

Sustainability in School Furniture

**A Practical Supplier
Checklist for Schools**



Sustainability isn't just about materials - it's about asking better questions of your furniture suppliers.

The decisions schools make today affect **cost, compliance, longevity, and carbon impact** for years to come.

Furniture typically lasts **5-25** years, meaning choices made now lock in environmental and financial outcomes.

Why this matters to schools now

Increased regulatory pressure on supply chains

Greater scrutiny of whole-life cost, not just upfront price

Carbon, compliance, and reputational risk now sit with buyers - not just manufacturers

Long furniture lifespans mean long-term impact is unavoidable



1. Sustainable Timber & Legal Compliance

When selecting a furniture supplier, ask:

- ▶ Is the timber **legally sourced**?
- ▶ Is it **sustainably managed**?
- ▶ Is it **fully traceable through the supply chain**?

What 'sustainable timber' really means

Legal:

Harvested lawfully

Meets national regulations

No illegal logging

Sustainable:

Forests responsibly managed

Biodiversity protected

Long-term regeneration ensured

Traceable:

Certified supply chain

Auditable evidence available

Proof - not just a logo



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IN BRITAIN**

2. EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) Readiness

- ▶ **Supplier complies with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)**
- ▶ **Timber is proven legal, deforestation-free, and traceable**
- ▶ **Clear evidence of timber origin and land use is available**

Why this matters

Schools themselves are not regulated, but **suppliers are**
- making compliant supply chains essential to avoid risk.

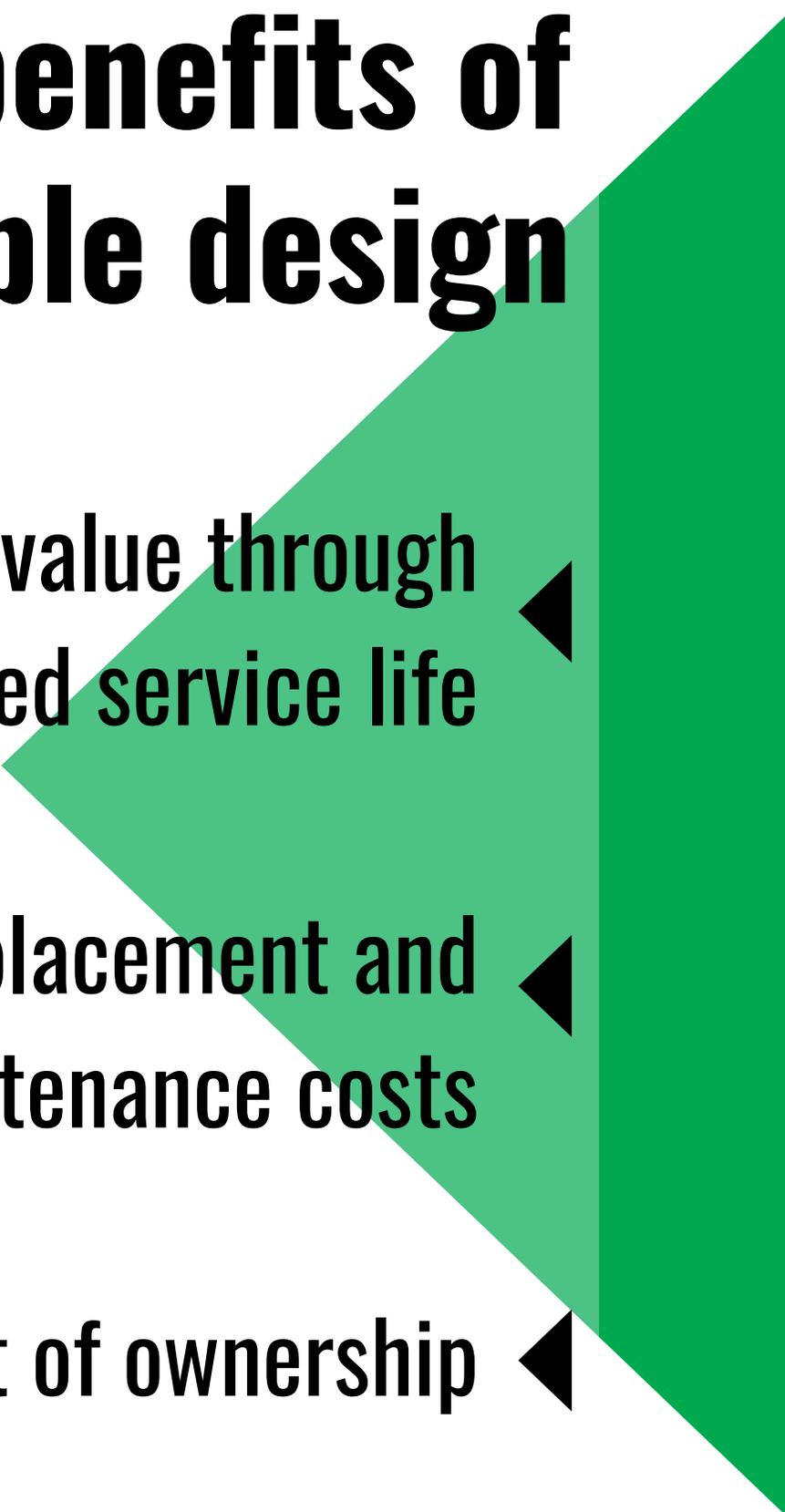


3 **Whole-Life Cost & Financial Sustainability**

Ask your supplier:

- ▶ Does the furniture offer lower whole-life cost, not just lower purchase price?**
- ▶ Is the material choice stable in price and supply?**
- ▶ Does durability reduce waste and replacement cycles?**

Key benefits of sustainable design



Better long-term value through extended service life ◀

Reduced replacement and maintenance costs ◀

Lower total cost of ownership ◀



4. Furniture Lifespan & Durability

Do you consider how long the furniture is expected to last?

- ▶ Typical lifespan expectations are clearly defined**
- ▶ Designed for intensity of use (including boarding environments)**
- ▶ Early failure and replacement risks are addressed**

Why lifespan matters

**Fewer replacements
reduce carbon footprint**

**Less disruption to pupils,
houses, and school operations**

**Lower whole-life environmental
and financial cost**



5. Design Quality & Certification

Ask your supplier:

- ▶ Are designs independently tested and certified (e.g. FIRA)?**
- ▶ Are manufacturing standards consistent and controlled?**
- ▶ Where is the furniture actually manufactured?**
- ▶ Is the supplier focused on long-term performance and satisfaction, not short-term cost cutting?**

6. Materials & End-of-Life Considerations

Do you know what the furniture is really made from?

Core material choice clearly explained ◀

Proven performance in real-world school environments ◀

Repairability considered during design ◀

End-of-life recyclability addressed ◀

Why Material Choice Matters

- ▶ Affects cost
and availability**
- ▶ Determines durability
and lifespan**
- ▶ Influences repair, reuse,
and recycling options**

A final question for schools

**Are you buying furniture -
or investing in long term
performance, compliance,
and sustainability?**

Ask better questions. Demand better answers.

If you'd like support assessing your current furniture or understanding sustainable options for your school, **Witley Jones** is here to help.

Speak to our team about sustainable school furniture designed for longevity, compliance, and whole-life value.

