

## **Little Sticks Forest School – Early Years Climate Action Plan**

Nurturing children who care for nature, community, and the future.

### 1. Vision & Principles

Little Sticks Forest School aims to embed climate awareness and environmental stewardship into everyday practice. Our approach is:

Child-led and rooted in exploration and play.

Place-based, celebrating Wigan’s natural landscapes, parks, and woodland.

Practical, with small actions that build lifelong sustainable habits.

Community-focused, involving families and local partners.

### 2. Priority Areas of Action

#### A. Nature Connection & Climate Learning

##### Goals

Foster a deep, emotional connection to nature.

Develop early climate literacy through hands-on experiences.

##### Actions

Daily woodland sessions that explore trees, wildlife, and seasonal changes.

Introduce simple climate concepts through stories, puppets, and sensory play (e.g., water cycle play, wind ribbons, soil digging).

“Care for Our Woods” routines: litter picks, bug hotel maintenance, and checking bird feeders.

Encourage children to observe current weather conditions, discuss impact and make predictions throughout the day.

## B. Sustainable Operations

### Goals

Reduce the environmental footprint of day-to-day practice.

Make sustainability visible to children and families.

### Actions

Switch to reusable snack containers, cups, and cutlery.

Use natural materials (sticks, leaves, stones, mud) instead of bought plastic resources- encourage staff and parents to bring in recycled materials to use in craft activities and free play. This will be added to our 'spare parts' box.

Ensure first-aid, hygiene, and cleaning products are eco-friendly were safe and possible.

Review transport habits: talk about how we get to forest school, celebrate when we walk/cycle and discuss environmental impact.

Compost all suitable food scraps and use the compost in the school's growing areas.

## C. Energy, Waste & Resource Management

### Goals

Build sustainable habits into routines.

Teach children responsibility for their environment.

### Actions

Set up colour-coded recycling stations children can use independently.

Rotate child roles: checking for waste, carrying backpacks, recycling and helping tidy nature areas.

Reduce printing and laminating; use chalkboards, reusable clipboards, and natural signage outdoors.

Harvest rainwater for watering plants.

Where possible, use fallen wood for fire sessions; maintain responsible fuel sourcing. For warmth use foraged wood, for cooking use bought wood for health and safety reasons however we only have fires when deemed necessary. Fires must always be purposeful and ecological impact is always considered.

#### D. Food, Growing & Biodiversity

##### Goals

Promote food awareness, biodiversity, and self-sufficiency.

Connect children to where food comes from.

##### Actions

At Greenslate, there will be seasonal planting in raised beds: herbs, berries, pollinator-friendly flowers, fruit and vegetables.

At Greenslate, visit mini orchard. Discuss the fruits and use for campfire cooking where possible.

At Aspull, give regular opportunities to plant and take home. Encourage children and parents to share the progress of things they are growing.

Regular cooking outdoors using low-carbon recipes (vegetable soups, foraged teas).

Partner with local growers, allotments, or Wigan Council's green spaces team.

Create wildlife habitats: log piles, wildflower patches, bird boxes, bird feeders, water trays for insects, bug hotels.

#### E. Family & Community Engagement

##### Goals

Extend climate learning beyond sessions.

Build a community culture of sustainability.

## Actions

Send home “Eco Challenges” once a month (e.g., plastic-free snacks, turn-off-the-lights day) on Facebook page and family app.

Host seasonal family events: spring, summer and winter.

Share simple climate learning ideas on newsletters and social media.

Work with local groups, counsellors and local eco charities.

## F. Staff Development & Leadership

### Goals

Equip educators with knowledge, confidence, and inspiration.

Embed sustainability into curriculum planning.

### Actions

Provide annual staff CPD in:

climate-aware early years practice

nature pedagogy

outdoor risk-benefit assessments

Use reflective planning: each term, include one new sustainability initiative.

Encourage staff to model eco-friendly behaviour (reducing waste, reusing materials, mindful energy use).

## 3. Monitoring & Evaluation

### Area What We Will Track Evidence / Tools

Nature connection Child participation, seasonal journals, observations, learning journey book, photos, voice notes. These will be shared on our facebook page and family app. Parents will be encouraged to send in images from home.

Waste reduction observations on family app

Biodiversity Wildlife sightings, plant growth, habitat, update monthly on chalk board and child drawings. Take part in the great British birdwatch.

Family engagement Participation in events & home eco tasks Sign-in sheets, family feedback

Staff progress Training completed, new initiatives CPD records, climate update at staff meetings

Review termly and update actions for improvement.

### **Climate Curriculum Themes (EYFS-Aligned)**

Earth & Our Home – caring for land, water, and air.

Weather & Seasons – observing the natural world.

Animals & Insects – respecting living things.

Trees & Plants – growing and nurturing.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle – simple sustainable habits.

Community Helpers – children contributing to positive change.

### 4. Year-by-Year Roadmap ASPULL

Year 1 – Foundation

Spring 1:

Fauna in the environment- food, water and habitat

Spring 2:

Eco challenges

Summer 1:

Footpaths- litter picking, balsam bashing, keeping footpaths open and clear

Summer 2:

Sun safety, climate and the water cycle

Autumn 1:

Seasonal changes- trees and habitats

Autumn 2: harvesting

Winter 1: recyclable resources used in play and crafts

Winter 2: keeping warm, elements of fire, animals hibernation

Year 2 – Growth

Year 3 – Leadership

#### 4. Year-by-Year Roadmap GREENSLATE

Year 1 – Foundation

Introduce recycling, composting, reusable materials- set up a spare parts box with things such as corks, egg boxes, tubes, rolls etc.

Launch nature connection routines and daily weather discussion during sticky feet and throughout the day

Begin an allotment

Create a bug hotel- in the woods and one for children to take home

Start monthly Eco Challenges for families.

Year 2 – Growth

Year 3 – Leadership