



## Environmental Policy

### Introduction

At ACE we seek to provide a setting where children will flourish; we also attach upmost importance to safeguarding the environment for future generations and aim to do this through limiting our impact on the environment and encouraging understanding and awareness within the ACE community.

ACE's Environmental Education is cross curricular and opportunities are provided for learning **about, in, through,** and **for** the environment:

- Education **about** the environment – to help the children have some basic understanding of environmental issues. For example, caring for the plants and trees in the ACE garden and the importance of planting more trees, growing vegetables, conserving water by having a water butt, using the recycle and compost bins provided within the nursery environment.
- To provide education **in** the environment – to give children first-hand experience of various local environments as well as our own indoor and outdoor areas. For example visiting parks to look at the trees and plants growing, museums to see how items can be kept and cherished for long periods of time, visit charity shops to buy resources – not everything has to be new! Using bins for our litter and respecting whichever environment they are in.
- To provide stimulus for learning a wide range of skills **through** a variety of activities related to the environment e.g. litter picking and gardening
- Education **for** the environment focuses on sustainable solutions: up-cycling resources for ongoing use, recycling containers for the children's use, careful use of paper towels and paper in general and collecting loose parts for play

### Aims and Objectives

ACE's approach is to consider our environmental responsibilities and give special thought to ways we can minimize our carbon footprint: in the day to day activities offered to the children, the running of the nursery, when organizing social events for the ACE community and to instill in the children a sense of pride, care and wonder in the natural world and our role in helping to look after it..

**1. Encouraging staff and children to think about the 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.

**2. Striving to minimise our impact on the environment.** We work to **reduce** the amount of materials we use and the 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.

### **1. ENCOURAGING STAFF AND CHILDREN TO THINK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT**

Travelling safely to and from the nursery is a regular topic; most families, and staff, commute by bicycle, other staff use the bus or train. There is no parking allocated to the nursery. We use this topic to explain how walking and cycling is good for us *and* the environment and using public transport means that more people can travel at the same time, rather than everyone travelling in their own cars, which would make the roads we look out onto from the nursery, even busier.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children will engage in activities that:

- Encourage exploration and observation of the local environment by having regular trips outside the nurseries for example Forest School sessions.
- Encourage problem solving, decision making and critical thinking; foundation skills for developing individuals who will be able to influence change
- Encourage children to think and respond to what they see, touch, smell and feel in the local environment to foster a love and appreciation of nature
- Explore the visual elements in natural and man-made objects including resources from their locality and different cultures to encourage understanding of manufacturing processes
- Encourage biodiversity in the ACE garden

### **Outdoor environment**

Children who attend the Nursery have regular access throughout the day to the garden area which provides unique experiences, opportunities and resources, all within a safe, supervised environment.

Our intention is for the garden to be a stimulating and enjoyable place to play which:

- Compliments all areas of the curriculum
- Encourages curiosity
- Helps the children develop a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding
- Affords opportunities for the children to work together; setting up equipment/tidy up time/ gardening etc encouraging a sense of pride, ownership and responsibility
- Offers opportunities for growing and using some of our own fruit and vegetables
- Engage in managed risk taking to foster motor development and self-control

### **Communications**

- Suggested activities which are sent home to parents/carers will be low burden on the environment.
- A copy of this policy will be available for parents to read on the ACE website
- Use this policy to help inform decisions on future ACE social event: their location, resources required for activities and how refreshments are offered (use cups for the children's drinks which are already used at ACE, offer cups made from recycled or biodegradable materials/compostable for the adults drinks.

## **2. STRIVING TO MINIMISE OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **Reduce**

#### **Energy**

- Switch off lights when not needed
- Keep outside doors and windows closed during cold weather as much as possible to minimize heat loss.
- Encourage parents to dress their children in layers of clothing (staff also) to help keep warm and this will mean the heating does not to be set too high.

- Make sure taps are turned off when no longer needed and children are taught this when they settle in to nursery/supported to do this
- Review ACE's energy supply and consider the feasibility of moving to a renewable energy supplier when the next contract is due
- Replace the old spot lights with energy efficient LED - This goal has now been achieved.
- Heating system is on a timed/thermostat control, so the building is not heated out of hours.
- Computers and other electrical equipment are not left on stand-by
- Water: monitor, reduce and report water usage. Children are observed when in the bathroom, washing hands and helped to understand the tap can be turned off once wet, and the soap can be used; only turning the tap on once again to rinse off.
- The hand basins are monitored by staff at the end of 'toilet time' to ensure all taps are fully off.

### **Procurement**

When ACE procures items for nursery use, where possible, we will consider a product's provenance. Sourcing 'good' products can be challenging, but ACE wishes to encourage a sense of care and pride in its purchasing. This includes:

- Food purchased for ACE Day Nursery is entirely vegetarian -organic food and Fair Trade items are used where possible.
- Fruit and vegetables purchased for snack times are delivered by a local business, are organic and seasonal where possible
- Environmentally friendly cleaning products are used where possible
- Recycled paper products are used whenever possible
- Glitter is no longer used in the Nursery School or Day Nursery
- Strive to ensure that the investments we have and suppliers we use are environmentally and socially responsible

### **Paper and printing**

- Writing and printing on both side of the paper whenever possible
- Using recycled paper and re-using paper whenever possible, including display paper
- Ensuring paper is recycled (paper bins are provided in the Big Room, Art Room and the Office)
- Emailing information to parents when a hard copy is not required
- Recycle ink cartridges used in office printers and purchase Inkjet printers whenever possible
- Committee meetings are paperless and all newsletters are digital

## Re-use

### **Fruit and food waste**

- Food compost bins in the areas where the children and staff consume food
- Green compost bin in the front garden which is emptied once a fortnight by the local council

### **Gardening**

- Gardening waste will be put into the garden compost for later use and/or green compost bin as mentioned above
- Rain water is collected in water butts and used to water the plants to limit hosepipe use
- We only use peat-free compost

### **Donated items**

- ACE will try to find uses for items kindly donated wherever possible
- Wellington boots are donated and these are used by new children joining the setting (£1 donation per pair which goes towards buying bulbs to plant in the garden.)
- Where uses cannot be found for these items we will endeavour to recycle or donate to others

## Recycle

- ACE aims to recycle as much as possible, including paper
- There are recycling bins (in the Big Room, Art Room and Office)
- Lost property items, such as clothing and toys which are not collected at the end of the year, are taken to local charity shops
- We recycle the everyday items which can be placed in the purple bin, which is emptied weekly by the local council
- ACE avoids - whenever possible - the use of non-recyclable materials/products, and products made from unsustainable materials
- Where possible, rechargeable batteries will be used, otherwise they will be recycled through the local council / Tesco visits

## Restore

- Books and other equipment will be repaired wherever possible.

## Respect

- Our first and most important rule is to respect one another. This rule permeates all we do whether it is discussing the wider world, welcoming people from different cultures, faiths, abilities, or dealing with each other on a daily basis
- Children will be encouraged to treat themselves, others and the school equipment with respect
- We extend this respect to the environment and all living creatures:
  - o We have a 'bug hotel' in the garden for the children to investigate and explore living things and their habitats
  - o Children will be supported to return all living creatures to their original habitat

### **Other related Policies:**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Food and Drink Policy
- Food Safety Management

Policy approved and adopted: November 2022

Signed on behalf of ACE Nursery School: *Lisa Tuohy*

Position: Headteacher

Due for review: Autumn term 2023