

Environmental Policy and Procedures

Last Updated: June 2026

Purpose and Scope

We recognise our duty of care to minimise environmental harm and to consider climate-related risks to our service users, colleagues and communities. This policy supplements Health & Safety (esp. SA 3-6 and SA 3-18) and covers carbon and energy, water, circular economy (waste & reuse), travel emissions, digital footprint, procurement impacts, biodiversity and climate resilience.

It applies to Kids-operated premises, outreach, community and virtual delivery, and to all colleagues. Where Kids shares sites or works with partners, this policy is our minimum standard.

Policy Statement and Principles

We will reduce our environmental impact through measurable objectives, continual improvement and transparent reporting.

Principles: prevention first (avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle), proportionate and practical, evidence-led, and shared responsibility.

Definitions

Waste follows the hierarchy: prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, dispose. Additional terms: carbon emissions, healthcare waste, digital footprint, and climate resilience.

Objectives (2026–2029)

- **Paper:** reduce paper purchasing by 15% by March 2029.
- **Electricity:** reduce electricity usage by 20% by March 2029.

Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board:** receives annual summary.
- **ELT:** approves objectives and removes barriers.
- **Health & Safety Lead:** owner, monitoring and reporting; ensures alignment with SA 3-6 and SA 3-18.
- **Facilities/Operations & Service Managers:** implement locally; maintain good practice; ensure contractor compliance.
- **Procurement Lead:** embeds sustainability in purchasing.
- **IT Lead:** manages digital footprint actions.
- **All colleagues:** comply and contribute ideas.

Legal and Other Requirements

We comply with applicable environmental, health & safety and waste requirements and follow recognised good practice, including the waste hierarchy, duty of care for waste, safe management of healthcare waste, and energy and water efficiency expectations. Where Kids is not the bill payer/landlord, we will work with property owners to influence improvements.

Waste, Pollution and Circularity

Separate recycling, secure healthcare waste, competent contractors, regular collections, and prevention of nuisance or pollution. Prioritise reduce/reuse (refill, repair, internal reuse of furniture/IT) before disposal. Bonfires are not permitted; risk-assessed fire pit/BBQ use is limited to structured activities with controls. Follow Infection & Contamination Control and pest controls for food waste.

Energy and Carbon Management

Switch off non-essential equipment; use rechargeable batteries where safe; adopt energy-efficient lighting and controls where feasible; purchase energy-efficient products; set heating thoughtfully (typical office set points 19–21°C, subject to service user needs); record simple readings in Kids-controlled sites to track use.

Water Management

Minimise water use, fix leaks promptly, use efficient fixtures where feasible, encourage good habits, and follow Legionella controls.

Digital Footprint

Buy efficient devices; extend lifecycles within IT security limits; reduce duplicate files and large email attachments by using shared storage; ensure secure, compliant recycling of ICT equipment.

Sustainable Procurement

Order only what is needed; prefer durable, repairable and recycled-content goods; consider whole-life cost and environmental performance; avoid unnecessary transport; include proportionate sustainability criteria in tenders; prioritise reuse/donation (where safe) and recycling at end of life.

Travel and Transport

Plan to avoid travel where possible; prioritise remote meetings. If travel is necessary, choose the lowest-carbon practical mode that meets safeguarding and access needs; combine trips; avoid idling; ensure vehicles are roadworthy. Transport service users only when contractually required or necessary for safe, effective delivery and risk-assessed.

Monitoring, KPIs and Reporting

Quarterly indicators (where available): energy, paper, recycling, business mileage/rail usage, training completion, and incident log. NHSL provides an annual report to ELT with progress and next-year objectives; a summary is shared internally and noted by the Board.

Training and Engagement

Induction for all; role-specific refreshers every 2 years for managers and facilities/purchasing roles.

Community, Biodiversity and Neighbourliness

We will be considerate neighbours and, where we manage outdoor spaces, consider simple biodiversity actions that are appropriate and safe. We will support local environmental initiatives aligned to our mission.

Documentation, Records and Non-Compliance

Policies are on PeopleHR. Sites must retain applicable waste and contractor records with H&S documents. Report incidents or non-compliance to Line Manager and NHSL; record corrective actions. Serious or repeated non-compliance may lead to disciplinary action.

Version Control

Author: NHSL • Consultation: Facilities/Operations, IT, Procurement, Safeguarding, HR • Approval: ELT (Board noting)

Version history: v1.0 Sept 2025; v2.0 2026 (modernised with objectives, monitoring, water, digital, procurement, resilience, governance).

Appendices (Toolkit)

- A. 2026–2029 Objectives & Measures (template)
- B. Site Action Checklist (1 page)
- C. Travel Decision Tree (1 page)
- D. Glossary & Quick Links
- E. Kids Educational Sustainability & Climate Action Framework

Environmental Policy Toolkit Appendices

Appendix A: 2026–2029 Objectives & Measures Template

Use this template to set, track and review environmental objectives annually.

Objective	Baseline	Owner	Measure / KPI	Due Date

Appendix B: Site Action Checklist

- Confirm recycling facilities available and clearly labelled
- Check waste storage is secure, clean and pest-proof
- Confirm food waste disposed correctly
- Ensure switch-off procedures in place for equipment
- Heating set points appropriate (19–21°C unless service needs differ)
- Check for leaks (report immediately)

- Confirm safe storage of chemicals and hazardous waste
- Outdoor areas maintained safely and biodiversity considered

Appendix C: Travel Decision Tree

Use this decision guide to choose the lowest-carbon practical travel option.

1. Can this meeting be remote? If yes → choose remote.
2. If travel is required → choose lowest-carbon practical mode.
 3. - Walking/cycling (where safe)
 4. - Public transport
 5. - Shared car travel
 6. - Individual car (only where necessary)
3. Combine trips where possible.
4. Record exceptions where higher-carbon travel was necessary.

Appendix D: Glossary & Quick Links

Key terms and links to supporting documents and guidance.

- **Carbon emissions:** greenhouse gases from energy, travel and goods.
- **Circular economy:** reduce, reuse, repair, recycle before disposal.
- **Healthcare waste:** waste requiring special handling (sharps, infectious).
- **Digital footprint:** impact from digital storage, devices, cloud services.

Appendix E

Kids Education Sustainability & Climate Action Framework

Supplement to the Kids Environmental Policy

Version: Draft February 2026

Review: February 2028

Applies to: All Kids Education Settings (Early Years, Learning Hubs, Transitions, Youth & Community Learning)

1. Purpose

Kids is committed to creating learning environments where children and young people can thrive in safe, healthy, and sustainable spaces. As a values-driven provider of education and support, we believe sustainability is fundamental to wellbeing, equality, and future opportunity.

This framework sets out a shared approach for all Kids education settings to:






- Cultivate environmental awareness and responsibility
- Embed sustainability principles into learning experiences
- Reduce environmental impact across our sites and teaching activities
- Strengthen resilience to climate-related risks
- Foster community partnerships that benefit people and the planet
- Contribute to organisational environmental goals in a way that centres children's rights, inclusion, and SEND-specific needs

This framework should be read alongside:

- Kids Environmental Policy & Procedures (2026)
 - Kids Health & Safety Policies (including SA 3-6, SA 3-18)
 - Kids Curriculum and Quality Framework
 - Kids Procurement and Travel Policies
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2. Vision

Kids education settings will model sustainability through:

-  **Healthy and resource-aware spaces**
-  **Climate-ready environments and resilient operations**
-  **Learning that empowers informed, active, climate-literate citizens**
-  **Community collaboration and leadership**
-  **Wellbeing-centred practices that benefit staff and learners**

We believe environmental action, financial responsibility, and staff/student wellbeing are interconnected. Sustainable practices help create calmer, cleaner, healthier learning spaces that support emotional regulation, sensory needs, and inclusive participation.

3. National Context

In line with the UK Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2022–2025), all education settings must:

- Nominate a **Sustainability Lead**
- Develop a **Climate Action Plan**
- Provide meaningful climate education suited to age and ability
- Strengthen climate resilience and biodiversity
- Promote green careers and skills

This framework provides Kids-wide guidance to achieve this consistently.

4. Core Framework Areas

Kids education settings will develop actions under four domains:

A. Decarbonisation

Reducing emissions across learning environments and operations.

Commitments

- Monitor and reduce energy use across classrooms, buildings, and equipment
- Choose lower-carbon travel options for learning activities and colleague commitments
- Prioritise energy-efficient and durable IT and teaching equipment
- Reduce reliance on single-use materials
- Support organisational objectives (paper reduction, travel emissions, recycling targets)

Examples of practice

- “Switch Off” routines incorporated into end-of-day checklists
 - Turn-taking eco-monitors in classrooms
 - Using digital learning platforms to reduce printing
 - Encouraging active travel for local community sessions
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B. Adaptation & Climate Resilience

Preparing learning environments for climate-related risks and ensuring safety, accessibility and continuity.

Commitments

- Identify risks such as overheating, flooding, air quality, storms
- Ensure learning spaces have safe temperatures, ventilation and shading
- Adapt outdoor learning spaces to be safe in varied weather
- Include climate resilience considerations in risk assessments and site planning
- Support children and families during climate-related disruptions

Examples of practice

- Cool-down protocols for heatwaves
 - Flood-aware evacuation plans
 - Shade, hydration and sensory-safe outdoor learning
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C. Biodiversity, Nature & the Built Environment

Strengthening children’s connection to nature and improving local ecosystems.

Commitments

- Incorporate nature-connected learning into sessions
- Create opportunities for hands-on ecological engagement
- Develop or maintain biodiverse outdoor areas, where safely possible
- Engage with national initiatives (e.g., Nature Park, local wildlife groups)

Examples of practice

- Planting sensory-friendly, low-allergen gardens
- Bug hotels, bird feeders, mini wild spaces
- Seasonal planting or nature challenges

D. Education, Participation & Green Skills

Providing climate-literate, inclusive education that empowers action.

Commitments

- Integrate sustainability themes into curriculum and session planning
- Provide colleagues with CPD and training
- Promote green careers and skill pathways for older learners
- Celebrate learner-led sustainability projects
- Ensure content is adapted for SEND needs, communication styles, and sensory profiles

Examples of practice

- Visual learning modules on weather, nature cycles, recycling
- Life-skills activities: growing food, caring for spaces
- Youth-led climate clubs, eco-councils, green enterprise projects

5. Cross-Cutting Principles

All Kids education settings will embed these principles:

Inclusion and Accessibility

Climate learning must be adapted to a wide range of communication needs, cognitive levels, sensory profiles and trauma-informed practices.

Wellbeing

Sustainability activities must support regulation, calmness, sensory needs, and mental health.

Co-production

Learners, families, colleagues and volunteers co-design sustainability activities wherever possible.

Community Focus

Settings build partnerships with local groups, schools, councils, charities and green networks.

Financial Responsibility

Activities should be low-cost and have clear value. Waste reduction and energy efficiency support Kids' financial sustainability.

6. Governance & Roles

Kids Education Sustainability Lead (national)

- Coordinates the Framework
- Provides resources and guidance
- Collects annual data across settings
- Supports sites to develop Climate Action Plans

Setting-Level Sustainability Champion

Every setting must nominate a Champion (colleague or volunteer) who will:

- Lead local action plans
- Coordinate colleague and learner engagement
- Liaise with the national lead
- Support audits and tracking
- Promote wellbeing-centred sustainability practices

Leadership and Managers

- Include sustainability in improvement planning
- Ensure safe, accessible environments for climate resilience
- Support colleague time for training or projects

All Colleagues

- Model sustainable behaviours
 - Integrate learning opportunities
 - Participate in monitoring and evaluation
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7. Climate Action Planning (CAP)

Each setting will develop a **simple, live Climate Action Plan**, covering:

1. **Decarbonisation actions**
2. **Adaptation & resilience**
3. **Biodiversity & environment**
4. **Education and participation**

Plans should include:

- Clear objectives
- Timelines
- Named responsibilities
- Resource needs
- SEND-appropriate adaptations
- How learners and families contribute
- Risks and enabling factors
- Links to Kids' organisational environmental KPIs

A template will be provided.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

Settings will:

- Update their Climate Action Plan termly
- Review progress annually in July
- Submit a short annual sustainability update to the national lead
- Share successes, challenges, and case studies
- Engage in peer learning activities across the Kids network

Monitoring focuses on:

- Progress against CAP actions
 - Learner participation
 - Colleague training
 - Environmental improvements (biodiversity, energy, waste)
 - Impact on wellbeing and inclusion
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9. Funding, Partnerships and Opportunities

Kids will support settings to:

- Identify funding opportunities for climate-related projects
- Build partnerships with local organisations
- Participate in national climate or nature initiatives
- Share resources, toolkits and learning across the charity

A coordinated approach strengthens bids and demonstrates evidence of impact.

10. Review

This Framework will be reviewed every **two years** to ensure:

- Alignment with updated DfE requirements
- Relevance to Kids' environmental policy
- Inclusion of new climate science or best practice
- Feedback from colleagues, learners and families