



# Strategic Plan

## 2023–2026





**Children and young people are currently facing some of the toughest challenges in decades. The cost-of-living crisis, ongoing effects post-pandemic, pressures of social media, and other external worries such as climate change, are all having a huge impact on mental wellbeing. Those already at a disadvantage are being disproportionately impacted, causing lasting effects on their life chances.**

This Strategic Plan builds upon the organisational priorities we set ourselves between 2021 and 2023, and continues to follow our previous structure based around our Foundations, Direct Impact and Indirect Impact. Financially, our strategy continues to be to earn as much income as possible from school visit costs, our working farms and our house let business. Despite this, we will continue to be focused on running a highly effective fundraising operation, as targets are set to increase.

Over the next three years, we aim to increase the number of our residential farms by 50% – from four to six – in order to better meet the burgeoning need and demand for our programme. We plan to enhance our impact on children and young people by improving our legacy strand – ensuring that after a visit we embed as much of its value as possible within the whole school.

We will continue to codify our model and find ever more effective means of sharing our learning and expertise with others, primarily by supporting teachers and other education professionals through our Cultivating Change platform. Part of this learning comes directly from the children and young people that we work with themselves, and how we best include their voices in our programme development and strategy will be a key focus.

## **Our vision:**

Vulnerable children and young people are better equipped to thrive during secondary school years and beyond

To underpin our expansion, we will continue to develop rigorous processes and effective structures that also retain the flexibility to respond to opportunities, while ensuring our finances are robust. We firmly believe it is our pragmatic and entrepreneurial attitude that has enabled our continued success to date and which will be essential in the challenges ahead. We also want to do more as an organisation to create and uphold a better Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) culture and policy for all our stakeholders.

Finally, within our environmental agenda, we want to be as sustainable as possible from both a farming and operational perspective. As custodians of a large amount of land, we want to run exemplary farms, rearing outstanding livestock. In this, we will uphold regenerative farming practices, and begin using our reach as a national charity to share the value of this approach across the sector.



# Foundations

Our Foundations, including our Culture, Operational Excellence, Financial Resilience, Environments and People, were all notably strengthened throughout the period of our last Strategic Plan. As a result, we were able to weather the major challenges of the pandemic, adapting and sustaining both our Direct and Indirect Impact.

Overall, our attention on our Foundations aims **“to ensure that the organisation is healthy, resilient, efficient and effective”** to deliver our mission. This will remain critical and be a continued focus as we look to expand.

## Culture

- To instil a culture of institutional learning, transparency and accountability – that includes rigorous internal reporting – in relation to our strategic objectives and KPIs.
- To adapt our structures and processes effectively to be able to manage our anticipated growth without compromising our values, culture and the quality of our provision.

## Financial Resilience

- To manage our finances to meet our budgets and remain within our reserves policy.
- To continue to maximise our earned income and minimise each farm’s ‘operational gap’ between income generated and operational costs.

## Our People

- To become a more diverse and inclusive organisation.
- To boost our staff capacity and resilience while ensuring we keep our organisation lean.
- To provide better training and professional development opportunities to our staff.

## Our Environments

- To ensure we are a low carbon, sustainable organisation across all our functions.
- To produce exemplar livestock, using the best genetics, focusing on grass fed beef and lamb.
- To ensure that all the land we manage is farmed using regenerative principles, sharing best practice and learning.
- To continue striving for self-sufficiency in utilising our own dairy, meat and vegetables.

## Operational Excellence

- To continue to improve the way we manage our relationships with partner schools and donors through Salesforce, by ensuring all staff are utilising the system effectively.
- To improve our estate management function to ensure our farms are safe, sustainable and beautiful.





# Direct Impact

During the pandemic we worked in new ways and with a broader range of partner organisations than ever before. We are keen to harness that experience to help us expand our direct impact whether through the numbers reached or the depth of difference we make to children and young people's lives.

Our aim remains ***"to ensure that we are doing everything in our power to maximise the impact from our direct work on vulnerable children and young people."***

From the 2022/23 academic year, we are reframing our monitoring and evaluation around the well-known and respected CASEL social and emotional learning metrics. Our target for visitor numbers and CASEL metrics for the year are:

- Delivering at least 38 weeklong residential visits at each of our farms, and therefore working with 2,250 children and young people (including those on Day Visits to our new Skipton Farm);
- 2 in 3 children and young people will see an improvement in skills that support their behaviour;
- 2 in 3 children and young people will now be on track in their core subjects;
- 1 in 2 children and young people will show an increase in their school attendance;
- 1 in 2 children and young people will no longer be at risk of exclusion;
- 2 in 3 children and young people will show an improvement in their wellbeing;
- 2 in 3 children and young people will show improvement in their relationship skills.







## Improving our outcomes

- To improve how we include the voices of children and young people in our programme design and decision-making processes.
- To ensure we are fully utilising our impact measurement specialist partners for data collection and their evaluation systems, including control groups and working towards an external evaluation.
- To bring a greater focus and investment to our Legacy work, initially through a pilot project, in an effort to improve our outcomes.
- To review the variety of specific groups we currently work with and develop structured criteria for how this might be adapted to ensure we continue to focus on those that would benefit the most.

## Further Expansion

- To have six residential farms operational by February 2026. This includes the staff recruitment and site development necessary for our new Skipton Farm to commence a Day Visit Programme from April 2023.
- To explore a 'four hubs, eight farms' operational model as a longer-term means of securing efficiencies in management and the delivery of visits from schools across England and Wales.

## Innovative Programmes

- To improve the management, prioritisation and learning in relation to our innovative programmes such as weekend working, children and young people in care and with families, through a new regular Project Board.
- To conclude trials of weekend working and make a recommendation in relation to expanding our work in this way.
- To continue to increase the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) we work with, with a focus on improving our impact for this particularly vulnerable group.





# Indirect Impact

Whilst recognising that we are not a lobbying organisation and do not have the scale to deliver extensive Professional Development for teachers, we believe we have valuable learning and expertise to share. This can help teachers to thrive and better serve the needs of children and young people, whether they have the chance to visit our farms or not.

Our aim is ***“to empower teachers and education professionals to enable vulnerable children and young people to thrive.”***



## Spread awareness and adoption of our model

- To build our Cultivating Change platform in a way that ensures a high degree of engagement from partner teachers, schools and other education professionals.
- To develop and expand our collaborations with key partners.
- To deliver a module of Jamie's Farm teaching and learning and spread our approach more broadly.
- To improve our public relations, including our social media and storytelling, to increase engagement from the public, education professionals and the wider social and education sectors.

## Represent our model

- To clarify what is unique in our approach in terms of how we support children and young people to thrive.
- To concisely present our model – in effect, our intellectual property – in order to make it accessible to teachers and other colleagues in our sector.





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t: 01225 743 608  @JamiesFarm

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