

Sustainability Policy



Policy statement

Cotswold Bunnies has sustainability at the forefront of its ethos. Examining and reducing the carbon footprints of our settings, embedding sustainability into the Early Years Curriculum and engaging with parents and the wider community will support children to develop good habits from a young age.

Childcare practitioners play a hugely important role in endeavouring to achieve a net zero target. By their actions, mindfulness, engagement and education around the subject, practitioners can be super role models for the children in their care. Teaching by example, backed up with explanations of reasons as to why they act in the way they do, can lead to a new generation of children who are highly aware of sustainability to the point where it is deeply embedded in the way that they live their lives. This is the goal that our nursery wishes to achieve. This policy will be used, alongside our Sustainability action plan to ensure that we are able to meet our goal.

Procedures

Many things are out of the control of young children in the settings, so it is important that all staff are educated and made aware of the importance of sustainability so that the choices made by children are choices made on a pre thought out sustainability plan.


- **Food** - Cotswold Bunnies recognises that one of the main factors that contributes to climate change is eating meat. The production of meat consumes a vast amount more energy and resources than any non-meat diet. For this reason, we offer a primarily vegetarian menu. Fish is served only once a week, as many parents have asked for this.
- **Food waste** – All food waste (at the Common) is either fed to our rabbit or put into the food bins. These bins are then either put into a hot bin (Common) and turned into compost by Ludo and Katy. The Cowshed have their food waste taken away by an external contractor. Staff must ensure that only food waste goes into the appropriate bin. Fresh food that is left over must never be put into the bin but is donated where appropriate.
- **Recycling** – At the Common we have 2 recycling bins. One is wheelie bin for clean hard plastic, clean glass, clean cans and tin foil. The other is a box for clean paper and clean cardboard only. There is a bin bag for soft plastic in the utility room. These items must never be mixed up together. If staff are faced with an item such as a tissue box that contains both cardboard and soft plastic, then they must separate these before adding to the recycling bins. Recycling at the Cowshed must be put into the correct containers where it is collected by an external contractor. Glass can not be recycled at the Cowshed, and where possible staff will take it for recycling. We minimise the use of non recyclable materials, especially where an alternative is available.

- **Washing products** – All products used in the nursery on the common such as washing powder etc must be environmentally friendly such as Ecover. Any products that are not, such as floor cleaner, are Eco Rated excellent and must be emptied outside in the wash basin outside the kitchen. All products that go down the sinks in the Common nursery go into an environmentally friendly sewage system that relies on bacteria to break down the waste. Nothing must contaminate this. At the Cowshed, we ensure that any products that we buy have at least a good eco rating. We aim to buy in bulk and decant in to reused bottles where possible to reduce our plastic wastage.
- **Wipes** – Baby wipes must be kept to a minimum. We encourage and support parents to use reusable nappies and towelling wipes. Towelling wipes must be used to wipe hands, never baby wipes. It is preferable to get the children to wash their hands rather than use towelling wipes as washing adds to our carbon footprint.
- **Food for play** – The use of rice, pasta and oats for play must be kept to a minimum. It is outrageous that some children in the world do not have enough food to eat and yet we let our children play with food. Alternative solutions should be found. Where necessary, food that is used for play is kept to be used on multiple occasions.
- **Heating and lighting** – Steps must be taken to avoid overuse of heating and lighting. Staff should wear extra warm clothes when cold and ask parents to send in extra clothing for the children. Lights must only be used where necessary and turned off when not in the room
- **Emails, photos** – the excessive storage of these necessitates huge amounts of water to be used a coolant, so it is important that staff monitor and delete these where they can.
- **Use of water** – Taps should never be left running. The dishwasher should be used (only 1 tablet per use) only when full, as must the washing machine.
- **Education about caring for our planet** – There is a focus on outdoor learning and nature-based play. The forest school areas in both settings have been set up to reflect this and the other children must also be encouraged to use the outside area for learning about nature. Inside the nursery, children have access to recycling bins to encourage them to be involved in the recycling process.
- **Growing our own food** – Children should be encouraged to grow food from seed, both in containers and in the raised beds in the garden. Their involvement in sowing, cultivating and eating the products of their labour will result in an increased awareness and appreciation of where food comes from. All products that are grown are used where possible in the lunches, or in cooking/baking activities with the children.
- **Packaging** – Any packaging brought in by parents (e.g food packaging) will be returned to them at the end of each day.
- **Printing** – Staff are encouraged to consider the benefit and necessity of printing documents off rather than having a digital copy. Where it is necessary, any documents printed are shredded following use to be recycled.
- **Toys and Resources** – Where possible, we make every effort to ensure that the toys and resources that we purchase are environmentally friendly, preferably wood. Where this is not possible, we aim to buy resources second hand and will donate any resources or toys that are no longer required to ensure that their carbon footprint is reduced.

Legal framework

Further guidance

- **Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems (2023)**

This Policy was adopted by:		Cotswold Bunnies Nurseries Ltd	
On:	1 st September 2025	Date to be reviewed:	1 st September 2026
Signed on behalf of the Provider:			
Name of Signatory:	Pippa Collins		
Role of Signatory (e.g, Chair, Director or Manager)		Manager	