

Overseas Education Limited

Investing in Education



SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2017

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OVERSEAS EDUCATION LIMITED

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2017

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About This Report

Overseas Education Limited (OEL) Sustainability Report has been prepared in accordance with Global Reporting Initiatives (GRI) Standards: Core Option, as well as Singapore Exchange Limited (SGX) Rule Guide to Sustainability Reporting for Listed Companies. We have adopted the GRI reporting framework for its international recognition and universal applicability (*SGX Guide 3.6 – Global standards and comparability*).

We, OEL together with our subsidiaries (the Group), recognise that sustainable business practices have become increasingly important to our stakeholders. Our stakeholders are also looking towards us for increased transparency and accountability around our business practices. Hence, we have prepared this sustainability report to communicate our efforts and the sustainability journey we have made thus far.

In this sustainability report, we have identified the material environmental, social and governance areas that are important to our stakeholders and us. We have also set out our strategy roadmap to use our resources in a more equitable and sustainable manner, and at the same time create long-term value for our stakeholders.

Our sustainability report focused on our performance from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017, which is congruous with the financial year reported in our OEL Annual Report 2017.

We have not sought external independent assurance for this sustainability report, but please feel free to write to us at ir@ofs.edu.sg should you have any inquiries about its content.

We also welcome any feedback you may have.

Corporate Profile

OEL is an investment holding company of Overseas Family School Limited which operates Overseas Family School (OFS or the School), a leading private foreign system school (FSS) in Singapore with an operating history of over 25 years.

OFS offers a fully integrated inquiry-based programme comprising the International Early Years Curriculum, the International Primary Curriculum and the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum within a globalised multi-cultural environment to children aged between 2 and 18 years of primarily expatriate parents, who are senior executives and professionals working and living in Singapore. We have around 2,500 students from over 60 nationalities, supported by about 400 staff members from over 30 countries.

Apart from being one of the pioneering FSS in Singapore offering both the IB Middle Years Programme and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education, we believe we are also the first FSS to integrate the Model United Nations initiative into our core curriculum. We also offer other programmes including Study

Preparation Programme and Intellectual Development Programmes to supplement our curriculum.

Previously based at Paterson Road, we moved to our new Pasir Ris campus in June 2015. Our Pasir Ris campus has been called the ‘school design of the future’, with unique features and many teaching facilities designed to support advance student learning.

We stay true to our Master Policy: To maintain a happy, safe and effective school for overseas families living in Singapore, and prepare our students for their return to their respective national education systems or, for the more senior students, for entry into universities worldwide.

Board Statement

OEL Board of Directors (Board) and Management recognise that environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are very important in managing a school. Continued emphasis is placed on ensuring sustainable business practices which are transparent and accountable. We also view this increased emphasis on sustainability as an opportunity to further improve on our business practices, and to help address any material ESG areas that are relevant to our stakeholders.

Our Board assumes the leadership and advisory role for the Group’s sustainability strategy. Our Chief Financial Officer is the designated Sustainability Team Lead, and he reports to the Board on any key material sustainability performance matters. He also ensures the preparation of sustainability disclosures as required by the SGX Sustainability Reporting Requirements.

We believe our School is an inextricable part of Singapore’s social and economic infrastructure supporting foreign direct investments into Singapore, and forming an important consideration for expatriates contemplating the relocation of their families, especially of their school-going children here.

Our Master Policy: To maintain a happy, safe and effective school for overseas families living in Singapore is the key pillar of our sustainable strategy. We strive to achieve our *Master Policy* through our internationally recognised curricula, our student code of conduct and well-supervised security measures.

Our Board and Management are committed to manage our School in an ethical, socially and environmentally sustainable manner. We also recognise the importance of a safe school environment for our students, parents, teachers and OFS community. We embrace cultural and social diversity, and promote equal opportunities among our people. Our teachers and staff are well trained and remunerated, and are expected to maintain the highest standard of professionalism, integrity and trust.

We embrace sustainability not only as guiding principle, but also imbue our the day-to-day running of our School’s operations, processes, curricula and activities with sustainable ESG practices. We will share more of these further in our sustainability report.

Engaging With Our Stakeholders

We actively engage with our stakeholders through various engagement platforms so as to allow us to better understand their expectations or any concern they may have. We also welcome routine inquiries and regular feedback from stakeholders.

While such engagements are helpful to drive change and improve sustainable practices, we are also conscious that building engagement on the ground or through our day-to-day contact, e.g. with individual parents or Parents' Association group, is critical to ensure that our sustainable programmes are realistic and effective.

The engagement platforms with our stakeholder groups are summarised in the table below.

Stakeholder groups	Engagement platforms	Frequency
Parents and Parents' Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors' Coffee Morning • School newsletters • School Yearbook • Global Picnic • Parents-Teacher conferences • Notice boards and announcements • Parents' meetings and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New semester • Monthly • Annually • Annually • Scheduled • Throughout the year • Scheduled
Shareholders, investors and analysts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results announcements • Release of Annual Reports • Annual General Meetings • Extraordinary General Meetings • Analysts meetings • Investors roadshow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly • Annually • Annually • As needed • Scheduled • As needed
Teachers and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman's lunch • Academic Board meetings • Global Picnic • Staff meetings and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually • Scheduled • Annually • Scheduled
Government agencies and regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings • Electronic communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled • Quarterly
Business partners, contractors and suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduled
Local community and corporate social responsibility (CSR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various school programmes and community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please refer to OEL Annual Report 2017 CSR section

Assessment Of Material Environmental, Social And Governance Areas

Our assessment of material environmental, social and governance (ESG) areas was guided by GRI reporting framework and SGX Sustainability Reporting Guide.

The following material ESG areas are assessed and selected based on the degree of influence they have on our stakeholders as well as the effect our School has on the economy, the environment and society.

Material ESG areas	GRI topics	Read more in our:
Economic Sustainability Our financial performance, economic value generated and distributed.	Economic Performance	OEL Annual Report 2017 - Chairman's Message - Financial Highlights - Financial Statements
Corporate Governance Our corporate governance structure, ethics, accountability and audit, shareholders rights and responsibilities.	Anti-corruption	OEL Annual Report 2017 - Corporate Governance Report
The OFS Experience and OFS Community Our values, principles and norms of behaviour.	Non-discrimination	Page 6
Community Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility Our local community engagement and school programmes on sustainability.	Local Communities	Page 6 and OEL Annual Report 2017 - Corporate Social Responsibility section
Our Teachers and Staff Investing in our teachers and staff.	- Employment - Training and Education - Diversity and Equal Opportunity - Non-discrimination	Page 7
Green Spaces and Energy Management Our OFS campus at Pasir Ris.	Energy	Page 8
Waste Minimisation and Recycling The 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) suffused through every level of learning.	Effluents and Waste	Page 8
Security, Health and Safety Happy and safe learning environment.	Security practices	Page 9

The OFS Experience And OFS Community

OFS is unique in our philosophy of education and in our beliefs for our School. We promote a truly international outlook and there is no one dominant nationality within our student population or amongst our staff.

OFS is a community of learning where the learning is student-focused, and not teacher-centred, to enhance the student learning experience. Group and project-based learning, and outdoor activities support student engagement. We also integrate Model United Nations initiative and Intellectual Development Programmes into the core curriculum to build relational skills, critical thinking and self-confidence.

We have a ‘Self-Discipline, and No Tolerance for Violence’ policy at OFS.

Multinationalism and multiculturalism are cornerstones of our OFS ethos, and have deep roots in our collective consciousness. Respect for one another naturally developed amongst students and teachers, and we operate with the minimum of rules or punishments. It is essential that no student or staff member feels threatened by violent or aggressive behaviour from another member of the School community. Any act of violence will lead to immediate dismissal; and all students, teachers, principals, management and staff work together to meet this policy.

Community Engagement And Corporate Social Responsibility

OFS believes in the importance of community service, engagement with other educators, and awareness of the environment. We believe our policies and practices have a positive impact on our stakeholders and the community we operate in, and also help to instil a sense of social responsibility among our students and teachers alike.

Our students at OFS actively participate in the school’s Community Service Programme, which is an integral part of school life. This can be service to the local school community, the Singapore community, or the larger global community. The teachers at OFS have the opportunity to engage with other educators in Singapore, allowing them to contribute by sharing their knowledge, experience and expertise with the wider education community in Singapore.

More details of our local community engagement and school programmes on social responsibilities and sustainability can be found in our OEL Annual Report 2017 - Corporate Social Responsibility section.

Our Teachers And Staff

OFS continues to hire the best of teaching ability from around the world. Teaching is organised into four age-related schools, each with a Principal and academic support team. The four Principals and those with leadership roles were all previously successful OFS teachers, and are committed to OFS educational policies. The academic teams focus on their students, and administrative duties mostly performed by the management and administrative staff.

Throughout our years of operating OFS, we have been fortunate to experience a low normalized rate of staff turnover. We believe in a happy and safe school environment. We conduct fair employment practices and recognise teachers and staff for their exemplary contributions to the School. We always advocate a friendly and ‘worldwide family’ culture at OFS. Above all, OFS remunerates all our teachers and staff competitively, and strive to make OFS a workplace of choice.

Regular performance reviews are conducted for staff, and performance feedback is given to the staff during these reviews. At OFS, our academic staff growth is seen as a professional journey rather than short measurable end-points. Goal settings are undertaken, but short-term goals setting is not an approach used at OFS. Our teachers have the professional choice how they wish to plan their own professional development within the guidelines set out by each of the school Principals and senior management.

Demographics

We have about full-time 400 staff members. Gender diversity remained stable during the year at 67% female staff and 33% male staff.

The tables below provide the breakdown by gender, age group and residency status:

AGE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
20-30	4%	1%	5%
30-40	19%	8%	27%
40-50	20%	11%	31%
50-60	15%	8%	23%
60-70	8%	4%	12%
70-80	1%	1%	2%
Total	67%	33%	100%

	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Singaporeans	27%	13%	40%
Singapore PRs	13%	3%	16%
Pass Holders	27%	17%	44%
Total	67%	33%	100%

Green Spaces And Energy Management

Our OFS campus at Pasir Ris is designed and built as a 'Green Mark' campus with ample green and open spaces. Comfort, safety and security measures are at the forefront to maintain a happy and safe school environment. Natural daylighting also contributes to bright cheerful environment and reduces the need for excessive electric lighting. Open green spaces with wide passageways and corridors promote natural ventilation and breezy conditions all around the campus.

All our classrooms and study areas are installed with full-spectrum mercury-free LED lights. OFS invested in these full-spectrum LED lights to achieve an optimal learning environment for our students. Many research studies have shown that children placed in rooms with these special LED lights can concentrate better and display less behaviour related issues.

These LED lights are also very energy efficient. We have also many other energy saving features in place like energy-efficient induction air distribution and air-conditioning system, 'smart' lifts and escalators, timer-switches and sensors, to reduce energy waste and help to improve environmental quality.

We are mindful of our impact to the environment of our School's operations, and we are committed to further improve on our energy saving effort year on year.

Waste Minimisation And Recycling

The 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) are suffused through every level of learning at OFS. We feel that the 3Rs play a crucial role of waste generation at its source by reducing consumption, as well as reusing and recycling all materials to give them a second lease of life. We also aim to instil a green culture combined with collaborative learning (e.g. beach clean-up at Pasir Ris beach) to bring benefits to the local community and wider environment both now and into the future.

There are several service projects that involve recycling paper on campus. One team of students collect and sort recycled paper from classrooms every week. Another team then takes the sorted paper and makes notebooks that are used throughout the school as homework journals or memo pads. Through these efforts, students save a lot of paper each month simply by reducing the usage of new paper and recycling the rest.

We also practice waste segregation in order to recycle as much as possible. We provide ample special recycling bins for collecting different recyclable materials. All students, staff and visitors are encouraged to reduce waste by placing discarded items into the relevant bins.

We expect everyone at OFS to play their part in the waste minimisation and recycling, and contribute to maintaining a happy and safe surroundings for all.

Security, Health And Safety

We take our responsibilities in security, health and safety matters very seriously.

Our security team is on duty 24/7, and CCTV cameras monitor activities on school campus at all times.

We have a comprehensive and well-supervised traffic control plan where our traffic control team ensures the safety of pedestrians and motorists when they enter the school, and within the school.

All staff, parents and students (except for students in uniforms) are required to wear an OFS security identity pass on school campus. All visitors are screened at the security guard post and issued with a visitor pass before entering the school campus. Visitors must display their visitor pass prominently, and be accompanied by school staff at all times.

We adopt National Environment Agency guidelines (please refer to NEA website) to monitor Haze conditions. Evacuation drills are also conducted every semester to familiarise the school body with evacuation routes and assembly points, should emergency evacuation be activated.

We have a medical centre with qualified full-time school nurses to render first-aid help, as well as regular health checks for our students.

We adopt a whole school approach in partnership with our students, parents and teachers to maintain a happy and safe learning environment.

Appendix – GRI Content Index

GRI Standard	Disclosure Title	Page Reference & Remarks
GENERAL STANDARDS DISCLOSURES		
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE		
102 – 1	Name of the organisation	2
102 – 2	Activities, brands, products, and services	2
102 – 3	Location of headquarters	2
102 – 4	Location of operations	2
102 – 5	Ownership and legal form	2
102 – 6	Markets served	2
102 – 7	Scale of the organization	2
102 – 8	Info on employees and other workers	2, 7
102 – 9	Supply chain	2
102 – 10	Significant changes to the organization and its supply chain	3
102 – 11	Precautionary Principle or approach	OEL AR 2017 Pg. 45
102 – 12	External initiatives	OEL AR 2017 Pg. 22-24
102 – 13	Membership of associations	2
STRATEGY		
102 – 14	Statement from senior decision-maker	3
ETHICS AND INTEGRITY		
102 – 16	Values, principles, standards and norms of behaviour	3, 6
102 – 17	Mechanisms for advice and concerns about ethics	OEL AR 2017 Pg. 42
GOVERNANCE		
102 – 18	Governance structure	3
102 – 20	Executive-level responsibility for economic, environmental and social topics	3
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT		
102 – 40	List of stakeholder groups	4
102 – 41	Collective bargaining	Nil
102 – 42	Identifying and selecting stakeholders	4
102 – 43	Approach to stakeholder engagement	4
102 – 44	Key topics and concerns raised	4
REPORTING PRACTICE		
102 – 45	Entities included in the consolidated financial statements	OEL AR 2017 Note 11 - Pg. 84
102 – 46	Defining report content and topic Boundaries	2, 5
102 – 47	List of material topics	5
102 – 48	Restatements of information	First reporting in FY 2017
102 – 49	Changes in reporting	First reporting in FY 2017
102 – 50	Reporting period	2
102 – 51	Date of most recent report	First reporting in FY 2017

GRI Standard	Disclosure Title	Page Reference & Remarks
102 – 52	Reporting cycle	2
102 – 53	Contact point for questions regarding the report	2
102 – 54	Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI standards	2
102 – 55	GRI content index	10
102 – 56	External assurance	2
MANAGEMENT APPROACH		
103 – 1	Explanation of the material topic and its Boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Performance – OEL AR 2017 Pg. 4-5, 18-21, and 48-100 • Anti-corruption – OEL AR 2017 Pg. 25-46 • Non-discrimination – Pg. 6, 7 • Local Communities – Pg. 6 and OEL AR 2017 Pg. 22-24 • Employment – Pg. 7 • Training and Education – Pg. 7 • Diversity and Equal Opportunity – Pg. 7 • Energy – Pg. 8 • Effluents and Waste – Pg. 8 • Security Practices – Pg. 9
103 – 2	The management approach and its components	
103 – 3	Evaluation of the management approach	

SPECIFIC STANDARDS DISCLOSURES		
GRI Standard	Notes	Page Reference & Remarks
ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE		
201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed	Economic Sustainability	OEL AR 2017 Pg. 4-5, 18-21, and 48-100
SOCIAL		
404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	Our Teachers and Staff	7
405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees	The OFS Experience and OFS Community Our Teachers and Staff	6, 7
413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	Community Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility	6 OEL AR 2017 Pg. 22-24