

# SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT REPORT 2020



ACS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOLS





LEADERS OF TOMORROW,  
READY FOR CHANGE.



# ABOUT ACS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS



Founded in 1967 to serve the needs of global and local families, ACS International Schools educate over 3,700 students, aged 2 to 18, day and boarding, from more than 100 countries. Our schools – 3 in Greater London and 1 in Doha, Qatar – are all non-sectarian and co-educational.

At ACS, diversity, innovation, academic excellence and global awareness come together to create a dynamic learning community and an exceptional school experience.

At the heart of our approach is the idea of readiness – we empower our students with the skills and knowledge to thrive in a world that is changing fast. At ACS we prepare our students to be ready. Ready for cultures that crossover, boundaries that blur and ideas that interconnect. Ready for a world that demands a new kind of learning – and a new kind of citizen.

Part of this vision is to make them ready to change the future and make change possible. This is the catalyst that sets out our plan for our schools to be ever-more active in tackling the global climate emergency whilst deepening our commitment as a leader in environmental and social sustainability.

Our community wants to do the right thing, often overcoming barriers to do this. We want to remove those barriers; providing the infrastructure and sustainable alternatives to make it easy for everyone at ACS to make these responsible choices, from more water fountains to simpler recycling and low carbon food choices, but even more so, for our students to go on to be the leaders of tomorrow, ready to change.

This annual Sustainability Report has been prepared in conjunction with ACS's appointed sustainability advisor, Sustainable Advantage. The report covers the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 and outlines progress against our sustainability targets, whilst also giving a brief look into the initiatives planned to address our key environmental and social impacts in 2020-21.

Working with young people, we already have an opportunity to educate and inform students about their environment, but we also have a responsibility to set an example and show how, through simple actions, each individual, each house, each company, through a little thought and determination, can make a difference to the local environment. The small changes made locally can then help to make a massive change globally.

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10 million young people at schools across the UK are demanding action on climate and social justice. Collectively we must get behind them and take bold action to change.

3,700 STUDENTS  
FROM MORE THAN  
100 COUNTRIES

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE CHAIR



Graeme Lawrie

Partnering with the local community to share facilities, resources and educational expertise, as well as opportunities for collaborative research, professional development and networking is essential to ensure young people have access to the highest quality education and learning experiences across the region.

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I have the privilege of welcoming you to our first Sustainability Report. This represents a significant milestone in ACS's journey as part of our commitment to the global drive towards sustainability. Despite the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain committed to continuously developing our sustainability practices and demonstrating the positive impact we have on society, people and the planet.

Our students and staff come to us from every corner of the globe. The result is a wonderfully open-minded, outward-looking culture, with a genuine curiosity about the world. Internationalism is at the very heart of the ACS philosophy; we are proud of our multicultural identity and commitment to diversity, tolerance and choice.

To this end, we aim to continually develop a school community that promotes respect and compassion, service to others and active, positive participation in society and the wider world. In doing so, we must respond to the key challenges that we face at a local, national and global level, and in particular, the impact that our activities have on our environment and society.

ACS is committed as an organisation to not only ensure our students are equipped to enter their chosen university or career but to be a responsible organisation recognising that we have a fragile planet with unique resources. We take this role seriously and have invested a significant amount of time and resources to deliver on this goal. We have also taken our students on the journey with us and very much embedded our sustainability ethos into the school way of life and curriculum.

We have two key areas of focus: environment and society.

Our environmental focus covers energy, waste, water, biodiversity, transport and also our carbon footprint. We engaged Sustainable Advantage, a leading energy, waste and sustainability consultancy, five years ago as part of the company's long-term commitment to sustainability and reducing its impact on the planet. We are very proud to announce that ACS International Schools is now carbon negative meaning we have removed and offset more carbon than we emit. We will however continue to make great strides in reducing our total emissions in line with our targets.

ACS became a registered charity in September 2018 and partnerships form a key part of our schools' charity activity. This year has been one where our external communities' extended needs remind us of what the privilege of being a charity means to us. The partnership landscape in schools has changed significantly during these turbulent times and the trajectory of our initial partnership strategy has been adapted swiftly and effectively to support those in need, whilst maintaining our ambition to develop a positive vision for future generations, a stronger community and to ensure ACS is a leader in education through partnerships.

During the height of the coronavirus pandemic, we spearheaded a number of charitable initiatives to support communities in need. The ACS community raised and donated £15,000 to the Magic Breakfast programme, which provided 45,000 meals to children of families experiencing hardship.



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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE CHAIR

in the local communities around ACS's three schools in the Surrey and Greater London area. We increased support to our ACS families through a financial hardship appeal and have doubled our hardship budget for the coming year.

Whilst face-to-face interaction has been restricted and the sharing of facilities has been temporarily paused, our initial strategic priorities (community collaboration, digital innovation and teaching excellence) have been more critical during a time when communities have needed to work together to provide a very different approach to education. Digital solutions and blended learning have been a steep learning curve for many educators and schools. Many opportunities have arisen to enable educators to enhance learning across the region through shared resources, online expertise and partnership collaboration.

We launched several successful pilot programmes across our partnership network during this time, which includes our outreach box programme (sharing technology hardware with partner schools), a partnership app (point of contact and due diligence impact monitor), a neighbourhood partnership hub (25 local primary, sharing facilities, resources, and expertise), a service-learning programme and experiential learning opportunities and a corporate and charity partnership programme. These initiatives ensure that we as a school community are beginning to be recognised as a leader in the partnership and charity sector.

The remainder of this report showcases our journey to date, focusing on the achievements of 2019/2020 and what we have planned for next year and beyond in order to become a leading 'eco-school' and benchmark for sustainability excellence.

Graeme Lawrie, ACS International Schools' Partnership Director, has been awarded an MBE for his services to education, as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours 2020.



# SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

FOR THE NEXT  
TWO YEARS



PROCURE 100%  
RENEWABLE  
ENERGY



MAINTAIN  
100% OF WASTE  
DIVERTED FROM  
LANDFILL



REDUCE  
CARBON  
EMISSIONS  
BY 10%



INCREASE  
SUPPLY CHAIN  
ENGAGEMENT  
TO >50%



REDUCE ENERGY  
CONSUMPTION  
BY 10%



INCREASE  
RECYCLING RATE  
TO >55%



REMAIN  
CARBON  
NEGATIVE

## ENVIRONMENT

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing future generations. This is the decade in which, contrary to everything humanity has experienced before, we have everything in our power. We have the capital, technology, the policies. And we have the scientific knowledge to understand that we have to halve our emissions by 2030.

ACS has made a commitment to protect our environment, whether it be in relation to energy saving projects, recycling or sustainable transport. We became a carbon negative group of schools in 2020 and aim to build on this achievement. The daily operations of our schools have a range of environmental impacts. We work to actively manage these and create positive environmental change. We proactively take measures to reduce our carbon emissions, water usage and waste production; ensure our buildings have the lowest possible environmental impact; and source products and services responsibly. We will continually be looking for more efficient ways to limit our impact on the environment, working together and alongside our supply chain. But this alone will not address the challenges. Our approach must be to promote and support the behavioural changes that are needed to think and act differently.

## SOCIAL

When ACS was established in 1967, central to our mission was our founders' commitment to providing high quality, truly international education, which nurtures global thinkers and inspires better solutions to positively impact the communities we serve. Over 50 years on, while trends in education come and go, our founding principles remain. They are at the heart of everything we do.

In 2018, ACS became a UK charity, in keeping with our founders' wishes. Our remit as a charity also involves our commitment to working locally and internationally in partnership with schools and communities to share expertise and resources to enrich the education of our partner communities and ourselves.

Through our work, we have secured a meaningful and solid reputation as a group of schools that are actively engaged in charitable activity and worthwhile and effective partnerships that provide evidence of genuine and authentic public benefit.

Our service programme develops empathy, awareness of the need for social justice, and an understanding that individual actions make a difference. We encourage our leavers to strive to be agents for positive social change.

## GOVERNANCE

ACS, guided by a Board of Trustees with a wealth of international and UK experience, has an overall responsibility for ensuring that the activities of the company and its various businesses are conducted in compliance with the law, regulatory requirements, and good practice.

Successful integration and effective management of sustainability requires having committed leadership, clear direction and strategic influence – and none of this will happen without a robust governance structure.

Our ambitious sustainability goals have the support of the schools' Senior Leadership team to implement the sustainability strategy across the business, manage goal setting and reporting processes, strengthen relations with external stakeholders, and ensure overall accountability.



# SUPPORTING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are our world's call to action on the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing humanity and the natural world. With their unique role in creating and sharing knowledge, we have a direct role in addressing these challenges set out in Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# SUPPORTING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We have identified 7 UN SDGs to work towards and have integrated the SDGs throughout this sustainability report to demonstrate our contribution and alignment.

## NO POVERTY

**1** NO POVERTY



Ending poverty requires action from every part of society. And as a business we have a key role to play, from protecting lives in a crisis to using our influence within communities to encourage systemic change.

Where people are suffering, we know we can play an important role through fundraising, collaboration and raising awareness for causes close to our heart. We launched multiple targeted efforts this year to provide meaningful help to homeless charities, children facing food insecurities during the COVID-19 crisis and developing communities in Africa & Asia.

## QUALITY EDUCATION

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION



Education is the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. Quality education specifically entails issues such as appropriate skills development, gender parity, provision of relevant school infrastructure, equipment, educational materials and resources, scholarships or teaching force.

ACS's Education Strategy encompasses all of the above and aims to deepen an already solid foundation, driving key innovations that set a stage from which we can choose how to extend our impact into the future.

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Well-being is a feeling of satisfaction with life, a state characterised by health, happiness, and prosperity. Good health concerns the health of the human body and everything that can be done to protect it from sickness and intoxication and enable access to care.

This has been a school year unlike any other in history. We recognise the need to prioritise safe, supportive, culturally sustaining, and equitable learning environments that promote the social and emotional competencies of both students and adults in order for ACS schools and the communities they serve to thrive.

**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES



## REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Quality education raises consciousness about existing inequalities and contributes to ensuring that laws and social programmes primarily protect disadvantaged and vulnerable people. It helps to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

ACS aim to establish a functioning, empowered, and adequately resourced Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) Council, comprised of volunteers from all areas of the organisation and representing our diverse staff population, to develop collaborative measures to embrace diversity and foster environments for inclusion.





# SUPPORTING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

Sustainable consumption is the use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and which bring a better quality of life to people. This type of consumption minimises the use of natural resources and toxic materials and reduces polluting emissions of waste over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations.

ACS is proud to have achieved a zero waste to landfill status for 3 consecutive years and are committed to following the waste hierarchy of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recover', prioritising reducing waste, reusing items and recycling whenever possible over generating energy from waste.



## LIFE ON LAND

Biodiversity refers to the variety and number of species of life found within certain regions and in the world as a whole. An ecosystem is an ensemble consisting of a specific environment and the living beings in it.

We take an ecosystem approach to protecting and promoting biodiversity on our school sites, from liaising with grounds maintenance staff to reducing the use of pesticides, to ensuring habitat creation and biodiversity are considered as part of planning and design. We are also looking at actions at those sites with specific biodiversity value.



## CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change and ecological decline are the greatest challenges of our time. Presently governments around the world are doubling down on containing the COVID-19 pandemic, showing what a response to a global crisis – also the climate crisis – can and should look like: action informed by science and individual behavioural change enabling the transformation, while focusing on protecting the most vulnerable and leaving no one behind.

Our environment is at the top of our agenda: ACS is now carbon negative by way of offsetting the carbon we emit. We only procure from renewable energy sources; we will soon generate solar energy on site and implement multiple energy saving initiatives throughout the year. However, this is not enough, and we are committed to more ambitious targets to ultimately achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 in line with UK targets.

# ENERGY

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Using energy more efficiently and opting for renewable energy sources is essential for combating climate change and for lowering an organisation's overall environmental footprint.

We acknowledge that we are high energy users and our energy spend is substantial with the size of our campuses and facilities on offer. However, we are committed to making our school buildings more energy efficient and ensuring that any new developments are as sustainable as possible. We also continue to encourage our school community to save energy.

We have always engaged external consultants to monitor the energy markets and to advise us on when the best time is to lock these contracts in. We jointly felt that March 2020 was a good time to do this and we forward locked in our contracts a long way ahead of our actual renewal. This strategy saved £115,000. Part of this fantastic saving can now be re-invested into energy saving projects.

All electricity directly purchased by ACS has been sourced from renewable energy. We are continually working on energy efficiency upgrades, particularly in improving the efficiency of lighting and upgrading LED lights across all campuses. We installed sub-metering across the estate a number of years ago to monitor our energy usage in a very granular manner to identify areas of saving opportunity. We monitor energy usage on a half hourly basis.

## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

As the year in review was our first year of utilising the online energy reporting tool, we are gathering more and more knowledge as to how each site individually uses energy and why. The energy

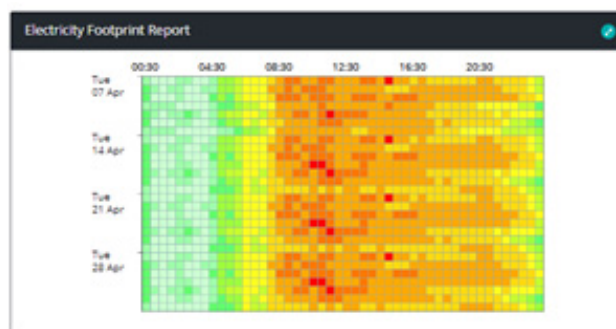
reporting tools we used identified areas of potential savings and we commissioned external specialists to conduct energy surveys at all three UK campuses.

The surveys showed that many areas would benefit from LED lighting upgrades that would save £3,600 a year with a payback of just over three years. We will also be evaluating how building management systems (BMS) can reduce energy consumption. We will continue to procure only renewable energy across all sites and review ACS buildings and property for climate change resilience and implementation adaption measures.

We are also planning on rolling out staff energy efficiency awareness training and will recognise and share success where a difference has been realised through targeted actions.

We have also identified that our significant roof space is ideal for installing solar panels. We conducted our first-round evaluation and will be supplementing this with a structural review. We have identified external partners who would fund the entire project at no cost to ACS and whereby we share in the savings.

Monitoring our heat map



REDUCE ENERGY  
CONSUMPTION  
BY 10% BY 2022

ENERGY 01/08/19 - 31/07/20

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| ELECTRICITY (kWh)     | 3,949,746 |
| RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY | 100%      |
| GAS (kWh)             | 7,666,135 |

UN SDGS  
SUPPORTED





# WASTE



DIVERT  
100% OF  
WASTE FROM  
LANDFILL



INCREASE  
RECYCLING  
RATE TO >55%

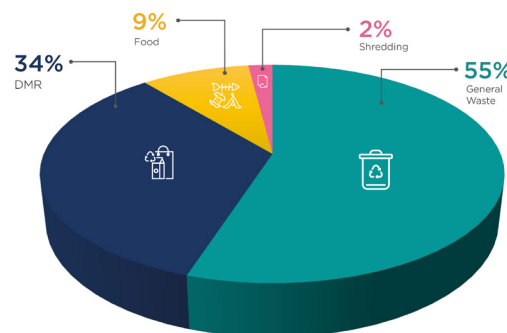
## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Unsustainable consumption is one of the big issues of our time, and high on the public agenda. The natural resources needed to make all of the products that we use are running out, and their disposal is impacting our rivers, oceans and air. There is a human cost too, with our desire for cheap disposable objects driving poor working conditions and a rise in slavery.

Waste disposal and recycling is therefore a key area of focus in our business and we are working in partnership with Sustainable Advantage who provide us with monthly waste reports to track our recycling rate and waste streams throughout the year and identify issues and improvements as they come up. ACS is proud to have achieved zero to landfill status, significantly minimising our environmental impact in this area.

All general waste is sent to an energy from waste recovery plan where waste that cannot be recycled is incinerated and turned into energy. We have also introduced food waste bins into all office kitchens. Our food waste is taken to an anaerobic digestion plant where it too is converted into energy. The by-product of this process is a residue which is used as high-grade fertiliser. Our used cooking oil is taken away for free and converted into biodiesel and negating the need for petrol or diesel to power vehicles running on biodiesel. Biodiesel reduces the carbon emissions from traditional transportation fuels by 90%.

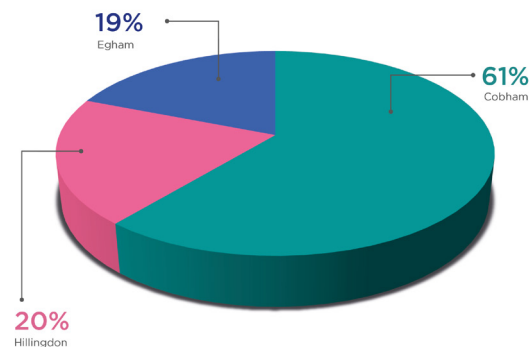
WASTE COMPOSITION



WASTE 01/08/19 - 31/07/20

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| WASTE PRODUCED (TONNES)          | 304.29 |
| RECYCLING (%)                    | 45.4%  |
| WASTE DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL (%) | 100%   |

WASTE PER CAMPUS



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# WASTE



DIVERT  
100% OF  
WASTE FROM  
LANDFILL



INCREASE  
RECYCLING  
RATE TO >55%

## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

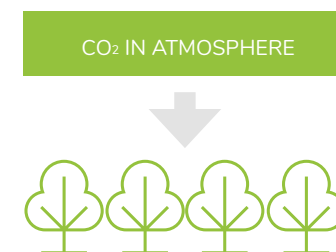
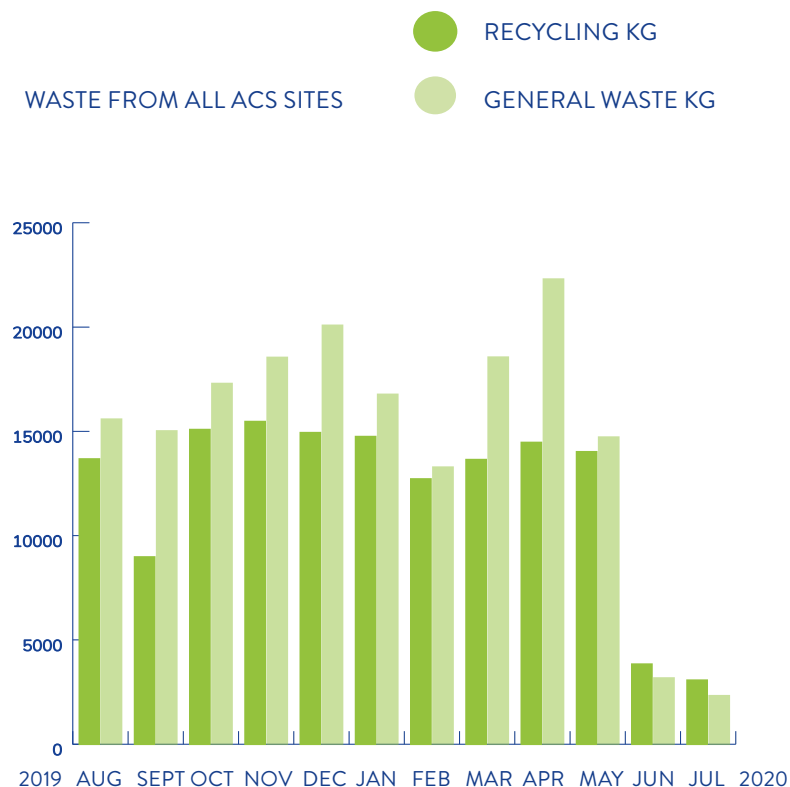
ACS is supporting efforts to move to the circular economy. We apply the “Reduce, reuse, recycle, recover” hierarchy to avoid sending waste to landfill, decreasing the overall amount of waste and increase recycling rates. We will continue to drive the move from general to recycled waste streams and will re-issue our staff and student “waste recycling guide” in order to increase our recycling percentage.

We have established stretch targets for the coming year to improve our performance in waste reduction and recycling percentage. Having achieved a zero to landfill status, we will continue to uphold this achievement through continued efforts and effective procurement. We have set a goal to increase our recycling percentage to 55% within the next two years.

Having worked hard to segregate our waste as best we can, the shift will now move up the waste hierarchy to rethink how the waste arises in the first place: “Where are these items from? Who made them? What happens at the end of their life? and do we really need them?”. This process involves us working with our supply chain partners to identify how they can help us. As an example, we ask whether cardboard boxes can be back-hauled and reused post delivery. This works very well with our cooking oil supplier as mentioned earlier and the creation of a circular economy.

Our targets for 2020 and 2021 include reducing single use plastics, in particular plastic bottles, coffee cups, water cups and plastic cutlery which we identified as key priorities based on the audit of waste.

WASTE FROM ALL ACS SITES



### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REDUCTION

|                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| LANDFILL WASTE AVOIDED     | 166.27 TONNES               |
| METHANE SAVED              | 88,647 KG                   |
| LANDFILL SPACE SAVED       | 498.8 CUBIC METRES          |
| CO <sub>2</sub> EQUIVALENT | 52.7 TONNES CO <sub>2</sub> |

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# WATER USE AND CONSERVATION

Water is essential to life. It constitutes up to 65% of the human body and 90% of the structure of plants. Thus, if deprived of water, no living being can survive for long. Nevertheless, this fundamental element to existence is seriously threatened.

This is an area where we clearly need to do more. We use water in many activities across the school, from grounds irrigation, washrooms and kitchens to catering, laboratories and cleaning. A school that is equipped with water conservation devices may use less than half the amount of water used in other schools. As we experience increasingly hot and dry summers, we need to manage our water use whilst maintaining the biodiversity of our school grounds and the quality of our sports pitches.

We took advantage of the deregulation of the water market and switched water supplier in 2020. Whilst this action has generated cost saving efficiencies and provided us with improved data, we will need to reset our baseline measures accordingly and develop closer tracking and usage.



## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

- We will improve our data collection on water within our own operations and identify opportunities to have a measurable impact in this area going forward
- We commit to designing, operating, and maintaining our existing and new facilities to ensure water efficiency across our estate
- We will reduce our water consumption, through identifying leaks to reducing unnecessary loss, improving efficiency of equipment, and recovering rainwater and runoff where possible
- We will undertake a study to benchmark our venues by their average daily usage and use this data validation to highlight high usage sites. Where usage increases or is marked as high, the venue will be surveyed for efficiency initiatives and leak fixes, to ensure that we prevent water wastage
- We will investigate water saving devices such as cistern dams, urinal controllers, flow restrictors and self-closing taps which save water and money. They are all proven, simple to apply and economic.

WATER 01/08/19 - 31/07/20

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| VOLUME OF WATER (M <sup>3</sup> ) | 36,922 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|

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READY TO EXCEL.





# BIODIVERSITY

Our school grounds provide an ideal opportunity to introduce children to the natural environment and to biodiversity in a practical way. We aim to maintain and enhance the ecological, and therefore educational value of the school site and have a positive impact on local and global biodiversity.

We carried out an ecological survey of the Cobham campus to map out habitats, features of interest, learning opportunities and woodland compartments.

This survey also highlighted the presence of non-native, invasive species of plants, considered to be one of the major threats to survival of native ecosystems, as they spread aggressively and displace the naturally occurring flora and reliant species. This discovery instigated the development of a management plan for the removal and elimination of Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed. The removal of other identified invasive species such as Rhododendron and Himalayan Balsam is also a priority.

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Bringing nature into the classroom can kindle a fascination and passion for the diversity of life on earth and can motivate a sense of responsibility to safeguard it.

## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

Given our extensive grounds which hold a wealth of ecological assets, providing a range of ecological services, we want to conserve our wild spaces, create new habitats, provide nesting and hibernation sites and start measuring our biodiversity on site. We have set the following measurable biodiversity targets:

- Effectively measure biodiversity on our campuses and just beyond our borders, in relation to species richness and abundance of plants, animals and fungi
- To achieve a continuous year-on-year increase in the genetic diversity, richness and abundance of bird, mammal, amphibian, and insect species found on site against a 2021 baseline. This includes the reintroduction of native species such as badgers, bats, water voles, hedgehogs, dormice, red kites, etc
- Identify any vulnerable or threatened species or landscape on or near our sites and work with conservation experts to develop conservation management units for these
- Regularly monitor and collect data about wildlife in order to generate interest amongst students whilst ensuring that our community is aware of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use the land sustainably
- To decrease the direct pressure on biodiversity by increasing year-on-year the area of grounds given over to ecologically valuable habitats against a 2021 baseline. These could include the rewilding of sites that are no longer in use and the transition of biodiversity-poor plantation woodlands to native mixed and broadleaf woodlands
- Develop a short and long-term management plan for the elimination of all invasive species.

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# BIODIVERSITY

- Ensure future building development plans do not adversely impact local biodiversity
- Increase the percentage of food grown on site used for catering purposes
- Increase the number of curriculum-linked lesson plans to outdoor and environmental learning and the number of hours students spend learning outside
- Enhance implementation of thorough participatory planning, knowledge management, and capacity building.

From a baseline of 2021, we will start to report on the following performance metrics:

- Percentage increase in the diversity and abundance of identified species year on year (%)
- Percentage increase in ecologically valuable habitat area (%)
- Net increase in the number of native trees planted
- Net decrease in the number of plantation and non-native trees (m<sup>3</sup>)
- Percentage of food grown on site used for catering purposes (%)
- Net change in natural green areas as a result of building developments (m<sup>2</sup>)
- Number of academic hours students in each grade level spend learning outside (hours)
- Number of curriculum-connected projects.



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READY FOR THE FUTURE.



# SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR CURRICULUM

## EMPOWERING PUPILS TO LEAD CHANGE

With around 3,700 students, one of our biggest impacts on sustainability is ensuring that all of our students have developed the attributes and competencies necessary for applying sustainability principles in their everyday lives.

Our goal is to provide teaching and learning experiences that empower and inspire students to one day be critical change-makers for sustainability within their field of expertise – whatever that field is.

There are many stories of sustainability across ACS, with staff and students getting involved in a whole array of projects to improve our social and environmental impact. We wish to highlight two in particular recently launched this year.

## ECO-SCHOOLS

Our students at ACS Egham are very engaged in the future of their school, and their planet. This year they became an Eco-School – by joining a global programme engaging 19.5 million children across 67 countries, making it the largest educational programme on the planet.

The Eco-Schools Programme is pupil-led, involving hands-on learning that gets the whole school and the wider community involved in exciting environmental projects. The programme follows a Seven Step framework in order to achieve the internationally recognised Eco-Schools Green Flag award.

ACS Egham are currently at step four of the seven-steps process, having already created an Eco-Committee and completed the environmental review, an investigation of the school's environmental performance. The next step involved the students writing an action plan based on the results of the environmental review. They chose to focus on waste, energy, biodiversity, healthy living and global citizenship.

Eco-Schools provide a simple programme to enable schools to analyse their operations and become more sustainable. A key element is the involvement of pupils in the whole process, including monitoring, action planning and decision making, leading to ownership of the programmes and an increase in their sense of responsibility to the environment and the local area.



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# SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR CURRICULUM

## I DO ONE THING (iDot)

I Do One Thing, also referred to as iDot, is a programme that was started by the Wildlife Aid Foundation. The idea behind iDot is simple: do at least one thing every day to help your environment. Individually, those actions may appear to do little to help the environment, but as a whole-school community those actions add up.

ACS Cobham is helping to pilot the iDot programme through our partnership with Wildlife Aid. The programme has been launched in Early Childhood, Lower School, and Middle School with plans of introducing iDot to the High School later this year.

In the Cobham Middle School, Grade 8 students completed 769 actions to help the environment during a two-week trial run of the programme in November. In the Lower School, over 350 actions to help our planet were completed during the first week by 60 students.

Actions completed by students include creating a hedgehog highway in their backyard, wrapping gifts in sustainable or reusable packaging, cutting or removing ear loops on disposable face masks, and selecting meat-free meals at lunch.

All iDots are logged via Google Forms and will eventually be added to the Wildlife Aid iDot counter on their website. In the Middle School, we are planning to provide a sustainability award to the student who completes the most and best quality iDots.

As we move towards obtaining our Eco-Schools Green Flag Award, we also hope to develop a role for a student to coordinate the I Do One Thing programme within our Eco-Committee: SEEders (Sustainability and Environmental Education Leaders).



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# SUPPLY CHAIN



REDUCE  
CARBON  
EMISSIONS  
BY 10% BY 2022



ALIGN SUPPLY  
CHAIN TO  
SUSTAINABILITY  
>50%

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Modern supply chains, where many hundreds of companies are part of creating one product, present a challenge around issues such as modern slavery and human rights – especially where manufacturing takes place outside the UK. We are committed to better understanding our supply chains and working towards greater transparency and responsibility towards people working in them. Our policy objectives include purchasing fairly traded, local, seasonal food and drink, using local businesses and small and medium enterprises especially in our home boroughs and increasing the number of social enterprises in our supply chain.

Through the contract management process, we require all our suppliers to evidence how they are implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to tackle slavery and human trafficking. We monitor supply chains that have been identified as a potential risk and take appropriate action, as necessary. Where possible we will use products that have been certified by external agencies such as Fair Trade for catering. Fair Trade standards include 'no forced labour' and require decent working conditions.

ACS uses a number of suppliers to provide non-core support functions, e.g. transport services (busing) and agency staff for certain roles (e.g. catering, cleaning,

security). We have during this year enhanced the number and breadth of questions of our current supply chain and added additional questions to new suppliers. ACS also uses professional suppliers and contractors for construction projects and specific facilities support.

ACS has taken the following steps to endorse and update our commitment to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains and/or in any part of its own business:

- Continue to ensure that contractors have an up-to-date Corporate Social Responsibility policy and staff welfare policies.
- Contacted suppliers to seek further assurances about anti-slavery and human trafficking.

Potential risk areas are in busing, contract and casual labour support for certain facilities services, building contractors and other contractors. To ensure compliance ACS prefers and generally hires staff directly under employment contracts and uses agency staff only for specific functions, expertise and as last resort for employment support.

ACS actively encourages its staff to speak up about any unethical behaviour within the organisation and have various channels of communication via line managers, Senior Leadership Team, staff forums and the HR department. There are also effective grievance and whistleblowing policies and procedures in place.

## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

There is still a lot more we can and should do in this area and we will be rolling out many new initiatives in the coming year to show that there is a better way to do business, working more closely with our suppliers.

We will help buyers make informed decisions, embed sustainability principles within the groups procurement policies and specifications and partner with our suppliers to provide more sustainable product options without cost impacts for our community, from vegan milks to energy efficient freezers.

Over the course of 2020/2021 we aim to better understand the carbon impacts of our supply chain, and as a result, we have made the decision to focus on those with the highest carbon impacts.

Sustainability considerations will be incorporated into all major new contracts to ensure we are purchasing from socially, ethically and environmentally responsible businesses. This includes the tendering for PCs and laptops, which specifies that deliveries should be consolidated with neighbouring schools (minimising transport emissions and local air pollution), as well as requiring the computers to be Energy Star rated and contain robust, long-lasting materials so components can be re-used at the end

UN SDGS  
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# WE'RE CARBON NEGATIVE.

FUNDING  
HYDROELECTRIC POWER

REDUCING EMISSIONS  
FROM DEFORESTATION  
AND DEGRADATION

SUPPORTING THE  
REPLANTING OF TREES

# THE JOURNEY TO NET ZERO

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are the leading cause of the planet's rapidly changing climate. ACS urgently needs to reduce its emissions to support the global effort to address the climate crisis.

The Climate Commission for the UK Higher and Further Education Students and Leaders (the Climate Commission) has advised that all higher education institutions should aim for net zero GHG emissions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2030 as a minimum, as per Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommendations. We are determined to meet this goal in advance of the deadline.

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR

We measure our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions.

Scope 1 emissions are the direct emissions that we as a group of schools can control. These are mainly from fuel combustion on-site (e.g., operational vehicles, or gas boilers)

Scope 2 emissions are the indirect emissions from electricity purchase and used by our schools. All energy purchased by ACS Schools is from renewable sources.

The recent Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) assessment for ACS International Schools identified a lot of opportunities of which were going to be implemented but had to be paused as a result of COVID-19. The measures and

projects that were initiated and left at planning stage involved investing in energy consumption reduction capex projects such as efficient boilers, solar PV panels, upgrading building controls, and low energy LED lighting. We are committed to reduce our overall energy and emissions footprint and therefore, should the current circumstances allow, we shall resume with planning and implementing our energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmes.

During the reporting period ACS planted 160 trees on the school grounds. This contributed to an offset of 0.9 tCO<sub>2</sub>e of carbon for 2019-2020. During the period 2020-2021 ACS will plant a further 420 trees, amounting to a total of 3.4 tCO<sub>2</sub>e offset for that period.

Finally, we offset our remaining emissions by removing more CO<sub>2</sub> from the air than we emit, by investing in renewable energy technologies and conservation initiatives around the world. We are proud to be one of the first group of schools in the UK to become a carbon negative organisation.

Target: Reduce our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions by 10% by 2022 compared to our 2019/20 baseline.



REMAIN  
CARBON  
NEGATIVE



REDUCE  
CARBON  
EMISSIONS BY  
10% BY 2022

| 01/08/19 - 31/07/20                   | TCO <sub>2</sub> E |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| SCOPE 1                               | 1,409.6            |
| SCOPE 2                               | 920.8              |
| SCOPE 3                               | -                  |
| GROSS TOTAL                           | 2330.4             |
| CARBON OFFSETS PLANTING TREES ON SITE | 0.9                |
| CARBON OFFSET PROJECTS                | 2330.0             |
| NET TOTAL                             | -0.5               |

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# REDUCING OUR EMISSIONS



REMAIN  
CARBON  
NEGATIVE



REDUCE  
CARBON  
EMISSIONS BY  
10% BY 2022

## PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR

Our goal is to create an ambitious roadmap to reduce our carbon emissions. Reduce, Replace and Recover are the three pillars we have adopted to support our carbon reduction strategy. We will reduce the energy intensity of everything we do, replace fossil electricity with renewable energy and on-site generation and as a last resort recover carbon emissions through offsetting.

The roadmap will set interim 2025 emissions reduction targets and include focused initiatives to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 emissions. The continuation of on-site generation of renewable electricity on each of our campuses will form a large part of these plans. We will also look to replace all end-of-life school vehicles with electric vehicles and make associated investments in a charging infrastructure.

We are also embarking on a very exciting journey to investigate the feasibility of developing and managing a certified emission reduction project with the Namibia Project that will avoid or reduce the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

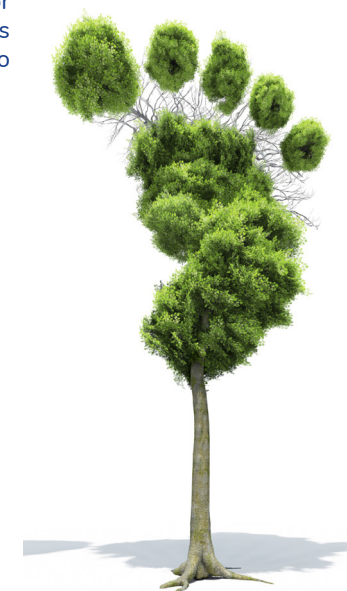
We will also be looking further than Scope 1 and 2 and looking at Scope 3, which includes indirect emissions from sources the schools do not own or control such as emissions from goods and services we buy and staff and student commuting.

Whilst it is vital that we work towards achieving net zero for Scope 3 emissions, efforts initially need to be made towards measuring these more accurately in 2020/21 with the view to set baselines and targets.

We can't save the world  
by playing by the rules, because  
the rules have to  
be changed. Everything needs  
to change – and it has to start  
today

”

–Greta Thunberg



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# PROUDLY OFFSETTING OUR CARBON

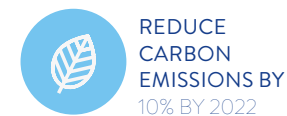
## MUSI RIVER HYDRO INDONESIA

We worked with Sustainable Advantage and South Pole to guide us in the pursuit of our carbon-offsetting initiative. Partnering with a global expert like South Pole to facilitate our carbon removal is a momentous moment for ACS. With more than 700 directly owned projects, South Pole delivers measurable certifiable benefits aligned with the aims of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We have chosen to invest in the Musi River Hydro Project in Indonesia and Vichada Forest Restoration in Colombia. These projects are certified by Gold Standard and Verified Carbon Standard (VCS)

Located in rural Sumatra, Indonesia, the Musi River run-of-river hydroelectricity project harnesses the flow of the Musi River to generate clean electricity for the grid. The project supports local jobs, new income streams and has funded infrastructure improvements for the local community – as well as a reforestation programme.

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY<br>             | 765,000 MWh generated on average annually by the hydro plant, displacing fossil fuel-generated electricity and boosting Indonesia's renewables sector.         | <b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH<br>         | 50 permanent jobs created in power plant operations, with part-time employment opportunities offered during the construction phase.                                       |
| <b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE<br> | Two drawbridges repaired, as well as new roads, trash basins and financial support building a public transport terminal, mosque and a traditional marketplace. | <b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION<br> | Free training for locals on composting and making organic fertiliser from invasive aquatic plants - providing free fertilisers to farmers to maintain healthy ecosystems. |
| <b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION<br>                         | 568,000 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> reduced on average annually, contributing to climate change mitigation.  | <b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND<br>                           | 20 ha of land reforested in the project area as part of a dedicated programme to support a healthy, natural ecosystem.  |



Gold Standard<sup>®</sup>





# PROUDLY OFFSETTING OUR CARBON



REMAIN  
CARBON  
NEGATIVE



REDUCE  
CARBON  
EMISSIONS BY  
10% BY 2022



## VICHADA FOREST RESTORATION COLOMBIA

Located in the Orinoco river basin in Colombia, the Vichada Climate Reforestation project combines reforestation for sustainable timber production with biodiversity protection and ecosystem restoration. The resulting forests offer habitat for native plants and animals, enrich the soil, save and filter water, and help mitigate the greenhouse effect.

The project further protects natural resources, with trees shielding the soil from erosion to prevent flooding and optimise water quality. Income from secure job opportunities with legal protections for workers helps alleviate local poverty, with leadership and development programs also offered to employees. The project is run by a multicultural team of men and women, and educates the community on climate change and the importance of sustainability activities. Community educational opportunities are further improved by capacity building programs in local schools.

The project engages with local communities, farmers and NGOs through annual stakeholder meetings - earning the project the coveted Social Carbon certification.



80 new jobs created, with secure working conditions for employees including minimum wage, health care and pension entitlements.



51,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e mitigated on average each year.



80 million trees planted from three main species (acacia, mangium, eucalyptus and pine).



13,205 ha of planting area and 8,089 ha of forest conservation area.







11,312

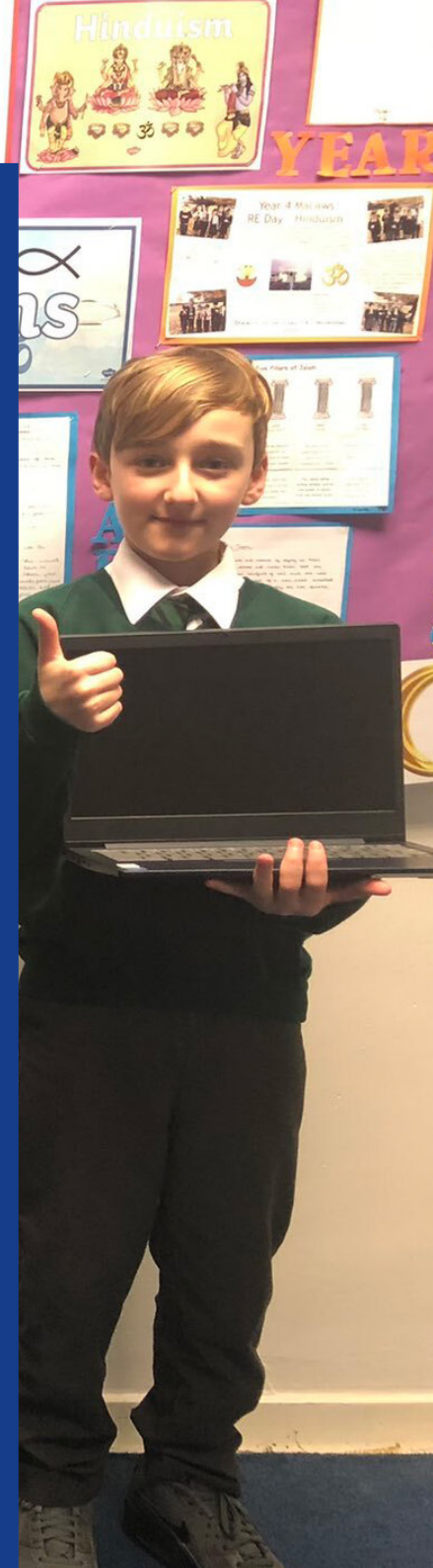
CHILDREN FROM  
PARTNER SCHOOLS  
USED AN OUTREACH  
BOX

1,412

EDUCATORS TRAINED IN  
NEW TECHNOLOGIES

10,253

HOURS OF ACS  
STUDENT PARTICIPATION  
IN SERVICE LEARNING  
ACTIVITIES





# SOCIAL

Engendering a sense of awareness in pupils and staff is one of our key aims. We nurture a deep-seated sense of social responsibility, actively seek to establish meaningful partnerships, and are enriched by our role in the wider community. This helps our pupils both to understand the responsibilities they have to society and their potential to make a difference.

Our charitable ambition is to become, over-time, a valued partner to local state schools, their staff and students and the wider community. Through working with and understanding others, we are strengthened ourselves.

We run and manage over 150 charitable initiatives across our campuses. It is not possible to list all of the activities as they are numerous but to mention just a few, they range from fundraising for the Australian bush fires, Christmas hampers, supporting homeless shelters and food banks, teaching local children, cleaning up the Thames, global educator conferences and much more.

## PARTNERSHIP APP

4,412 DOWNLOADS OF THE ACS PARTNERSHIP APP

6,000+ USERS VIEWED PARTNERSHIP VIDEO CONTENT

In October 2019 we launched the pilot Partnership App on Apple and Google Play stores. The app has now been downloaded by 4,412 users. The app provides a calendar for upcoming events, news items and other functionality for partner sign up and management, due diligence and impact reporting and is regularly used by our service learning leads and partnership staff.

## OUTREACH BOX PROGRAMME

We loan state-of-the-art technology kits to partner schools. These kits contain technology previously unavailable to schools, such as class sets of virtual and augmented reality headsets, the latest robotics technology, digital cameras, green screens, thermal imaging technology, etc. Each of these packs are accompanied by lesson plans, shared best practice and guidance/training provided by our staff and students as part of their service-learning programme – an opportunity to go into these schools and train teachers and students how to use and benefit from the latest technologies.

In the last six months this resource has been used by 11,312 individual children and some 1,412 staff at these schools have also received training in the use of this technology. The resource was also used as part of our outreach programme through events such as BETT 2020 (educational technology exhibition at the Excel) and various other conferences.

## PARTNERSHIP HUBS

The ACS partnership hub is an informal collective of like-minded individuals with a simple vision to enhance the education of ALL children through enhanced opportunity through collaboration.

The partnership hub at our Cobham campus now has 25 active state primary schools signed up. This group meets monthly and continues to meet virtually during the school closure period. The schools regularly use our outreach boxes and have attended partnership activities such as the partnership choir event, ICARE Steam robotics, and Teentech events, amongst many others. Schools are able to use our facilities and our students work alongside them as part of their service-learning programme. Teachers from these schools have taken part in many professional development courses in collaboration with universities, charities, and our new corporate partners. As part of our hub we have worked regularly with Brunel and the Royal Holloway University to host professional development seminars, such as the 'Literature in Education' conference that was adapted to an online platform for 82 participants across 29 schools.

Whilst our intention to develop similar hubs at ACS Egham and ACS Hillingdon was postponed this year, we continue to work with other schools in these areas without the partnership hub setup as yet.

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# SOCIAL

## CORPORATE AND CHARITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

A large part of partnerships work involves fostering relationships with external companies, charities, and individuals to enhance the education of all children. Through established relationships with these organisations, we have provided many opportunities for ACS students and our partner schools. Events such as the week long Pinewood Animation studio, The Queen Elizabeth Foundation (MERU), 'Engineering for Disabilities' workshop, the BETT 2020 exhibition, 'Learning Technologies' (Teacher PD and student workshops in robotics and VR), Peer Residency Programme with the Indonesian Embassy (using our boarding facilities) and sports camps with elite football/rugby are just some examples of what has been achieved.

It is important that our partner organisations also benefit from this partnership interaction. The MERU charity supported us in STEAM lessons, guest speakers and factory visits, whilst ACS sponsored their team at various networking events. Our children raised funds to build two electric wheelchairs for foundation children and support their efforts to adapt.

## ORBIS UK

For 17 years, ACS has partnered with Orbis UK, an international eye care charity, to raise awareness

about avoidable blindness. The partnership enables ACS to fulfil its mission of focusing on student learning outcomes while delivering an authentic public benefit. A key feature of the programme is the communications internship, completed by five students with journalism or medical aspirations. Assuming the role of roving reporters, they participate in hospital-based and community activities. At the end of the latest internship to Nepal, the students reported having been on a "life-changing" trip with at least one of them intent on pursuing a career in ophthalmology.

To date, 68 students have visited 28 Orbis programmes in eight countries. The partnership has raised over £560,000 for Orbis. The students produce content, including case studies, blogs and social media updates. The last ACS/Orbis trip launched 20 social media posts and attracted 17,206 views and 1,007 engagement and a video produced by the students showcasing the project has been used by Orbis globally to aid their fundraising efforts.

## THE ACS NAMIBIA PROJECT

The Namibia Project was founded in 1999 at ACS Cobham by our colleagues, Ann and Rijn Brandse, who through relatively humble origins, planned to offer just 20 students and 2 teachers at the school the chance to spend a month in Namibia, exploring and learning about a country that for many, was as far away from their consciousness as it was actual physical miles (that's 7,617 miles, to be precise).

The Namibia Project and ACS Cobham are now linked, with many wonderful fund-raising campaigns that make a tangible difference to the lives of orphans and vulnerable children in Namibia. At ACS, we use this annual expedition as a Service-Learning trip – it isn't just about raising money for the Namibia Project. Our students gain valuable learnings and are immersed in experiential education – a cycle of action and reflection, as students seek to achieve real objectives for the community and achieve deeper understanding and new skills for themselves.

## BURSARY PROGRAMME

The ACS bursary programme provides financially assisted places to enable more young people to access an ACS education, in turn enriching our community. In our next 2020-21 academic year, over 50 students will benefit from bursary places worth over £1.1m. Furthermore, in response to the coronavirus crisis, we have also increased our support for families through a financial hardship appeal and have doubled the hardship budget for the coming year.

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# SOCIAL

## REACTING TO COVID-19

School closure as part of the COVID-19 pandemic was abrupt and caused significant issues for state schools. Many were not ready for online provision/distance learning and it became very apparent that technological provision and expertise were areas of focus, alongside provision for disadvantaged children facing food insecurities. Working together to overcome the significant burden of changing educational provision with school closures, we shared best practices across schools and provided a support hub for senior leaders

In the early weeks of the pandemic we liaised with software and hardware companies, developed instructional videos, hosted online professional development, as well as public webinars alongside our partner organisations. We developed several fundraising efforts to support these communities. Our students and staff also provided online lessons and fitness sessions, which we shared with our external communities.

A particular focus was on special schools with many vulnerable children on an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP), who faced a particularly difficult period. We coordinated a national effort to support these children through the Schools Together Group with the 'Big Food Fundraiser' project – to focus on UK children facing food insecurities this year. Working together as a community on this focused fundraising initiative we donated 45,000 meals to so many families in their time of need.



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THE  
WORLD  
NEEDS  
NEW  
THINKING.  
GET READY.

# GOVERNANCE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The ACS Board comprises of ten Trustees/Non-Executive Directors, including the Chair.

The Board formerly meets six times a year, including the Annual General Meeting, and it has three Sub Committees (Audit & Risk, Education and People) that meet three times a year.

The Board is collectively responsible for ensuring that it pursues its charitable objects for the public benefit and promoting the long-term success and viability of the Group. It does this by directing and having oversight of the Group's affairs including setting and approving the Group's strategy, vision, values, educational philosophy and associated strategies.

The Board evaluates its performance annually using self-evaluation and external evaluation where deemed necessary. The Board discusses collective performance as a team and individual Board members discuss their own development needs and goals individually with the Chair.

The Chief Executive and his Leadership Team, to whom the Board has delegated responsibility for proposing and delivering the Group's strategy, is responsible for managing the day-to-day activities, operations and resources of the Group.

## NEASC-ACCREDITED

All three ACS schools in the United Kingdom are accredited by the New England Association for Schools and Colleges (NEASC), a globally recognised standard of excellence which attests to a school's high quality and integrity.

Founded in 1885, NEASC is an independent, voluntary, non-profit membership organisation which connects and serves over 1,500 public, independent and international learning communities in the United States and worldwide. Specifically, NEASC Accreditation is a system of accountability that is ongoing, voluntary and comprehensive in scope based on a rigorous set of standards which define the characteristics of high quality, effective learning communities and encompass all aspects of a school's operation.

Our concept of learning – what it looks like, how it is nurtured or hindered, where and how it occurs, and what it means to be a learning-focused organisation – has significantly changed thanks to social, economic, and technological shifts and dramatic new insights and understandings provided by brain research.

Yet, despite many efforts at reforming and reinventing the place we call 'school', education has made little progress in liberating itself from a 19th century factory model designed to produce mass literacy – and a compliant work force. For the most part 'school' continues to be a place where learning is equated with academic outcomes, content mastery, and uniformity of process and practice. 'Learning' remains largely de-personalised, is often confused

with high stakes test results, and does not equip our children with the understandings, aptitudes, dispositions, values, and competencies needed to deal with the global dilemmas and challenges of our times.

In 2016, the NEASC Commission on International Education introduced ACE Learning, its ground-breaking accreditation protocol which presents a fundamentally different approach to accreditation.

ACE asks learning communities to reflect on learner impacts rather than outputs and to identify the evidence required to validate the desired Impact. ACE aims to change the place called 'school' into an "interactive museum of learning opportunities", envisioned and sustained by a community that shares and acts upon a common, explicit understanding of learning. Someone said: "All learning begins with and depends on a provocation." ACE intends to be such a 'provocation'.

Sustainability initiatives are compatible with the aims of the NEASC Ethical Practice Foundation Standard and to support this foundation standard, ACS has established:

- policies that support fair and ethical practices reflective of community values – which are reviewed regularly
- open, transparent information and communication platforms where policies and procedures are readily available
- conflict resolution structures.

### UN SDGS SUPPORTED



# GOVERNANCE

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone who works at ACS, and Safety Cloud is the H&S management and compliance tool that we use to help everyone fulfil those responsibilities. This system is managed by Southalls Associates, our external competent person, appointed to ensure that our schools' health and safety responsibilities are met. The system provides access to all staff and covers H&S training, accident & incident reporting, risk assessments, policies, audits & checklists, meeting minutes and facilities records.

- Each new member of staff completes a health and safety induction with their Principal/ Manager when they start working at ACS
- Every school trip or event taking place at the school needs a risk assessment approved by the Head of the School
- A library of information and resources is available for our staff to access with regard to health & safety, child protection, safeguarding and coronavirus guidance.

Plans are underway to implement ISO450001: the first globally recognised standard for Occupational Health and Safety management systems providing a framework to create safe and health workplaces. Focused on risk prevention, innovation and continual improvement, this will allow us to anticipate, adapt and respond, providing both resilience and agility in a global marketplace.

## SAFEGUARDING

ACS is committed to ensuring that everyone is safeguarded from harm and protected from all forms of bullying, abuse, discrimination or harassment. We recognise that school plays a significant role in the prevention of harm to our students by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults and supportive friendships. Our schools will therefore:

- Establish and maintain a community where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to
- Ensure that all students know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Include across the curriculum and our pastoral programmes, the promotion of British Values, and opportunities which equip a student with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and know to whom they should turn for help.



## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

We are committed to providing the leadership and management that support efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing. To this end, we have developed an ACS Wellbeing Strategy which outlines a whole-school approach to wellbeing for staff, students and parents. Families may join our Wednesday Wellbeing Webinars. Students can avail of one-to-one mentoring and coaching. Parents may attend workshops, talks and presentations to support them in helping their children navigate the modern world.

There is a lot of information being published around the wellbeing of employees in these changed circumstances with a focus on the mental health aspects of working in isolation from home. We have already implemented a Wellbeing programme for our staff which includes therapeutic counselling and mental health training. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the support we provide our staff is different but still just as important, if not more so. It is our intention to develop a Staff Wellbeing Charter over the next year to give us direction and establish best practice.

We have enlisted the services of four Wellbeing expert advisors to support our whole school, who provide training, counselling and advice and information on various topics and issues.

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# GOVERNANCE

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL

We are proud of our culturally diverse community of students, families, staff and alumni representing over 70 nationalities, and recognise that we have an important role to play in being a positive catalyst for change. We continue to learn and acknowledge that we can do better and will work harder as a community.

In 2020 ACS formed its first employee led Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) council, comprised of volunteers from all areas of the organisation and representing our diverse staff population. The council took its lead from the public statement made by ACS in response to the Black Lives Matter movement and extended its scope beyond race to consider all aspects of diversity.

The council is backed by a strong executive sponsorship demonstrated by the attendance of our CEO and Leadership team in all monthly meetings. The Board has fully endorsed our approach and we will be reporting on progress against our initial goals in July 2021.

Since inception, we have created a resource bank for staff to both educate themselves and students, arranged for an expert guest speaker to deliver a presentation during our staff professional development day, and established diversity requirements for our recruitment partners. We have also developed a Wellbeing and Diversity calendar

to plan and celebrate ACS-wide events throughout the year. In the past few months, we have celebrated Black History Month, Anti-Bullying Week, LGBT History month, Kick Out Racism Day and Mental Health Awareness week.

Over the months ahead we will propose and agree an ACS Charter, create the policies and manifesto around this and establish our objectives and goals going forward.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion needs to be something that every single ACS employee has a stake in.

## DATA PROTECTION

ACS takes data protection extremely seriously and maintains a data protection officer that always liaises with all departments. During the course of a school's activities it collects, stores and processes personal data (sometime sensitive in nature) about staff, children, their parents, its contractors and other third parties. ACS is liable for the actions of its staff and governors in how they handle data. It is therefore an area where all staff have a part to play in ensuring we comply with and are mindful of our legal obligations, whether that personal data handling is sensitive or routine.

We are committed to protecting individual's personal data and aim to remain at all times fully compliant with data protection laws and guidance from the relevant regulators.

## GENDER PAY GAP

In line with our values, ACS is committed to equal opportunities and equal pay. Gender equality is a significant part of this commitment to diversity and inclusion, which is why we welcome the implementation of mandatory gender pay gap reporting as one important step in terms of progression and transparency.

Our mean gap is 3.88% which is relatively small when compared to the national average (18.4% Office of National Statistics 2018). Our median pay gap is -6.98%. The pay gap shows that mean pay is higher for male staff than females, while median pay for female staff is higher than for male staff. This is because a small number of the most senior and highest paid positions in the organisation are largely filled by males rather than females.

Although the current gender pay gap is relatively small, we will continue to work towards reducing any gender pay gap. The relatively small number of people in very senior roles contributes to a gap when bonus is considered, and this is an area we will consider and monitor further.

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WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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