

Introducing the OMEP–UK Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award



Every child, family and Early Years' setting involved in the Award develops an awareness of children's rights as citizens of the world. On enrolment, each child receives a passport to record their engagement in family fun award **'i-care' activities**.

Parents can sign up for free access to these short 'bite-sized' practical activities for children to engage in with their families. The activities may be accessed on any internet browser, or by using our free Thinkific App: www.omepuk.thinkific.com. In alignment with government and UNESCO guidance, policy and initiatives, parent and community partnerships provide a crucial contribution to the 'whole institutional approach' of the Award scheme.

The family fun i-care activities relate to all the three pillars of sustainability:

- 'social-cultural sustainability',
- 'environmental sustainability', and
- 'economic sustainability'

Active citizenship, and the realization of the UN sustainable Development Goals requires literacy and numeracy, so we also supply activities to support these foundations in sustainable educational contexts

Children also engage in activities in the setting, which build upon what each child **'can do'** and what they **'know'**. The Award offers a truly **child-centred approach** to learning about sustainability through meaningful activities in free-flow play. Activities not only support children's developing empathy and care for others but also **care and respect for wildlife, learning to respect** and **take responsibility** for their outdoor environment where they engage in practical conservation activities and develop greater awareness of and respect for cultural diversity and equality both locally and globally.



Children also learn to be 'economic' in their activities; they learn about thrift; about repairing and reusing resources; and the conservation of resources, such as water, electricity, paper towels and paint. All offered in freeplay, self-chosen activities – **activities recognising that every child is unique**.

Sustainable Citizenship Guidance and other resources are available for download on the GECCO website. The guidance offers settings sustainable activity ideas, contributing to the EYFS, supporting each child's holistic development and learning outcomes. The OMEP–UK award enables sustainability to be embedded into early years' learning through free-flow play and through a wide range of daily routines and activities.

Each early childhood setting also engages in a progression of curriculum audits, to assess their current offering against either the Bronze, Silver and Gold level Award levels, depending upon the level they are working towards and work towards an area of development to improve children's engagement in sustainability.

How does my setting sign up? Please email: OMEP@gecco.org.uk For more information, please scan the QR code.

Accreditation is provided by OMEP UK and included in their annual membership fee of £35. The online Thinkific service is provided for ease of access, but as an alternative, or to supplement the online materials, we can provide i-care activity booklets that may be photocopied for distribution to parents. Individualised Sustainable Citizenship Passports and stickers are also available for only £4 per child. The Passports are supplied on recycled paper and will stay with each child through each of the Silver and Gold levels of the Award. Support is also provided for settings who choose to improvise their own passports or alternative record keeping arrangements.

