

Why is it important to care for our planet?

Notes and guidance

This block is the first time children look at the concept of sustainability. In Year 1, children do not need to use the terms “sustainable” or “sustainability”, but they should understand that if an action can be done forever or long term then it is sustainable or helpful for the planet. If it cannot, then it can be harmful for the planet or unsustainable.

In this small step, children think about our planet and why it is important to care for it. They explore their role in looking after the planet to create a sustainable future for themselves and future generations. This will enable them to think about the positive impact they can have on the planet, both locally and in the wider world. For some children, this could be the first time they have really thought about their actions and the potential consequences that could occur.

Things to look out for

- Children may have difficulty understanding how their actions can impact the planet, as it is not immediately visible to them.
- Children at this age may have difficulty thinking about things in the future, as they are so young.

Key questions

- What is planet Earth?
- How can we care for humans?
- How can we care for animals?
- How can we care for plants?
- Why is it important to care for humans/animals/plants?
- What actions are helpful for planet Earth?
- What actions are harmful for planet Earth?

Sustainability link

- How can we care for our planet?

National curriculum link

- **Working scientifically** – Explore the world around them and raise their own questions (non-statutory).

Why is it important to care for our planet?

Key vocabulary

- **Earth** – the planet that we live on



- **plant** – a living thing that usually grows in soil



- **animal** – a living creature



- **helpful** – an action that is useful



- **harmful** – an action that causes hurt or damage



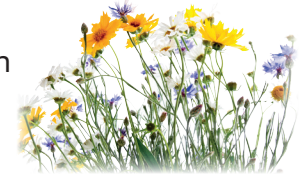
Practical ideas

- Create a feeding station in the playground.

Children could choose an animal that lives in/around the playground and make a safe place for them to eat.

- Create a wildflower garden.

Children could create a wildflower garden in the school grounds or local area and think about what might visit the garden.



- Create a vegetable patch.

Children could grow their own produce. They could explore which fruits/vegetables grow best in their local area.

- Create wildflower seed bombs.

Children could make and distribute seed bombs to encourage wildlife to the local area.

Factual knowledge

- Everyone should look after the planet.
- Some actions help the Earth.
- Some actions harm the Earth.
- Looking after the planet helps to care for humans, other animals and plants.

How can we care for our planet?

Notes and guidance

In the previous step, children looked at different positive and negative actions and the consequences that they have on the planet. By the end of this step, they should understand that everyone has a responsibility to care for the planet.

In this small step, children think about the things they can do to care for the planet, which includes their homes, school, local area, surrounding areas and the wider world. Secondary sources, including books and photographs, will help to support children, especially when thinking about the wider world.

Children should think of simple ways to care for their local area and may want to start actions within their school to improve their area over time.

Things to look out for

- Children may not realise that we need to consider our whole lifestyle when caring for the planet and that it is not just one isolated action.
- Children may need help to understand that each small action is part of a much bigger action.

Key questions

- What is planet Earth?
- How can we care for humans?
- How can we care for animals?
- How can we care for plants?
- Why is it important to care for humans/animals/plants?
- What does it mean to care for the planet?
- What would happen if ... ?
- If I ..., what would happen to ... ?

Sustainability link

- How can we care for our planet?

National curriculum link

- **Working scientifically** – Using their observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions.

How can we care for our planet?

Key vocabulary

- **Earth** – the planet that we live on



- **material** – what an object is made from



- **recycle** – to change rubbish into a material that can be used again



- **reuse** – to use again or use more than once



Practical ideas

- Children can compare and contrast two schools in different areas.
They should identify problems that each area faces and suggest changes that they could make. Some of the problems will be the same, for example, litter on the ground.

- Children could choose an area to renovate or improve so that it offers a safe haven for animals to live in/visit.

They can use their previous learning to think about which materials will be better for the planet and for the animals.

- Children can research and find out about what can be recycled in their local area.
They can then create a recycling station which can be used in the classroom environment.



Factual knowledge

- Everyone should look after the planet.
- Some actions are helpful for the Earth.
- Some actions are harmful for the Earth.
- Looking after the planet helps to care for humans, other animals and plants.