

Learning for Sustainable Futures: Project Summary

Who was involved?

Practitioners and learners at Viewforth Early Years ELC, and the wider community, including members of Friends of the Meadows and Bruntfield Links.

The Learning Context

Viewforth EYC is located in South Edinburgh, offering a range of provision for children aged 0 to 5 years old. Despite being in a central urban area, the Meadows and Bruntfield Links are within walking distance from the centre.

The staff and learners at Viewforth are committed to embedding sustainability in learning and play. The year before we started the wormery project, we worked with Wilding Wee Spaces at CEC to boost biodiversity in our centre garden, planting wildflowers and making bug hotels.

In the 2025-2026 session, we planned to start a wormery in a project which supported Scottish Government climate targets by helping children reduce food waste, recycle organic materials, and improve soil quality in the garden. This links to the Scottish Government's climate goals under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act and wider sustainability aims connected to COP30.

EARLY YEARS PHASE: Viewforth EYC

Learner Outcome Focus: Taking Action

I help to care for the environment, I reduce, reuse and recycle the resources I use.

TCH 0-06a

Curriculum for Excellence: HWB 0-50a; SCN 0-01a; SOC 0-08a

Related policy & initiatives:

Target 2030

Climate Change (Scotland)

Act

Realising the Ambition: Being Me (Confidence, Creativity and Curiosity: interactions, experiences and spaces)



Viewforth EYC garden

Viewforth Wormery

When building, populating and feeding our new wormery, our children learned through real-life experiences by caring for worms, feeding them food waste, and using the liquid fertiliser to help plants grow. This reflects Education Scotland's *Realising the Ambition*, which encourages curiosity, inquiry, and meaningful learning.

We also worked with community partners and senior pupils from James Gillespie's High School, which promoted teamwork, shared learning, and responsibility for the environment.

Although there were some barriers, such as children feeling unsure about touching worms and staff lacking confidence, we overcame these through support, modelling, and ensuring opportunities for regular hands-on experiences.

Overall, the project was a strong example of sustainability in early years practice.

Evidence and Impacts

Over the course of this project, our children gained:

- an understanding of recycling, and reducing food waste
- knowledge of life cycles, decomposition, and the effect of this on the environment
- communication and teamwork by caring for and maintaining our wormery
- observation, prediction, and inquiry skills.

Our staff recorded observations of increased curiosity, engagement, and responsibility through children's interests.

Staff confidence in providing sustainability-focused learning experiences has increased, and many are now able to offer learning using ICT.

We have established valuable partnerships with community groups and also senior pupils from James Gillespie's High School.

The project helped embed environmentally friendly practices across the setting and encouraged wider community involvement.

Next steps

We plan to encourage our children to take more responsibility for maintaining and monitoring the growth of plants and vegetables in our garden. We also hope to involve families and **eco partners** with our sustainability projects in the future.

Practitioner Reflections

Our wormery project has improved children's understanding of sustainability, recycling, and caring for the environment. Hands-on learning experiences have developed their curiosity, personal responsibility, and observation skills.

Great enjoyment has come from caring for our worms and using the fertiliser they produce to support plant growth in the garden.

-Stefania Micheli and Dawn McEwan