



Wonderseekers

Imagine...

Strategy 2030:
For people and planet

Registered charity no. 294582





Our vision

...a world where,
through the wonder of science,
people and planet thrive.



Our Young Steering
Group helps shape our
development.



Our mission

To create a more equitable world where all children can treasure science and are equipped and empowered to improve lives and protect and heal our planet.



The challenge we face

We believe that with science, children can choose to live healthier, more sustainable lives and contribute to a better world for all.

Since 1986, our Charity has focused on engaging young children in science so that they can:

- discover the wonder of science and make sense of the world around them and their place within it,
- use science methodology as a framework for critical thinking and problem solving,
- develop their self-confidence and resilience through practical experience and experimentation.

Science engagement in the UK has typically focused on the science career pathway and is often aimed at children over the age of 11 but by this point many children feel disconnected from science and regard it as ‘not for me’.

To address this situation, increase diversity and challenge the inequality that exists within science, early engagement is key.

Science is fundamental to our ability to critically evaluate the information we’re given and respond positively to global challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of science for all. The response was diverse, collective and world-wide; everybody needed to play a part, big or small.

Climate change is the greatest threat to life on Earth. The extent of climate and eco-anxiety amongst children and young people is widespread, deeply felt and intruding on their lives. Children care passionately and will ultimately be responsible for the future of our planet, but their fears and aspirations often go unheard. Having neither the skills nor the platform to contribute, children are frustrated that too many decisions are being made by global leaders and heavyweight corporates about them, without them.

Key themes

To ensure we are doing everything we can to increase equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in science and support children, through science, to respond positively to the threat of climate change and biodiversity loss, we have introduced two overarching key themes:

Be the change

Increase opportunities for children to engage with the wonder of science, especially those who are disadvantaged by:

- Social and economic deprivation
- Disability or impairment

We pledge to grow our own understanding of EDI in science; become a more diverse Charity and to use our experience and platforms to champion change.

Respect. Protect. Action.

There’s a climate emergency. Bold action is needed.

We pledge to use our spaces, experiences and voice to positively engage children, through all disciplines of science, with the natural world and to take action against climate change.

We will lead by example.

Our values

Inclusive

We create accessible and inclusive experiences so that all children, whatever barriers they may face, can treasure, participate and experience science in ways that are relevant to them. Everyone is welcome and valued, from our audiences to our work family.

Bold

We want to change lives for the better through science. We are strategic, credible and resilient. We have the confidence to challenge and be challenged, to be innovative and agile, and to take managed risks when necessary.

For the planet

We care about our planet and demonstrate this through action and advocacy. We choose suppliers carefully, seek ways to reduce our environmental impact and use our profile and experiences to influence positive change in others.

Fun

We share our love for science in ways that are magical, memorable, engaging and uplifting. Science is amazing and exciting, creative and challenging, diverse and everywhere. We enjoy what we do. We want our staff and those who come in to contact with our Charity to enjoy the experience.

Open and honest

We are communicators of science and provide a trusted voice for children. We evaluate what we do, learn from our successes and failures and share our achievements and experiences honestly.

Collaborative

We achieve more working together, with children and in partnership with others. We find ways to work collaboratively, to bring diverse people, ideas and experiences together and share information and resources for the benefit of all.

Our objectives

We will use key results, reviewed and agreed annually by the Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team, as a criterion for success to measure our Charity's performance against the following four objectives.

An evaluation strategy and framework will be used to measure our outcomes and impact.



1 Diversify our reach and grow impact

We will work to overcome inequality in science by reaching out and supporting children who are not already engaged. We will build our capacity and diversify our activity to create more opportunities for children to participate. We will use our experience, learning and voice to influence change.

2 Champion equality, diversity and inclusion in science

We will build on the leadership role we have established in accessibility to champion all aspects of EDI in science. Through all our activities we will continue to find new ways to overcome barriers to engagement for children, particularly those with a disability or impairment. We will use our profile to call out inequality in science and raise awareness of the value EDI has in and through science.

3 Work long-term with children who need our support the most

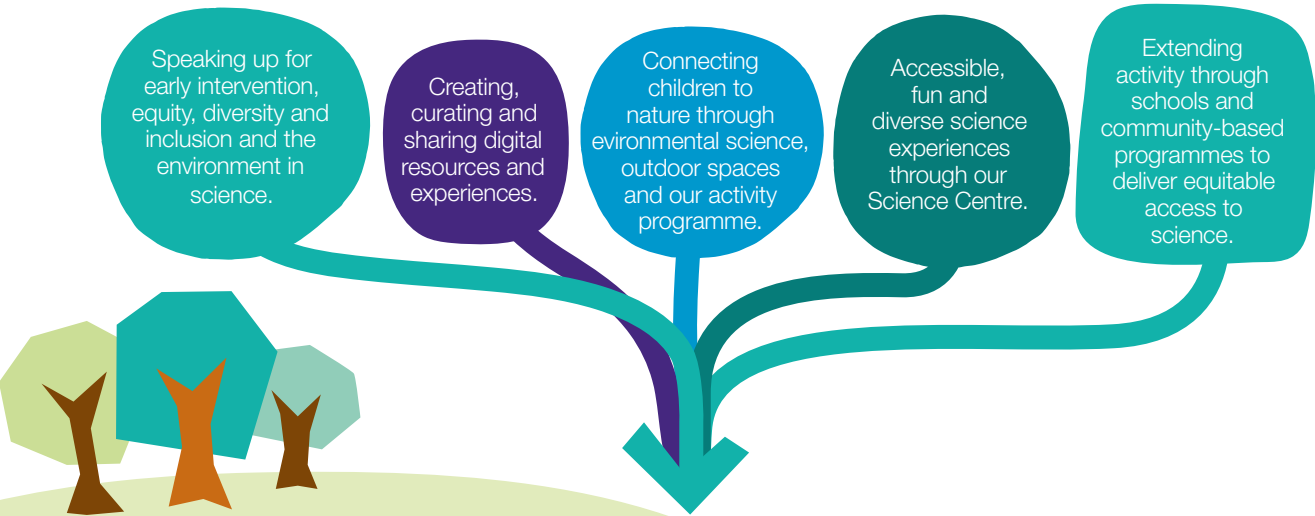
We will deliver long-term community-based programmes and activities to reach children who need our support the most. We will work collaboratively to co-create experiences with these children, their schools and their support networks. We will build opportunities for children to participate in diverse, repeated and sustained experiences for maximum engagement and impact.

4 Protect and heal our planet and inspire others to do the same

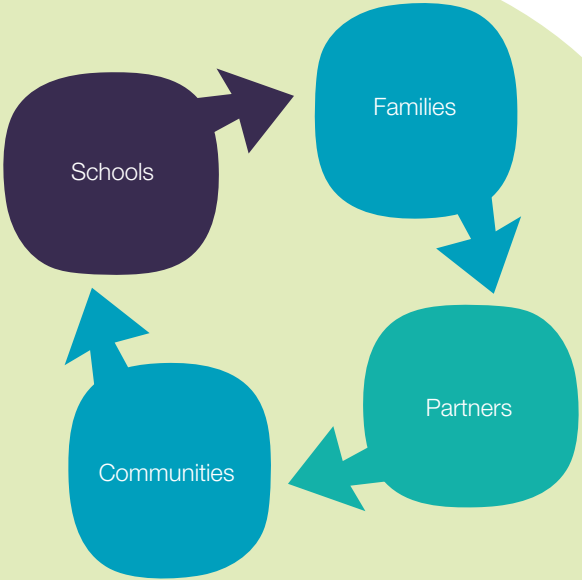
We will reduce our environmental impact through our existing operations and future development. We will connect children to nature through science and support them positively in our collective need to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss. We will speak out, take positive action and empower children and others to do the same.

The contribution we make

By doing this:



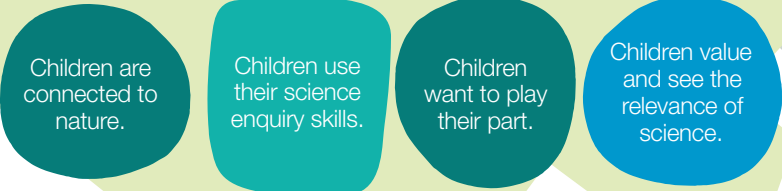
And by working with:



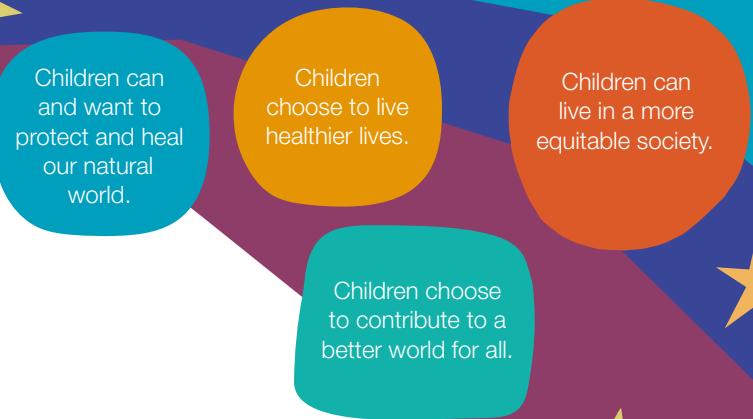
Underpinned by our values:

The outcomes for children and the long-term impacts we want to have

Outcomes:



Long-term impacts:



We will be the catalyst for change through:



Why Wonderseekers?

Our Charity was founded in 1986, born out of a shared need from local authority, industry and academic partners, to spark children's curiosity in all forms of science, technology, engineering and maths. The Charity continues to work collaboratively and seek out opportunities to partner with organisations, groups and individuals to further our collective aims.

Our focus has always centred around hands-on science experiences for young children. The Charity initially operated from a disused school canteen until, in 2002, it successfully opened one of the largest hands-on science and discovery centres in the UK.

In 2017, following a review of our audiences, we developed a strategy that would create more equitable access to science. We set out a development plan to transform our Science Centre to create experiences for audiences who had not previously been able to take part, with a real commitment to getting it right for people with a disability or impairment.

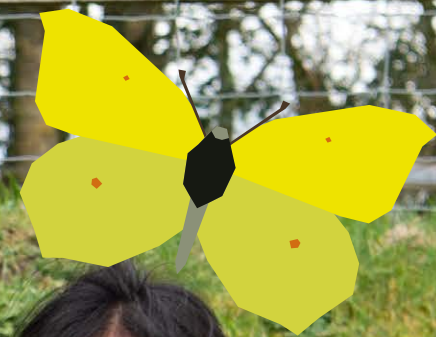
Since then, our Charity has gained a reputation for leadership in accessibility. We have invested in our team and our Science Centre and have extended our reach into communities that needed our support the most. We're proud of the progress we have made so far but to have greater impact we must do more.

In October 2022, we changed our Charity name from Winchester Science Centre to Wonderseekers. Winchester Science Centre will continue to thrive as a hub for science engagement within the South of England, as part of the Wonderseekers family.

This strategy demonstrates our ambition to build on our heritage, to develop our experience in EDI, continue our focus on all disciplines of science and take on an environmental agenda in response to climate change.

"Children are naturally curious. Wonderseekers can help children harness that curiosity and learn about the world around them. If children can really get to grips with the science behind things, they are going to feel empowered to do something productive and powerful. That really excites me."

Megan McCubbin - Patron





Vision

Through the wonder of science, people and planet thrive.

Mission

To create a more equitable world where all children can treasure science and are equipped and empowered to improve lives and protect and heal our planet.

Values

- Inclusive
- Bold
- For the planet
- Fun
- Open and honest
- Collaborative

Outcomes

- Children are connected to nature
- Children use their science enquiry skills
- Children want to play their part
- Children value and see the relevance of science

Key themes

- Be the change
- Respect. Protect. Action.

Objectives

- Diversify our reach and grow impact
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion in science
- Work long-term with children who need our support the most
- Protect and heal our planet and inspire others to do the same

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