

Sustainability Strategy 2025



Education

Therapy

Futures



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Who We Are

We are Witherslack Group. The UK's leading education provider for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) as evidenced by sector leading Ofsted judgements and our unmatched placement stability, school attendance and outcomes for young people.

Our unique integrated team around the child model and inspirational environments are key to our seamless delivery of education, care and therapeutic support. This enables children and young people to thrive in and outside of the classroom and coupled with our sector leading Futures programme, optimises outcomes and future contribution to society.

We don't give up, and by this we are seen as the destination of choice by parents, carers and professionals alike.

Our Mission



The work that we do now not only helps our young people today, but positively impacts society in the future. We are committed to leading by example, caring for the communities we serve and taking action to drive sustainability forward. We want to accelerate new behaviours that will help to deliver lasting, sustainable change across our sector. As an educational provider we are uniquely placed to educate our young people, lead by example in how we embed more sustainable practices, and to drive change among our partners and suppliers.

Why Sustainability Matters

The world is grappling with critical sustainability challenges, including climate change, resource depletion, social inequality, and environmental degradation.

These global issues not only threaten ecosystems and communities but also the ability of future generations to thrive. For the education sector, the implications are profound. Schools are not just places of learning; they shape the values, behaviours, and decisions of the next generation.

At Witherslack Group, we believe that educational institutions, particularly those serving Special Educational Needs (SEN), have a unique responsibility. We must prepare young people to navigate and contribute to a world increasingly in need of sustainable solutions.

For us, sustainability in education extends far beyond the curriculum. It involves creating inclusive and resilient learning environments, empowering our learners, staff, and the wider community, and modelling sustainable practices in every aspect of our governance and operations.



What We Aim To Achieve

Witherslack Group aims to achieve a more sustainable and socially responsible future by developing a formal ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) strategy.

This initiative focuses on reducing our carbon footprint, empowering young people to thrive academically and personally, and fostering stronger ties with local communities. By integrating these priorities, the group seeks to create an environment where our young people can develop a sense of responsibility toward the planet, our employees can work in a more sustainable and fulfilling workplace, and communities can benefit from collaborative efforts that enhance well-being and growth.

In the long term, this strategy promises to deliver lasting benefits, including a healthier environment, enriched learning opportunities, and a more cohesive society, ensuring positive outcomes for all stakeholders.



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Our Sustainability Vision and Objectives



Witherslack Group's ESG Journey



We started declaring GHG emissions in our financial statements to comply with our regulatory obligation to report greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions pursuant to the Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) regulations 2018, which implement the Government's policy on Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting.



This was the first year we started declaring ESG goals in our public annual report.

First ESG Pulse survey to all employees.

Produced a formal ESG strategy with plans to publish our first ESG impact report in 2025



Using our new carbon accounting Greenly software we aim to measure our first Carbon footprint, and align with the SBTi, and set targets for Net Zero. We hope to align with Green House Gases (GHG) protocol, sustainable development goals and establish SASB reporting.

We have achieved a bronze award in the inclusive employer programme.



2018

FY2019
- 2020



Elevate & Inspire Programme launched

First employee engagement survey



FY2020
- 2021

Started working towards ECO school awards



FY2021
- 2022

FY2022
- 2023



WG Futures Programme launched

This year we took a forward leap in our sustainability journey. Carrying out a gap analyses and double materiality assessment to begin the journey of developing an ESG Strategy.

We completed our B-Corp impact assessment achieving a score of 119.



FY24 & Onwards

Published our five ESG Pledges



First Star Awards



Strategy Creation

Witherslack Group’s sustainability strategy is built on solid foundations.

We examined a series of best in class sustainability inputs, including best practice across our sector and beyond as well as investor requirements. This was then aligned to topics we know to be meaningful as identified by our materiality assessment conducted in 2023.

This has allowed us to create a strategy that resonates with our key stakeholders and enables tangible impact.

External and internal Inputs

- ESG Ratings
- Sector Guidance
- Value Chain
- Current Processes
- Competitors
- Sector Excellence



Materiality Assessment

Witherslack ESG Material Topics

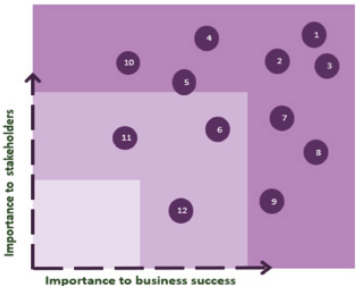
- 1 Safeguarding
- 2 Ofsted Results
- 3 Data Security
- 4 Energy Usage
- 5 Waste Management
- 6 Reputational Stability
- 7 Quality SEN Education
- 8 Leader in SEN Sector
- 9 Realising Business Plan
- 10 Community Investment & Engagement
- 11 Ethical Marketing & Recruitment
- 12 Operational Stability



Sustainability Strategy



Materiality Matrix



Strategic Pillars

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Pioneering New Frontiers

As we embark on this sustainability journey, we are not only laying the groundwork but also pushing the boundaries of what is possible in SEN education.

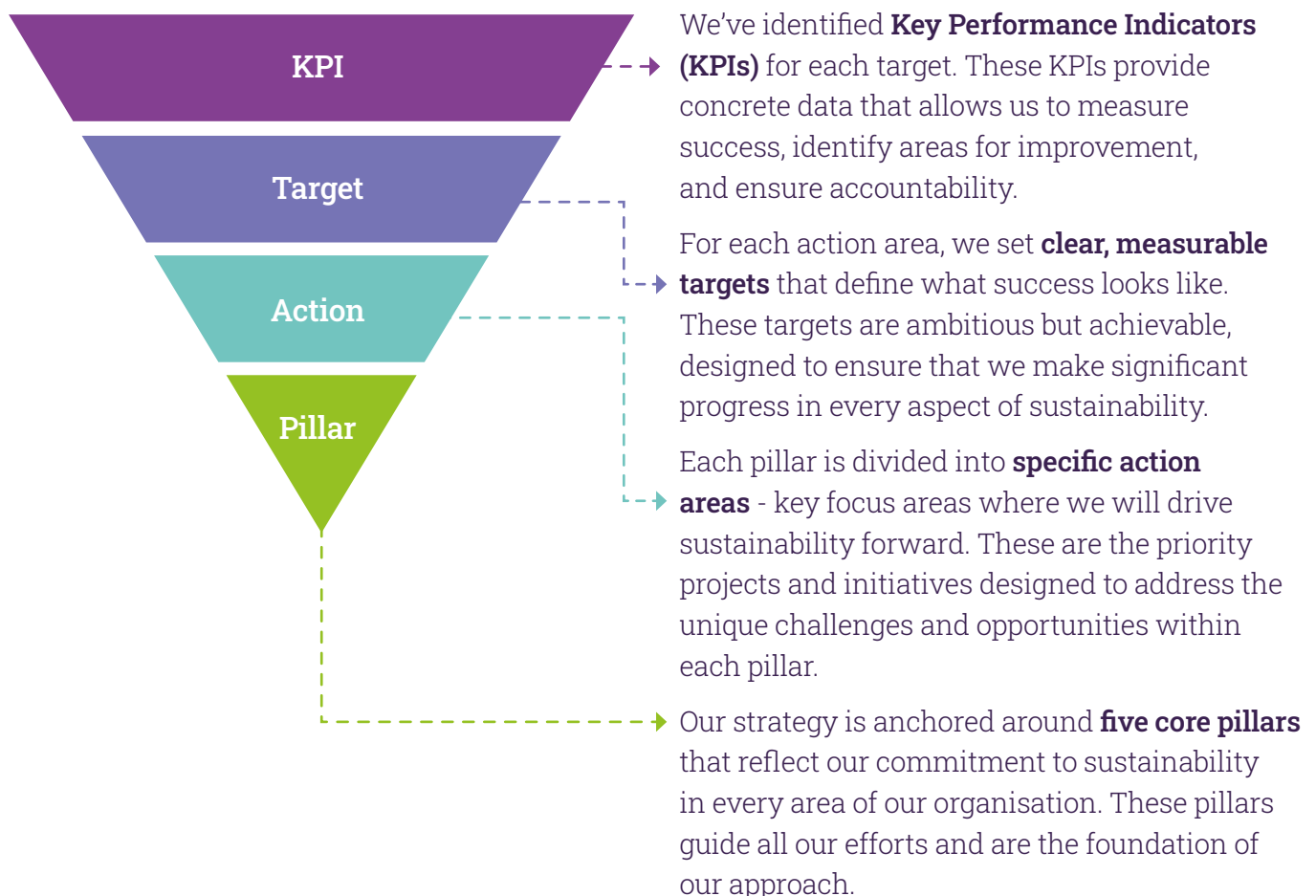
Our five pillars provide the framework, but the real strength of our strategy lies in our commitment to collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement.

This is a shared journey - one that involves our young people, employees, parents, carers and community partners. Together, we will drive progress, learning from each step as we advance toward a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Through collaboration and ongoing reflection, we will adapt, refine, and improve our practices to ensure that we meet the evolving challenges ahead. Our strategy is not static - it's a dynamic, living approach that prioritises the well-being of our learners and their future.

Strategy Structure

Our Sustainability Strategy follows a clear and structured hierarchy that ensures each level drives tangible progress toward our overall vision. This hierarchy breaks down our ambitious goals into actionable steps, measurable targets, and key performance indicators (KPIs) to track our success.



Our Strategic Pillars

Our Sustainability Strategy is structured around five core pillars, ensuring a holistic approach to sustainability that aligns with Witherslack Group's mission to provide the best learning environments for our young people and communities.

Each pillar addresses key aspects of our operations and the impact we aim to deliver across environmental, social, and governance areas.



Our Strategic Objectives

At Witherslack Group, sustainability shapes both our operations and our approach to education.

Our sustainability strategy is guided by five key strategic objectives, each aimed at addressing crucial areas that contribute to a more sustainable future for our schools, students, and communities.

These objectives ensure we continue to lead in sustainable education while fulfilling our mission to support the holistic development of SEN learners.



Sustainable Nurturing Spaces

Objective: To create sustainable learning environments that promote environmental responsibility alongside our young people's well-being.

Focus: Minimising our environmental impact while ensuring that young people thrive in safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible spaces.



Strengthening community connections

Objective: To build strong relationships with local communities, parents, carers and stakeholders.

Focus: Engaging community partners in our sustainability efforts to foster a shared responsibility for a sustainable future.



Leading with Integrity and Accountability

Objective: To ensure transparent, accountable governance and strong leadership in sustainability.

Focus: Positioning Witherslack Group as a leader in sustainable education through ethical practices and robust governance frameworks.



Empowering our teams

Objective: To invest in our employees through professional development and well-being support, fostering a culture of outstanding leadership.

Focus: Empowering our team to thrive in a collaborative, innovative, and responsible work environment, contributing to our sustainability goals.



Supporting tailored education and care for our young people

Objective: To equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to make positive change in sustainability.

Focus: Embedding sustainability within the curriculum and fostering a culture of responsibility and innovation to prepare our learners for global challenges.



Sustainable Nurturing Spaces



At Witherslack Group, our goal is to create sustainable learning environments that promote both environmental responsibility and young people's well-being.

These spaces are carefully designed to align with our young people's unique needs, supporting their educational journey while reducing our environmental impact.

Outcomes

Reduced Environmental Footprint

Lower energy consumption, water usage, and waste generation.

Enhanced Young People's Well-being

Healthier, more comfortable learning environments that contribute to better educational outcomes.

Leadership in Sustainability

Setting a benchmark for sustainable education facilities within the sector, inspiring our young people and the wider community.



Empowering Our Teams



We believe that our people are our greatest asset. Empowering our teams through professional development, well-being support, and outstanding leadership is essential to driving our sustainability goals forward.

By investing in our people, we create a workplace culture that thrives on collaboration, innovation, and inclusion. Through targeted leadership initiatives and holistic support, we equip our team to drive positive change - within the organisation and beyond.

Outcomes

Increased Employee Engagement

Empowered, motivated employees who are engaged in both their professional development and sustainability efforts.

Stronger Leadership

A diverse and capable leadership team driving sustainability initiatives and fostering innovation across the organisation.

Improved Well-being

A healthier, happier workforce leading to increased productivity and employee retention.



Strengthening Community Connections



We recognise the importance of building strong relationships with the communities in which we operate.

By collaborating with parents and carers, local authorities, stakeholders, and community partners, we empower positive change through inclusive education and sustainability efforts. Together, we not only enhance our collective impact but also inspire responsibility for a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Outcomes

Stronger Community Bonds

Engaged communities that collaborate on sustainability initiatives and share common goals.

Positive Local Impact

Tangible improvements in the local environment and community well-being through sustainability projects.

Enhanced Community Investment

Witherslack Group recognised as a leader in community-driven sustainability, further building trust and local support.



Leading With Integrity And Accountability



Effective governance and strong leadership are essential to ensuring that Witherslack Group's sustainability goals are achieved with transparency, accountability, and a commitment to ethical practices.

We aim to lead by example, ensuring that all practices, decisions and operations reflect our core mission of supporting children with special educational needs. By embedding integrity in our educational governance and sustainability practices, we set a benchmark for trust, leadership, and responsibility in the education sector.

Outcomes

Enhanced Accountability

Strong governance ensures that sustainability goals are met with transparency and ethical oversight.

Improved Stakeholder Trust

Consistent communication and involvement of stakeholders foster trust and buy-in from the entire Witherslack Group community.

Ethical Leadership in Sustainability and Education

Witherslack Group becomes a model for governance and ethical leadership in the education sector, driving positive change.



Supporting Tailored Education And Care For Our Young People



At the heart of our strategy we are committed to empowering our young people with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become aware and responsible towards global sustainability issues.

By embedding sustainability and social responsibility into our curriculum, we provide personalised support that aligns with each student's unique needs and aspirations.

Through innovation, adaptability, and collaborative learning, we equip young people with the tools they need to navigate real-world challenges and create meaningful, positive change in their communities and beyond.

Outcomes

Empowered Young People

Young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to drive sustainability efforts.

Awareness and Innovation

Young people are equipped with the ability to appreciate sustainability challenges and recognise the efforts needed to overcome them.

Inclusive and Adaptive Thinkers

Young people develop the ability to adapt to diverse learning environments, demonstrating resilience and resourcefulness.



Creating Sustainable Nurturing Spaces



Goal: Create sustainable, inclusive, and nurturing environments tailored to the unique needs of SEN students.

Renewable Energy	Carbon Management	Sustainable Procurement
80% of our energy will be purchased from renewable sources by 2030. 20% of schools will have renewable energy systems installed by 2027 and 50% by 2029.	Reduce carbon emissions by 20% across all operations by 2030. Transition 30% of the vehicle fleet to hybrid/electric by 2030. Install EV charging points at 20% of our sites by 2026 and 50% by 2029. We will open the UK's first zero carbon SEN school by the end of 2027. Net Zero by 2050.	Achieve at least 50% of procurement spend on sustainable suppliers by 2028, starting with high-impact categories like energy, office supplies, and food services. Reduce Scope 3 Emissions Linked to Procurement. Ensure 75% of key suppliers are actively engaged in sustainability initiatives by 2028. 80% of IT vendors vetted for ESG compliance by the end of 2025.
Resource Use	Energy Efficiency	Biodiversity
Install water-efficient fixtures (e.g., low-flow taps, toilets) in 100% of facilities by 2026. Divert 80% of waste from landfill through enhanced recycling programmes by 2028. Ensure 50% of food waste is composted or repurposed through local partnerships by 2028. 100% compliant e-waste disposal by certified recyclers by the end of 2025.	Transition 100% of lighting systems to LED or equivalent energy-efficient technologies by Year 2029. Achieve 5% reduction in overall energy consumption across facilities within five years. Increase the usage of sustainable energy for our data centres.	Create biodiversity-enhancing green spaces (e.g., native plant gardens) in 100% of facilities by 2027. 100% of all new construction sites undergo a biodiverse assessment and fully comply with regulation.

Strengthening Community Connections



Goal: Strengthen relationships with local communities, parents, and stakeholders to support and enhance sustainability efforts.

Stakeholder Engagement	Partnership & Outreach
We will have supported 1 million parents and carers of SEN Children by 2030. Develop and distribute a quarterly sustainability newsletter for parents and the wider community by 2026. Publish annual impact reports available to all external and internal stakeholders.	1% of our annual net profits will be allocated to community development and investment activities. Partner with over 100 employers through our Futures programme by the end of 2025.



Leading With Integrity And Accountability



Goal: Ensure strong governance practices that align with Witherslack Group's sustainability commitments and drive leadership within the education sector.

Corporate Behaviour & Ethics	Sustainability Governance	Educational Governance
Code of conduct is reviewed and updated annually and made available for all our employees. Board members to undergo an annual board self-assessment.	Ensure that our sustainability policies and strategy are reviewed and updated on an annual basis, achieving full compliance with industry best practices.	Benchmark educational performance annually against national and international peers (and Ofsted).
Climate Risks	Stakeholder Governance	Data Security & Privacy
Assess climate risk on a regular basis as part of our annual risk review.	Review and refresh our stakeholder engagement and communications plan on an annual basis. Zero incidents of legal action/ non-compliance.	Achieve 100% compliance with UK Data Protection Act across all operations by the end of 2026. Annual audits ensuring compliance with GDPR and other data protection laws. 100% of relevant employees trained in safeguarding and secure practices tailored for SEN environments.



Empowering Our Teams



Goal: Empower our people through continuous learning, career development, and well-being initiatives, fostering a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable workplace.

Diversity & Inclusion	Employee Wellbeing	Health & Safety
Continue to create an inclusive and engaging environment for our people. Ensure all people policies use inclusive language by the end of 2026. Embed Diversity and Inclusion training and learning in our Induction and Talent programmes and ensure line managers are supported to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in their settings and teams. Ensure transparency in pay equity and reduce the pay gap by tracking EDI metrics.	Provide access to mental health and wellbeing resources for 100% of employees. Conduct regular employee engagement surveys in conjunction with The Happiness Index.	All employees receive H&S training every three years.
Inclusive Recruitment	Sustainability Awareness	
Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive.	Provide sustainability training to 100% of employees every three years.	

Supporting Tailored Education And Care For Our Young People



Goal: Integrate sustainability into the educational experience, empowering students to become responsible and informed global citizens.

Curriculum Integration	Young People Outcomes via Futures Programme	Sustainability Challenges
100% of schools to Integrate climate change into at least three areas of the curriculum. Map the sustainability curriculum to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2026. All schools equipped with assistive technology solutions by 2026.	100% of our engaged alumni will be in employment, education or accessing direct WG Futures support by the end of 2025.	All schools to achieve Eco Schools award by the end of 2025. Eco-committees set up at every school to lead on action plans and ESG-related projects.



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Implementation Roadmap



Evaluation, Adaptation and Reporting

Evaluate progress, gather comprehensive feedback and share our outcomes having established Witherslack Group as a sustainability leader.



Scaling and Embedding Practices

Expand successful pilot programmes organisation-wide and formalise sustainability as a core organisational value.



Strategic Planning and Foundation Building

Develop a comprehensive baseline assessment and establish foundational policies across each of our sustainability pillars.



Initiative Launch and Early Implementation

Launch pilot initiatives across the core areas - environmental sustainability in facilities, community outreach programmes, and curriculum integration.



Our Roadmap

Our sustainability roadmap represents a structured, actionable plan that translates Witherslack Group's strategic vision into measurable actions over the next few years.

This roadmap outlines a clear transition from strategic planning to execution, providing a path toward creating sustainable and nurturing environments for our students, strengthening connections with our young people, and promoting responsibility across all levels of our operations.

Why a Roadmap?

Sustainability is a long-term commitment, and achieving our goals requires a detailed plan with clearly defined milestones. This roadmap ensures that each of our five core pillars are systematically addressed. Through this structured approach, we aim to embed sustainability into our culture, operations, and community engagements.

What This Roadmap Will Achieve

Over the next five years, this roadmap will guide us in building a strong foundation for our sustainability initiatives, launching impactful programmes, and scaling successful practices across Witherslack Group. Our commitment to transparency and ongoing stakeholder engagement means that we will continuously refine and adapt our approach based on feedback and measurable outcomes.



Action Plan For Sustainable Nurturing Spaces



Goal: Create sustainable, inclusive, and nurturing environments tailored to the unique needs of SEN students.

Priority Target Area	Key Activity	Sustainability Champion	Timeline
Installation of renewable energy systems.	Identifying feasible sites for solar and wind power to create a development plan.	Colin Swaine – Property Director	Installations at 20% of schools by 2027 and 50% of schools by 2029.
Increasing number of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles in our fleet.	In FY23 we stopped the purchasing of diesel vehicles. From FY26 we will only purchase hybrid and electric cars.	Chris Devitt – Group Transport Manager	30% of our fleet will be electric/hybrid vehicles by 2030 By 2030 all new vehicles (including vans) purchased will be electric or hybrid.

Action Plan For Strengthening Community Connections



Goal: Strengthen relationships with local communities, parents, and stakeholders to support and enhance sustainability efforts.

Priority Target Area	Key Activity	Sustainability Champion	Timeline
Investing in community development and investment	Establishment of community investment group to allocate profits to community projects	Steve Bacon - CFO	1% of net profits annually – programme in place by FY26

Action Plan For Leading With Integrity And Accountability



Goal: Ensure strong governance practices that align with Witherslack Group's sustainability commitments and drive leadership within the education sector.

Priority Target Area	Key Activity	Sustainability Champion	Timeline
Publish Annual Impact Report.	To measure and track metrics, consolidate ESG deliverables across the group.	Rebecca Cronin – Finance Manager	First report for FY24.
Align with SBTi - Net Zero.	Measure Carbon footprint and develop roadmap.	Rebecca Cronin - Finance Manager	By the end of FY25.

Action Plan For Empowering Our Team



Goal: Create sustainable, inclusive, and nurturing environments tailored to the unique needs of SEN students.

Priority Target Area	Key Activity	Sustainability Champion	Timeline
Increasing ESG awareness.	ESG training course to be put on to Witherslack Group learning portal for all employees.	Marie Leadbetter – Head of Organisational Development.	By the end of FY25.
Continue to create an inclusive and engaging environment for our people.	Follow action plan with a DEI focus.	Jo Sibson – HR – Associate Director	By the end of 2026.

Action Plan For Supporting Tailored Education And Care For Our Young People



Goal: Integrate sustainability into the educational experience, empowering students to become responsible and informed global citizens.

Priority Target Area	Key Activity	Sustainability Champion	Timeline
Integrate ESG into Curriculum.	To be monitored alongside the Eco-School award actions.	Robert James – Head of School Development	By the end of FY25.
All schools to achieve Eco-Schools award.	Continued support to schools still awaiting accreditation.	Robert James – Head of School Development	By the end of FY25.

A Collaborative Approach

The success of our sustainability strategy hinges not only on the framework we've established through our five pillars but also on the active involvement of the entire Witherslack Group organisation.

Each team and individual has a crucial role to play in executing this strategy, ensuring that sustainability becomes an integral part of our daily operations and decision-making processes.

We have designated leaders and groups responsible for each of our sustainability pillars. These leaders will champion their respective areas, driving initiatives, monitoring progress, and fostering collaboration across departments. Their expertise and commitment is vital in aligning our activities with our sustainability objectives and ensuring accountability.

Our collaborative approach ensures that sustainability is woven into the fabric of our organisation.

By empowering individuals and teams to take ownership of their roles within the strategy, we foster a culture of shared responsibility and commitment to making a positive impact. Together, we can pioneer new frontiers in sustainability, ultimately enhancing the educational experience for our SEN students and creating a brighter, more sustainable future.

Sustainability Champions

Each pillar will have designated leaders who will oversee the implementation of initiatives, set goals, and report on progress.



Cross-functional groups

These groups will bring together members from various departments to collaborate on initiatives that align with the sustainability pillars, sharing best practices and driving innovation.



Individual Contributors

Every employee is encouraged to engage with the sustainability strategy by identifying opportunities for improvement in their roles, participating in training sessions, and contributing ideas that support our collective goals.



Monitoring Our Progress

To ensure our sustainability strategy stays on track, we will implement:

Regular Check-ins and Reporting

Sustainability Champions will monitor progress in their pillars with scheduled reviews. A central dashboard will provide an overview of all areas.

ESG working group to meet monthly to discuss developments and progress towards targets.

Feedback Loops and Stakeholder Input

We will gather feedback from employees, students, and the community through forums, ESG surveys and meetings, ensuring the strategy remains aligned with their needs.

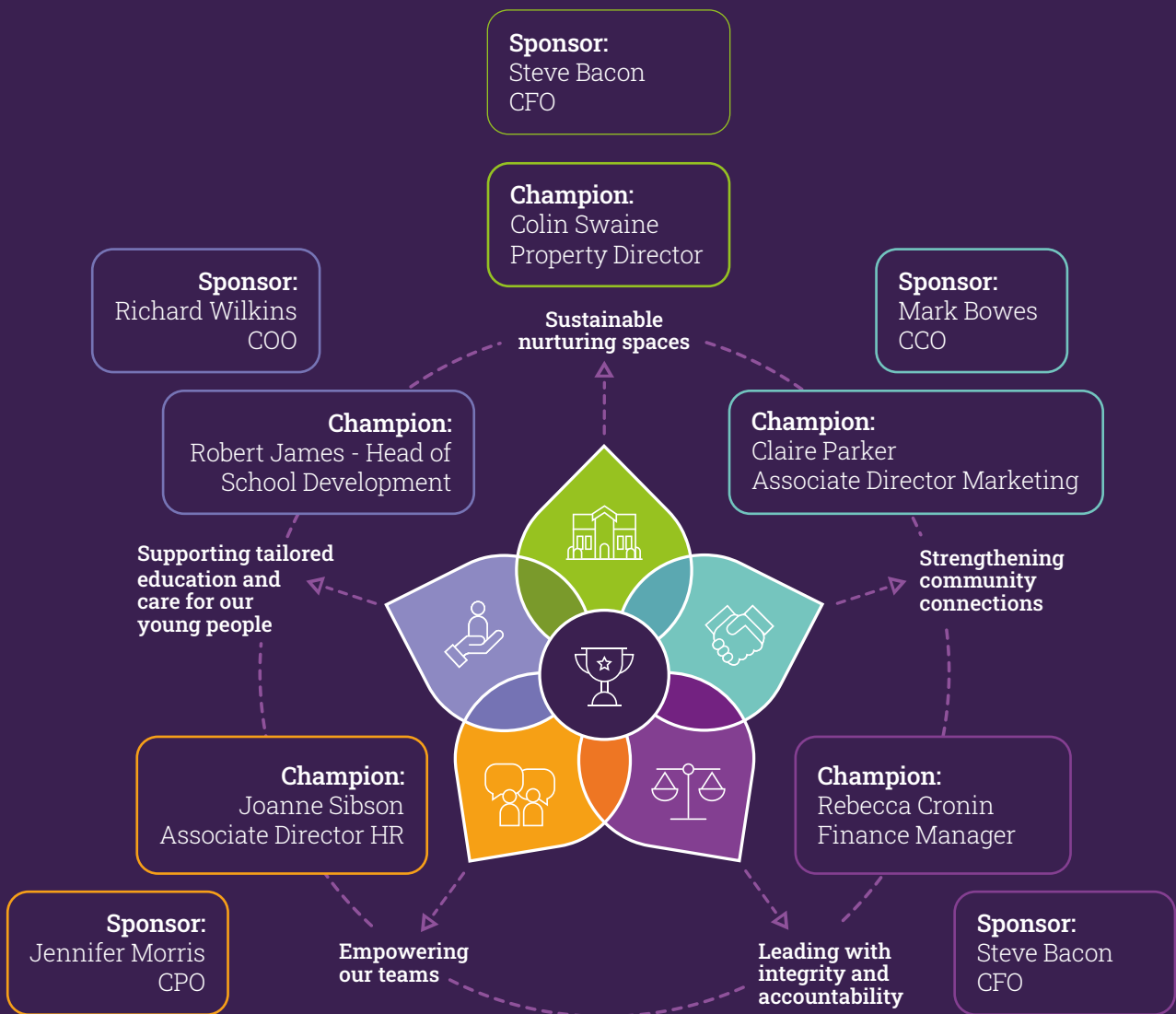
Adjusting Strategy as Needed

Using performance data and feedback, we will adapt our approach to meet evolving challenges and new opportunities, ensuring continuous improvement in sustainability efforts.

This process ensures we remain accountable, adaptable, and responsive as we move forward.

Our Sustainability Champions

Our dedicated champions for each of the pillars will lead the way in executing our sustainability strategy. They will oversee initiatives, track progress, and foster collaboration, ensuring that we make a meaningful impact across the organisation.



Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

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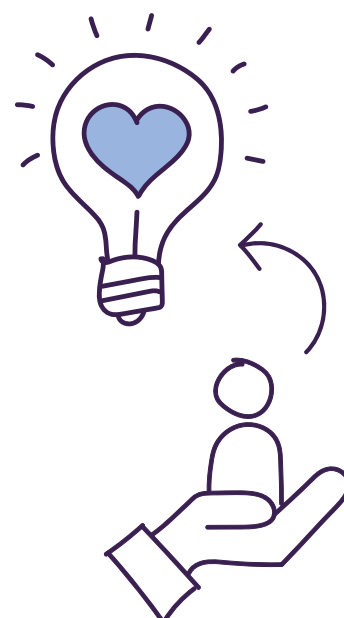


Stakeholder Engagement And Communication

Our approach to stakeholder engagement and communication is essential to the success of our Sustainability Strategy.

Transparent and consistent communication builds trust, reinforces accountability, and ensures alignment with the values and our expectations of diverse stakeholders, including employees, parents, young people, local communities, and regulatory bodies. Engaging these stakeholders allow us to identify key issues, address concerns, and collaborate on solutions that enhance our mission to provide the highest quality education and care.

By clearly communicating ESG goals, progress, and challenges, Witherslack Group strengthens relationships, inspires confidence, and encourages active participation in our sustainability journey.



Our Stakeholders



	Approach	Transparency	Collaboration	Mutual Benefit
Young People 	Incorporate sustainability education into the curriculum and organise student-led projects that align with ESG goals.	Communicate through Eco clubs set up in schools	Empower students to participate in shaping initiatives, such as recycling programmes, mental health campaigns, or biodiversity projects.	Build environmental and social responsibility skills in students, preparing them for a sustainable future while enhancing their educational experience.
Employees 	Publish ESG updates on our intranet Me@WG	Share updates on ESG goals, progress and challenges via regular quarterly newsletters/ blog posts on our intranet, Me@WG.	Involve employees in sustainability initiatives, such as energy-saving programmes or community projects, by forming cross-functional teams.	Foster a sense of purpose and belonging by aligning ESG efforts with employees' values, enhancing job satisfaction and retention.
Parents & Carers 	Annual impact report updates added into newsletters to keep parents and carers informed about ESG goals and progress.	Clearly communicate how ESG strategies benefit students and align with our Group's mission of providing exceptional care and education.	Create opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to ESG efforts, such as participating in eco-friendly school initiatives or community activities.	Strengthen trust and partnership by demonstrating how ESG commitments directly enhance the quality of education and care.
Local Communities 	Engage through partnerships with local organisations.	Regularly report on how ESG initiatives benefit the community, such as employment opportunities, environmental improvements, or support programmes.	Partner with local stakeholders to co-develop projects, such as improving green spaces or running community events.	Foster goodwill and community support while enhancing our Group's local impact and reputation.

Our Stakeholders

	Approach	Transparency	Collaboration	Mutual Benefit
Suppliers 	Develop supplier engagement programmes and include ESG criteria in procurement processes.	Clearly communicate expectations and progress in implementing sustainable supply chain practices.	Work with suppliers to improve sustainability practices, such as reducing waste or sourcing responsibly.	Create stronger partnerships that drive innovation, reduce costs, and enhance our Group's ESG performance.
Regulatory bodies 	Maintain regular communication through reports, compliance documentation.	Ensure full disclosure of ESG strategies, achievements, and areas for improvement.	Work closely with regulators to align practices with evolving standards and share insights for mutual learning.	Ensure compliance and build trust while influencing broader industry standards through proactive engagement.
Investors 	Provide regular ESG updates through reports, presentations, and board meetings.	Disclose key metrics, targets, and progress related to ESG commitments.	Engage in dialogue to align ESG goals with investor priorities and explore opportunities in impactful initiatives.	Build investor confidence.



Performance Monitoring and Reporting

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Measuring Our Success

Monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of our Sustainability Strategy is essential to ensure that we are meeting our goals and making meaningful progress. By regularly assessing our performance, we can identify areas of success and opportunities for improvement, allowing us to continuously refine our approach.

Accountability and transparency are at the core of our commitment to sustainability. Through clear reporting mechanisms and regular updates, we will track our progress, ensuring that we remain on course and accountable to our stakeholders. This ongoing evaluation process not only keeps us aligned with our objectives but also strengthens trust and engagement with our community, employees, and partners.

Our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) offer a clear and comprehensive view of our progress, ensuring that our goals are effectively tracked across the five strategic pillars. They are specifically designed to measure the outcomes outlined in this report, ensuring that our efforts remain focused and aligned with our sustainability objectives.



Sustainable Nurturing Spaces



Action	Target	KPI
Renewable Energy	• Achieve 80% purchased renewable energy by 2030 • Achieve 20% of schools will have renewable energy systems installed by 2027 and 50% by 2029	• % of total energy sourced from renewable energy contracts annually • Number of schools with onsite renewable (e.g. solar, wind) installed • % of new developments with integrated solar or geothermal systems
Carbon Management	• Reduce carbon emissions by 20% across all operations by 2030 • Transition 30% of the vehicle fleet to hybrid/electric by 2030 • Install EV charging points at 20% of our sites by 2025 and 50% by 2029 • We will open the UK's first zero carbon SEN school by the end of 2027 • Net Zero by 2050	• % reduction in carbon emissions (scopes 1, 2, and 3) compared to baseline year • % of the vehicle fleet that is hybrid/electric. • % of sites with operational EV charging points • Carbon footprint per student or per site (scope 1,2,3 emissions tracked annually)
Sustainable Procurement	• Achieve at least 50% of procurement spend on sustainable suppliers within three years, starting with high-impact categories like energy, office supplies, and food services. • Reduce Scope 3 Emissions Linked to Procurement • Ensure 75% of key suppliers are actively engaged in sustainability initiatives by 2025. • 80% of IT vendors vetted for ESG compliance by the end of 2025.	• % of Procurement Spend on Sustainable Suppliers (e.g. certified by relevant standards like ISO 14001). • Reduction in carbon emissions from Scope 3 categories tied to procurement activities. • % of suppliers completing scorecards and improving their sustainability performance. • % of IT vendors with ESG initiatives.

Action	Target	KPI
Resource Use	• Install water-efficient fixtures (e.g., low-flow taps, toilets) in 100% of facilities by 2025. • Divert 80% of waste from landfill through enhanced recycling programmes by 2028. • Ensure 50% of food waste is composted or repurposed through local partnerships by 2028. • 100% compliant e-waste disposal by certified recyclers by the end of 2025	• % reduction in total water usage annually compared to the baseline year. • % of waste diverted from landfill annually. • % of food waste diverted to composting or repurposing annually. • % of e-waste disposed via certified recyclers
Energy Efficiency	• Transition 100% of lighting systems to LED or equivalent energy-efficient technologies by 2029 • Achieve 5% reduction in overall energy consumption across facilities within five years.	• % of lighting systems converted to energy-efficient alternatives. • Annual percentage reduction in energy usage compared to the baseline year.
Biodiversity	• Create biodiversity-enhancing green spaces (e.g., native plant gardens) in 100% of facilities by 2026. • 100% of all new construction sites undergo biodiverse assessment and fully comply with regulation	• % of facilities with dedicated biodiversity-enhancing green spaces. • Number of biodiversity assessments.

Strengthening Community Connections



Action	Target	KPI
Stakeholder Engagement	• We will support one million parents and carers of SEN Children by 2030 • Publish annual impact report • Develop and distribute a quarterly sustainability newsletter for parents and the wider community by 2026	• Number of people engaged with all communication channels including, website visits, podcast streams, etc • Number of newsletters produced and distributed annually
Partnership & Outreach	• 1% of our annual net profits will be allocated to community development and investment activities • Partner with over 100 employers through our WG Futures programme by the end of 2025	• £ allocated to community development and investment activities • Number of employers partnered with through the WG Futures programme



Leading With Integrity And Accountability



Action	Target	KPI
Corporate Behaviour & Ethics	• Code of conduct is reviewed and updated annually and distributed to all employees • Board members to undergo an annual board self-assessment	• Number of reviews and updates of the code of conduct • % of board members undergoing annual self assessment
Sustainability Governance	• Ensure that WG's sustainability policies and strategy are reviewed and updated on an annual basis, achieving full compliance with industry best practices	• Annual compliance rate with industry frameworks (GRI, SASB, etc) • % of properties that achieve compliance with ESOS energy audits and EPC targets
Educational Governance	• Benchmark educational performance annually against national and international peers. (And Ofsted)	• Ofsted ratings
Climate Risks	• WG assess climate risk on a regular basis as part of its annual risk review	• % of climate risks identified and mitigated within a set timeframe
Stakeholder Governance	• WG will review and refresh the stakeholder engagement and communications plan on an annual basis • Zero incidents of legal action/non-compliance	• Stakeholder satisfaction with governance and communication efforts (can be measured through survey) • No. of legal actions or compliance violations reported
Data Security & Privacy	• Achieve 100% compliance with UK Data Protection Act across all operations by the end of 2026 • Annual audits ensuring compliance with GDPR and other data protection laws • 100% of relevant staff trained in safeguarding and secure practices tailored for special needs environments	• Results from data protection audits conducted annually • Number of audits conducted • % of employees trained

Empowering Our Team

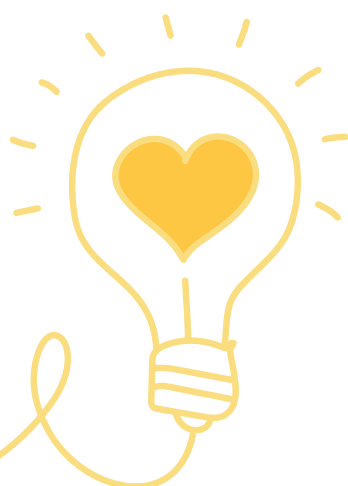


Action	Target	KPI
Diversity & Inclusion	• Continue to create an inclusive and engaging environment for our people • Ensure all people policies use inclusive language by the end of 2026 • Embed Diversity and Inclusion training and learning in our Induction and Talent programmes and ensure line managers are supported to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in their settings and teams. • Ensure we continue our work to reduce our gender pay gap	• Progress towards action plan • % of HR policies reviewed and updated for inclusivity • % of employees who have completed D&I training • Annual pay gap report including ethnicity pay gap
Employee Wellbeing	• Provide access to mental health and wellbeing resources for 100% of employees • Regularly assess staff satisfaction and wellbeing through our employee survey	• Employees survey participation rate • Employee Net Promoter Score • % of employees utilising flexible benefits programmes each year • New Hire turnover <6 months • Employee turnover & employee retention rates
Health & Safety	• All employees receive annual H&S training	• % of employees completing H&S training annually
Inclusive Recruitment	• Continue to create an inclusive and engaging environment for our people	• Diversity of new hires (gender, ethnicity, etc.) • Vacancy fill rate
Sustainability Awareness	• Provide sustainability training to 100% of employees every three years	• % of employees receiving sustainability training

Supporting Tailored Education And Care For Our Young People



Action	Target	KPI
Curriculum Integration	• 100% of schools to Integrate climate change into at least three areas of the curriculum • Map the sustainability curriculum to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2026 • All schools equipped with assistive technology solutions by 2026.	• % of schools delivering sustainability curriculum modules annually. • Number of SDG-linked activities integrated into the curriculum. • % of schools equipped with assistive technology
Young people outcomes via WG Futures Programme	• 100% of our engaged alumni will be in employment, education or accessing direct WG Futures support by the end of 2025	• % of young people accessing direct WG Futures support
Sustainability Challenges	• All schools to achieve eco schools award by the end of 2025 • Eco-committees set up at every school to lead on action plans and ESG related projects	• % of schools with eco schools accreditation • % of schools with established eco-committees



Reporting Our Progress

Witherslack Group is committed to transparent and effective reporting on ESG progress to drive accountability and continuous improvement.

- We use Greenly, a carbon accounting software, to collect and analyse data on our carbon footprint, enabling detailed insights into emissions across our operations.
- To enhance accuracy in tracking waste levels, we have aims to consolidate waste and water contracts across our sites, ensuring consistent data collection and reporting.
- Regular monitoring and analysis are key components of our approach, with updates and performance reviews discussed at ESG Working Group meetings. Progress against our targets will be calculated and shared internally on a quarterly basis, providing a clear picture of our achievements and areas for improvement. This enables the development of adaptable action plans, ensuring we stay on track to meet our sustainability goals.



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Future Outlook



Looking Ahead: A Forward-thinking Approach To Sustainability

As we move forward on our sustainability journey, Witherslack Group is committed to continuous improvement.

We view sustainability not as a one-time achievement but as an ongoing process that requires adaptability and innovation. We recognise that the challenges and opportunities in sustainability will evolve, and our approach must be flexible enough to respond to these changes.

Our focus on being proactive, learning from emerging trends, and adopting best practices ensures that we remain at the forefront of sustainability in the education sector. By staying adaptable, we can continue to meet our commitments to providing a sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality education for SEN students while making a meaningful impact on the communities we serve.

In the years ahead, we will continue to refine our sustainability efforts, involve all stakeholders, and explore new opportunities to embed sustainable practices throughout our organisation. Witherslack Group's dedication to innovation and leadership in sustainability will ensure we remain well-positioned to face future challenges and set an example within the sector.





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