



**ECEC SUSTAINABILITY FORUM:**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**THEME: World Forum on Early Care and Education**

DATE: 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

TIME: 11:00am

**Attendees:**

Cheryl Hadland  
Nick Corlett  
John Siraj-Blatchford  
Diane Boyd  
Naomi McLeod  
Jan White  
Dawn Jones  
Peter Ellse  
Gill Heyhoe  
Kyla Fory  
Shweta Bahri  
Glenda Tinney

Tops Day Nurseries  
LEYF  
OMEP-UK  
Liverpool John Moores  
Liverpool John Moores  
ECO  
University of Wolverhampton  
Cosy Direct  
Watermead Day Nursery  
Watermead Day Nursery  
Earth Warriors  
University of Wales

**Apologies:**

Janet King  
Amanda Hubball  
Suzanne Gibson  
Mark Bird  
Louise Lloyd-Evans

CACHE  
Alfreton Nursery School  
Ashden  
Childbase

**Minute-taker:**

Thobani Mathenjwa

Tops Day Nurseries



Item	Topic	Who	When
1	<p>Approve last minutes</p> <p><i>Outstanding actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draft a letter</b> which will air our grievances with regards to <b>the vagueness that is in the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change strategy</b>, in terms of having comprehensive details and plans on how to tackle the sustainability issue in the early years. – <b>Everyone will see it, comment on it, and then put their signature in it.</b></li> <li>• Send the SDG-13 Draft to Cheryl and Everyone in the group.</li> <li>• Get back to the group with the feedback from the Policy Unit, and feedback from the MP.</li> <li>• Poor air quality information – <b>performing an academic research and sharing that with the public.</b></li> <li>• Try and ask for smaller settings to pay less money for Green flag, instead of the £300.</li> <li>• Everyone should check out Earth Warriors site to see their different offerings. <a href="https://www.earthwarriorsglobal.com">https://www.earthwarriorsglobal.com</a></li> <li>• Link up with regards to writing and discussing about “The dispositions underpinning the sustainability mindset”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cheryl Hadland</b></p> <p><b>Diane Boyd</b></p> <p><b>Taking any suggestions</b></p> <p><b>Peter Ellse</b></p> <p><b>Everyone</b></p> <p><b>Jan White and Nick Corlett</b></p>	<p><b>Not Specified</b></p> <p><b>Before 14/06/2022</b></p> <p><b>Not specified</b></p> <p><b>Before 13/07/2022</b></p> <p><b>Not Specified</b></p>
2	<p><i>World Forum on Early Care and Education – Context</i></p> <p>First Presentation: <b>Cheryl Hadland</b></p> <p><b>DfE Sustainability and Climate Change: A strategy for the education and children’s services systems, 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2022,</b></p>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years was mentioned only 5 times.</li> <li>• Learning about the natural environment – from birth to 5 years, EYFS framework ensures that all children develop an understanding of the world and natural environment.</li> <li>• Support for teaching – the <b>first-ever national professional qualification (NPQ) for early years professionals</b> (in school white paper about teachers)</li> <li>• Share best practice, demonstrating how sustainability and Climate Change has been incorporated into teaching (... where relevant) in early years settings, schools...”. So, nothing about purchasing, buildings upgrade and apprenticeships.</li> <li>• No change to EYFS/Curriculum.</li> <li>• No change for education of staff other than teacher qualifications.</li> <li>• No support for nursery estates (eg for buildings/solar panels etc. no “Energy pods”) nor for green spaces within nurseries.</li> <li>• No data collecting from nurseries on energy use, and no plan to include them in a net zero target or even aspiration.</li> <li>• No effort to measure air quality outside or inside nurseries, nor to enhance biodiversity.</li> <li>• No engagement for Early Years with National Education Nature Park.</li> <li>• No Climate Leaders Awards for Early years leaders.</li> <li>• No change to inspection to reflect importance of sustainability.</li> <li>• Evaluating UK’s first biophilic primary school (ignoring several biophilic nurseries).</li> <li>• Eg “start rolling out carbon literacy training for at least one person in every locally maintained nursery” .... Not PVI sector.</li> <li>• No mention in “Next steps”.</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. Hadland</b></p>	<p><b>11:05 – 12:16</b></p>
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**There were some positive as well.**

**Learning in natural environment.**

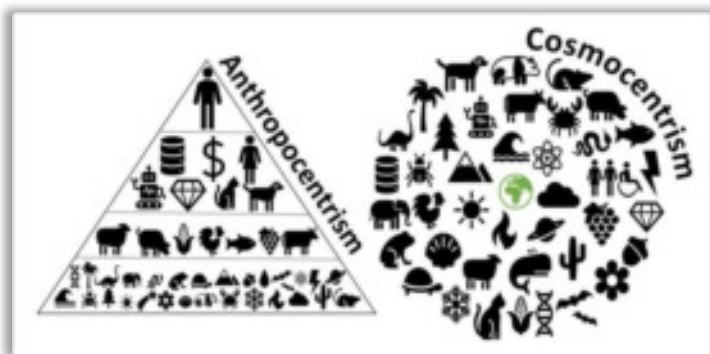
- Eco-clubs or vegetable growing
- Sustainable food choices
- Recycling, circular economy.
- Adaption projects
- Weather monitoring – temperature, rainfall
- Energy monitoring
- A sense of agency where anxiety stems from climate concerns
- Learning opportunities through retrofitted buildings and new build net zero settings: smart meters, energy monitoring, boiler replacements, drainage
- Holiday activities and food (HAF) programme – affordable, health eating, food preparation, cooking, discussing food and food sources, growing own fruit & vegetables
- Learn about nature – native species, develop skills, restore biodiversity
- Improve access to nature, and to environmental conditions (overheating and air quality) NB DEFRA's clean air strategy <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>
- Anti-idling zones, Bike ability, Walk to school (Department for Transport initiatives)
- Not political



### World Forum – Early Years Education and Care, Orlando, May 2022.

- Orlando – a place of guns, massive vehicles (not Electric), one-use plastic everywhere, over chilled conference rooms.
- Some sponsors e.g., Lakeshore (nursery resources) no clue on sustainability, but others great e.g., Community Playthings.

### Ego vs Eco



There were also OZono Machines – for killing bacteria, and Air purifiers as well.

For resources from recycling materials, reach out to Julie Hay:

[julie@singakwenza.co.uk](mailto:julie@singakwenza.co.uk)

[www.singakwenza.co.za](http://www.singakwenza.co.za)

South African based early childhood education centre, located in Pietermaritzburg, 70km away from Durban.



They are doing an amazing job with their holistic approach to child development.

### **Nursery World Conference in London, 13<sup>th</sup> July.**

- An overview of the meaning of sustainability in the early years and progress being made  
Cheryl Hadland, managing director, Tops Day Nurseries and founder, GECCO
- How to incorporate sustainable development goals  
Joe Neame, subject specialist science, NCFE
- How embedding self-regulation can support children to care for our planet  
Dr Mine Conkbayir, researcher and consultant in neuroscience and self-regulation in early years education
- Creating an environmental curriculum  
A case study from Everton Nursery School
- Breaking down barriers to participation  
Naomi Clarke, outdoor education consultant
- Training and awards  
Case studies on the OMEP Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Citizenship Award and the Eco-Schools Green Flag scheme, plus LEYF's Level 4 qualification.
- Practical workshops  
Involving parents and staff (Childbase); resourcing by reusing and repurposing; and focusing on STEM (Alfreton Nursery School).

We will share the content of the conference on the GECCO website after.



### Queens Award for Enterprise Sustainability.

**Tops Day Nurseries:** ... There is strong evidence of thought leadership and of challenging industry norms for instance in tackling the huge range of disposable items such as nappies and single use plastics normally used in the sector. It has found and implemented practical solutions and then inspired the wider sector to make their own changes. Tops Day Nurseries is awarded the Queen's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development because it has provided inspiration and is genuinely driving change in its sector.

**Cosy:** Specialising in supplying products including upcycled tyres, climbing frames, reading shelters and story chairs that engage and inspire youngsters, Cosy takes a sustainable approach to business – which is why this award in particular is important to them.

**Bambino Mio** are reusable nappy specialists, providing parents all over the world with stylish, affordable and environmentally friendly product alternatives for baby to help reduce single-use plastic waste.

**Frugi**, wins TWO Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Ethical children's clothing brand.

### In the press.

- Diane's articles and free resource – SDGs.
- NMT articles – essays on sustainability coordinated by the Early Childhood Studies Degree Network.
  - 1) Definitions
  - 2) Need for funding to sustain and extend provision



3) Equitable funding and pay to sustain workforce

- The CFO in sustainability (downloaded onto GECCO for you)
- Butterflies – Half of UK’s butterfly species vulnerable to extinction as five join red list: <https://butterfly-conservation.org>

### **Simple Dos and Don’ts of gardening for butterflies and moths.**

#### **Do:**

Grow lots of nectar-rich flowers between March and November.  
Buddleia, Lavender, Wallflowers, Marjoram Verbena Bonariensis, milkweed for Monarchs

Choose different plants to attract a wider variety of species.  
Place the same types of plant together in blocks.

Prolong flowering by deadheading flowers and watering well.  
Well-watered plants produce more nectar.

Grow caterpillar foodplants for butterflies and moths, wildflowers, nasturtiums, nettles, willows, blackthorn, hawthorn, oaks, fuscias

Let an area of grass grow long.

Allow a patch of ‘weeds’, such as Dandelion and Bird’s-foot-trefoil to flourish.

Leave bare patches of wall, fence or earth, or place large stones in sunny borders, so butterflies can bask.

Create a shelterbelt of trees, plant a mixed, native hedge, which will protect butterflies and moths from the wind.



Grow climbing plants up walls and fences, where butterflies and moths can shelter from the rain and frost.

Make a log pile, where butterflies and moths can hibernate. Some moths breed in dead wood too.

### **Don't:**

Use pesticides, especially those containing neonicotinoids, as these can remain in the plant for several months and potentially harm butterflies and moths which drink nectar from the flowers.

Buy peat-based compost. Peat bogs are home to many species, including the Large Heath butterfly. Check the label before you buy and choose peat-free alternatives.

Be too tidy – leave borders intact over winter, allow leaves to accumulate under hedges and create a 'wild' area that you don't touch very often. These areas will provide shelter for insects to hibernate and rest.



“Millions of children born in the last year will face, on average, 2-7 times more extreme weather events than their grandparents. This includes more frequent heatwaves, floods, droughts, crop failures and wildfires.” (Save the Children, 2021)

