# ACCREDITATION REPORT

## Oundle School

November 2025

# Executive Summary

Oundle School (Oundle) is a co-educational public school based in Oundle, Northamptonshire. The school occupies a large number of the buildings across the town, including educational facilities, offices, boarding houses, sports facilities, and various other structures that range in age from listed buildings to brand new developments. With both day pupils and boarding pupils, and a new cohort of students each year, the school must balance a wide range of stakeholder interests when it comes to sustainability.

Despite these challenges, the sustainability team and student-led green groups work hard to manage the impact of the school, maintain an effective environmental management system (EMS) and implement actions that have led to reductions in multiple resources this year. Initiatives introduced this year for waste and travel will also help to realise further reductions in future data.

Oundle's EMS is well established and should now be refined to both develop and achieve long-term sustainability goals at the school. Going forward, Oundle should incorporate increased resource monitoring and analysis, detailing the factors affecting resource use, and a more in-depth resource action plan, containing both smaller and more overarching actions, into the EMS. Helping to link analysis and action to realise resource reductions. Creating long-term sustainability goals and a delivery plan would bring focus to the sustainable efforts at Oundle and provide a framework to track progress against.

## Highlights

- A number of significant resource reductions were made in the 24/25 period when compared to 23/24, including electricity (-10%), gas (-3%) and food waste (-26%).
- Sustainability is actively considered throughout the school in planning, discussions, and decision-making. Providing a strong foundation for sustainable development and progress.
- Half-hourly sub-metering is used across the site for an increased breakdown of electricity usage, which can then be used to target action.
- A variety of impactful environmental and social projects have been delivered, including a range of biodiversity projects, sustainable construction planning for new developments, toy and clothes swaps, and other reuse projects, to name a few.

## Improvements

- Regularly recording the factors that have influenced the consumption of measured resources is essential to support continuous improvement. The analysis should then be used to inform planned actions and improve the accuracy of target setting.
- The carbon footprint calculation must be expanded to include all measured resources, as well as an expansion into some new resources. A more complete carbon footprint calculation is essential for setting accurate carbon targets and assessing Oundle's progress towards those targets.
- Start to consider the long-term sustainability goals for the school and begin to develop a delivery plan by completing the mapping exercises listed in the Leadership and Governance section of this report.
- Provide access to sustainability-focused training for staff and students, to embed a culture of sustainability across the school.

## Score

Investors in the Environment is pleased to confirm that, having recently completed the audit process, Oundle School has achieved the Green level accreditation with a score of 80%.



To achieve Green level accreditation, an organisation is required to demonstrate continual improvement through the implementation of their Environmental Management System, working towards a minimum 2% efficiency improvement year-on-year. At Green level, the organisation is focusing on driving wider sustainability development throughout and is starting to consider their value chain with the implementation of sustainable procurement practices, and associated carbon emissions.

# About the audit

The Investors in the Environment (iiE) accreditation requires an organisation to provide evidence that it has met a range of pre-defined criteria, set targets to reduce its environmental impact and taken action to improve its performance whilst enhancing the community in which it operates. Evidence is presented at an annual audit and this report provides an evaluation of the organisation's performance as well as offers advice on the next steps for continued improvement.

The Investors in the Environment annual audit assesses five key areas of an organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS). These areas include:

- Environmental policy
- Resource management and monitoring
- Progress against targets
- Action planning including social/ environmental projects
- Communication

The purpose of the audit is to evaluate the organisation's EMS and make suggestions relating to its performance. Future opportunities and risks to the organisation's environmental practices may also be identified as a result.

The audit consisted of an examination of documentation evidence, and an interview with key personnel on 19/11/25, with final evidence submitted on 27/11/25.

Evidence submitted included:

- Updated EMS Reporting Pack
- Travel Plan
- Various resource measurement sheets
- Environmental Action Plan
- Environmental Policy
- Communication examples
- Half hourly data and energy data

## Summary Results Table

| Audit category | Score |
|---|---|
| Section 1 - Leadership and Governance (Policy) | 90% |
| Section 2 - Resource Use, Data, & Monitoring | 79% |
| Section 3 - Performance, Action, & Targets | 72% |
| Section 4 - Carbon Management | 64% |
| Section 5 - Waste Management & Materials | 75% |
| Section 6 – Transport & Travel Planning | 89% |
| Section 7 - Environmental & Social Projects | 100% |
| Section 8 – Communication & Engagement | 83% |
| **Overall Score** | **80%** |

# Audit Scoring

Each section of the organisation's Environmental Management System (EMS) is scored as detailed below. Full reference to scoring can be found separately in the organisation's audit sheet upon request, including auditor comments against specific criteria.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Fail** | **0 Points**: A failing score means that this criterion has not been met nor is any progress demonstrated. *No progress or commitment has been made in this area.* |
| **Action Needed** | **1 point:** Action is needed to improve and should be considered in alignment with the auditor's comments and an appropriate timeline. These will be discussed during quarterly support calls to help improve. *The organisation is considering developing this area, but no formal process has been established or meaningful progress has not been made.* |
| **Pass / Compliant** | **2 points**: The criteria have been met, though there may also be suggestions to improve. *The organisation is beginning or improving this area, is broadly compliant with the iiE criteria, and may be showing processes that support improvements.* |
| **Outstanding** | **3 points**: This criterion has been exceeded as measured against the basic iiE criteria and may demonstrate a significant improvement since the previous year or may highlight best practice. *The organisation is succeeding with supportive target achievement and may be leading or supporting others in their sector or influence to achieve improvements.* |

## Leadership & Governance (Environmental Policy)                    90%

The process of developing an environmental policy includes a review of the environmental aspects of an organisation and the impacts these have on the wider environment. This should consider material use and consumption, energy use, water management, waste minimisation, etc.

The policy is the main driver for environmental performance improvements and needs to be led by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). It should be reviewed annually, alongside environmental performance updates.

In time, wider strategies and long-term objectives should be considered by the organisation and used to inform the commitments outlined in the policy. The policy should be communicated to staff and made available for all to review, both internally and publicly.

### Strengths

- Co-leads are now in place for sustainability, providing strong leadership and governance to deliver action.

- Sustainability is actively considered throughout the school in planning, discussions, and decision-making. This provides a strong foundation for sustainable development and progress.

## Actions for review

- Closer collaboration between the Green Team and the Estates team is vital to ensure that all opportunities for performance improvements and upgrades are captured and teams are working together to make reductions.
- Conduct sustainability mapping and context analysis for Oundle, including a PESTLE analysis and a Scope 1, 2, and 3 mapping exercise to understand the school's wider influences and impacts. Use these insights to shape the ideal future position of sustainability at Oundle and guide the setting of annual and long- term goals.
- Begin drafting Oundle's long-term sustainability goals and a delivery plan for how to achieve them. Use the proposed sustainability steering group to lead and support this work.

# Resource Use & Data Monitoring

**79%**

Resource use and data monitoring is pivotal for any organisation to ensure good management of performance. Within this section of the EMS, an organisation is required to develop robust data recording procedures and set a process for data revision that aligns with general performance reviews – which could be monthly, quarterly, or even half yearly, depending on the measured resource and planned activity.

To support the monitoring of data, a review of operations and processes across the organisation needs to be carried out to understand how and why resources are used and where opportunities for improvement exist.

As part of resource management, prioritisation is key, to ensure activities and resources focused on efficiency gains are deployed in areas which can have the biggest impact.

## Strengths

- Half-hourly sub-metering is used across the site for an increased breakdown of electricity usage, which can then be used to target action.
- Data is compared year on year to the previous academic term to allow for more accurate performance tracking. Data is also normalised by student numbers to see resource trends against growth.

## Actions for review

- Regularly recording the factors that have influenced the consumption of measured resources is essential to support continuous improvement. The analysis should then be used to inform planned actions and improve the accuracy of target setting.
- Utilise the breakdowns of gas, electricity, and food waste to identify the buildings and meters with the lowest usage, comparing their techniques, behaviours, and upgrades to help bring performance more in line across the site.

- Conduct audits for each measured resource to identify both physical upgrades and behaviour changes that are opportunities for reductions. These can then be fed into the action plan and a future ideas document.

# Performance, Action & Targets

**72%**

Setting targets provides an opportunity to measure performance against planned activities. Where performance is falling short of achieving targets, future or underway activity or project plans can be refined to ensure set out goals are achieved.

Targets can be set against activity metrics to analyse how annual changes to business activity have affected performance, with the aim to always improve efficiency where absolute reductions are not achievable.

Clear, relevant and well managed action plans should record intended activities and support the review of performance, with the aim to achieving the set targets.

## Strengths

- Multiple resource reductions were made in the 24/25 period when compared to 23/24, Including electricity (-10%), gas (-3%) and food waste (-26%).
- Several behavioural and physical actions were completed and led to reductions. These included fitting LED lighting, changes to the school menu and food service, and boiler replacements, to name a few.

## Actions for review

- The action plan must include both the smaller, immediate actions and the broader, more strategic ones. This will help to make annual target setting more accurate in the future, as it will document all the supporting efforts.
- To support action plan generation, create a document that captures ideas that need further exploration so that they are noted for future implementation.

# Carbon Management

**64%**

With increased focus on working towards Net Zero and the importance of Climate Action, carbon management is a key element of the iiE accreditation process. Organisations are required to calculate their footprint starting at buildings level (energy consumed within the buildings), then water, travel, and finally including additional aspects of business activity, such as waste, etc.

Carbon Management provides an opportunity for an organisation to consider which resources or operations need to be prioritised to decarbonise as quickly as possible, in line with Climate Science. The output from a carbon footprint calculation should be used to inform these decisions, which is another reason data capture and accurate data reporting is necessary.

In accordance with the GHG Protocol, iiE encourages the dual reporting of an organisation's carbon footprint, which results in the provision of two outputs for those organisations on a renewable energy tariff, a 'location-based' and a 'market-based' carbon footprint.
The 'location-based' method reflects the impact of electricity drawn from the grid, using the UK grid's average emission factor, regardless of the tariff to which an organisation has signed up.

The 'market-based' method uses an emission factor which is either specific to the electricity tariff to which the reporting organisation has signed up, or a generic 'UK renewable energy' factor, which allows electricity from renewables or low carbon sources to be reported with lower emissions than those generated through the burning of fossil fuels. An energy provider should be able to provide the emission factor for any of its tariffs.

Any electricity purchased and distributed through the National Grid is generated from a variety of sources and will always have a carbon footprint as a result. Location-based reporting demonstrates the organisation's awareness of the overall impact Grid sourced electricity contributes towards climate change. Direct carbon reduction using location-based reporting can only be achieved through the installation of solar or other renewable technologies. However, the market-based reporting provides an opportunity to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to support the reduction of emissions through its purchasing decisions.

## 2024/2025 Total tCO2e 2074.39444



Transport 1%
Elec 14%
Gas 85%
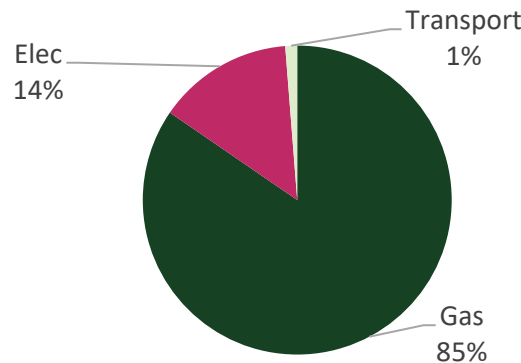
The figure above was calculated by Oundle School using the government carbon factors sheet.

Oundle needs to broaden the scope of the carbon footprint to include all the resources that they measure, as well as an expansion into some new recorded resources. This will allow for more effective long-term tracking of reductions.

### Actions for review

- The carbon footprint must include all currently measured resources from Scopes 1, 2, and 3 and should be expanded to record new resources such as commuter travel and water use.
- Utilise the iiE carbon footprint spreadsheet or an alternative calculator to make it easier to track Oundle's annual carbon footprint with an expanded number of resources.
- F-gas emissions from air conditioning replacements and top-ups must be included in next year's footprint based on the service records, to reflect their significant impact on the environment.
- Oundle could begin estimating scope 3 emissions based on data or spend, where applicable, to expand the carbon footprint calculation.

## Waste Management & Materials

**75%**

Organisations are required to review and improve upon waste management. This should start with how waste is managed on site and ultimately disposed of to ensure the correct processes are followed.

From Silver level onwards, thought should be given to procurement and how waste is generated on site, from the materials purchased that end up in the waste stream, through to the activities on site that create waste.

Finally, circular economy concepts and thinking should be introduced, with the waste hierarchy leading to decision making, opting for elimination as the priority, followed by choosing products that can be reused or repaired.

### Strengths

- There are regular meetings with the waste manager to discuss waste issues and where waste can be reduced across the site.
- The team managing waste has implemented actions and investments to try to improve waste stream quality, including bin purchases, signage, and more strategic bin locations.
- Student reuse initiatives are in place for a variety of waste streams for art and design projects.

## Actions for review

- Conduct a waste audit looking at inputs, uses, and outputs to identify where more considered product procurement and behavioural patterns could help reduce waste.
- Food waste in particular should be reviewed to identify best practice learnings between houses and to create consistent, lower waste procedures. For example, family-style dinners produce more waste. This review will aid a reduction in waste levels and make data easier to analyse for future efficiencies where there are fewer variables.
- Consult those responsible for cleaning, catering, and estate management, as well as other support staff, for suggestions on where waste is being produced and where reusable or lower waste alternatives could be procured.
- Create a more centralised waste collection system by removing single desk bins across the site to encourage better waste segregation and improve recycling rates. Review communal bin locations to ensure there are sufficient bins available to manage waste effectively.
- Consider a student waste/delivery miles campaign to reduce online purchases by encouraging students to identify local businesses to buy their supplies from instead.

# Transport & Travel Planning

**89%**

A travel plan must consider the travel needs for an organisation, including access, availability of public services, and safety of travel where relevant. Travel is the single largest contributor to UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and can be a challenging area to manage, given the need for transport within any operation.

The plan should aim to remove barriers for individuals to choose active / shared transport over single car occupancy, and then to consider electrification of vehicles over internal combustion engines.

Surveys are a useful tool to engage with individuals around travel habits and to support identification and implementation of barrier removals, to improve good travel habits.

## Strengths

- The purchase of an EV fleet vehicle this year is an investment aimed at reducing fleet mileage in the coming year.
- A travel survey has been completed to see the motivations and barriers to sustainable travel among staff.
- The use of coaches rather than individual transport for student airport transfers has lowered the impact of student travel.

**Actions for review**

- Clearer oversight of fleet vehicle use is necessary to optimise route and works planning and prioritise the use of lower-emission fleet vehicles.
- Include staff commuter mileage in future carbon footprint calculations. The data required for this could be added to next year's staff travel survey.
- Use insights from the travel survey to implement actions such as car sharing that support and encourage the adoption of more sustainable transport in 2025/26.

# Environmental & Social Projects

**100%**

All organisations need to consider their corporate responsibility, both for social, community and wellbeing impacts, and for environmental impacts through biodiversity or conservation efforts.

This section requires organisations to undertake a range of projects that not only aim to achieve impacts, but to also encourage individual participation and engagement – to raise conversation and encourage individuals to consider what they can do outside of the organisation as well.

It is strongly encouraged that organisations undertake projects in all three areas, Resource Efficiency, Biodiversity / Conservation, and Social / Community.

**Strengths**

- A variety of impactful environmental and social projects have been delivered, including a range of biodiversity projects, sustainable construction planning for new developments, toy and clothes swaps, and other reuse projects, to name a few.

**Actions for review**

- Provide access to sustainability training for staff and students, to embed a culture of sustainability across the school. The Stickerbook learning platform, included in your iiE membership, offers bite-sized sustainability lessons.
- Consider boosting student engagement through a sustainability-focused inter-house competition. Houses could compete in resource areas such as energy and water reduction, waste minimisation, and sustainable travel. It could also include themed eco-challenges, or weekly sustainability tasks. Incentives or rewards could motivate participation and create a more positive attitude towards other sustainable practices.

# Communication & Engagement

**83%**

The scheme requires that active and engaged communication happens at all levels, as sustainability cannot only happen within the Senior Team or only happen at ground level

but requires a collaborative approach. Regular and consistent communication and engagement is therefore pivotal to ensuring objectives are achieved.

In addition, regular reporting is necessary to highlight the success of activities and improvements achieved. These should be produced both for the SLT, but also for wider staff to celebrate success and recognise efforts they have made through participation.

In time, reports should be made available publicly alongside the environmental policy to further demonstrate the commitment and celebrate the achievements of the organisation.

## Strengths

- There are a variety of student-led sustainability groups where students can share ideas and promote wider student engagement.
- Regular meetings with senior leadership and departments, along with a biannual sustainability report for all staff, help to ensure that sustainability remains consistently on the agenda.
- There are regular internal and external communications with stakeholders, keeping all parties informed of the developments and progress of sustainability at Oundle.

## Actions for review

- It would be beneficial to connect with other schools that are focused on sustainability to exchange ideas and knowledge. Consider looking into iiE's sister project, Climate Education, to get involved with a network of sustainable schools and gain access to resources specifically designed for schools to engage with students and staff on sustainability.
- Consider a unified communications platform to share information and resources with staff and students. It would also be beneficial to use it as a reporting tool for environmental concerns such as leaks, bins, and site damage.

# Next steps

To continue to develop sustainability within the organisation, the business should consider and prioritise the following next steps below.

- Regularly recording the factors that have influenced the consumption of measured resources is essential to support continuous improvement. The analysis should then be used to inform planned actions and improve the accuracy of target setting.
- The carbon footprint calculation must be expanded to include all measured resources, as well as an expansion into some new resources. A more complete carbon footprint calculation is essential for setting accurate carbon targets and assessing Oundle's progress towards those targets.
- Start to consider the long-term sustainability goals for the school and begin to develop a delivery plan by completing the mapping exercises listed in the Leadership and Governance section of this report.
- Provide access to sustainability-focused training for staff and students, to embed a culture of sustainability across the school.

Investors in the Environment (iiE)
Ham Lane House
Ham Lane
Peterborough
PE2 5UU

TEL: 01733 866436
Email: info@iie.uk.com
Website: www.iie.uk.com