Climate Action Plan

Baseline Report – July 2026

Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School

Prepared By: School Consulting Ltd

Overview

Purpose

This baseline report has been developed as an essential step in preparing the school's Climate Action Plan. It provides a clear picture of the **current** environmental impact, covering carbon emissions, energy use, waste, water consumption, and transport habits. This starting point allows us to set realistic, measurable goals and monitor progress over time.

The Climate Action Plan, informed by this report, and found as an appendix, addresses the four key areas identified by the Department of Education: **decarbonisation, adaptation and resilience, environment and biodiversity, and climate education and green careers**. Together, these areas will guide informed decision-making and meaningful action, strengthening the school's commitment to sustainability and shaping a more environmentally conscious future.

Scope

In this first report, we have reviewed:

- Scope 1: Direct emissions owned or controlled by the school
- Scope 2: Indirect emissions from purchased energy

Currently, as no scope 3 calculations have been generated, ***an assumption has been made, based on national averages, that supply chain emissions account for 45% of overall CO_2 emissions*.**

In order to compare to other schools, a footprint has been provided in the report for both operational (scopes 1 & 2) emissions and an ***estimated*** full impact.

Executive Summary

Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School has a baseline footprint shaped mainly by travel, food and heating. Electricity use is broadly in line with expected levels for the size of the school, while gas use appears comparatively low against the benchmark. Waste systems are a strength, with the school already separating paper, plastic, glass, food waste and general waste. However, actual waste quantities have not been provided, so the waste footprint is currently based on an average assumption.

Water cannot yet be assessed because no annual readings were supplied. The school should begin regular meter recording and continue practical water audits so that future reports can identify leaks, inefficient fittings or unnecessary consumption.

Travel is the largest measured operational category, contributing **38%** of the operational footprint. Parent responses show good levels of walking and some cycling, but car-based travel remains significant. There is also a positive opportunity, with most parents who answered saying they would consider more sustainable travel if it were safe and practical.

Existing activity includes LED lighting, recycling, a water butt, Walk to School Week and curriculum-related environmental work. The school's stated priorities of sustainability in the curriculum and a whole-school approach are well matched to the baseline findings. The next stage should focus on joining existing activity into a clearer action plan, improving missing data, and using pupil, staff and parent interest to support practical change.

Mission Statement

Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School is committed to reducing its environmental impact and aligning with national and local government sustainability policies. Our goal is to create a greener, healthier learning environment while fostering environmental responsibility among pupils, staff, and the wider community. We strive to meet government climate targets by implementing sustainable practices, reducing carbon emissions, and integrating environmental education into our curriculum.

School Profile

School Name: Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School

School Type: Infants' and Nursery

Location: Stevenage, SG1 3PS

Number of Pupils on Roll: 294

Number of Staff: 35

Size of Site: 7,600m^2

Indoor Space: 1,541m^2

School Facilities: The school is 118 years old and is made up of 2 buildings. The Local Authority is responsible for approving funding and any building changes. The school is not in a conservation area.

Key Stakeholders and their role

Role	Name
Headteacher	**Eleanor Williams & Jo Harding**

Provides strategic leadership and vision; champions whole-school commitment to climate action; ensures alignment with school values and improvement plans.

Sustainability Lead **Lewis Green**

Coordinates the Climate Action Plan; monitors progress; engages staff, pupils, and community; integrates sustainability into curriculum and daily school life.

Assistant Headteacher/s **Janis Thorpe, Michaela Benson, Lisa Nevill**

Leads specific action areas (e.g. transport, food); supports implementation across key stages or departments; assists in staff training and resource planning.

School Business Manager **Sally Allen**

Manages funding, procurement, and building projects to align with sustainability goals; embeds climate priorities in finance, contracts, and resource planning.

Office Manager **Charlotte Edwards**

Supports communication with parents and suppliers; assists with data tracking (e.g. energy use); encourages eco-friendly office practices.

Caretaker / Site Manager **John Wasmuth**

Oversees building maintenance, energy use, waste, and grounds; implements practical sustainability measures (e.g. recycling, energy efficiency, biodiversity projects).

Chair of Governors **Sally Davis**

Ensures climate action is part of school governance; holds leadership accountable; advocates for long-term sustainability planning and compliance.

Teaching staff

Delivers climate education across the curriculum; supports pupil-led projects; role-models sustainable behaviours in the classroom.

Other school staff

Participates in sustainability practices (e.g. reducing waste, energy-saving); supports pupils and leadership in delivering Climate Action Plan actions.

Pupils

Participate in green initiatives (e.g. eco-council, litter picks); share ideas and promote behaviour change among peers and families.

Parents
Support sustainable travel, lunches, and home behaviours; contribute to consultations or volunteering for Climate Action Plan projects; reinforce messages outside school.

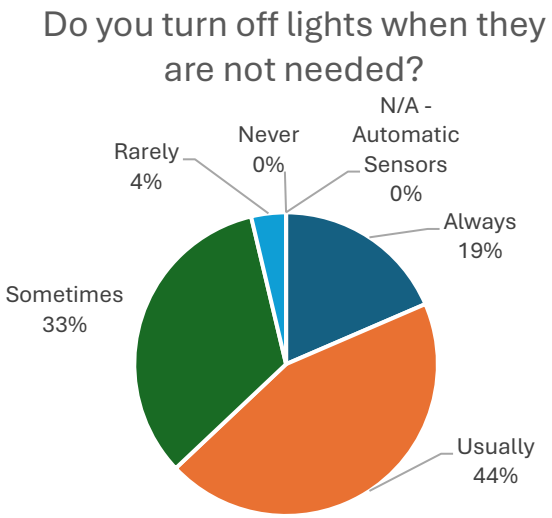
Carbon Footprint Assessment

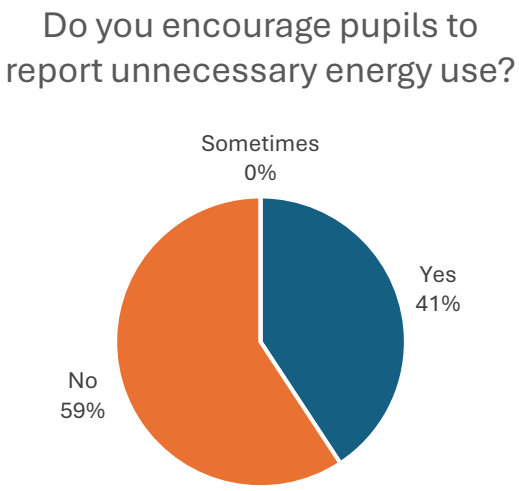
Energy Use

The school's electricity is supplied by NPower and gas is supplied by Corona. The school does not currently have a green energy tariff, so its energy use has been assessed on the basis of a standard supply arrangement. Annual electricity consumption is **49,104 kWh**, which equates to approximately **32 kWh/m^2**. This sits within the benchmark range of **30–40 kWh/m^2**, suggesting that electricity use is broadly in line with expected levels for the size of the school. Annual gas consumption is **128,630 kWh**, equal to approximately **83 kWh/m^2**. This is below the benchmark range of **120–150 kWh/m^2**, which suggests that heating energy use appears comparatively low for the school's floor area, although this should still be monitored because heating systems, occupancy patterns and building age can all affect the figures.

Responses from staff show some clear energy-saving behaviours, but also areas where consistency could improve. Classroom lights are reported as being turned off **always by 19%**, **usually by 44%**, and **sometimes by 33%** of staff who responded. Computers and electronic devices are more consistently managed, with **80%** saying they switch them off at the end of the day and **20%** saying they do so sometimes. Heating efficiency behaviours are also relatively strong, with **79%** saying windows and doors are closed properly during colder months, while **21%** said this happens sometimes.

There is a more mixed picture around pupil involvement in spotting energy waste. **59%** of staff said they encourage pupils to report unnecessary energy use, while **41%** said they do not. This is a useful opportunity because small routines, such as pupil energy monitors or classroom checks, could help make the school's existing energy habits more visible and consistent across classrooms.





Water Usage

Castle Water is listed as the water supplier, but no annual water reading has been provided for this baseline. As a result, it is not possible to assess annual consumption, calculate water use per pupil, or compare the school reliably against the benchmark of **3–5 m^3 per pupil per year**. The zero value shown within the carbon calculation should therefore be treated as missing data, not as evidence that the school has no water-related impact.

The school has reported that it carries out regular checks for water leaks and has one water butt installed in Key Stage 1. These are positive starting points, but without meter readings no reliable comment can be made about whether water use is high, low or broadly in line with expectations. Best practice would be to record regular meter readings, reconcile these against billing information, and conduct routine water audits covering taps, toilets, urinals, pipework, outdoor use and any areas where water may be used regularly but not closely monitored. This would allow future reports to identify leaks, inefficient fittings or changes in behaviour.

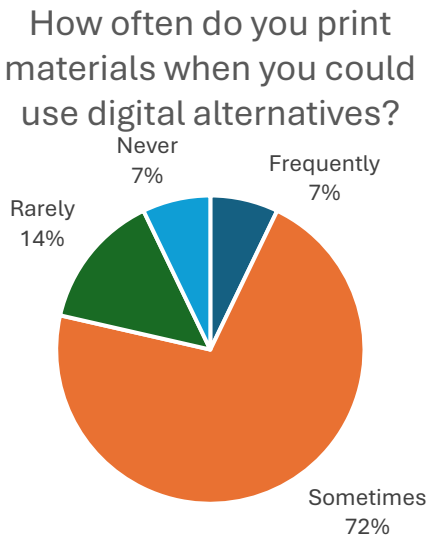
Waste Management

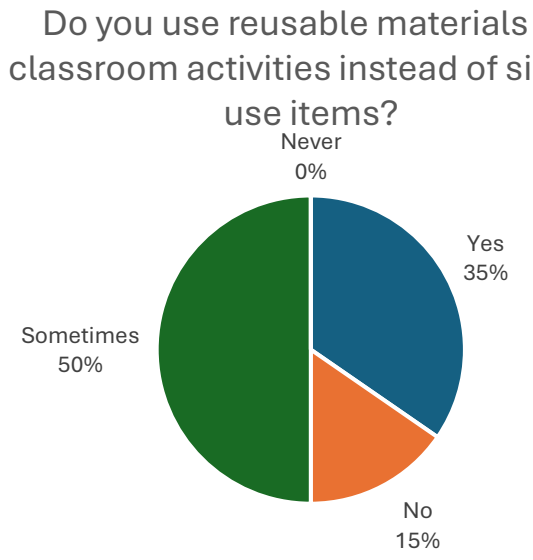
General waste and recycling are collected by Stevenage Borough Council. The school separates plastic, glass, paper, food waste and general waste, and it has confirmed that food waste is separated. This is a positive waste-management position for a primary

setting because the main expected waste streams are already being separated, rather than all waste being handled through a single general-waste route.

The school has not provided the amount of waste removed from site during the year, so an average has been used for the carbon estimate. The assumption used is **35 kg of landfill waste per pupil** and **10 kg of recycled waste per pupil**, giving an estimated waste-related footprint of **4.69 tCO_2**. The main opportunity is to begin recording actual waste quantities and, where possible, the proportion recycled. This would make future reporting more accurate and help the school judge whether waste-reduction initiatives are changing disposal patterns.

Responses from staff suggest that recycling is reasonably embedded, with **73%** saying they and their pupils actively participate in the recycling programme and **27%** saying they do so sometimes. Printing remains an area where habits could shift further: **72%** said they sometimes print when digital alternatives could be used, **14%** said rarely, and **7%** said frequently. Reusable classroom materials are used **yes by 35%** and **sometimes by 50%**, while **15%** said they do not use them. This suggests that practice is already moving in the right direction, but a clearer whole-school expectation around printing and reusable resources could strengthen consistency.



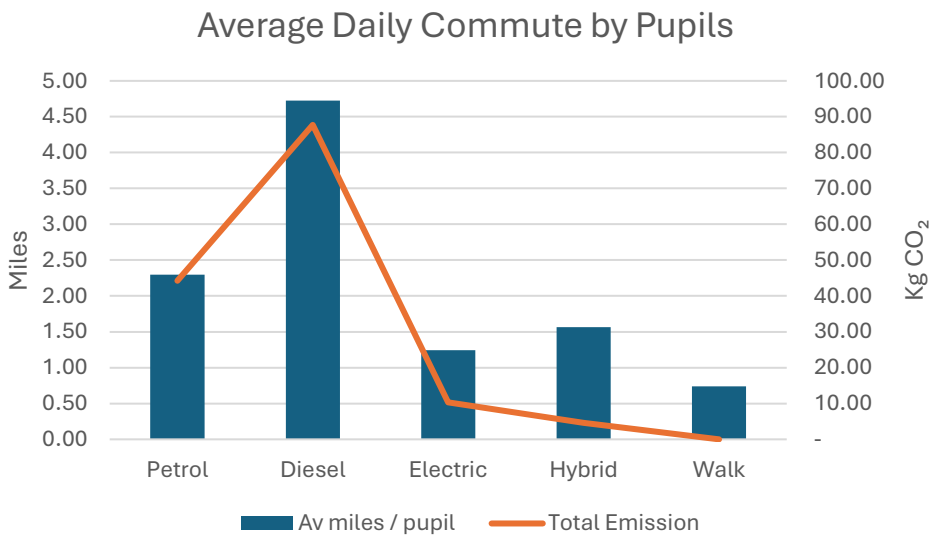


Transport

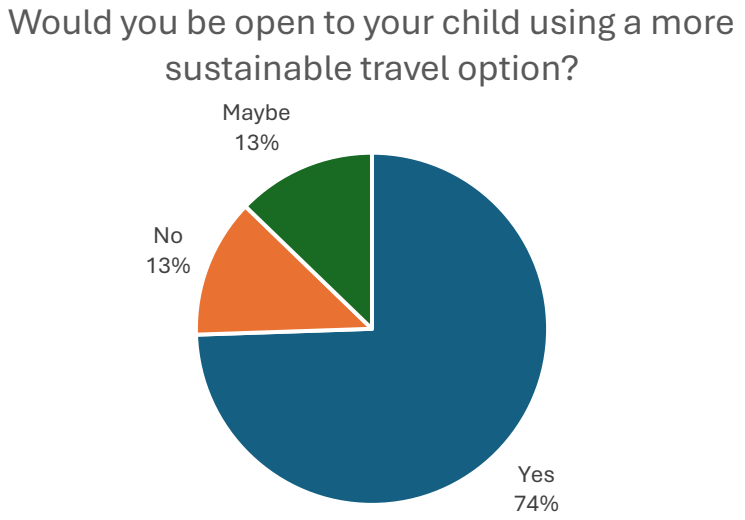
Responses from parents covered **63 pupils**, giving a response rate of **21%**. Emissions have therefore been scaled up to represent the full pupil population of **294 pupils** and a school year. This scaling is important because the calculated footprint is intended to represent whole-school travel rather than only the families who responded.

The travel pattern shows a mixture of active travel and car-based journeys. Based on the weighted travel data, **36%** of pupil journeys are by walking, **7%** by cycling, **23%** by electric car, **15%** by petrol car, **15%** by diesel car and **3%** by hybrid car. No bus or train use was recorded. The level of walking is a positive feature, and cycling is also present, but car-based travel remains a significant part of the overall pattern. Some families also vary their travel during the week, with **68%** reporting the same mode each day and **32%** reporting that they do not always use the same mode. The estimated annual pupil travel footprint is **27.90 tCO_2**. For a primary school, this pattern appears broadly understandable given pupil age and family routines, but the level of car-based travel creates a clear opportunity for targeted behaviour-change work.

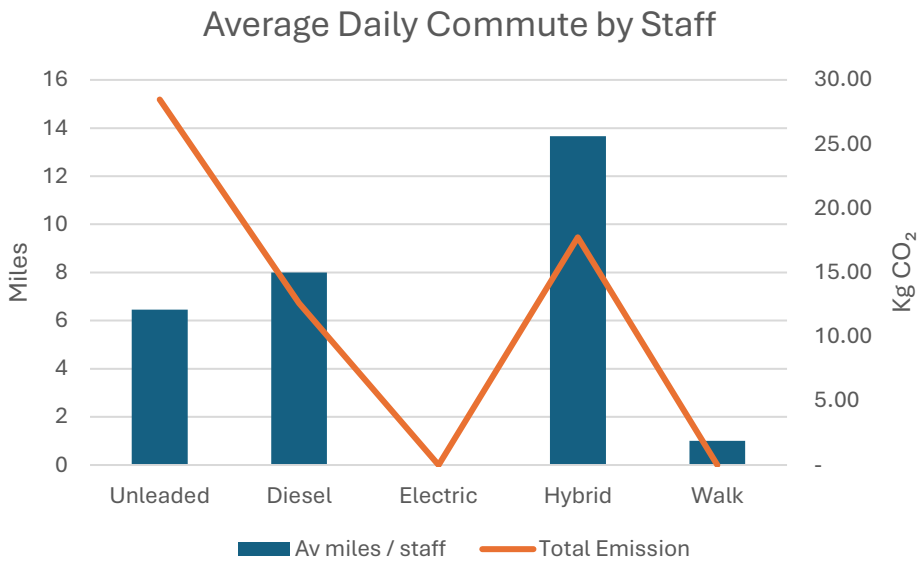
The main reason parents gave for car use was convenience and time constraints, selected by **49%** of responses. Distance being too far to walk or cycle was selected by **28%**, while the pupil being too young to walk alone was selected by **21%**. Other reasons were selected by **17%**, lack of safe walking or cycling routes by **6%**, and Special Educational Needs by **4%**. This indicates that the barriers are not only environmental; they also relate to timing, family logistics and confidence around safe independent or accompanied travel.



There is a generally positive appetite for more sustainable options. Of those who answered, **74%** said they would be open to a more sustainable travel option if it were safe and practical, with **13%** saying maybe and **13%** saying no. The most common improvement selected was safer walking or biking routes at **38%**, followed by other suggestions at **23%**, incentives for sustainable travel at **19%**, more school bus availability at **15%**, and car sharing programmes at **9%**. Written suggestions included safer cycling routes, improved pavements, a walking bus, a school bus or shuttle-style arrangement, reduced parking pressure and incentives for families who walk, cycle, scoot or car share.



Responses from staff produced a travel response rate of **49%**, and staff travel emissions have been estimated at **11.17 tCO_2**. These emissions were calculated from reported travel modes and commuting distances, then scaled up to represent the full staff population and the school year. Most staff who responded reported using the same travel mode during the week, with **93%** saying they always use the same mode and **7%** saying they do not. Staff travel is therefore less variable than pupil travel, although the overall footprint still reflects a reliance on car travel, particularly unleaded, diesel and hybrid vehicles.



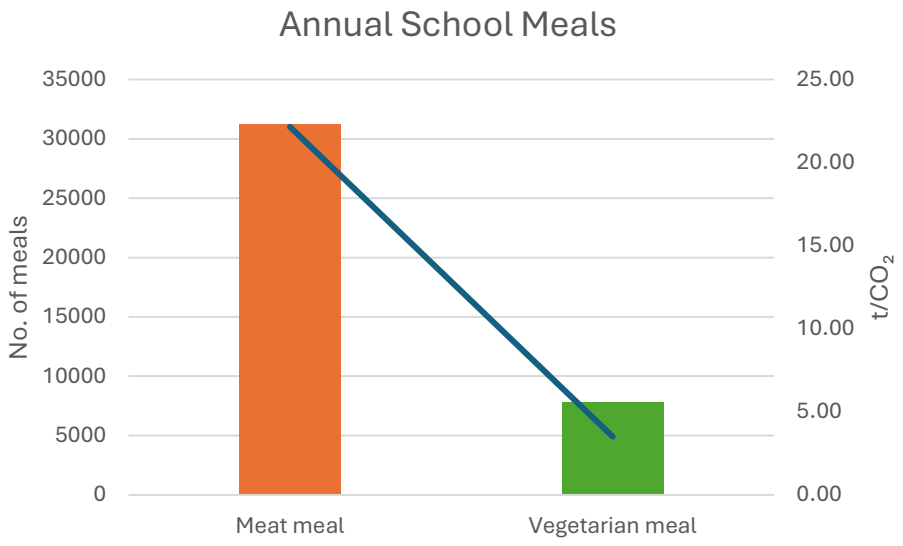
Travel accounts for **38%** of the school's operational carbon footprint. This is a substantial share and is one of the largest areas in the baseline. This does not mean travel is easy to reduce, because pupil travel is heavily shaped by safety, distance, age and family commitments, but it does mean that even modest shifts towards walking, cycling, scooting, car sharing or reduced single-car journeys could have a meaningful effect over time.

Food

Catering is provided by Herts Catering Ltd. The school serves approximately **1,000 meals per week**. The number of vegetarian meals has not been provided, but the school has reported that a meat-free day is in place. Based on the meal data provided, annual food emissions are estimated at **25.66 tCO_2**, from a total of **39,000 meals per year**.

A vegetarian meal has a lower estimated carbon impact than a meat meal, with an approximate saving of **37%** per meal compared with the meat-meal assumption used in the calculation. The weekly meat-free day reduces the modelled food footprint by approximately **7%** compared with a position where all meals were treated as meat meals. This is a positive existing measure, although the accuracy of this section would improve if the school or caterer could provide regular data on vegetarian uptake and menu choices.

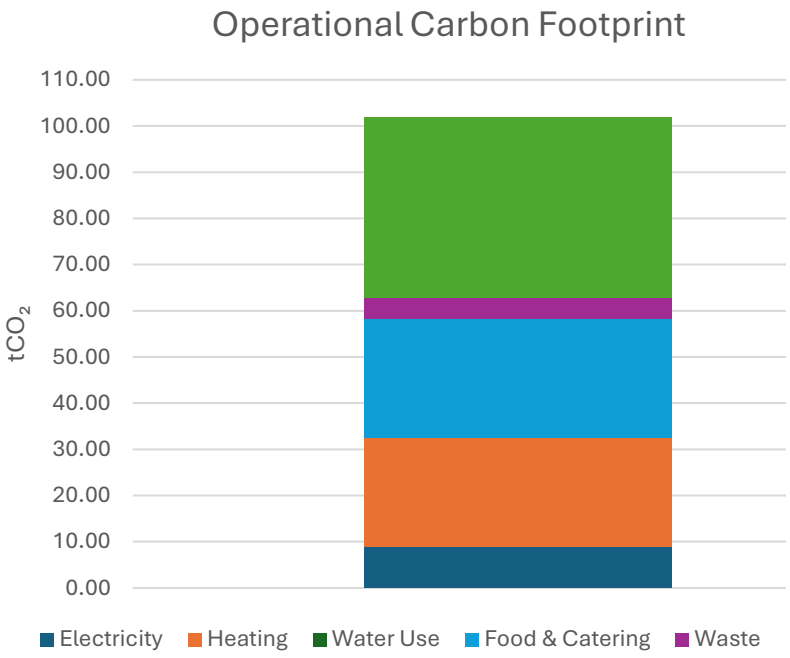
An assumption has been made that non-vegetarian pupils choose a meat option four days a week, therefore showing a worst-case scenario.

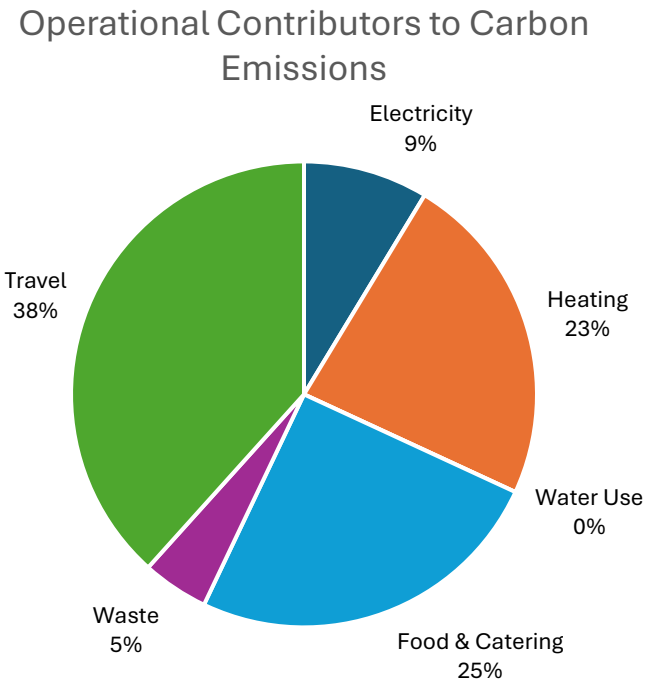

Annual School Meals
35000
30000
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
No. of meals
25.00
20.00
15.00
10.00
5.00
0.00
t/CO2
Meat meal
Vegetarian meal

Carbon Footprint

As of July 2026, the carbon footprint for Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School is estimated to be:

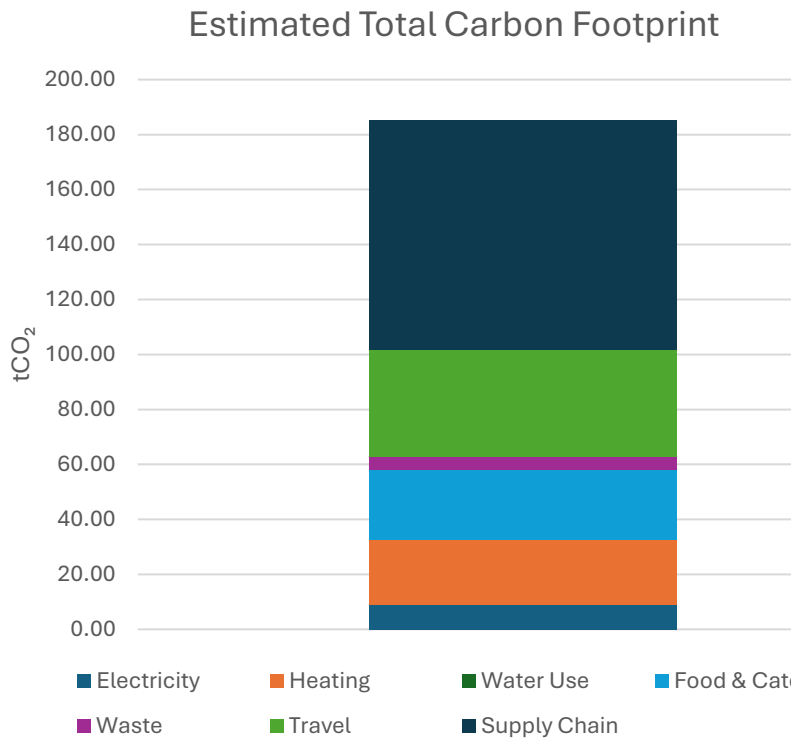
Scope 1 & 2 Only (Operational)

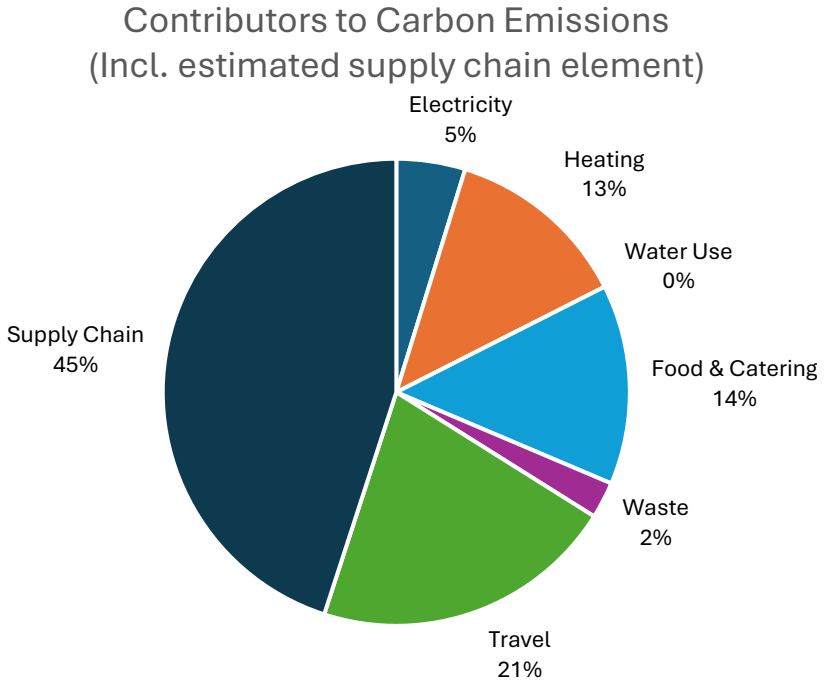


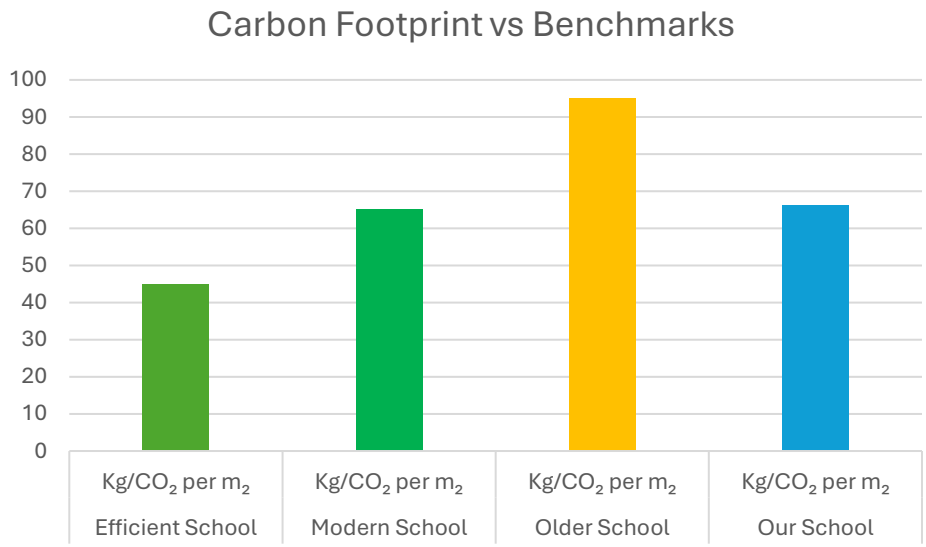


Estimate Total Carbon Footprint

(including average of 45% supply chain contribution)







The estimated operational carbon footprint for Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School is **101.93 tCO_2**. This equates to approximately **347 kg CO_2 per pupil** and **66 kg CO_2 per m^2** of indoor floor area. Against the benchmark categories used in the calculation, this places the school just above the modern school benchmark of **65 kg CO_2 per m^2**, below the older school benchmark of **95 kg CO_2 per m^2**, and above the efficient school benchmark of **45 kg CO_2 per m^2**. Given the age of the school buildings, the operational result is not unexpectedly high, but it still shows clear scope for improvement.

Travel is the largest operational category at **39.07 tCO_2**, followed by food at **25.66 tCO_2** and heating at **23.67 tCO_2**. Electricity contributes **8.84 tCO_2**, while waste contributes **4.69 tCO_2**. Water is shown as **0 tCO_2**, but this is because no water readings were provided, so it should not be interpreted as a low-impact category. If an estimated supply-chain allowance is included, this adds a further **83.40 tCO_2**, giving a wider estimated footprint of **185.33 tCO_2**. The supply-chain figure is an estimate rather than a measured school-specific result, but it illustrates the likely importance of procurement, catering, services and purchased goods in future planning.

Existing Climate Action Initiatives

The school already has several sustainability-related activities and measures in place. LED lighting is installed, which supports reduced electricity consumption. The school separates paper, plastic, glass, food waste and general waste, which provides a good basis for improving recycling and reducing unnecessary disposal. A water butt is installed in Key Stage 1, and the school has also reported that it carries out checks for water leaks. Walk to School Week is already in place, which aligns well with the travel data and the appetite from some parents for more sustainable journeys.

There is no renewable energy technology recorded at this stage, and light sensors are not installed. These are not weaknesses in themselves, but they are potential areas for future consideration, particularly if the school is exploring investment options or looking for measures that reduce reliance on staff routines alone.

Responses from staff support the view that sustainability is already present in school life. **86%** said they include environmental topics in lessons, and **57%** said they have taken part in or led sustainability initiatives at school. Examples included recycling paper, using books rather than loose paper, water-butt installation, recycling assemblies, Walk to School Week, Eco Club or Global Goals work, and litter picking. These examples show that the school is not starting from nothing; the stronger opportunity is to connect existing activities into a more visible whole-school approach.

Pupil & Community Engagement

The school has a School Council and a Parents' Association. It does not currently record an Eco or Green Council. The School Council and Parents' Association could both support sustainability activity, with the School Council helping to involve pupils in classroom routines, waste reduction and travel campaigns, while the Parents' Association could help with family-facing initiatives such as walking routes, parking expectations, second-hand uniform, fundraising or community support.

The school perceives pupil engagement as strong, with pupils rated highly in relation to sustainability. Senior leadership engagement is also positive. Staff, parent and governor engagement are perceived as more moderate, suggesting that the foundations are in place but that sustainability may not yet feel equally embedded across all stakeholder groups. This makes communication and visible leadership important, particularly if the school

wants sustainability to be seen as a whole-school priority rather than a set of separate activities.

Practical suggestions from parents focused mainly on safer walking and cycling, improved pavements, a walking bus, a school bus or shuttle, incentives for active travel, reducing parking pressure and encouraging nearby families not to use cars. Suggestions from staff included more water butts, solar panels, a larger bike shed, motion sensor lights, stronger recycling provision in classrooms, alternatives to disposable milk cartons, food waste collection and ensuring unused devices are turned off.

A total of **12 parents** were identified as interested in supporting sustainability initiatives. This is a helpful level of interest and could provide the school with a small but practical group to test ideas, support communication and help build wider parent engagement.

Staff attitudes are also positive. **80%** said protecting the environment is very important to them personally, and **20%** said it is relatively important. In terms of playing a key role in sustainability initiatives, **14%** said yes, **57%** said maybe, **14%** said they were already involved and **14%** said no. This suggests there is enough staff interest to build a working group or informal network, particularly if expectations are kept manageable.

Target Areas

The school has identified sustainability in the curriculum and a whole-school approach as its key sustainability priorities. This is a sensible focus because the baseline shows that there are already individual activities in place, but they would benefit from being joined together into a clearer programme with shared expectations, visible pupil involvement and practical actions that staff and families can understand.

For significant building-related changes, investment decisions or larger estate improvements, active support from the local authority may be needed. This is particularly relevant if the school later considers renewable energy, heating upgrades, lighting controls, water-efficiency work or other measures requiring capital funding or formal approval.

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan issued alongside this baseline report has been developed as a five-year plan, focusing on immediate priorities and achievable quick wins, while also embedding climate education across the school community in the earlier years. It sets out

clear actions to raise awareness, reduce environmental impact, and engage pupils, staff, and families in meaningful change. The plan will be regularly monitored to track progress, with a commitment to continuous improvement. Formal annual reviews will be conducted to assess outcomes, update data, and establish objectives for the following rolling year, ensuring the plan remains responsive and effective over time.

Note that additional actions have been provided in Pupil and Site Manager audit checklists to enable them to initiate activities and therefore take some ownership.

See Separate Climate Action Plan Document.

Conclusion

Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School has a baseline that shows a number of encouraging starting points, particularly in relation to electricity use, waste separation, curriculum engagement and active travel. Electricity consumption is broadly in line with the benchmark for the school's indoor floor area, and gas use appears below the expected benchmark range. This suggests that the school's operational energy position is not currently the largest concern, although more active monitoring would still help identify seasonal changes, unusual use or opportunities for further savings.

Water is the least complete part of the baseline because no annual water reading was provided. The school has identified some positive practice, including leak checks and a water butt, but without meter readings it is not possible to judge whether consumption is high, low or typical. This should be addressed early, as regular readings and audits would allow the school to identify leaks, inefficient fittings and behaviour-related waste.

Waste management is relatively well established, with separate streams for plastic, glass, paper, food waste and general waste. The main limitation is the absence of actual waste quantity data, meaning the current carbon figure relies on an average assumption. Travel is the largest measured operational category, contributing **38%** of the footprint. Parent responses show a meaningful level of walking and cycling, but also significant use of petrol, diesel and electric cars. The strongest barriers to change are convenience, time and distance, so practical initiatives are likely to be more effective than general awareness messages alone.

Food is also a significant contributor, at **25.66 tCO_2**, although the existing meat-free day already provides a measurable reduction. The school's greatest strength is that

sustainability is already visible through Walk to School Week, recycling, LED lighting, curriculum activity and staff interest. The next step is to draw these strands into a whole-school plan, supported by better water and waste data, targeted travel work and clear engagement through pupils, staff, parents and governors.