

OAKTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

An Athena Education School

CONSERVATION & SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Caring for Our Environment — Learning, Acting and Growing Together

Policy Title	Conservation and Sustainability Policy
Institution	Oaktree Primary School
Operator	Athena Education
Applies To	All pupils, staff, governors, families, visitors and contractors
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School Leader Signature	

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1. Policy Statement

Oaktree Primary School, as part of Athena Education, believes that caring for the environment is both a shared responsibility and an essential part of a well-rounded education. We are committed to reducing our environmental impact, conserving precious natural resources, and nurturing in our pupils the knowledge, values and habits they need to become thoughtful, responsible custodians of the planet.

As a school in Dubai, we recognise the particular importance of conserving water and energy in our climate, and we are proud to support the emirate's environmental ambitions. Our approach is aligned with the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050, which aims for Dubai to draw 75% of its energy from clean sources by 2050, and with the Dubai Net Zero Carbon Emissions Strategy 2050, alongside the national UAE Net Zero by 2050 initiative. We also actively support city-wide programmes such as Dubai Can and comply with Dubai's regulations on single-use products.

Through our everyday practices and our curriculum, we aim to embed sustainability into the life and culture of our School. This policy sets out our commitments and the practical steps we will take across our operations, our grounds, our teaching and our community to live and learn more sustainably.

This policy is aligned with Dubai and UAE sustainability frameworks, including:

- Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 — 75% of energy from clean sources by 2050
- Dubai Net Zero Carbon Emissions Strategy 2050
- UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative
- Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan — a greener, more liveable city
- Dubai Can — reducing single-use plastic water bottles
- Dubai's ban on single-use products (Executive Council Resolution No. 124 of 2023)

2. Purpose and Aims

Through this policy the School aims to:

- Reduce our consumption of energy, water and other natural resources, and minimise waste;
- Embed education for sustainability across the curriculum so that pupils understand environmental issues and feel empowered to act;
- Develop responsible attitudes and lifelong habits of conservation among pupils, staff and families;
- Care for and enhance our school grounds to support biodiversity and provide rich outdoor learning;
- Make sustainable choices in what we buy, how we travel and how we operate as a school;
- Engage the whole school community — including parents and the wider community — in our sustainability journey;
- Support Dubai's and the UAE's environmental goals, including the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 and Net Zero ambitions;
- Set measurable targets, monitor our progress, and continually improve.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the whole school community, including all pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, the senior leadership team, governors, parents and carers, visitors, volunteers, and contractors and suppliers working on behalf of the School. It covers all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, the school buildings and grounds, energy and water use, waste and recycling, procurement, catering, transport and community engagement.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Strategic Governance Advisory Board (SGAB)	Champions sustainability as part of the School's ethos; reviews and approves this policy; supports investment in sustainable improvements.
Principal	Holds overall responsibility for implementing the policy; promotes a culture of sustainability; ensures resources and time are allocated to environmental goals.
Sustainability Lead / Eco-Coordinator	Coordinates sustainability initiatives; supports the Eco-Committee; monitors progress against targets; reports to the Principal.
Eco-Committee (pupils & staff)	Leads and promotes whole-school environmental projects; gathers pupil voice; raises awareness; helps drive and evaluate action.
Teaching Staff	Embed sustainability in teaching and learning; model good environmental practice in the classroom; support pupil-led initiatives.
Operations / Facilities Team	Manages energy, water and waste efficiently; maintains buildings and grounds sustainably; implements practical conservation measures.
All Pupils, Staff & Families	Take everyday actions to conserve resources and reduce waste; support and participate in the School's sustainability efforts.

5. Education for Sustainability

Education is at the heart of this policy. We want our pupils to leave Oaktree Primary School with a genuine understanding of environmental issues and the confidence to make a positive difference. To achieve this, the School will:

- Embed sustainability themes — such as conservation, climate, biodiversity, energy, water and waste — across subjects and year groups;
- Use the school grounds and local environment as a living classroom for outdoor and hands-on learning;
- Mark key environmental dates and campaigns and link them to learning and action;
- Encourage critical thinking, curiosity and care for the natural world;
- Empower pupils to lead and participate in real sustainability projects within the School.

6. Energy Conservation

Energy use, particularly for cooling, is one of the most significant aspects of our environmental footprint. The School is committed to using energy efficiently and reducing unnecessary consumption. We will:

- Switch off lights, screens, equipment and appliances when not in use, and encourage a “switch-off” culture across the School;
- Set air-conditioning to sensible, efficient temperatures and avoid cooling unoccupied spaces;
- Make use of natural light and energy-efficient lighting and equipment where possible;
- Maintain cooling, lighting and electrical systems so they run efficiently;
- Monitor energy use and explore cleaner and renewable options over time, supporting the goals of the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 and the conservation guidance of the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA).

7. Water Conservation

Water is an especially precious resource in our region, where much of the supply depends on desalination, and conserving it is a key priority. In support of the conservation efforts of the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), the School will:

- Fix leaks and dripping taps promptly and maintain plumbing in good working order;
- Install or use water-efficient taps, fittings and fixtures where possible;
- Encourage pupils and staff to use only the water they need and to report waste;
- Use efficient irrigation and select appropriate, water-wise planting for our grounds;
- Raise awareness of the value of water through the curriculum and school campaigns.

8. Waste Reduction and Recycling

The School follows the principle of “reduce, reuse, recycle” and aims to send as little as possible to landfill, supporting Dubai Municipality’s drive towards a more sustainable, circular city. We will:

- Reduce waste at source by avoiding unnecessary printing and single-use items;
- Eliminate avoidable single-use plastics across the School, in line with Dubai’s phased ban on single-use products (Executive Council Resolution No. 124 of 2023);
- Provide clearly labelled recycling points and encourage their correct use;
- Reuse and repurpose materials and resources wherever practical;
- Compost suitable organic and garden waste where facilities allow;
- Encourage reusable water bottles, lunch containers and bags throughout the School community, in support of the city-wide Dubai Can initiative.

9. Sustainable Procurement and Resources

The choices we make about what we buy have a real environmental impact. Where it is practical and provides value, the School will favour products and suppliers that are more sustainable. We will give preference to recycled, recyclable, durable, energy-efficient and responsibly sourced products; reduce

paper use and choose recycled or responsibly sourced paper where paper is needed; consider the full life cycle and disposal of items before purchase; and encourage suppliers and contractors to share and support our environmental commitments.

10. Travel and Transport

Travel to and from school contributes to emissions and local air quality. The School will encourage more sustainable travel by promoting shared school transport and car-sharing among families; encouraging walking and active travel where it is safe and practical, in keeping with the greener, more walkable city envisaged by the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan; discouraging unnecessary engine idling near the School; and planning trips and visits with sustainability and efficiency in mind.

11. Grounds, Biodiversity and Green Spaces

Our school grounds are a valuable resource for wellbeing, learning and nature. The School is committed to caring for and, where possible, enhancing our outdoor spaces to support biodiversity and provide opportunities for pupils to connect with the natural world. We will:

- Maintain green and planted areas using water-wise, climate-appropriate planting;
- Create and protect spaces that support local plant and animal life where possible;
- Involve pupils in gardening, growing and caring for the grounds;
- Use outdoor spaces for learning and for developing pupils' appreciation of nature;
- Avoid harmful chemicals and adopt environmentally responsible grounds maintenance.

12. Food and Catering

Food choices and waste are an important part of sustainability. Working with our catering provider and families, the School will aim to reduce food waste through sensible planning and portioning; encourage healthy, balanced and, where possible, locally and responsibly sourced food; reduce packaging and single-use items associated with food and drink; and use the topics of food, growing and waste as opportunities for learning.

13. Pupil Voice and Community Engagement

Sustainability is most powerful when it is led and owned by our pupils and shared with our wider community. The School will support a pupil-led Eco-Committee to help shape, lead and promote our environmental work; celebrate and share pupils' sustainability achievements; engage parents, carers and the local community in our initiatives and campaigns, including city-wide programmes such as Dubai Can; and seek partnerships and opportunities that strengthen our environmental impact and learning.

14. Targets, Monitoring and Review

To ensure this policy leads to real change, the School will set clear, achievable sustainability targets and record them in a Sustainability Action Plan (see Appendix A). The Sustainability Lead, supported by the Eco-Committee, will monitor progress against these targets throughout the year and report to the Principal and the SGAB. This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner in response to new opportunities, KHDA

and regulatory expectations, developments in Dubai and UAE sustainability frameworks, the standards of Athena Education, or learning from our own progress.

15. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies and documents:

- Sustainability Action Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy
- Procurement and Financial Regulations
- Curriculum Policy
- Premises and Facilities Management Policy
- Healthy Eating / Food and Nutrition Policy

Appendix A: Sustainability Action Plan (Template)

This template may be used to plan, record and monitor the School's sustainability actions. Focus areas are pre-listed; complete the remaining columns and add rows as needed. The plan should be reviewed regularly by the Sustainability Lead and Eco-Committee.

Focus Area	Action / Objective	Lead	Timescale	Measure of Success
Energy				
Water				
Waste & Recycling				
Procurement				
Travel				
Grounds & Biodiversity				
Curriculum				
Community				

Appendix B: Whole-School Eco Checklist

This checklist can be used by classes, teams and the Eco-Committee to review everyday sustainable practice across the School. Tick each item that is in place, and use any unticked items to plan further action.

✓	Sustainable Practice
☐	Lights, screens and equipment are switched off when not in use.
☐	Air-conditioning is set efficiently and not cooling empty rooms.
☐	Taps are turned off fully and any leaks are reported promptly.
☐	Recycling points are available, clearly labelled and used correctly.
☐	Printing and paper use are kept to a minimum.
☐	Single-use plastics are avoided wherever possible.
☐	Reusable water bottles and lunch containers are encouraged.
☐	Refillable bottles are used in support of the Dubai Can initiative.
☐	Materials and resources are reused or repurposed where practical.
☐	Sustainability themes are included in teaching and learning.
☐	Pupils are involved in caring for plants and the school grounds.
☐	The class/team takes part in whole-school eco initiatives.
☐	Food waste is minimised at snack and lunch times.
☐	Sustainable travel (sharing, walking) is encouraged.
☐	Achievements and ideas are shared with the Eco-Committee.