

Climate Action Plan

Baseline Report - September 2025

School Name: Sandridge School

Prepared By: School Consulting Ltd

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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

The report highlights that **Sandridge** is performing reasonably well on building energy intensity but that **transport, catering and water** are the most significant contributors to its operational emissions.

The school has positive measures in place — partial LED lighting and food-waste separation — and staff practices (e.g., high rates of switching off computers) are encouraging. The most impactful next steps are pragmatic: complete lighting upgrades and controls, address water efficiency, promote further reduction in printing and single-use disposables, and prioritise travel-behaviour interventions (walking buses, safer active routes, car-share schemes for staff and families). Curriculum-linked activity and mobilising the School Council and Parents' Association will help build the engagement needed for these changes. Together these actions would reduce the operational carbon footprint and deliver visible savings while engaging pupils, staff and parents in sustainable practice.

Mission Statement

Sandridge 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: Sandridge

School Type: Primary

Location: St Albans, Hertfordshire

Number of Pupils on Roll: 129

Number of Staff: 21

Size of Site: 20,100 m²

Indoor Space: 1,234.4 m²

School Facilities: The school is **60 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	**Lisa Roberts**

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

Sustainability Lead **Lisa Roberts (James Riley supporting)**

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

Deputy Headteacher **Marika Barrasso**

Supports curriculum integration and staff engagement; leads on pastoral or behaviour elements linked to sustainability (e.g. eco-rewards, school culture).

Office Manager **Fiona Virji**

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

Caretaker / Site Manager **Lynne Ewen**

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

Chair of Governors **Josh Kempton**

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

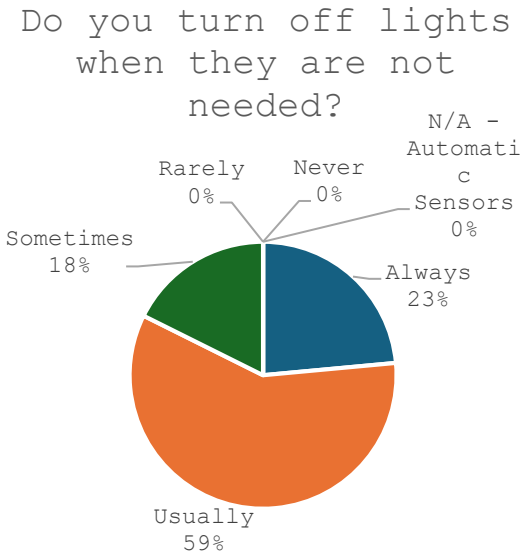
Support sustainable travel, lunches, and home behaviours; contribute to consultations or volunteering for Climate Action Plan projects; reinforce messages outside school.

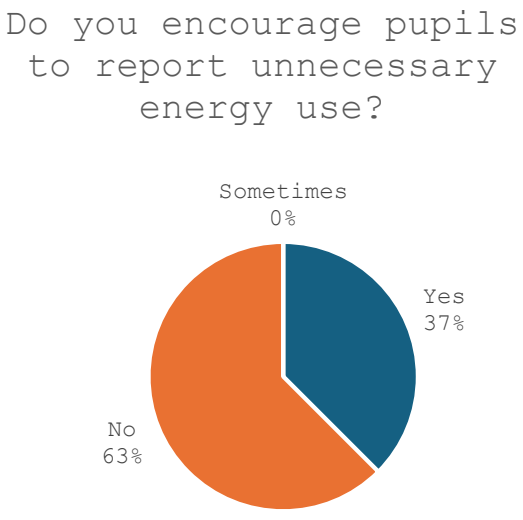
Carbon Footprint Assessment

Energy Use

The school's electricity supplier is **Npower NHH** and the gas supplier is **Corona Energy**. The school indicated "Don't know" when asked whether it is on a green energy tariff. Annual electricity consumption is **37,994 kilowatt hours**, which equates to approximately **30.78 kilowatt hours per square metre** of indoor space. When compared with the benchmark for an efficient primary school, which is around **45.6 kilowatt hours per square metre**, Sandridge performs below this level, a positive sign that electricity use is relatively efficient. Opportunities remain to confirm whether a green tariff is available and, if so, to switch to one or procure renewable-backed supply to further reduce indirect emissions.

Teacher energy-saving behaviour shows a mixed picture. Around **23 percent always turn off lights**, while the majority, **59 percent**, usually do so and **18 percent** only sometimes. Turning off computers is much stronger, with **94 percent always switching them off** and the remainder usually doing so. Encouraging pupils to report energy issues is not common, with **37 percent promoting this** and **63 percent not doing so**. These habits demonstrate good practice in some areas and highlight room for improvement in others, particularly lighting, where moving more staff from "usually" to "always" would reduce energy waste further and involving the pupils more.





Water Usage

The most recent billing period recorded **99 m³** of water use between **01/05/25 – 31/05/25**. Annualising this one-month figure gives an estimated annual use of **1,188 m³**. With a school roll of **148 pupils**, this equates to **~8.03 m³ per pupil per year**.

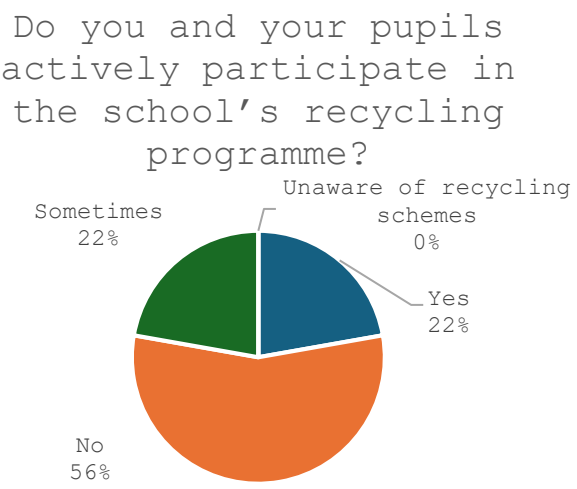
Sector benchmarks suggest that **well-managed primary schools typically achieve between 3–5 m³ per pupil annually**. Against this benchmark, Sandridge's figure of **8.03 m³ per pupil per year** is notably higher. This indicates there may be opportunities to improve efficiency through regular monitoring, proactive leak detection, fitting of water-saving devices, or pupil/staff engagement campaigns.

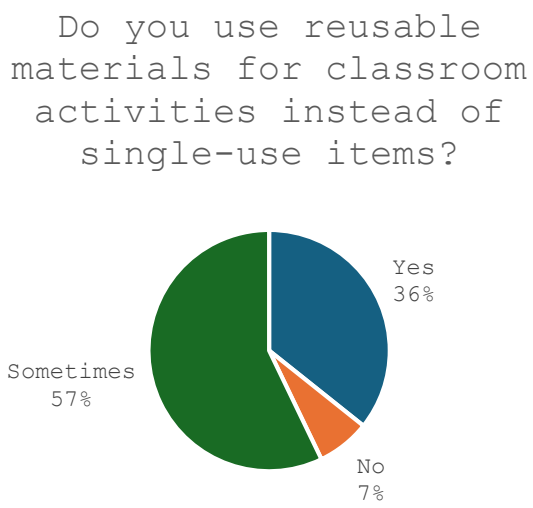
The use of a single billing month scaled to a year provides a reasonable estimate, but it is important to monitor across different seasons to ensure an accurate picture of annual consumption.

Waste Management

Sandridge's general waste is collected by **KP Waste**, and the school separates food waste for collection. This is a positive step towards diverting organics from landfill and is in line with recommended practice for primary schools. As actual data for the amount of waste generated is not available, an average has been used.

Teacher habits give further insight. Around **36 percent said they use re-useable materials**, with the majority, **57 percent**, sometimes doing so and **7 percent** don't. Printing habits show that **13 percent always print** rather than reduce printing, while **54 percent usually manage to cut down** and **33 percent only sometimes do so**. These results show a generally positive attitude but suggest that more consistency could be achieved, particularly in printing and reuse, by embedding practices that make the sustainable choice the easier one.



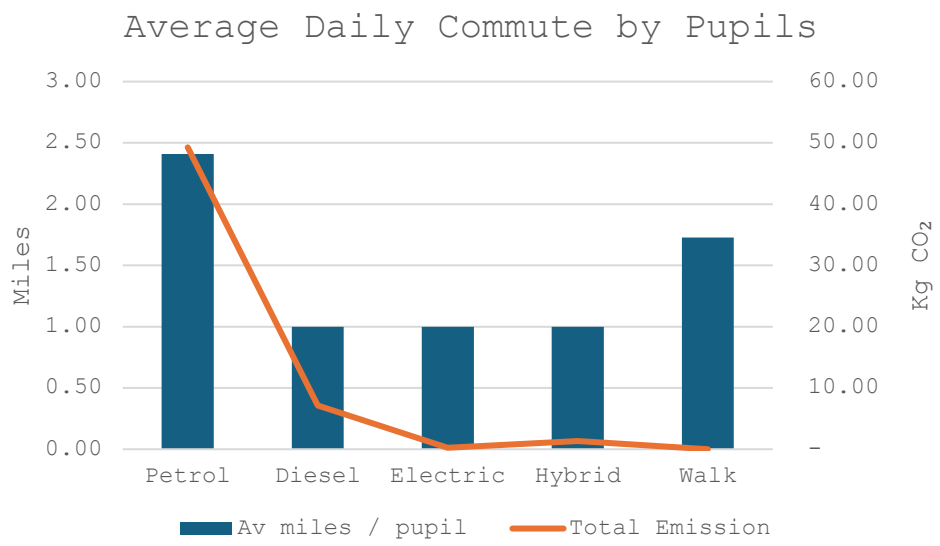


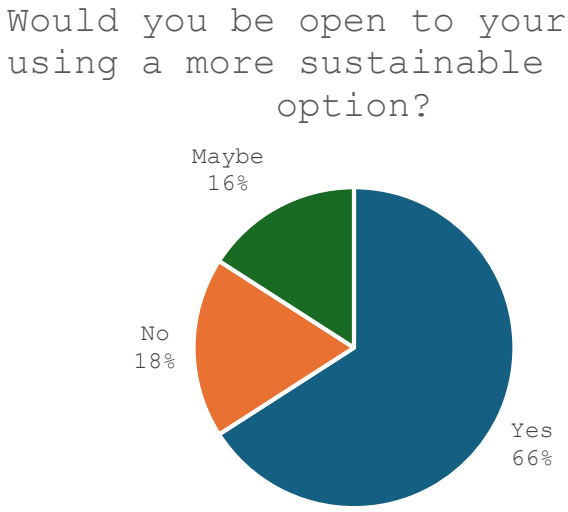
Transport

The pupil commuter survey indicated annualised emissions of just over **11 tonnes of carbon dioxide** once scaled up from the survey responses to represent the full school roll. Among the 95 survey responses, about **51.6 percent of pupils travel by petrol car**, **18.9 percent by diesel car**, **2.1 percent by electric vehicle**, and **4.2 percent by hybrid vehicle**, while **23.2 percent walk to school**. Compared with national averages, Sandridge has a higher proportion of car use and a lower proportion of walking, which suggests there is scope to encourage more active travel.

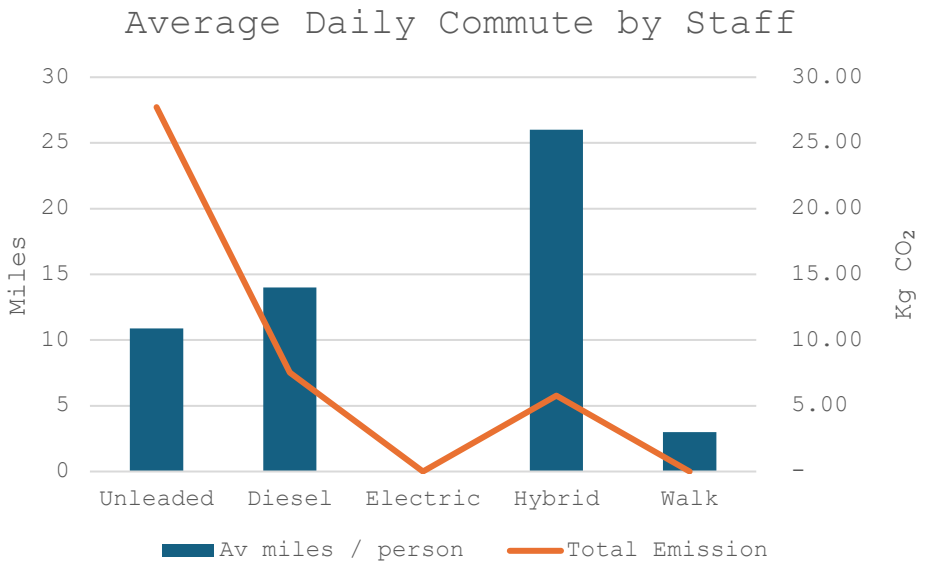
Parents gave several reasons for using cars, with the most common being distance considered too far to walk or cycle, lack of safe routes, convenience linked to time constraints, the child being too young to walk alone, and special educational needs. These barriers are typical across schools nationally and show that improvements to safe routes and targeted options for families living further away will be important.

Parents were also asked about their interest in sustainable transport options. Responses indicated a mix of those already participating in walking or cycling schemes and others willing to consider alternatives if they were made more practical. Where interest was lower, this may change over time as engagement grows and new opportunities are introduced. However, over 66% were open to sustainable travel options.





Teacher travel also contributes significantly to the footprint. Eighteen staff responded, giving a response rate of nearly 95 percent. Combined, they travel about 155 miles each day, which results in daily emissions of just over 41 kilograms of carbon dioxide. This scales to an annual teacher-travel total of about **7.8 tonnes of carbon dioxide**. The method used was based on reported daily miles, fuel type and average emission factors applied across school days. Some teachers use the same travel method every day, while a few vary by day of the week. Promoting car-sharing among staff, encouraging the uptake of hybrid and electric vehicles, and supporting flexible travel patterns could help reduce these emissions further.

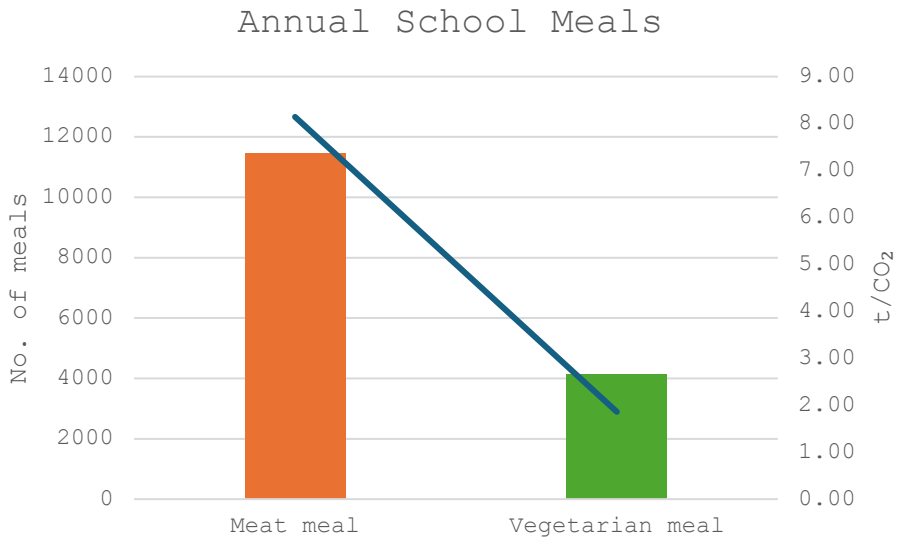


Taken together, pupil and teacher travel contribute almost one fifth of the school's **operational carbon footprint**, a proportion that is broadly in line with other primary schools. This underlines the importance of focusing on transport in any action plan.

Food

Catering at Sandridge is provided by **Herts Catering Ltd**, with around 400 meals produced each week. Over the course of the year this equates to approximately **15,600 meals**. A small number of pupils, **12 in total**, are vegetarian. Annual food-related emissions are calculated at **10 tonnes of carbon dioxide**, with meat meals responsible for the majority of this. Vegetarian meals produce substantially less carbon dioxide than meat-based meals, with savings of around two thirds per meal. This shows that increasing the proportion of vegetarian meals would deliver a significant reduction in emissions. The caterer currently offers a weekly meat-free day, which makes a good saving on emissions.

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

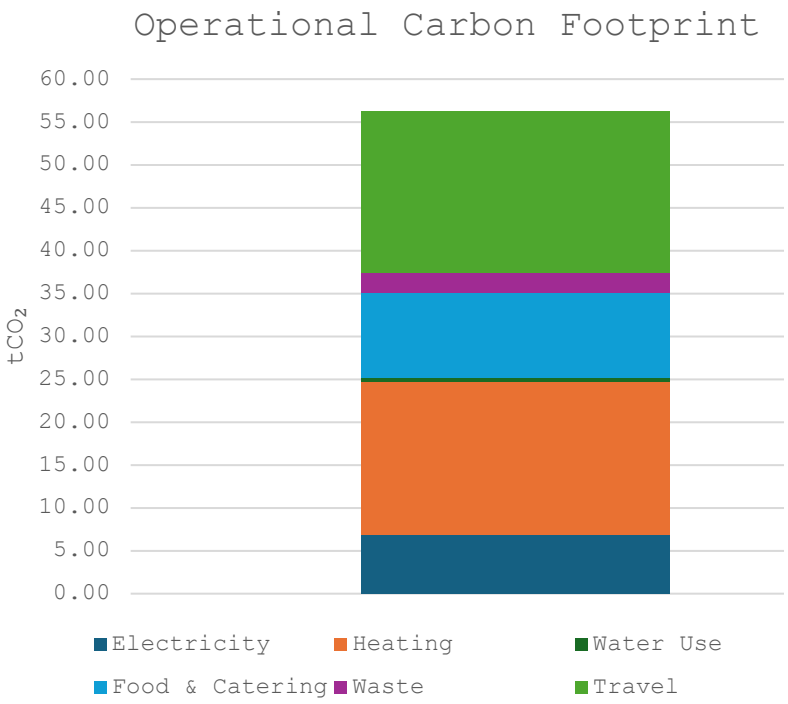

Annual School Meals
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
No. of meals
9.00
8.00
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
0.00
t/CO2
Meat meal
Vegetarian meal

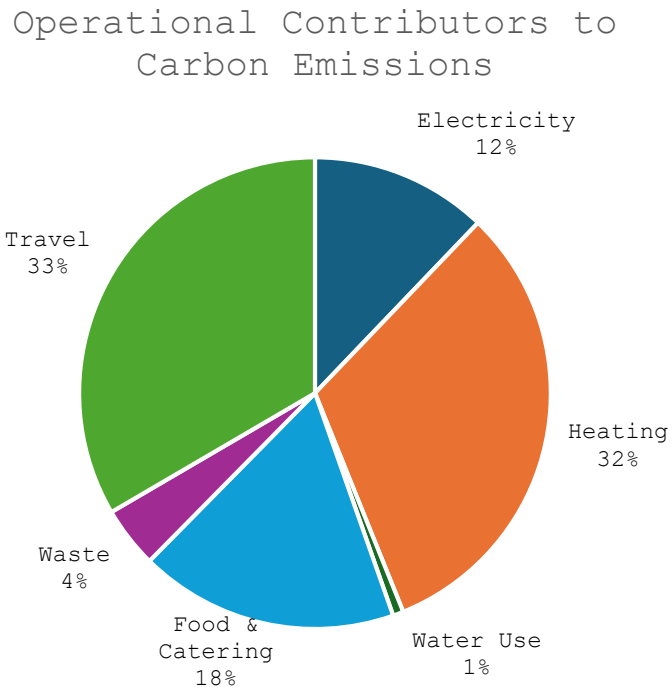
Carbon Footprint

As of July 2025, the carbon footprint for Sandridge is estimated to be:

Scope 1 & 2 Only (Operational)



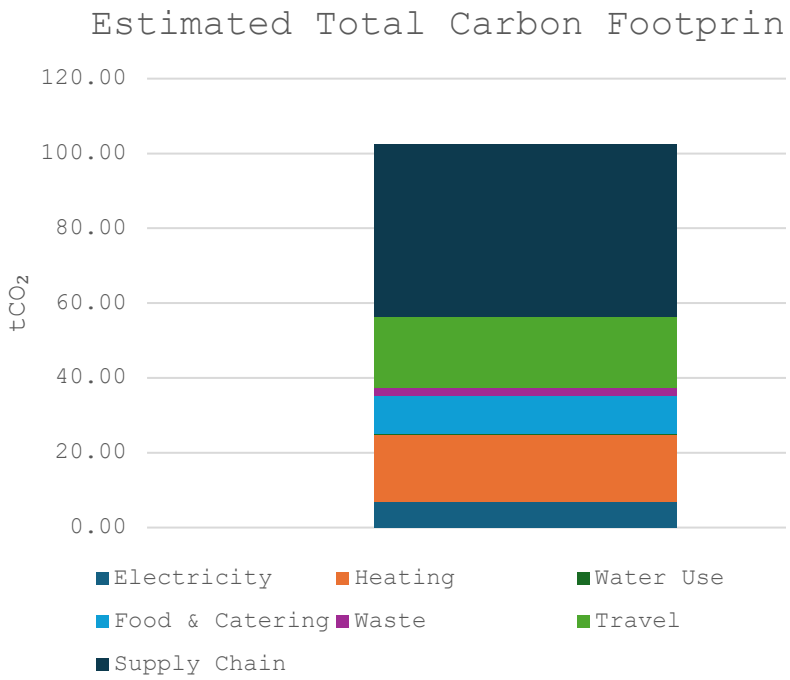


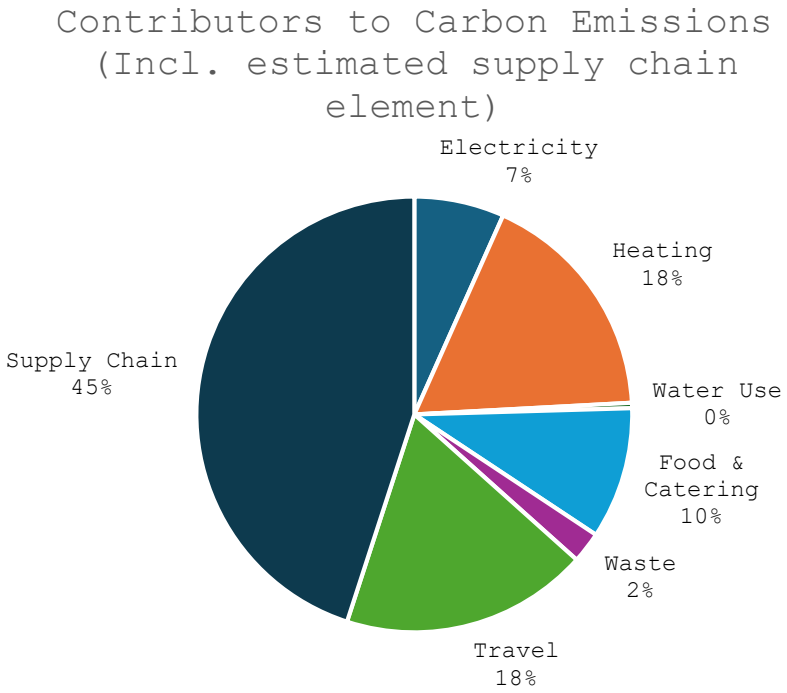


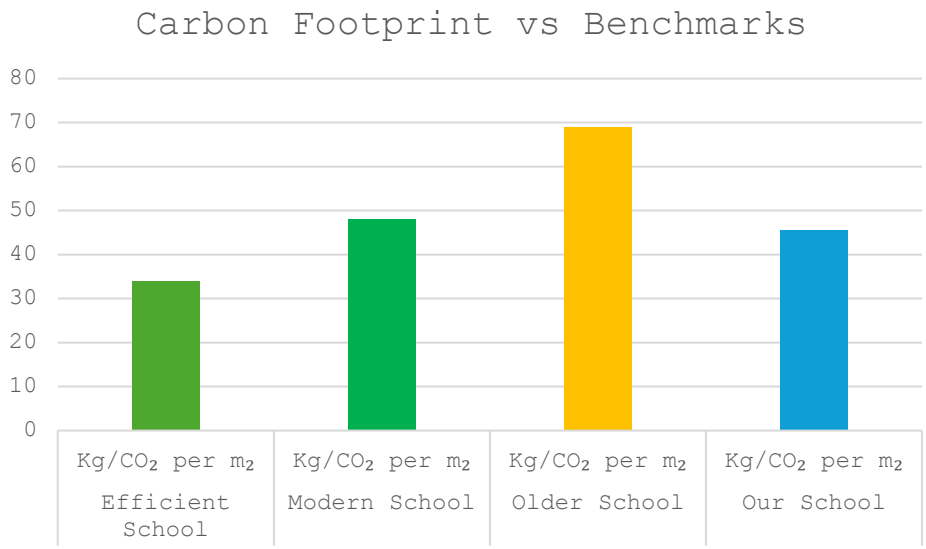
Estimate Total Carbon Footprint

(including average of 45% supply chain contribution)









Sandridge's overall emissions profile shows that electricity use per square metre is below benchmark levels for modern primary schools, which is a positive result. Travel and food, however, contribute more heavily to the operational footprint and therefore present the best opportunities for reduction.

Existing Climate Action Initiatives

Sandridge has already taken some important steps in its climate action journey. The school has installed LED lighting and some light sensors, although these are not yet comprehensive across the site. Waste collection is managed by KP Waste, and food waste separation is already in place. Teachers also show positive habits, with the vast majority routinely switching off computers and keeping doors and windows closed to save energy. These measures create a strong base from which the school can continue to improve.

Pupil & Community Engagement

Sandridge benefits from the presence of a School Council and a Parents' Association, both of which can provide valuable support for sustainability initiatives. There is no Eco or Green Council currently in place. The school also has a dedicated outdoor learning area, which offers opportunities to embed sustainability in day-to-day learning. Priorities identified by the school include embedding sustainability in the curriculum, reducing waste and educating children about environmental issues.

Suggestions from parents and teachers focused on practical steps such as promoting active travel, improving recycling systems, developing stronger curriculum links and making small infrastructure improvements, including better cycle parking and more visible recycling points. Several parents indicated that they were willing to support the school's efforts, and staff responses showed a strong belief in the importance of protecting the environment. This positive culture provides an encouraging foundation for further community engagement.

Target Areas

The school has identified sustainability in the curriculum, minimising waste and educating children about sustainability as its main target areas. It is also noted that any significant operational changes may require the active support and engagement of the local authority.

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

Sandridge demonstrates a promising mix of strengths and straightforward opportunities. The school's **electricity intensity (~30.8 kWh/m²)** is **below** the spreadsheet benchmark for an efficient primary, suggesting decent building-level performance. Staff behaviours also support energy savings in key areas — particularly in switching off computers and managing doors/windows — and partial LED and sensor installations provide a solid platform for further lighting efficiency gains.

Water use, when annualised from the May 2025 billing, is **~8.03 m³ per pupil per year**, which is **above the 3–5 m³ per pupil benchmark for well-managed primary schools**. This highlights a clear opportunity to reduce consumption through measures such as improved leak detection, water-saving devices, and ongoing monitoring.

Waste arrangements (food-waste separation) are positive and align with recommended practice; teacher recycling and reuse habits show solid engagement but highlight room for higher “Always” behaviour on printing and reuse.

Travel is the most material near-term opportunity. The pupil-travel survey scales to **~11.01 t/CO_2** annually (pupils) and teacher travel contributes **~7.79 t/CO_2** annually — together, travel makes up a meaningful share of operational emissions, and the calculator marks travel as **~33% of the operational carbon footprint**. Parent reasons for driving (distance, safety, convenience) are familiar and point towards practical interventions: organised walking buses, promotion of active travel for those living close by, improved cycle/scooter storage, targeted communications, and investigations into feasible school-bus or shared options for longer-distance commuters.

Food accounts for **~10.00 t/CO_2** annually; vegetarian meals produce substantially lower emissions per meal, so interventions such as a twice weekly meat-free day or promotion of plant-based options could yield measurable savings. The school already has governance and community groups in place (School Council, Parents’ Association) which can be leveraged for engagement and practical delivery.

Overall, Sandridge has a good base of low-hanging fruit (lighting completion, water checks, printing reduction, active-travel promotion) plus some policy/investment options (procurement of green tariffs, food catering options) that would reduce operational emissions further. With staff largely supportive and some parental interest indicated, the action plan focusing on travel, food and completing LED/sensor installations is likely to deliver visible progress.