

# **Portfield Farm Eco Nursery & Forest School**

We are an Ofsted rated Outstanding Setting

Award winning Wildlife Garden



**Our Environment MUST be More  
SUSTAINABLE**



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## Our Sensitive Eco Approach

We would like you to consider these very wise words -

*“Heal the World, make it a better place for you, for me and for the entire human race”*

Then we hope that you will help the children in nursery to make the small changes that in turn will make very large changes to our planet.

As you are know, we have recently been judged as “Outstanding” by two different Ofsted inspectors in ten days. This is wonderful news and we all certainly worked hard to achieve this high standard across the board, however it leaves us thinking what more can we do to help our children?

Something BIG, which can help all children, everywhere, now and for the future, and, being a Forest School Nursery – what can we do to help our environment and to encourage wildlife to flourish around us?



## Why should our nursery be sustainable?

The key to a more sustainable planet is in the way we educate the next generation.

We want our children to grow up understanding how they can look after the environment and we hope, in turn to involve their parents, family, and friends in becoming more sustainable so that we can all reduce our carbon footprint.

As with all learning, the sooner we can teach the core principles, the better.

## How are We learning and helping our future?

### Energy

We've turned down our thermostat to a constant temperature of 21°

We use low energy light bulbs

Our walls are insulated and our many windows are double glazed to stop heat from escaping.

We will be installing some solar panels in the future to support our energy use.

### Why does sustainability matter?

Because we want our children to grow up in a clean, healthy, natural world, not a polluted world.

Pollution, excessive waste, and carbon pollution are claiming our planet.

Eco-Schools are to be found worldwide and recommend several areas in which we could restrict our impact on the world.

They include:-

- |                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Transport           | Energy         |
| Litter              | Healthy Living |
| Waste               | Biodiversity   |
| Water               | School Grounds |
| Global Perspectives |                |

## Litter



We make sure not to drop litter and to put it in the proper re-cycling bin. The children make their own, informed, choice to use the re-cycling bin in the nursery.

## Waste

We are careful not to take more of anything than we need.

We are making every effort to use less paper.

We are conscious of the amount of non-recyclable packaging on our food and other purchases and are careful to avoid this whenever possible (buying in bulk helps).

## Water

We are careful not to leave taps running while washing our hands and cleaning our teeth.

We collect rainwater to water the gardens.

## Transport

We encourage Green Miles by using local suppliers for anything that we cannot produce ourselves.

We walk whenever we can.

### Healthy Living

We eat healthy food – some of which we grow ourselves.

We walk lots.

We play outside in the fresh air.

Some of us practice yoga.

### Biodiversity

We support a wide variety of species in their natural habitats around the nursery.

We are careful not to compromise or destroy these habitats and we build “hotels” for animals and bugs.

We nurture and feed the wildlife around us.







### School Grounds

Our Wildlife Garden will support bees, birds, butterflies, hedgehogs, mice, voles and many, many more species in their own habitats.

Our Bird, Bee and Butterfly hedge is due to be delivered on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, and will include one hundred and forty of each eight species.

## OUR GREAT OAK TREE RE-PLANTING INITIATIVE

We are removing self-seeded oak saplings and putting them into pots for the children to bring home. While we know that not everyone has acres of ground like us (and please do not plant them near your house), it would be good if you have a “far off” corner in your garden to re-plant the trees. If not, why don't you go to the riverside or a park to plant your sapling and encourage your child to watch their tree as it grows into a giant oak!



### Global Perspectives

The whole world needs to understand and become involved in preserving the planet.



## Plastic and the throwaway society

For us at Portfield Farm, reducing the use of all plastics is something that can have a BIG influence on the “throwaway” attitudes that are causing harm to our planet.

Even though plastic toys are pretty indestructible, we teach our children to “play and care” for everything so that our toys are not put down and forgotten about but put away when the child has finished with it and it is there for other children – thus our plastic toys are recycled for many more children to enjoy and we will not replace these with more plastic items.

We have replaced our plastic plates and cups with ceramics (plastic ones recycled in the sandpit) and we no longer use plastic cutlery (with the exception of the babies who use plastic trainer spoons). The children have learned that although they could drop a plastic cup with no consequences, “throw it away” they do now appreciate that there are consequences if a ceramic plate falls to the floor.

They also know that there is a proper way to save this for recycling.

We need to be aware and to teach our children to care for the world – they will then teach, encourage, and include their family and friends (why not let your children teach their neighbours) and so on until this becomes a global perspective on the future of the planet

## How we are learning to be more sustainable

**Now that we know why sustainability is so important, let's look at how we can and are making Portfield Farm a more environmentally friendly place to be.**

### Recycling

Recycling can help us all to save a lot of waste and it encourages the children to consider where things end up.

The children all have their own recycling bin in the the nursery and you probably have some provided by the local authority for your home, but why not have kid-sized recycling bins too. They will soon be keeping you in line with the recycling!

### Re-use and re-purpose

We try not to just throw things away, instead we think of ways we can re-use them. For instance, we use the inside of kitchen and toilet rolls for painting and modelling.

We try very hard to avoid single-use, disposable items such as plastic cups and cutlery. By learning that the type of materials we choose to use are not just to be thrown away we will become more mindful of the things we use in the future.

### Use less paper

By communicating with you (parents) electronically (invoices, newsletters, notices etc) we are effectively cutting down our use of paper already.

But our use of Forest friendly paper goods, when it is necessary to use paper at all, will also have a notable effect on the forests of our planet.

We describe paper made from quick growing, purposely planted trees, which re-planted one for one as they are cut down and are therefore eternally sustainable, as Forest Friendly.

*IT IS QUITE AMAZING JUST HOW MUCH  
PAPER WE USE IN A DAY AT NURSERY:  
THE PAPER WE DRAW ON, TOILET  
PAPER, AND PAPER TOWELS ARE JUST A  
FEW.  
IF WE USE RECYCLABLE AND FULLY  
BIODEGRADABLE PAPERS WHICH DO  
NOT CONTAIN CHLORINE, WE CAN  
HELP TO MAKE A CREDIBLE  
DIFFERENCE.*

## Purchases

We collect natural materials like stones, twigs, and feathers for crafting.

We take only what we need and think about the way in which we use it.

We try to only make sustainable equipment purchases like wooden toys and tables instead of plastic which is likely to need replacing more frequently. Whenever possible we will buy recycled or recyclable items such as aprons, writing and drawing paper, toilet rolls, bin liners, wellies, and plastic macs.

We also try to purchase our new resources in bulk to avoid excess packaging. For example, biodegradable nappies and wipes are available at lower prices in bulk, online – why not try sharing an order with a friend to cut costs and get them involved with sustainability.

## Make more use of the outdoors (and your green fingers!)

The children already grow a selection of fruit and vegetables in their garden, but for next spring we plan to have a full-scale kitchen-garden in full swing. This will mean that we can be almost self-sufficient in this area and as well as growing clean, organic food (Solo produces our fully organic manure!) we are cutting out air miles and encouraging green miles.

Composting is great fun!

We make our own compost knowing that in six months' time we will be able to use it to nourish our new season's crops

### Crafts

Because we draw and paint a lot at nursery, we have thought carefully about the types of paint, glitter, and pens we use and have selected a range of Forest Friendly goods in order to make an easy environmental win.

Washing up after craft activities, using our usual chemical-based cleaning products, means that the bad stuff can get into our water system and eventually into the sea.

By making our own, chemical and chlorine free, and by being careful only to buy eco-friendly products we are preventing some of these dangerous chemicals and microplastics from polluting the sea and killing fish.

### Water conservation

### How we are going to be green

Here are some of the ways we are going to be more sustainable at Portfield Farm

We'll use recycled and Forest Friendly stationery and craft supplies.

We'll grow more of our own fruit and vegetables in our new kitchen-garden and use local producers to promote green miles.



We have learned not to leave taps running.

As far as possible we use collected water for the gardens.

### How to get everyone involved

Being eco-friendly is about more than the impact of the practices we follow at nursery or the impact we have on our children. Our environmental “tentacles” can reach everyone with whom we interact, through the nursery and beyond. We also have young staff members who are learning how they can help protect their own future too. We will be encouraging them to have a more positive impact when choosing their cosmetics and toiletries.

We would like you, as parents, to join us and support your children in their efforts. Perhaps you could consider:-

- Turning down the heating by just one degree.
- Changing to low energy lightbulbs.
- Using rainwater for the garden.



- Walking or using your bike more often instead of the car.
- Buying locally produced food.
- Sharing bulk purchasing with friends, family, and other parents to cut down on packaging.
- Recycling your mobile phones.
- Change to eco-friendly cleaning and skincare products. These are readily available in most super-markets; Sainsbury carry a full range – or you could make your own. The children have been trying this and their recipes are at the end of the booklet!
- Source recyclable plastic macs, wellies, overalls, and aprons.

Have a go – and get everyone you know to join in – after all – it's for all our benefit.



## Don't just throw it away!

We are careful not to just consign our used resources to the bin as we are conscious that the children will not learn sustainability if we do this.

We try to use as many as possible of these recycling options for things we don't need any more. The following are just some ideas of how to help:-

Putting larger items on ebay or local marketplace sites.

Donating to charity shops.

Donating to charities who help people needing to start over and set up again.

Re-using toys by dismantling them and using the parts or by finding a new use for them.



## PESTER POWER

Getting the children involved in recycling, composting, and re-using doesn't just teach the children these important lessons.

Pester Power is a wonderful tool – we all know about the toy or sweets that our child has seen and absolutely “needs”, or the friend that they just must go to play with!

Just imagine when your children start to ask “can we recycle the rubbish at home?”, “where is our compost bin?”, and insist on donating their old toys and clothes to the charity shop – will you be able to resist?

We hope not and we hope you get involved and encourage the children in their efforts.

**Let's save money too!**

Being eco-friendly isn't always easy on the purse so here are some top tips on how to keep costs down in order to afford the sometimes slightly more expensive sustainable alternatives.

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*On bulk buying*

*If we bulk buy Forest Friendly paper and eco-friendly cleaning products, we can save a huge amount of money.*

*How about getting together with other like-minded parents and bulk buy your biodegradable nappies and wipes (details later). It might seem like a bit of a bind distributing them but if you set up an account and take turns doing the ordering or each take responsibility for one type of supply it will be easier – you could always do the “share out” in the nursery car park!*

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**Nappies**

Aldi's Mamia nappies are chlorine free, have no petroleum-based plastics, and no phthalates and are budget friendly!

We have details of other eco-friendly nappies later

On-going wholesale

Why not get together and organise to buy in bulk – many suppliers will arrange a wholesale

**TAKE IT BIT BY BIT**

You don't have to do it all at once.

If you do just one thing and do it well it can make a considerable change.

If you don't you  
to ... (by m

## Our “extra bits”

### Eco-friendly nappy suppliers

Eco-friendly nappies should be free of phthalates and biodegradable. Many use wood pulp from sustainably managed forests for their core and are covered in eco-friendly pure unbleached cotton.



Here are some of the most easily available:-

Aldi – own brand – Mamia.

Sainsbury's – own brand.

Eco by Naty Nappies – available from Sainsbury's.

Beaming Baby Nappies – available online.

Kit & Kin Eco Nappies – available online and at Tesco.

And – you can get a sample pack of Mum & You Eco-Friendly Nappies from [mumandyou.com/nappies/eco-friendly](http://mumandyou.com/nappies/eco-friendly). These are also available at Sainsbury's but if you subscribe online the price is much lower! Mum & You also make 100% biodegradable baby wipes and a Face The Day Stick – coconut and sunflower oils to protect baby's face from wind, rain, and dribble!

## Our Eco-Friendly Recipes

### WASHING-UP LIQUID

3 tablespoons liquid castile soap, 2 cups water, 2 teaspoons glycerine, 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar, 10 drops lavender oil.

Mix well in a clean, empty “squirty” bottle and you're ready to go - use this in our other recipes too.

### WINDOW CLEANER

Fill a bottle to half full with white vinegar and top up with water. If windows are very dirty add a couple of squirts of our washing-up liquid. SHAKE AND GO!

### ANTI-BAC SPRAY

In a clean spray bottle, mix:

3 cups water, half cup white vinegar, 15 drops lavender or lemon oil, and 1 teaspoon baking powder.

### TOILET CLEANER

Mix together:

Three-quarters cup baking powder, three-quarters cup white vinegar, 10 drops tea-tree oil, and 10 drops lavender oil.

### FABRIC SOFTNER

Mix together:

Half cup baking powder, half cup of cornflower, and a small amount of water.

**GO – HAVE A GO AND HAVE FUN – YOUR CHILDREN WILL LOVE TO HELP YOU!**





## TAKE A LOOK AT THESE!

Taken from EWG's 2019 data collection:

### The Dirty Dozen (most pesticide contaminated fruit & vegetables)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Strawberries  | 9. Pears (another one for the orchard)  |
| 2. Spinach   | 10. Tomatoes                            |
| 3. Kale  | 11. Celery                              |
| 4. Nectarines  | 12. Potatoes (not the ones grown at PF) |
| 5. Apples (a good reason for having our own orchard at PF) |   |
| 6. Grapes  |   |



7. Peaches

8. Cherries (will feature in our orchard)

And – The Clean Fifteen

1. Avocado
2. Sweetcorn
3. Pineapple
4. Cabbage (here's one we will be growing)
5. Onion (and these)
6. Peas
7. Papaya
8. Asparagus

9. Mango
10. Aubergine
11. Honeydew Melon
12. Kiwi
13. Cantaloupe Melon
14. Cauliflower
15. Broccoli



## **AND FINALLY**

Please help us by supporting your children in their efforts to lead a sustainable lifestyle and to learn to care for their planet for the rest of their lives and pass their ethos on to their own children and grandchildren. In this way we will lay our part in the Global Perspective.

- ✓ Please carry the education on at home.
- ✓ Help the children to find Forest Friendly products.
- ✓ Help them to identify Forest Friendly items by the special markings.
- ✓ Try growing at home – remember to find a spot for your oak tree sapling.
- ✓ Encourage wildlife in your garden at home.
- ✓ Please try to give the children some serious encouragement.

✓ And please, please send only biodegradable nappies in to Nursery.

**Thank you,**

**From**

**All at Portfield Farm Eco Nursery & Forest School**

