

VALENTINE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

SUSTAINABILITY & *ECOLOGY* **CURRICULUM PROJECT**

Sustainability in every classroom

Becoming global citizens

Climate Change activism

Understanding our local biodiversity

Equipping pupils with knowledge to share

#TAKINGACTION



At St. Mary's, Mason Moor and Valentine, leaders recognise the need to lead a curriculum that teaches pupils the importance of looking after the world they will one day inherit from us.

Whilst our Science Curriculum provides essential knowledge related to: biodiversity and global warming and our Geography curriculum teaches children about the environmental impact of issues such as global trade – it is important that we root this knowledge and skill development within the local context of the area they inhabit and they will one day lead.

The Sustainability & Ecology Project is a curriculum drop-down week to inform, educate, celebrate and create action. We will use a wealth of resources including: visual, art, spoken word (including music), video, real-life speakers and visits.

The week will culminate in each child contributing to a 'bigger piece' school project – including a parent/carer event to showcase learning and a Community Day. Simultaneously the project will support the retention of new knowledge in relation to: Southampton's wider sustainability goals, Our School's Climate Pledge and Ecologically-driven activities that promote sustainability at our school in the longer-term.

But it doesn't end here. Our wider reading and writing spine this year incorporates world literature linked to sustainability and climate change action. Our VR headsets enable pupils to see climate action first-hand, to visit new centres tackling sustainability and to review areas that still pose a threat to the World. We are doing our bit to create future global citizens.



CURRICULUM PROJECT YEAR GROUP FOCI

EYFS

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Focus: Endangered animals in the UK and Is there a problem with litter in our area?

Curricula links: Understanding the World, Science (links to KS1), Literacy, Maths

Suggested tasks and topics:

- **How many animals are endangered in the UK?** (Hedgehogs, Water Voles, Dormouse, Beavers and Bats). Children to explore the animals, their habitats and think about why they've become endangered. (Link to Science, UW)
- **Hedgehog Preservation.** How can we support Hedgehogs? Trip to the school field to look at where hedgehogs may choose to live and to show children how easily they are susceptible to prey. (Link to Science, UW)
- **Create: Hedgehog Houses.** Children to create 2-3 hedgehog houses to be placed around the school. (Creative)
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – parents to be invited as children will be off site. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PD, Science, UW)
- **Writing a letter to our local MP – every child adds a sentence.** Letter should outline what we found in our local area and what we want to do to make it better. Pupils should use photographs of their work throughout the week to highlight the issues.

Evidence collation:

- Create a scrapbook to show the learning journey of the pupils throughout the week.



Hedgehog Awareness Week

How to help hedgehogs...

- **Make your pond safe for hedgehogs** by providing a ramp or shallow area so they can easily exit
- **Provide nesting areas** such as log/leaf piles, wilderness areas and man made hedgehog homes
- **Install gapped fencing** or dig a channel beneath your garden boundaries to create easy access for hedgehogs
- **Leave out food** such as meat-based dog or cat food, and a dish of water
- **Check for hedgehogs** before lighting bonfires, strimming and mowing the lawn
- **Keep household rubbish above ground level** to prevent entanglement

The College of Animal Welfare (AW)



Make a simple hedgehog house



You will need:

- Medium-sized plastic storage box
- Stanley knife
- Leaf litter
- Dry grass or straw
- Carrier bag
- Twigs and dry leaves

- 1 Cut two side air vents and an entrance into the plastic box.
- 2 Put some leaf litter inside the box, with clean, dry grass or straw on top.
- 3 Tuck the box near a hedge (with the entrance facing south if possible).
- 4 Put an opened-up carrier bag over the top of the box, then cover with twigs, dry grass and leaves.

Illustration: Corinne Welch © Copyright: Kogee, Birney and Mitchell, 2005

Year 1

#TAKINGACTION

Focus: Trees and biodiversity. Outdoor Classroom Day - to collect items for our Sustainable Art Project

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, PSHE.

Suggested tasks and topics:

- **Why are trees important to us and our future planet?**
(Outdoor Classroom Day to focus on trees around our school site.) Leaf collection – can we work out tree species, types? What lives in the trees on the school grounds? Twigs, sticks etc – for the art work). (Art, Science, Geography)
- **Tree planting.** To mark Y1s Sustainability Project – they will plant a tree in the school grounds that they will watch grow throughout their time at the school. Utilise resources from: <https://queensgreencanopy.org/>
- **Create: Sustainable Art Pieces using forage findings.**
Children should be given materials that are recycled or found in the school grounds. The finished picture should represent the living world and contain a message from the child about their learning from sustainability week. (Back these onto card for wider displaying). **If time – can we collect bottle tops to create a relief piece of art to go on display?**
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE)
- **Poetry – acrostic poetry focused on Earth conservation and/or trees.** The poem should relate to earth, conservation of trees – drawing on the work over the week.

Evidence collation:

- Science books – tree classification work – what do we have on our school site?
- Ecology in our area – what sort of habitats do some of the creatures live in?
- Art created in pupil sketch pads – a few made for display?
- Photography of the tree-planting and the litter-picking.



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Year 2

#TAKINGACTION

Focus: Recycling and Sculpture, Recycling Nature

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, PSHE.

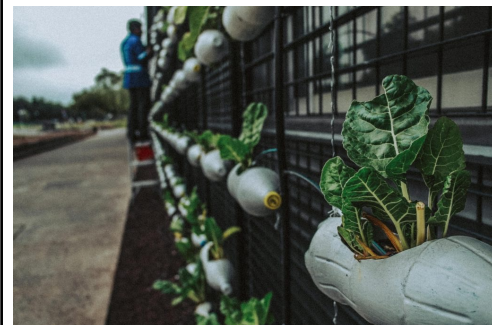
Suggested tasks and topics:

- **Why do we throw so much away and where does it end up?** Youtube – The Whale's Tale
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFPoIU5iiYQ> Could children recount the story? It's a textless tale – screen grab stills to help children tell it their way in their English books? Explore in Science – the wider themes of plastic pollution – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yogivh3GkaE>
- **Rubbish challenge.** Every child to bring in waste plastic from their home for the week. (This will later be used for sculpture – see the examples on the right). You could incorporate Maths into this – weighing the daily rubbish and classes having a totaliser? Who creates the most rubbish? You could discuss how much rubbish there is within the class – is it wasteful? Remind pupils of the Whale's Tale. What if this didn't go into recycling and ended up in the ocean (discuss – cause and effect).
- Part 2 – Art outcome – to create some sculpture – using chicken wire models – filled with the rubbish you collect.
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE).
- Take photos of rubbish found out and about - what does it suggest about lifestyles people have?
- **Outdoor rubbish** – or is it? Spend an afternoon/morning in the school fields. What can you collect – can you see rubbish that needs to be put away? Can you find twigs and branches that could be used in different ways (outdoor shelter? Create a piece of art?) Challenge – to recycle things found outside to help the school environment.
- **Writing Published Piece:** Does the school recycle enough? Children to write a letter to the headteacher with their findings. Do we need more recycling stations? Do we need better recycling posters?

Evidence collation:

- Science books – Make links between Southampton and the water – and the local rubbish/pollution. Pupils to evaluate the impact of that pollution.
- Writing published piece – a letter to the Headteacher summing up what needs to change to improve recycling.

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Year 3

#TAKINGACTION

Focus: Plants, Growth and Composting. (Direct link to Sum 1 and Sum 2 Science)

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, PSHE.

Suggested tasks and topics:

- **Upcycling old items to use as homes for plants.** Research different vessels to be used/repurposed to become homes for plants around our school site. Research plant types that are deciduous – and may last the year. Consider ways of installing plants such as ivy – around our railings – they absorb CO2. Pupils to design (Art) and annotate (Science) plant choices and the purpose (to clean air, to support wildlife) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZYIN5C0aVM>



- **Research the purpose of compost – how does it help plants?**
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Activity/Composting-life-cycle> Research suitable composters for school – what could we add? Kitchen waste? Paper shredding waste? Where could it be sited? Possible outcome – written piece about the process of composting? (School to purchase composter so that you can demonstrate use to children)
- **Planting – a day outdoors – planting items such as:**
 - Food to grow (vegetables)
 - Plants to heal (ivy, to provide oxygen)
 - Plants to enjoy (vibrant, eye-catching).
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE)

Evidence collation:

- Create and make – ideas round recycling products that we can use in the school grounds for our project. Art and Design – plus copies/photos in Science to annotate.
- Compost research – Science books.
- English – the process of composting – information text.
- Science – planting flowers/vegetables and pupils discussing what they have chosen and why.



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Year 4

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Focus: Energy and Water Consumption

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, Maths, PSHE.

Suggested tasks and topics:

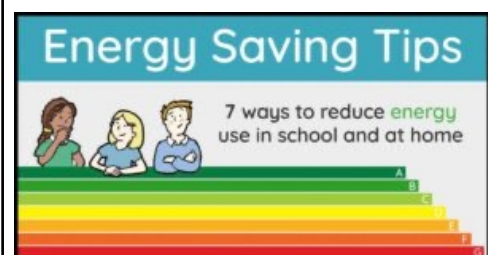
- **How much energy do we waste at school?**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBo-GGNwsEU> Use the casestudy of Freshford School. Together with pupils – design an action plan of areas that we want to understand more about at our school. How could we better save energy? Pupils to devise a plan for the next day – they are to be able to survey, observe and understand how energy is wasted.
- **Energy waste results** – tabulating the results in charts, tallies and graphs. Using this information to scale up the problem – e.g. If in one day we waste X amount of energy – how much do we waste in a year?
- Children to then create a plan for improving energy waste in school. This should be a written piece considering how they can interest peers, teachers and leaders to help improve the school. Are there areas we are already better at? Are there worrying concerns?
- **Creating an assembly for the school.** The results from the surveys will be fed back to everybody in school. A special assembly – delivered by pupils – will be held during the week. Y4 will create an action plan to improve it and Y4 pupils will be voted in to become energy guardians.
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE)
- **Wasting water and it's impact on the environment.**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTcFXJT0Fsc> Video linked to Climate Change and water. What could the school do to improve this situation? Pupils to think about the amount of water the school uses in day, week, month and a year. Consider the issues we face – flooding when children mess around with taps, unnecessary flushing, silly behaviour wasting water in the toilets. Possible literacy topic – 'Improving the use of water at our school' – either through an information text or a letter/speech? Think about changes – push-fit tap changes etc. Link to Science and Water.

Evidence collation:

- English books – survey ideas, results and action plan.
- English books – improving water use – letter/speech (GD), information text (ARE and below)



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Year 5

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Focus: Food waste – At Home and School. Planting a wild-flower meadow – sustainability for insects.

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, PSHE.

Suggested tasks and topics:

- **Southampton Biosphere – Wildflower meadows**
parksvolunteers@southampton.gov.uk Support pupils to write to the council (at the attached email) to ask about help in establishing a wild-flower meadow outside of the school grounds. Use the Southampton City Green Pledge information to see what the City is doing to help the cause. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=339R0lp9d_s WWF WildFlower Benefits. Pupils to design (D&T) and plant a WildFlower Meadow.
- **Written Piece: Biodiversity from WildFlower Meadows.**
Pupils to create a published written piece linked to the benefits of utilising space to create wild meadows to encourage nature. Focus on pollinators for food crops, creating a food chain for birds/animals etc.
- **Food Waste and the impact on Climate Change**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjxwfp8rs34> Wexford Council Video and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccR2zK6yn8o> BBC News. Pupils to compile a school report - using iPads – to show the impact of food waste in our locality. They will investigate the waste food issue in our school canteen over 1 school day. Simultaneously they will create a published food waste guide for the school as well as News Report to be shared to every class in Class Worship. **Link to school foodbank – to highlight our approach to ensuring unwanted food/products can be given out.
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE)

Evidence collation:

- Science books – separate section identified as 'Sustainability & Ecology Week' with reference to work on WildFlower Meadows (Biosphere support), examples of local WildFlower work, Design of pupils' own and reasons for choosing specific flowers to encourage animals. Food waste – the big issues.
- English – Information text – WildFlower Meadows.
- English – Food Waste Report – investigatory report.



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Year 6

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Focus: Young Environmental Activists – making the case for a greener future – before it's too late.

Curricula links: Science, Literacy, Art & Design, PSHE.

Suggested tasks and topics:

- **Why isn't enough being done to stop Climate Change?**
Explore the video narrated by David Attenborough (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAa58N4Jlos>) it's a powerful vehicle for getting the children to think. Literacy link – fact file – what is Climate Change? Who is causing it? How could it be stopped? Potential outcome: Poetry to express what the video made them feel? Hopelessness of the planet? A need to change?
- **What is happening further across the World – focus on Brazil (Link back to Spring 2 Geography Unit).** Consider the impact of the former president Jair Bolsonaro. Newsround video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFDO-LV5oEQ> demonstrates a balanced argument of deforestation vs farming. Where do pupils sit? COP27 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPsNPkPoejY>
- **Local issues:** The Expansion of Southampton City Airport. The purchase of Marlhill Copse to destroy local nature to support the new runway. Pupils to have time to research and review evidence. Do they agree with the proposed runway? (Commerce, connecting Southampton to the world) or are they worried about the ecological impact? Potential outcome – a letter to a local MP or to the CEO of the Airport?
- **Litter around the local area.** Are there issues with litter near our school? ECO-action – children to be given gloves and bin-bags to collect litter – bar chart modelling between classes? Tally?. **Competition – which class can clean up the most litter during Sustainability Week?** (Link to Maths, PE, Science, PSHE)

Final task: Pupils to stage a protest – albeit peacefully – to share/show their concern for Climate Change. Inspired by Greta Thunberg's UN speech in 2019:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg> Pupils will have the opportunity to consider the impact of the speech – (suggested reading lesson – using a transcript of the speech) before creating their own banner placards and protest cards. These need to be polished, finished pieces. It would be useful to make local links to specific concerns – whether that's the Airport, rubbish dumping (fly tipping), congestion of cars and pollution or even local litter issues. **Placards to be made into a permanent display.** Photos of child with placards in Writing books with a statement of action they intend to take to improve Climate Change.



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