THE BEDFORD COLLEGE GROUP

SKILLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

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INTRODUCTION FROM OUR GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

One of my first priorities as I joined the Group was to thoroughly review our strategic plan, reaffirming our commitment to being the best and most authoritative post-16 educator in the South Midlands. Our purpose is to help individuals, communities and society flourish through education, raising aspirations and reducing inequality to create a sustainable future.

This strategic plan sets a clear roadmap for achieving our purpose. We are dedicated to equipping our students with the skills necessary for personal and professional success. By emphasising educational and community leadership, bolstering our reputation and championing sustainability, we will ensure our students thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our core values − teamwork, improving continuously, student centred, inclusivity, open and caring − are the foundation of our approach to nurturing educational excellence.

Key goals include driving up educational excellence, expanding technical, professional and higher skills programmes, enhancing our services to businesses and leading in civic engagement. We aim to extend our market leadership, attract and retain exceptional staff and invest in digital transformation. Furthermore, we are committed to financial strength and advancing towards becoming a net zero organisation.

Together, we will enhance the quality of education, improve outcomes and enrich all of our students' lives, ensuring every one of our 18,000 students achieves their full potential.

Yiannis Koursis OBE
Group Chief Executive Officer

OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

1882

Bedford Training College for Teachers was established at the Cauldwell Street campus

1903

Margaret Stansfeld OBE founded and became Principal of Bedford Physical Training College

1959

The College at Cauldwell Street was renamed Mander College of Further Education

1976

Bedford College of Higher Education was created through a merger between Bedford College of Education, Bedford Physical Training College and Mander College

1992

Bedford College achieved independent status from local authorities following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992

2000

The Bedford Learning Centre opened in Bedford town centre

2009

Bedford College was rated Outstanding by Ofsted and Shuttleworth College became part of Bedford College

2012

The Bedford Sixth Form opened providing specialist A Level education in Bedford town centre

2017

Bedford College and Tresham College merged to create The Bedford College Group

2018

The Bedford College Group was granted membership of the Chartered Institution for Further Education under its Royal Charter and Kettering Learning Centre opened in the town centre

2020

The Bedford College Group was awarded FE College of the Year

2021

The Corby Learning Centre opened in Corby town centre

2023

Central Bedfordshire College joined The Bedford College Group to create the seventh largest college group in the country (by income), and the Group's second dedicated Sixth Form opened in Corby

2025

The National College for Logistics opened in Leighton Buzzard.

THE BEDFORD COLLEGE GROUP TODAY

CAMPUSES ACROSS THE REGION

Bedford College, Cauldwell Street Campus
Cauldwell Street, Bedford,
Bedfordshire MK42 9AH

Bedford College, Advanced Automotive Technology Centre
59 Brunel Road, Bedford,
Bedfordshire MK41 9TJ

Bedford College, Kempston Centre
Triumph Way, Woburn Road Industrial Estate,
Kempston, Bedfordshire MK42 7QB

Bedford Learning Centre
88 High Street, Bedford,
Bedfordshire MK40 lNN

Central Bedfordshire College, Dunstable Campus
Kingsway, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 4HG

Central Bedfordshire College, Luton Centre
Dallow Road Community Centre, 234
Dallow Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 1TB

Corby Learning Centre
40 George Street, Corby,
Northamptonshire NN17 1QD

Kettering Learning Centre
9-10 Newland Street, Kettering,
Northamptonshire NN16 8JH

National College for Logistics
Chartmoor Road, Leighton Buzzard LU7 4TN

National College for Motorsport
Units 8 & 2285, Silverstone Park, Towcester,
Northamptonshire NN12 8GX

Shuttleworth College
Old Warden Park, Biggleswade,
Bedfordshire SG18 9DX

The Bedford Sixth Form
Bromham Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK40 2BS

The Corby Sixth Form
Queens Square, Corby,
Northamptonshire NN17 1QN

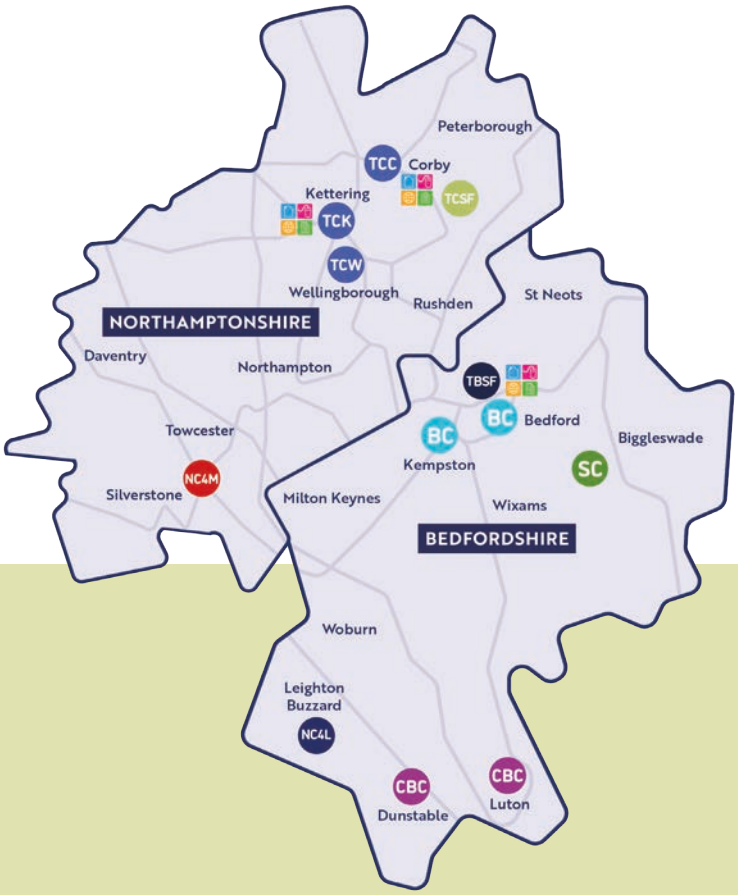
The Incuba
1 Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable, LU6 1AA

Tresham College, Corby Campus
Oakley Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1NE

Tresham College, Kettering Campus
Windmill Avenue, Kettering,
Northamptonshire NN15 6ER

Tresham College, Wellingborough Campus
Church Street, Wellingborough,
Northamptonshire NN8 4PD

Wellingborough Learning Centre
Church Street, Wellingborough,
Northamptonshire NN8 4PD



OUR PURPOSE, VISION & VALUES

OUR PURPOSE

To help individuals, communities and society flourish through education by raising aspirations and reducing inequality to create a sustainable future.

OUR VISION

To be the best and most authoritative post-16 educator in the South Midlands.

OUR VALUES

VALUING TEAMWORK

We are one team who by working together can achieve great things, respecting the opinion and valuing the contribution each of us makes.

IMPROVING CONTINUOUSLY

We challenge ourselves to always do better by trying new things, sharing knowledge, reflecting on practice and learning from others.

STUDENT CENTRED

At our heart is always doing what is best for our students. We consider students in all of our decision making to create positive outcomes and memorable experiences for every student.

INCLUSIVE

We celebrate differences and diversity, recognising that we can learn from each other.

OPEN AND CARING

We care about the wellbeing of our staff, our students, our community and wider society, creating an environment built on trust where we listen, engage with and support each other.

NURTURING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We promote educational excellence by delivering programmes that challenge our students to achieve their ambitions.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations 17 sustainable development goals are a set of related goals designed to address some of the world's most urgent challenges facing humanity and the natural world.

We are committed to playing our part in tackling these goals to create a more equitable, prosperous and sustainable world for everyone through education and awareness, community engagement activities, adopting sustainable practices on campus, our partnership working and championing sustainable development through actions in our strategic plan.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Bedford College Group has three strategic pillars which drive us to serve our purpose and achieve our vision. Under each pillar are key strategic objectives and targets. Our key strategic objectives are set out on the following pages.

OUR VISION

To be the best and most authoritative post-16 educator in the South Midlands

OUR PURPOSE

To help individuals, communities and society flourish through education by raising aspirations and reducing inequality to create a sustainable future

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Provide a better, more comprehensive service to employers
- Expand Technical and Professional Education and Higher Skills programmes
- Achieve consistent standards of educational excellence by making quality of education our top priority

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND REPUTATION

- Extend our market leadership, size and scale in the areas we serve
- Be recognised as a leader in further education and a major source of civic leadership within our communities

SUSTAINABILITY

- Maintain a proactive health and safety culture that protects wellbeing of our students, staff and visitors and meets all statutory requirements
- Maintain financial strength and continuous capital investments
- Attract, retain and develop great staff

TRANSFORMATION

- Make a strong progress towards becoming a net zero organisation and a leader in sustainability practices
- Improve data accessibility and analytical capabilities to drive evidence-based decision-making across the Group
- Invest in digital transformation to support the plan

DEPARTMENTAL PLANS

OUR PEOPLE

OUR VALUES

• Valuing teamwork • Improving continuously • Student centred • Inclusive • Open and caring • Nurturing educational excellence

OBJECTIVE 1

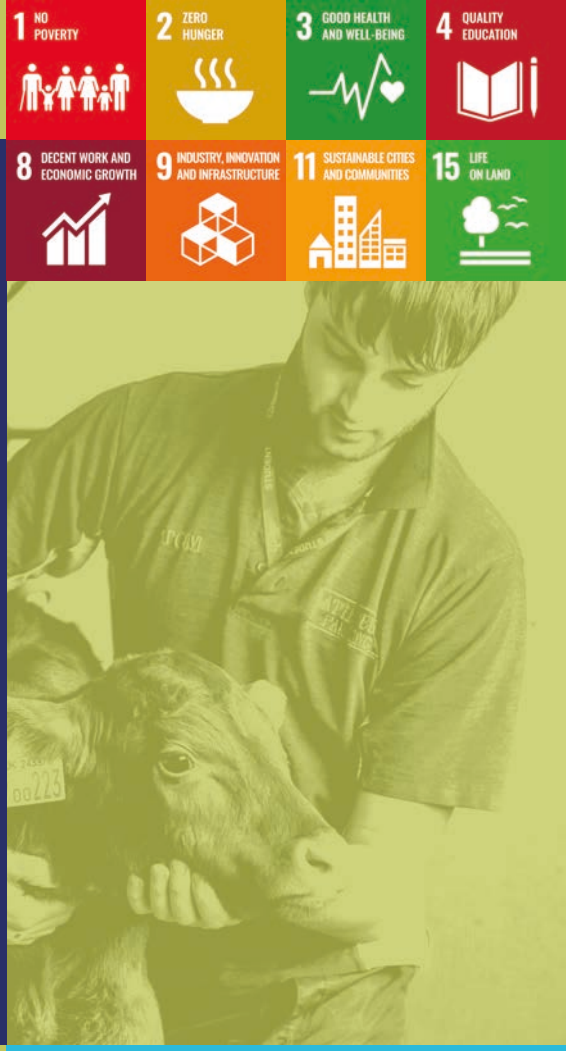
To achieve consistent standards of education excellence by making quality of education our top priority

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Maintaining a comprehensive full-time offer across all sector subject areas
- Maintaining a strong higher skills, adult education and apprenticeship offer across our communities in areas where there is a clear need
- Ensuring all programmes prepare students for their next steps and career ambitions, maintaining a strong focus on student achievement, retention and progression
- Developing exciting enrichment, sustainability and community leadership programmes for our younger students to improve the student experience and strengthening students' cultural and social capital
- Ensuring all curriculum areas are engaged in skills competitions and as many students take part as possible
- Developing and implementing a framework which supports students to make educational gains
- Introducing a whole group approach in the use of 'Philosophical Enquiry', enabling students to develop much improved critical thinking, ethical reflection and enhanced communication skills
- Improving participation in education by protected characteristics and ensuring there is equity in student achievement and the student experience
- Increasing our focus towards equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to support all students to thrive and become global citizens
- Prioritising the recruitment of teaching staff so that we have the staffing levels to deliver a high quality educational experience
- Investing in teaching, learning and assessment, along with digital technologies, to provide the very best experience to our students

OUR TARGETS:

- Overall achievement rate of 90%
- Sixth Form ALPS score 4
- 55% of students improve English by one grade
- 48% of students improve maths by one grade
- Overall attendance of funded learners 90%
- At least 95% of students would recommend the Group to others
- At least 95% of staff utilise and comply with CPOMS
- Launch new student union



OBJECTIVE 2

To expand technical and professional education and higher skills programmes

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Developing a wide range of T Level provision at our campuses and investing in the new curriculum
- Leveraging the move to new higher technical qualifications (HTQs) by developing a relevant and accessible curriculum offer to meet community needs
- Developing a strong Higher Apprenticeship offer that meets the needs of our business communities
- Actively participating in the government's Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) programme to deliver against the skills priorities in the South Midlands
- Ensuring all curriculum areas are engaged in skills competitions and as many students take part as possible
- Developing higher level professional programmes to support workforce and individual development
- Continuing to develop The Corby Sixth Form as a new specialist A Level centre for North Northamptonshire
- Taking a responsive approach to the government's post-16 education reforms to support people into higher skilled jobs
- Partnering with high quality industry specialists to provide relevant industry placements and work experience
- Working effectively with partners to develop a range of high-quality higher education programmes and pathways to provide a broader portfolio to our communities

OUR TARGETS:

- At least 1,100 students study T Levels
- At least 1,000 Higher Skills students
- At least 500 students at The Corby Sixth Form

OBJECTIVE 3

To provide a better, more comprehensive service to employers

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Improving the ways in which we engage with businesses, shifting from a transactional approach to building mutually beneficial partnerships
- Focussing on significantly improving the quality of our apprenticeship provision in terms of experience, outcomes, destinations and customer satisfaction
- Working with local and regional businesses to align our services and products to their business needs
- Improving our communication with businesses to ensure they receive a highly efficient and responsive approach through any means they choose to engage with us
- Increasing the reach we have with employers across the region, generating new key business opportunities as well as supporting and maintaining our existing businesses with their needs
- Actively engaging business partners and key stakeholders in the co-creation, design and delivery of our curriculum offer to ensure it meets their precise needs
- Investing in our facilities to create Business Partnership Hubs, bringing employers closer and offering reciprocal opportunities for both employers and students
- Enhancing the experience of our students by bringing industry influences into the classroom and ensuring employers' input is at the heart of the learning offer
- Expanding our adult and commercial offerings to align with employers' needs, supporting them in investing their levy and training funds in ways that add meaningful value and impact to their business requirements

OUR TARGETS:

- At least 2,700 employers actively engage with the Group
- Apprenticeship Accountability Framework on track
- 45 employer partnerships
- At least 90% of employers would recommend the Group to others

OBJECTIVE 4

To be recognised as a leader in further education and a major source of civic leadership within our communities

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Developing a reputation as a thought leader and system influencer in the field of further education through the participation in industry networks, partnerships and events to inform, shape and influence direction and policy
- Having a greater focus on our civic role by working with other anchor institutions and key organisations for the collective benefits of our towns and communities
- Proactively engaging with civic organisations, community groups, education providers and businesses to contribute to the economic and social development of our communities, including harnessing the connections of our staff, governors and partners to develop new partnerships
- Actively seeking out and participating in collaborative arrangements with other education providers to ensure the mix of provision locally meets the needs of our communities and there is a joined up approach
- Growing provision where there is unmet demand to better meet the needs of our communities
- Supporting our students to become active citizens and community leaders so that they can actively contribute to society
- Establishing an alumni programme to track our students over time to demonstrate the impact they have on our communities and wider society
- Building inclusive boards across the Group's governance structure to enhance decision making
- Focussing the Corporation agenda on educational excellence, curriculum development, inclusion and teaching and learning to reflect the renewed focus on the quality of education

OUR TARGETS:

- Expected standard achieved for contribution to meeting skills needs
- At least 85% of stakeholders agree the Group is a leader in Further Education within its communities
- At least 95% of stakeholders agree the Group contributes to making the local area a better place

OBJECTIVE 5

To extend our market leadership, size and scale in the areas we serve

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Growing our further education and higher skills provision in identified priority and growth sectors to meet the needs of our communities in the South Midlands, such as green skills and digital skills
- Growing our apprenticeship offer in growth and priority sectors across the South Midlands to meet the current and future needs of businesses
- Raising aspirations in our communities and our students to progress on to higher skills qualifications, ensuring fair access to all regardless of differences
- Integrating a culture of careers not courses across our local communities to ensure adults are equipped for employment at every opportunity to meet specific technical and higher skills demands
- Further developing relationships with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Jobcentre Plus to reduce unemployment for economically active residents
- Revamping our innovative Learning Centre model and looking to expand the number of centres we have in the community
- Ensuring our investment in Wellingborough generates the growth we expected
- Expanding our provision at Leighton Buzzard to meet the needs of the community
- Further developing our provision at the National College for Motorsport to meet demand

OUR TARGETS:

- At least 9,900 16-18 students
- At least 8,700 adult learners
- At least 2,000 apprentices

OBJECTIVE 6

To attract, retain and develop great staff

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Establishing a focused talent acquisition team who will have continuously developing knowledge of the external market and the competitor challenges within that market
- Developing campaign data that will inform the most successful external attraction methods and enable bespoke campaigns for key hard to fill areas
- Improving both the timescales and candidate experience from application to when candidates accept an offer of employment to when they are able to commence employment
- Developing an induction programme which promotes a positive culture that holds the student at the centre of everything we do and ensures positive behaviours that reflect our values
- Developing our managers to be effective leaders, with a particular initial focus on people management skills that both ensure high performance and enable staff to feel supported and valued so they can thrive within their roles
- Ensuring all staff have the essential training to both support our students in quality outcomes and keep them safe during their journey
- Enabling managers to develop their staff in achieving their ambition and potential through a variety of coaching and training, and create clear career pathways across the Group

OUR TARGETS:

- Period from vacancy to interview of four weeks
- Staff turnover not to exceed 14%
- 100% appraisals completion rate

OBJECTIVE 7

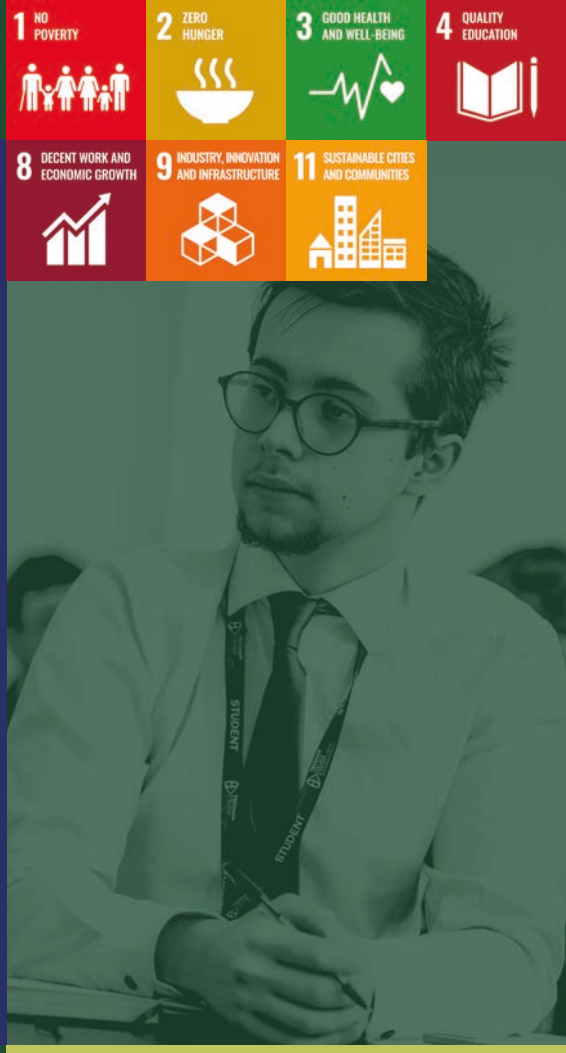
Maintain financial strength and continuous capital investments

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Maintaining our strong financial and capital investment model
- Developing and implementing an estates strategy which achieves efficiencies that can be directed into the student experience
- Pursuing funding opportunities for both revenue and capital to enable us to deliver our vision
- Taking a more disciplined approach to projects and investments so we adequately resource and assess each one
- Switching quickly and significantly the focus of investment from major refurbishments to smaller-scale refurbishments and investment in the student experience in every curriculum area
- Continuing to improve the condition of our buildings whilst responding to ever demanding regulatory change
- Operating a resourcing model that is activity driven but outcome focussed
- Maintaining reserves to ensure resilience and embrace emerging opportunities

OUR TARGETS:

- College surplus of at least £0.756m
- Outstanding financial strength rating
- A minimum of 53 days cash in hand



OBJECTIVE 8

Maintain a proactive health and safety culture that protects wellbeing of our students, staff and visitors and meets all statutory requirements.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Maintaining a central training matrix that is reviewed and updated with mandatory courses by staff role
- Providing regular reminders to alert staff before training expires
- Checking compliance monthly and escalate where gaps exist
- Reviewing and revising training regularly to ensure accessibility, relevance and engagement
- Recognising departmental excellence in completion of mandatory training on time
- Holding departments locally accountable for non-completion of training within timescales
- Producing Strategic/Group level, Local/Departmental and Task specific risk assessments
- Ensuring local risk assessments translate high-level H&S policy and assessments into practical day-to-day controls
- Making each department through Head of Department or appointed H&S champions responsible and accountable for local risk assessments
- Standardising risk assessment templates to ensure clarity
- Using a proportionate approach, avoid overcomplication and focus on the actual significant risks present
- Reviewing and updating risk assessments periodically at set timescales such as annually or following an incident or major changes
- Sharing the significant findings of risk assessments with staff, students and other relevant stakeholders such as contractors and visitors
- Periodically audit risk assessments for quality, content and relevance

OUR TARGETS:

- 100% of required risk assessments completed and reviewed on schedule
- 100% of staff complete mandatory training on time

OBJECTIVE 9

Invest in digital transformation to support the plan

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Establishing digital innovation hubs that foster the integration of new technologies into teaching and learning practices
- Optimising digital learning platforms to improve student engagement and educational delivery, including launching Microsoft Educator Academy to provide teaching staff with the ability to continually transform their teaching methods to improve student outcomes
- Leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance learning outcomes, decision-making processes and operational efficiency
- Improving the accessibility and user-friendliness of teaching materials so that every student can engage effectively
- Ensuring that all digital products, including the student virtual learning environment (VLE) and other learning technologies, meet legislation (e.g. WCAG 2.2)
- Achieving the appropriate certification to provide the confidence to deliver a safe and robust digital infrastructure for our students and staff
- Investing in our IT infrastructure to provide robust, scalable and secure solutions which future proof the organisation and provide a seamless user experience for students and staff

OUR TARGETS:

- At least 80% of staff agree that the innovative use of technology has helped to improve their teaching and the student experience
- Implement new HR system
- Implement new Employer Engagement CRM

4 QUALITY EDUCATION
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

OBJECTIVE 10

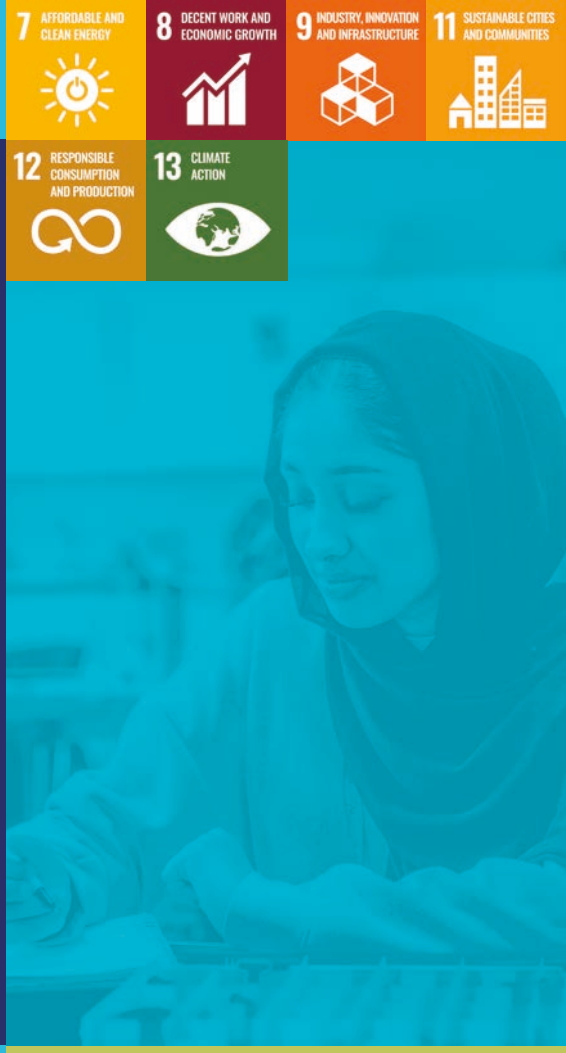
Improve data accessibility and analytical capabilities to drive evidence-based decision-making across the Group

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Developing and publishing a clear data strategy that aligns to the Group strategic plan to focus on evidence led improvement
- Implementing a data governance group to develop and embed data standards and policies across the Group
- Delivering a suite of data dashboards to meet stakeholder needs that are based on feedback and usage analytics
- Using real-time predictive data insights to inform performance management, budgeting and strategic planning cycles
- Equipping staff with the skills to interpret dashboards and apply insights in teaching and operational decisions
- Enabling self-service access to data dashboards for leaders across the Group and make data accuracy a standing item at curriculum and management meetings

OUR TARGETS:

- Successful implementation of a suite of consistent data dashboards to consolidate and visualise data from multiple sources to monitor the Group's KPIs
- At least 70% of staff agree that they can easily access accurate information to inform decisions



OBJECTIVE 11

Make strong progress towards becoming a net zero organisation and a leader in sustainability practices

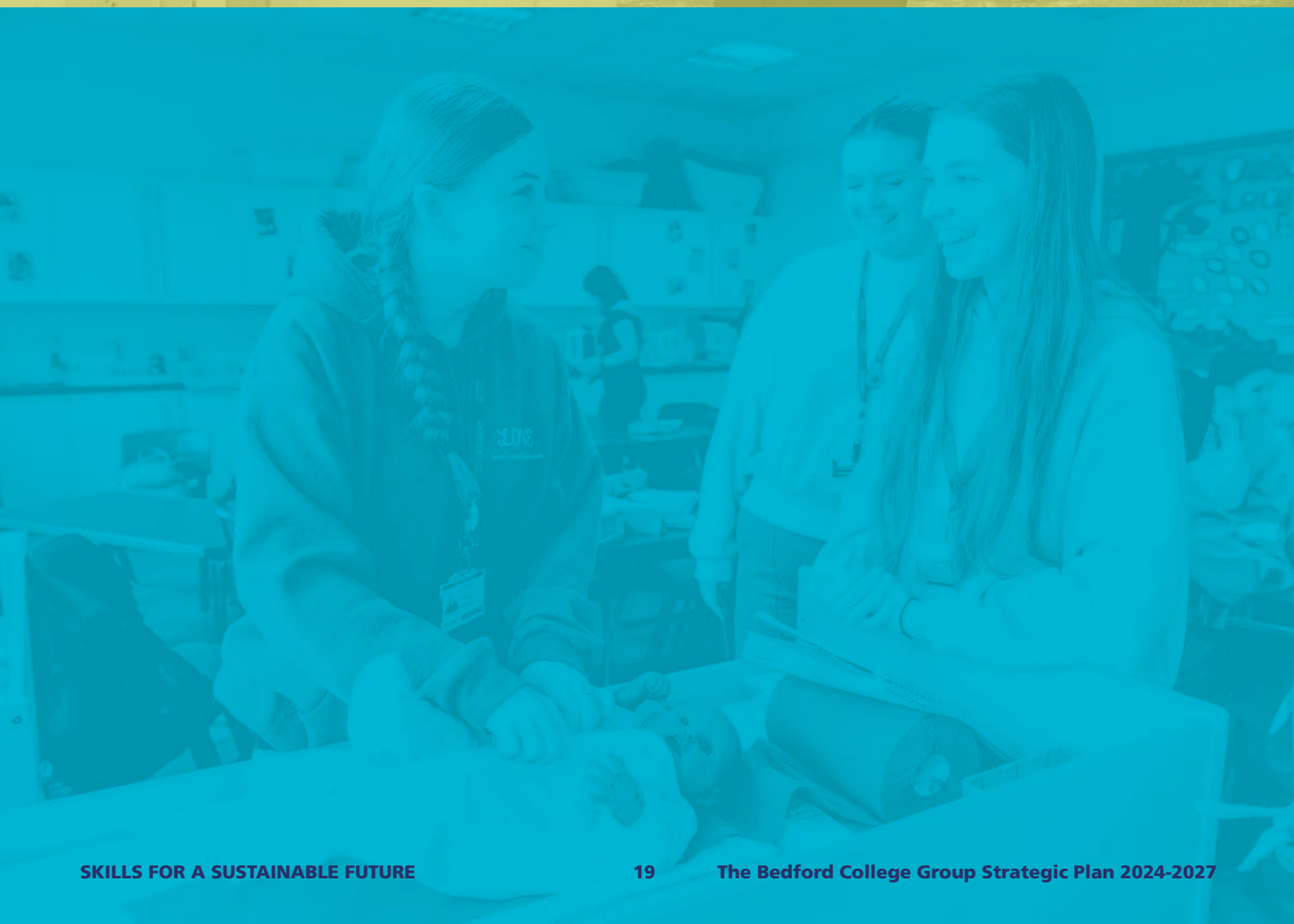
WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Embedding vocationally relevant teaching of climate change and sustainability across our full-time, part-time, apprenticeship and higher skills courses
- Developing and delivering a suite of T Levels, apprenticeships and adult courses to support the government's green skills agenda and to meet national and regional needs
- Identifying and accessing available funding to support the design and delivery of new provision for green skills and careers, and to make our estate as energy efficient as possible
- Ensuring new buildings are net zero in operation and implementing an energy efficiency and carbon reduction programme for existing buildings which incorporates sustainable building practices and low carbon technologies
- Reducing energy usage and water consumption through efficient use and management and the adoption of renewable energies
- Adopting a waste management policy which focuses first on waste reduction (particularly food, paper and card) and then reuse and recycling approaches
- Providing viable and accessible sustainable travel options for students and staff to reduce carbon emissions, including replacing existing Group vehicles to the electrical equivalent and providing EV charging points
- Providing carbon literacy training to our students and staff to improve their personal understanding of climate change and sustainability to encourage sustainable practices in all aspects of their lives
- Identifying and actively participating in local, regional and national networking groups to develop and take forward partnership opportunities to meet green skills needs

OUR TARGETS:

- Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education (EAUC) sustainability leadership scorecard to be Gold
- At least 88% of stakeholders agree the Group is a leader in sustainability practices

DEWALT



THE BEDFORD COLLEGE GROUP

The Bedford College Group
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Bedford
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BEDFORD COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY CENTRE
Part of The Bedford College Group

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY CENTRE
Part of The Bedford College Group

NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR LOGISTICS
Part of The Bedford College Group

NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR MOTORSPORT
SILVERSTONE
Part of The Bedford College Group

SHUTTLEWORTH COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY CENTRE
Part of The Bedford College Group

THE BEDFORD SIXTH FORM

THE CORBY SIXTH FORM

The Learning Centres
Bedford · Corby · Kettering · Wellingborough

TRESHAM COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY CENTRE
Part of The Bedford College Group