

Stepping Up in Sustainability 2012-13

Bedford College Case Study



Title of project	Sustainability Leadership at Bedford College	
Lead partner organisation name and address	Bedford College Cauldwell Street Bedford Bedfordshire MK42 9AH	
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1. Aims of the project	<p>This project focused on leadership and capacity building with the following key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a collective commitment to and understanding of sustainability across Bedford College's senior team. • Reviewing and updating the college's strategy and action plan for sustainable development with input from the corporation members and senior team. • Developing strategies for assessing and measuring sustainability performance, sharing progress and driving improvement across the College. <p>Plans included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing all four themes of the Sustaining Our Future Framework; Leadership, Learning, Organisational Capacity, and Partnerships; making Leadership a starting point. • Using the Reaching Forward Index (RFI) to assess current performance and inform a whole-organisation approach to review and action planning. • Utilising the Stepping up in Sustainability resources and case studies on the Excellence Gateway in a series of workshops, increasing familiarity with these and building the teams' capacity to embed sustainability into their departments' work. 	
2. Situation: Identify the situation or issue that faced you	<p>For many years sustainability has been a key priority at Bedford College. However understanding and buy-in from our senior team members has been variable. More needed doing to improve the understanding of, and to engage all members of the senior team in establishing a college-wide strategy and plan to drive our sustainability performance to the next level.</p> <p>There are many committed and knowledgeable individuals across Bedford College, successfully embedding sustainability within their own areas of responsibility. Without clear understanding and buy-in from <u>all</u> senior staff and key decision makers, the achievements of many individuals remained isolated, were not always acknowledged, and many opportunities for sharing & dissemination were lost.</p>	

3. Task: Define the outcomes you needed to achieve	The project’s overall goals were to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all managers, Directors and Corporation members (Governors) take ownership of sustainability within their areas of responsibility.• Review and update the sustainability policy to incorporate Bedford College’s values.• Identify key strategic sustainability aims, listing the Directorates responsible, to be agreed by the Executive team.• Put in place and action plan relating to all aspects of the college, including short and longer term goals• Create opportunities for sharing and dissemination within Bedford College and across the Sector.		
4. Actions that you took in order to achieve your plan, and your approach	Project Activity	Details	Completed by
	Bedford College Corporation (Governors) Sustainability briefing	Setting the scene. Outlining achievements and future potential	05.07.12
	6-week project preparation phase	Project plan finalised	17.08.12
	Senior Team Project briefing	Project plan presented to Exec	31.08.12
	Agreeing key priorities and targets per department (based on the 2012 self-assessment workshop)	Key targets listed, departments’ responsibilities identified and their suggestions incorporated	30.09. 12
	Middle managers sustainability workshops	6 workshops held Sept-Dec 2012 Targets agreed by each manager	31.12.12
	An estimated 90% of staff attended a sustainability presentation by Bedford College’s CEO	The presentation highlighted the importance of sustainability and expectations from all staff	04.01.13
	Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Coordinator appointed	Responsible for staff and student engagement & carbon management	01.01.13
	Governors and Executive Team RFI self-assessment & progress review	Review of priorities from the 2012 self-assessment workshop Agreeing new/updated priorities	31.01.13
	Policy and strategy review	Policy was reviewed, updated and approved by the Executive team	05.02.13
	Progress reports and	Examples collated in	05.03.13

	sustainability examples	readiness for the Sustainability Day	
	Showcasing/sharing achievements during Bedford College's 2013 Sustainability Day	The day was a big success with contributions from staff, student, schools and community groups	05.03.13
	Dissemination event	Event details: Bedford College Sustainability Leadership Event	09.05.13
	Supporting cross-college implementation	Sustainability Team is monitoring progress and providing support.	On-going
5. Results that you obtained	<p>Results included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An estimated 90% of college staff (=619) received development through a presentation delivered by the CEO on two separate occasions. • 33 middle managers attended one of a series of 2-hour sustainability planning workshops. • A permanent Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Coordinator post was created to drive related action across the college. • Bedford College's Sustainability Policy was reviewed and updated. • Roles and responsibilities of all Directorates were clearly defined. • An action plan was put in place to achieve the College's key SD priorities. • The 05.03.2013 Sustainability Day preparations and activities were supported by staff at all levels of the college. • Many excellent examples of staff, student and community engagement were showcased during the Sustainability Day. 		
6. What made the project a success? What were the key ingredients?	<p>Bedford College CEO's support in delivering a sustainability presentation to all staff worked out to be much more effective than individual staff being trained at different times and locations. This enabled an estimated 619 college staff to appreciate the importance of sustainability to Bedford College. It emphasised the top level commitment to sustainability and expectations from staff members. It also highlighted the excellent work already being done by Bedford College's various departments.</p>		
7. What would you say were the most important things you learned from	<p>In order to successfully embed sustainability into all functions of an organisation, it is important to develop a clear understanding of how it relates to the work of staff in all departments and at all levels.</p> <p>In the past decade Bedford College demonstrated a strong commitment to</p>		

<p>this project, which you will take forward as an individual or as an organisation in your sustainability journey?</p>	<p>sustainability by appointing a Director of Sustainability, embedding sustainability into the curriculum and successfully delivering many related projects and initiatives. However there was a need to clarify the expected roles of all staff and the responsibilities of all Directors in leading sustainability. This project, and in particular the direct involvement of the College's CEO, helped make this happen.</p> <p>We now have an updated policy, a list of key strategic priorities and an action plan clearly stating the Directors responsible for each action. This will improve the various departments' responsiveness to Sustainability Team's requests for information and participation.</p> <p>We have also reviewed the Sustainability Team's functions and strengthened the focus on staff and student engagement. This will help achieve greater stakeholder ownership of our sustainability priorities.</p>		
<p>8. Any resources or tools produced by the project</p>	<p>Bedford College's revised sustainability policy and strategic objectives can be found through: http://www.greenbedfordcollege.com/. The Green Bedford College website also contains a wide range of additional information and resources that Sector organisations may find helpful.</p> <p>Also, please see attached the Departmental Sustainability pdf document providing most recent examples of how sustainability is embedded into various curriculum disciplines as well as administrative and operational processes.</p>		
<p>9. Total costs of the project</p>	<p>LSIS funding</p> <p>£10,000</p>	<p>Match funding</p> <p>£1,100 (exc. staff time & on-costs)</p>	<p>Total funding</p> <p>£11,100</p>

	<p>Funded by LSIS through the Stepping Up in Sustainability Fund</p>	
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