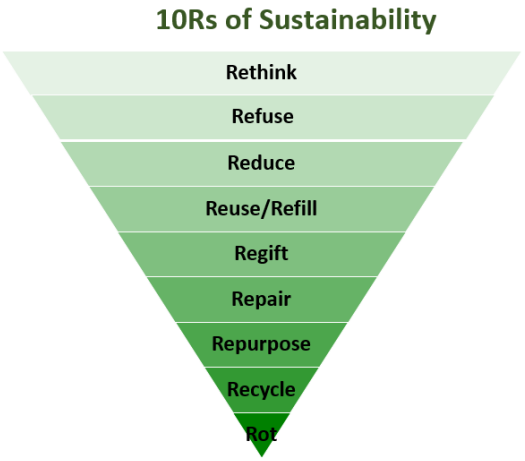
10Rs of Sustainability



This is a combination of behaviour, energy and resource consumption and natural processes.

The aim is to extract the maximum benefits from products and activities and generate the minimum amount of waste and negative impacts on the environment.

Rethink	**Is this the best way? Is this the only way?**
	Take the time rethink about what we can do differently to avoid things that can only be used once, or use up an unnecessary amount of carbon and/or world resources, or may have damaging side effects. Rethinking is about finding environmentally friendly and sustainable alternatives rather taking the easiest wasteful and potentially harmful options. Considering energy efficiency when making purchases, developing buildings…all the way along supply chains. It takes practice, it might require more planning, but it is the very start of a more sustainable way of being and working. Rethinking also involves prevention – let's not make it worse! We are rethinking our attitudes towards other on our planet, those that bear the consequences of our actions even if we do not – and also rethinking how we might leave our planet for our children and the generations yet to come. Rethinking does take time and effort but the time for rethinking is now…have a read through the following **Rs** and check out the Bank of Proven Practice to help you. When you have great ideas please share them in return to help others.
Refuse	**Do I really need this? Can I say 'No'?**
	Refusing is a fundamental step – not accepting items that we do not need, or will go onto pose a problem at the end of their useful lives Refusing to engage in wasteful practices or those that have damaging side-effects. This ties in with the power of the consumer to encourage companies to change their practice to be more sustainable. It also means not giving up or giving in – refusing to become a sceptic or thinking that we are powerless to make any change. Refusing to ridicule others who are trying to be more sustainable.
Reduce	**Do I need this? Can I manage with less? Can I do this less? Can I do this nearer?**
	Before making any purchases, ask if you really need this item. If you do, look at the quality and value for money. While price is a huge factor, try to find the best quality in your budget. Well-made products will last longer, reducing the times you'll need to repurchase. By taking care of things by following maintenance and cleaning instructions. Try small incremental reductions like turning the heating down by 1 degree or 30 minutes. Reduce the amount of products used and the frequency of replacement. Apply this thinking to items that use energy e.g. journeys (yours and your products), emails and electrical goods. Plan ahead to reduce waste through things like careful stock control, making to order, smart systems, and finally looking at the options below before throwing away.
Reuse/Refill	**How do I make sure I can use again and again?**
	Reusing and refilling items for as long as possible and for as many times as possible to reduce waste and probably improve our experience. It may mean that you need to make an initial greater investment in order to buy items that will sustain repeated use but that you save

	money in the long term. This may involve their increased cleaning, washing and careful handling – possibly training and recognising the value in everyday objects. The impact of reusing and refilling might seem small, but repeated over, and over again, the accumulative impact becomes significant.
Regift	**If this is of no use to me, is there someone else who will use it? Can I use pre-owned rather than new?**
	Regifting means selling or donating your used items so they go to loving homes instead of the landfill, may help others because of cost or sourcing items hard to find or obsolete. It might be a larger item is broken down into smaller components that may still have value/worth in their own right and can be used again. Reducing the need for storage may also reduce waste energy and increase building efficiency. It also means you are willing to accept items that others are looking to pass on, rather than sourcing something brand new.
Repair	**Can I make this good again?**
	Repairing is about not disposing of something that is broken before we attempt to fix it. Repairing may require initial investment in tools, skills and work space. It might mean 'breaking' something for spares. For some items, safety checks and additional inspection may be needed once they are repaired. When making purchases, we need to consider if the items can be repaired and spare parts are available, avoiding built in obsolescence and sealed units. By repairing we are not discarding the energy and materials that have already been consumed in the making, production and building.
Repurpose	**Can this be adapted for another use?**
	Repurposing is when we take items that were meant for one purpose but can be used for other ones. Sometimes referred to as 'upcycling' – get creative with your repurposing. If an item is no good for its original purpose what else can it be used for or do? You may need to create some storage and collection points, but by repurposing you may not need to buy a new item, so you will be saving money as well as resources. You may change the purpose of bigger things such as buildings, grounds and vehicles. Frequently talking points, repurposed items are great for messages communication as well as practicalities. And ultimately repurpose yourselves – gain new skills, knowledge and qualifications to support sustainable decision making and practice.
Recycle	**Can the materials be reconstituted and then reused?**
	The recyclability of a material depends on its ability to reacquire the properties it had in its original state. Recyclable materials include many kinds of glass, paper, cardboard, metal, plastic, tyres, textiles, batteries, and electronics. We can also prevent the waste of potentially useful materials and reduce the consumption of fresh raw materials, reducing energy use, air pollution from incineration and water pollution from seepage. Another form of recycling is the salvage of constituent materials from complex products, due to either their intrinsic value (such as lead from car batteries and gold from printed circuit boards), or their hazardous nature (e.g. removal and reuse of mercury from thermometers and thermostats). When you recycle, ensure that you're sorting and cleaning your recycling according to local regulations.
Rot	**Will this compost organically?**
	Composting can be done at different scales, some Local Authorities manage it through their waste collections. If you can compost yourself, you will, with time have a magical organic material that is an asset to fertilise soil, improve soil structure, as a surface mulch to suppress weeds and also reduce the need for chemical fertilisers. Wood chip makes a versatile surfacing to protect tree roots and cover ground irregularities. By composting we make an environmentally superior alternative to using organic material for landfill because composting ourselves reduces harmful methane production and also landfill quantities by as much as 20%.

Other Rs….

You can play with this, what other **Rs** can you think of? Which ones make the most sense to you and your setting? You may decide to make up your own **Rs-List.** Why not ask your children and young people to create their own?