically sourced and sustainable products.
- Purchase durable, good-quality resources that can be reused over time.
- Choose local suppliers where possible to support the local economy and reduce transportation impact.
- Select products with minimal packaging or recyclable packaging.
- Use environmentally considerate cleaning products that are appropriate for the nursery environment.
- Consider the environmental impact of products before making purchasing decisions.
- Avoid unnecessary purchases and make effective use of existing resources.

All products and materials used within the nursery will continue to meet relevant health, safety and safeguarding requirements.

2.4 Food and Catering

Oyster Bay Nursery recognises the relationship between sustainability, nutrition and children's health and wellbeing.

We will:

- Promote healthy, balanced and nutritious meals and snacks.
- Use seasonal and locally sourced ingredients where reasonably possible.
- Reduce food waste through appropriate meal planning and portion management.
- Encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards food and trying a variety of healthy options.
- Encourage reusable food containers and drinks bottles.
- Teach children about where food comes from and how it is grown.
- Promote gardening and food-growing activities to help children understand the journey from planting to eating.

Food preparation, storage and disposal will always follow appropriate food hygiene and safety requirements.

2.5 Biodiversity and Outdoor Learning

We recognise the importance of providing children with opportunities to explore, appreciate and care for the natural environment.

We will:

- Maintain outdoor areas that encourage wildlife and biodiversity.
- Provide opportunities for children to plant flowers, herbs, fruit and vegetables.
- Encourage children to observe insects, birds, plants and other wildlife.
- Use natural materials such as leaves, sticks, pinecones and stones in supervised learning activities.
- Provide opportunities for nature-based exploration and outdoor learning throughout the year.
- Encourage children to respect living things and understand the importance of protecting habitats.
- Avoid unnecessary disturbance to wildlife and natural environments.
- Provide suitable opportunities for children to experience seasonal changes.

All outdoor activities will be appropriately supervised and risk assessed to ensure children's safety.

2.6 Education and Curriculum

Sustainability will be incorporated into our everyday practice and learning experiences.

We will:

- Integrate environmental awareness into our curriculum and daily routines.
- Provide age-appropriate activities focusing on recycling, conservation and caring for nature.
- Encourage children to develop curiosity about the natural world.
- Use stories, songs, discussions and practical experiences to introduce environmental themes.
- Encourage children to participate in gardening, planting and recycling activities.
- Support children to develop responsibility, independence and respect for their surroundings.

We recognise that young children learn best through practical experiences, positive role modelling and opportunities to explore their environment.

Sustainability activities will be inclusive and adapted to meet the individual needs, abilities and developmental stages of all children.

2.7 Family and Community Engagement

We recognise that working in partnership with families and the wider community strengthens our sustainability commitments.

We will:

- Encourage families to support environmentally responsible practices at home.
- Promote nursery initiatives through newsletters, noticeboards and digital communication.
- Organise appropriate events and activities that encourage environmental awareness.
- Encourage the donation and reuse of suitable resources where appropriate.
- Explore opportunities to work with local organisations and community groups on environmental projects.

We welcome suggestions and contributions from families to help us improve our sustainability practices.

2.8 Leadership and Staff Development

Sustainability is a shared responsibility and will be supported through effective leadership and management.

Oyster Bay Nursery will:

- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities under this policy.
- Provide staff with relevant information, guidance and training.
- Encourage staff to identify opportunities to reduce waste and improve resource efficiency.
- Include sustainability within nursery planning and management discussions.
- Monitor progress against agreed sustainability targets.
- Encourage staff to act as positive role models for children and families.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Sustainability is the responsibility of everyone at Oyster Bay Nursery.

Leadership Team

Leaders will:

- Ensure appropriate resources are available to support sustainability initiatives.
- Promote sustainability as part of the nursery's overall vision and values.
- Monitor implementation of this policy.
- Review sustainability objectives and progress.
- Ensure environmental practices are consistent with relevant health, safety and welfare requirements.

Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Encourage children to care for their environment.
- Reduce unnecessary waste and use resources responsibly.
- Switch off unused equipment where appropriate.
- Promote recycling and reuse.
- Support environmental learning opportunities.
- Share ideas and suggestions for improving sustainability.

Children

Children will be encouraged and supported to:

- Participate in recycling and gardening activities.
- Respect plants, animals and natural habitats.
- Avoid wasting food, water and other resources.
- Take part in age-appropriate environmental activities.
- Develop an understanding of how to care for their surroundings.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Support the nursery's sustainability aims.
- Use reusable lunchboxes and drinks bottles where appropriate.
- Participate in environmental events and initiatives.
- Share ideas and suggestions.
- Encourage sustainable habits within the home environment.

4. Alignment with Ofsted's Early Years Inspection Framework

Oyster Bay Nursery recognises the importance of effective leadership, high-quality education and children's wellbeing in promoting sustainability.

Our approach supports the relevant evaluation areas within Ofsted's renewed Early Years Inspection Framework.

Leadership and Governance

Leaders demonstrate a commitment to sustainability through effective planning, staff engagement, responsible resource management and regular evaluation of environmental practices.

Curriculum and Teaching

Children are provided with meaningful opportunities to explore the natural world, understand environmental responsibility and develop positive sustainable habits through everyday learning experiences.

Children's Welfare and Wellbeing

We promote a healthy, clean and safe environment that supports children's physical health, emotional wellbeing and connection with nature.

Behaviour, Attitudes and Establishing Routines

Children are encouraged to develop positive habits, show respect for living things, care for their surroundings and take responsibility for age-appropriate daily tasks.

Inclusion

Sustainability activities and learning opportunities are accessible to all children, taking account of their individual needs, abilities, interests and developmental stages.

We recognise that sustainability should be demonstrated through meaningful everyday practice and should contribute positively to children's experiences, learning and development.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure this policy is effectively implemented, Oyster Bay Nursery will monitor its sustainability practices through:

- Regular monitoring of recycling and waste management arrangements.
- Reviewing energy and water conservation practices.
- Monitoring purchasing decisions and the use of sustainable resources.
- Reviewing children's involvement in environmental learning.
- Gathering feedback from staff and families.
- Setting and reviewing achievable sustainability targets.

6. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by nursery leaders.

It will also be reviewed sooner if necessary to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, Ofsted requirements or nursery procedures.

All staff will be made aware of any changes to the policy.

Our Commitment

At Oyster Bay Nursery, we believe that caring for the environment starts with small actions taken every day. By working together, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, experiences and positive values they need to become responsible, environmentally aware citizens of the future.