

## Derby Forest School Climate Action Plan

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At Derby Forest School, we are committed to protecting and nurturing the environment. As part of our goal to provide a nature-based learning experience, we aim to inspire children, families, and staff to embrace sustainability both at Forest School and at home.

Being based at Whistlewood Common, a community-led site designed along permaculture principles, we are already off-grid, significantly minimising our environmental impact through sustainable practices and natural systems. However, we are committed to continuously improving our sustainability practices and reducing our impact on the planet.

Our Current Sustainable Practices:

We have already implemented a range of measures that align with our ethical policy and contribute to reducing waste and environmental impact:

- Online Learning Journeys: We use digital platforms to track and share children's progress, minimising paper waste and supporting a paper-free office environment.
- Recycling and Reusing: We prioritise the use of natural and recycled materials in our crafts and educational activities, ensuring that waste is minimised and reused wherever possible.
- Sustainable Food Choices: We aim to use fair trade, unpackaged ingredients in our cooking where possible, and encourage parents to use reusable lunchboxes, promoting sustainable food consumption.
- We grow organic fruit on site and use homegrown produce when available in our cooking, demonstrating to our children where food comes from and teaching them about local, seasonal produce, as well as minimising our carbon footprint.
- Cloth Nappies: We support the use of cloth nappies and encourage parents to use eco-friendly alternatives.
- Personal Responsibility for Waste: We send home all personal waste (packed lunches and nappies) to encourage children and families to take responsibility for their own environmental impact.
- Compost Toilets: We currently use compost toilets, with the waste being responsibly utilised to nourish the trees and plants growing on-site, contributing to a closed-loop, sustainable system.
- Composting: We compost organic waste, including food scraps from our cooking activities, to create nutrient-rich soil for the garden and nature-based learning projects.

Key Focus Areas for Our Climate Action Plan:

1. Reducing the carbon footprint of travel: As most of our families and staff need to travel to our site, this is the largest source of our carbon footprint. We aim to:

- Encourage car sharing: We will promote carpooling among families to reduce the number of individual car journeys.
- Support sustainable transport: Where possible, we will encourage walking, cycling, or the use of public transport by providing information on sustainable transport options in the local area.

2. Energy and resource efficiency: As an off-grid nursery, we already use renewable energy sources and rainwater harvesting systems but we can further reduce our consumption by:

- Optimising water usage: We will continue to bring our own heated water for hand washing but will also explore water-saving technologies like low-flow taps and using rainwater for water used in play.
- Energy-Efficient Heating: We will maintain and optimize our off-grid heating systems to ensure they operate as efficiently as possible, we currently use a log burning stove in our indoor space and a campfire outdoors and will aim to minimise the amount of firewood we use through responsible use.

3. Environmental Education and Community Involvement: We will continue to instil values of environmental stewardship in our children, families, and staff by:

- Sustainability projects for children: Engaging children in hands-on environmental projects, such as planting trees; growing fruit and vegetables; and caring for wildlife, fostering a deep connection to the natural world.
- Educational Workshops for Families: Offering workshops and resources on sustainability topics for our families, such as reducing household waste, creating eco-friendly gardens, and mindful consumption through our link with Whistlewood Common.

4. Feedback Loop: We will regularly survey staff and families for feedback on our sustainability practices and areas where we can improve, ensuring that our climate action plan evolves as needed.