SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School

Our Approach to ECO and Sustainability

How environmental learning works at SS Peter & Paul · 2026–27

Intent

At SS Peter & Paul Catholic Primary School, caring for God's creation is part of how we live our faith. We want every child, from Nursery to Year 6, to notice and value the natural world, understand how everyday choices affect it, and feel empowered to make a positive difference. Environmental learning is woven through relevant EYFS experiences, National Curriculum subjects and enrichment opportunities; it is not taught as a separate statutory ECO subject. Through gardening, wildlife observation, outdoor exploration and practical action, children develop curiosity, scientific understanding, vocabulary, communication, teamwork and responsibility. Our Eco Warriors lead by example, helping the whole school care for its environment. We are committed to ensuring pupils with SEND, pupils learning English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils can participate meaningfully in these experiences. Inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, especially Care for Creation and the common good, we aim to grow knowledgeable, compassionate and active stewards of our shared home.

Implementation

- **Learning across the school:** environmental understanding is developed through EYFS exploration and relevant Science, Geography, Design and Technology, Art and English learning. Pupils observe, ask questions, record findings, make things and communicate ways to care for the environment.
- **Outdoor enrichment for every year group:** each year group takes part in a planned block of six consecutive weekly outdoor sessions, with age-appropriate, Forest School-inspired activities such as seasonal observation, natural-material exploration, teamwork, habitats and practical problem-solving. This is enrichment provision as the school develops towards future Forest School practice, not a claim of formal Forest School status.
- **Gardening and biodiversity:** children help grow and care for plants, improve growing spaces, investigate habitats and support pollinators. The RHS School Gardening Awards and National Education Nature Park provide useful frameworks for recording improvements and celebrating progress; award status is checked before being reported.
- **Eco Warriors leadership:** pupil representatives take responsibility for agreed monitoring tasks, including lights, recycling, plant care and litter. They share ideas, encourage others and review actions with staff.
- **Waste reduction and reuse:** children learn to reduce unnecessary waste, recycle appropriately and reuse donated or Scrapstore materials in creative activities, including recycled and upcycled art.
- **Faith and stewardship:** Catholic Social Teaching helps pupils connect practical environmental choices with gratitude, service, justice and care for the common good.
- **Inclusion and participation:** staff adapt outdoor tasks, language, equipment and adult support so pupils with different needs can contribute, succeed and develop confidence.
- **Community and annual events:** established activities include environmental visitors, fundraising and the recycled-art exhibition. Pupils also participate in suitable celebrations and projects such as Earth Day, World Bee Day, birdwatching, planting and links with Canons Community Garden.
- **Sustainable school improvement:** the ECO Lead works with pupils, staff and leaders to review gardening, biodiversity, waste and resource use, drawing on the DfE climate-action themes as a planning guide and keeping activities proportionate and achievable.

Impact

- **Environmental understanding:** pupils increasingly recognise local plants and habitats, describe seasonal changes and explain age-appropriate ways to care for nature and resources.
- **Participation and confidence:** children across year groups, including pupils who need additional support, take part in purposeful outdoor experiences and develop practical skills, communication, collaboration and resilience.
- **Pupil agency and responsibility:** Eco Warriors and their classmates demonstrate stewardship through visible actions, such as caring for growing areas, reducing waste and encouraging responsible energy use.
- **Evidence of change over time:** dated photographs, pupil comments, activity records and simple before-and-after checks show how learning opportunities and the school environment have developed, without treating attendance alone as proof of impact.

Assessment

- Assessment is ongoing through observation, pupil conversations, practical tasks and age-appropriate records linked to the relevant EYFS or National Curriculum learning.
- Staff use pupils' ability to explain ideas, apply environmental vocabulary and demonstrate practical care as evidence of developing knowledge and skills.
- The ECO Lead reviews the six-week outdoor session logs, pupil voice and participation, including access for SEND, EAL and disadvantaged groups, to identify improvements.
- Termly ECO reviews compare simple baselines with follow-up evidence for growing spaces, habitats, recycling and resource use; findings inform the annual ECO Action Plan.