

Green Guardians: A Primary School Guide to Sustainability

Welcome to Green Guardians, an essential guide for primary schools across the UK, dedicated to fostering a culture of sustainability within classrooms and school communities.

As educators, you play a crucial role in shaping the minds and habits of your young learners.

By integrating sustainability into your teaching, you can help children develop a lifelong respect for our planet. This guide provides you with the tools to make a positive environmental impact through engaging lesson plans, hands-on activities, and practical tips.

We hope you find this guide useful in your classrooms and that it helps to inspire the next generation of environmental champions.

From Ned, Sue and Tim
The Education Team





Waste Reduction

As any primary teacher will know, waste in the classroom can build up.

Whether it's the half cut out spacemen or the disregarded snacks at break time. Schools generate a considerable amount of waste daily. We want to reduce the amount of waste happening daily, as this contributes to the reduction of our carbon footprint.

By getting children involved from an early age in waste management they start to learn about their consumption habits and the impact waste is having on the environment – not only around them but on a larger, more global scale too. Through engaging in activities like recycling and composting (a brilliant one to add to Forest School lessons), children develop a hands-on understanding of how to reduce waste.

Teaching Tips



Waste Audit

Conduct a waste audit in your classroom to identify the types of waste produced. Discuss ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle.



Reusable Items

Encourage the use of reusable water bottles, lunchboxes, and bags. Set up a 'swap shop' for second-hand items.



Composting

Start a compost bin for organic waste from snacks and lunches. Use the compost in a school garden.

Classroom Activity

Create a Recycling Station

1



Set up clearly labelled bins for different types of recyclables.

2



Involve students in decorating the bins with recycled materials.

3



Assign recycling monitors to ensure proper sorting.

4



Liaise with caretaker and facilities staff for recycling collection time.



Energy Conservation

The amount of energy we use in our everyday lives is a huge contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Many buildings, like schools, are large consumers of energy so what can be done to help reduce usage?

We want to help children learn about energy-saving practices, like switching off lights when they're not in a room (we're sure parents would appreciate this learning too). This simple action can lead to large energy usage reductions, which also means energy savings back to the school. Focusing on energy conservation is a great way to start a conversation and help them to understand the relationship between energy use and environmental health.

! Teaching Tips



Switch Off Campaign

Promote a 'switch off' campaign to turn off lights, computers, and other electrical devices when not in use.



Natural Light

Maximise the use of natural light in classrooms to reduce the need for artificial lighting.



Energy Monitors

Appoint energy monitors in each class to oversee energy-saving practices.

Classroom Activity

Energy Detective Game



1

Take the children on an adventure around the school and have them investigate where energy might be wasted – could it be classrooms, assembly halls or maybe in the kitchen.

2

Create a checklist of energy-saving actions.

3

Reward classes that implement the most effective energy-saving measures.



Eco-Friendly Initiatives

Let's go green by planting gardens and creating green spaces. This is a great way to involve the children in the care of and appreciation of the environment.

Plus, these activities help promote physical and mental wellbeing while providing practical lessons understanding elements of science at a young age. Why not form an eco-club? These can help young children take a keen interest in plant life, responsibility and being part of something much bigger.

Finally you can explore sustainable materials for crafts projects – encouraging children to bring in pieces from home to give them another life, this will also help realign things back to waste management and recycling.

! Teaching Tips



Green Spaces

Develop green spaces in and around the school. Plant trees, flowers, and create vegetable gardens.



Eco-Clubs

Establish an eco-club where children can learn, plan and take responsibility on sustainability projects.



Sustainable Materials

Use eco-friendly and sustainable materials for art and craft projects.

Classroom Activity

Create a Recycling Station

1



Collect natural materials like sticks, leaves, and bark.

2



Construct a bug hotel in the school garden to provide a habitat for insects.

3



Observe and document the different insects that visit the hotel.





! Teaching Tips

The Importance of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is crucial for our ecosystem and its health and resilience.

Think of bees and what they do for us and the planet and how important it is for us to preserve their environments. Teaching children about biodiversity helps them to understand how life connects across humans, animals, plants and why it's so important to protect habitats.

Activities like building bug hotels and creating secure and flourishing wildlife environments, allow children to observe and appreciate the power of nature firsthand. Being involved like this cultivates wonder and encourages teamwork towards a common goal of looking after our environment.



Nature Walks

Organise nature walks to explore local biodiversity. Encourage children to observe and identify various plants and animals.



Wildlife Habitats

Create wildlife habitats around the school, such as bird feeders, ponds and bug hotels. If you have a forest school facility this is a great area in which to do this.



Species Study

Assign projects on different species, highlighting their role in the ecosystem. The 20th May each year is World Bee Day. A day dedicated to encouraging everyone to plant bee friendly plants in their gardens and organisations like councils to plant wildflower meadows and leave grass verges so bees can flourish and do their much-needed work. The British Beekeepers Association has some great resources available here: bbka.org.uk/world-bee-day-events

Classroom Activity

Biodiversity Collage



1

Have students collect pictures and information about local wildlife.

2

Create a large collage showcasing the variety of species found in your area.

3

Display the collage in a prominent place to raise awareness.



Hooray to the Green Guardians!

We hope you've enjoyed this guide and are feeling inspired by the ideas that have been shared.

By integrating these practices and activities into your school, you can help nurture environmentally conscious children who are ready to become the green guardians of tomorrow.

Together, we can make a significant impact on our planet's future.

If you would like to find out how LASER can help your school with sustainability initiatives, contact us at:



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