

Sustainability Policy

2024-25



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Intent

Sustainability is an important and integral part of day-to-day life at Whitehall Primary School. We aim to become an environmentally friendly educational setting that reduces our carbon footprint and impact on the planet. We wish to instil an understanding and awareness of the importance of sustainable practice in pupils, staff and our wider school community. Being, “sustainable” is to make changes that help to look after our planet. Making these changes helps to protect our animals, plants and natural resources so that future generations will be able to enjoy them.

In line with the government’s goals to become a generation of leaders, our school is committed to promoting the importance of sustainable living. We regularly review our curriculum to ensure that we are actively preparing our pupils for a sustainable future, developing their awareness and appreciation of caring for the environment. Extracurricular activities give our pupils further opportunity to deepen their understanding and become active, caring citizens. We show the children how to reduce their carbon footprint and how to slow down the process of climate change, which is an important issue that we want to tackle at Whitehall Primary School.

Our school environment is managed in a manner that demonstrates positive, sustainable practice to our pupils and their families. Our goal is to ensure that our school site and the practices that occur both inside and outside of the school building are sustainable and in line with government expectations relating to sustainability and climate change. The ways in which we manage matters of food, transport and travel, waste reduction and our consumption of energy and water reflect the values and ethos we wish to promote. We learn about the ways we can care for our natural environment through assemblies, in Geography lessons and by keeping up with local and global news.

Aims

Whitehall aims to lead the community in developing sustainability in the following ways;

- **Energy.** We aim to educate the children at school about greenhouse gases and why they are harming our environment. We adopt a, ‘switch off’ policy where lights, heating and electricity are used appropriately and not in excess.
- **Waste.** We aim to reduce waste at school. Our packed lunch policy is eco-friendly to encourage rubbish-free lunches. They are taught how to recycle paper and how to maximise the use of paper. Staff know how to recycle paper for printing and photocopying and we have reduced the need for printing by making our documents accessible electronically. We also aim to reduce the use of single use plastics.
- **Biodiversity.** We aim to improve our natural environment by planting more trees, flowers and vegetables and to involve the whole school in this project. We aim to make more use of our pond in lessons and learn about the plants and wildlife that can be found there. We aim to use our tiny forest, the fields and the quiet garden more in lessons. Learning about animals, habitats and deforestation is part of our curriculum and we aim to foster a love for nature and all it has to offer.
- **Water.** Children are educated about water wastage and are encouraged to report any concerns around water waste. Our taps in our toilets ensure that water cannot be kept running.
- **Transport.** Through the ‘Walk to School Programme’, children are encouraged to walk or park and stride to school, to improve their overall well-being, adopt a healthy lifestyle and reduce pollution from cars. Whitehall Primary School has spaces to store bicycles if children wish to cycle to school.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy has been written by the ECO lead.

All staff and pupils at Whitehall Primary School have a role to play in developing a sustainable school environment. We all have the following responsibilities:

1. The school is responsible for:
 - Developing a curriculum, which promotes the need for environmental sustainability.
 - Including and engaging staff, governors, pupils, parents and the local community to improve and sustain the world today for future generations.
 - Sharing good practice with pupils, parents and the community, and encouraging them to adopt the initiatives outlined within this policy.

- Promoting awareness of climate change through cross-curricular activities.
 - Sharing the responsibility with the wider community for promoting and practising policies, which show concern and care for the future of the global environment.
2. Teaching staff are responsible for:
- Promoting the need for environmental sustainability in their lessons.
 - Ensuring their classrooms are using energy sustainably, for example, ensuring that computers and lights are turned off when not in use.
3. Our Eco-Warriors are devoted to caring for the environment and have regular meetings to discuss current, environmental issues and plan ways that we can be environmentally friendly in school. They are proud of what they do and the difference they make is vital to the success of sustainability. They are responsible for :
- Monitoring any litter problems in the wider community and address any problems.
 - Promoting a litter free environment to other pupils.
 - Reviewing and promoting sustainability throughout the school.
4. Pupils are responsible for:
- Applying their learning at home and aiming to be sustainable outside of school.
 - Walking or cycling to school, when possible.
 - Using energy sustainably, for example, not leaving taps running.
 - Be responsible for keeping our classrooms, school and grounds clean and tidy.
 - Eat healthy, natural fruit and vegetable snacks, which do not come in paper or plastic packaging.
 - Use the right bins so that we can recycle our waste.

Ensuring pupils at Whitehall Primary School access a curriculum that teaches them about the importance of sustainability and how to live more sustainable lives is integral to the ethos and values of our school.

Across our curriculum, opportunities are developed to enable pupils to learn about sustainable living. These opportunities may be targeted and specifically based on national curriculum objectives. For example, in Geography children learn about the threats plastic has on life both on land and in the Ocean.

Opportunities also occur outside of our usual curriculum expectations. For example, ad-hoc opportunities to educate our pupils on sustainable practice may arise when discussing the day-to-day life of our school, such as the reasons why we must turn off lights when leaving a room and why utilising both sides of paper before recycling is a usual practice in our classrooms.

Our programme of extracurricular activities and clubs also enables pupils to access further learning opportunities about sustainability. Children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 take part in the Forest School programme where they use their natural environment to learn about the animals surrounding them.

Beyond the classroom, our pupils will be given the following opportunities to extend their understanding and learning of sustainability:

1. PE lessons take place outside giving children the opportunity to use the natural environment to play in and experience more fresh air.
2. Dining hall routines and etiquette teaches children the value of reducing waste.
3. Through our walk to school scheme children strive to reduce their carbon footprint and earn a badge when they walk/scoot/cycle regularly.

Food Management

To ensure that Whitehall Primary School meets sustainability expectations relating to the management of food and the catering system at our school, the following actions will be taken:

1. Sourcing food from local vendors to reduce the impact of deliveries on the environment
2. Beginning the dialogue to positively rewarding those children who do not waste food and those who have an ECO – friendly packed lunch
3. Educating children on food waste and the impact it has on the world globally

Through introducing these practices, we hope to make a considerable impact, demonstrating sustainable practice to our staff, children, their families and the wider community. We hope that children will implement their learning at home, widening the influence of their education and increasing the benefits of these sustainable practices.

As part of our curriculum expectations, children will be taught a clear and comprehensive food curriculum that encourages them (and by extension, their families) to adopt sustainable life skills and approaches to food.

Waste Reduction

Whitehall Primary School is committed to reducing the amount of waste we produce and divert to landfill. To ensure we are able to limit the amount of waste generated in our school, we aim to instil good practice among pupils, staff and the wider community to ensure that, where possible, materials are recycled and repurposed.

We will endeavour to:

1. Continue to ensure children are using the correct bins for recycling
2. Children learn about how to reduce waste through the curriculum such as in PSHE and Geography sustainability lessons
3. Recyclable materials are used in DT lessons

To further our commitment, we are also ensuring that, where possible, our school sources, procures and uses sustainable, reusable materials and products. This will enable us to contribute to efforts to reduce the use of single use plastics and to ensure that items are not disposed of into landfill. Children are encouraged to use reusable water bottles, write on both sides of the paper in their books. Unwanted stationary is donated at the end of the year.

Energy and Water

To reduce the impact Whitehall Primary School has on the environment through the use of energy (electricity and gas) and water, our school aims, where possible, to monitor and limit our consumption. The following actions have been implemented to demonstrate our commitment to this goal:

1. The taps in our bathrooms run for a certain amount of time so water is not wasted
2. Classes have a light monitor to ensure the lights are turned off
3. The school heating is not on all year round.

Where possible, Whitehall Primary School will endeavour to update and replace existing systems and equipment, which are less energy efficient or outdated. This includes, but is not limited to, our heating system, the toileting facilities and electrical equipment, such as computers and other related technology. This will enable us to ensure that our school's energy and water consumption is sustainable and in line with our wider goals of becoming environmentally friendly. Updating these aspects of our school may also provide a significant financial benefit for Whitehall Primary School, reducing costs and futureproofing our systems.

It is important that staff, children and their families be informed of the importance of adopting sustainable practices in relation to energy and water consumption. For example, we will ensure that all members of our school community understand and value expectations, such as keeping windows closed in colder temperatures and turning off electrical equipment when it is not in use. Instilling these practices in day-to-day school life will enable our values and ethos to be driven towards our goals and ensure that our consumption is reduced for the benefit of all. Posters are found around the school reminding children and staff how to save energy and water.

Transport and Travel

Where possible, Whitehall Primary School will endeavour to promote sustainable practices relating to transport and travel.

Our efforts in this area include initiatives which will encourage staff, children and their families to travel to school via more sustainable, environmentally friendly means, including walking, use of bicycles and scooters and, as necessary, public transport. This will enable our school to reduce the impact of our carbon footprint, reducing the number of vehicles on the roads and the frequency of vehicles idling on, or near to, our school grounds.

To support our school community with their efforts to reduce the impact of transport and travel on the environment, we will do the following:

1. Continue our, “walk to school” programme where children are rewarded for walking, cycling or scooting to school
2. Continue to offer parking permits to parents who would like to park and stride

Where additional transport or travel arrangements are required, such as on the occasion of educational visits or assisting children and their families with attending the school site, we will endeavour to procure transport via eco-conscious organisations and companies.

Children are also educated on road safety through PSHE lessons.

School Buildings and Site

To demonstrate Whitehall Primary School’s continued commitment to improving its sustainable practices, the following actions will be taken in relation to the existing school building/site:

1. All doors are fire doors to keep the heat in
2. The school grounds are maintained so children can play and explore on them
3. A tiny forest has been planted to encourage a new ecosystem

Where new school buildings are required, Whitehall Primary School will endeavour to ensure that all plans and building works are carried out in accordance with recent guidelines and initiatives. Our aim is to ensure that any works conducted are kind to the environment and demonstrate sustainable practice to staff and pupils and their families.

Our school site will be used to promote the benefits of living in a sustainable manner. Where possible, children will be educated in outdoor spaces that enhance the delivery of our school curriculum.

We will work with our site management to ensure that the outdoor environment of our school promotes the ethos and values we are hoping to uphold, providing our children with opportunities to learn about flora and fauna and increase the biodiversity of our school site. Children grow their own food and plant in the Spring and Summer term.