

PLANNING YOUR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Before you can start any work, you need to think through carefully about what it is you want to achieve. Whilst this may seem obvious, it is sometimes easy to embark on getting some building 'problem' sorted and not take a broader view. Many issues with premises may not be so visible but neglect of these for several years could lead to problems in the future. Information to help inform a more detailed understanding of your premises are likely to include:

Condition Survey

Condition surveys provide an assessment of the condition of a building (roofs, ceilings, windowsetc.) and the mechanical and electrical equipment within them (boiler, electrics etc.) They are undertaken by building surveyors and give an overview of priorities. They should also give some indication of repairing/putting good such matters to help schools with their budgeting.

Surveys should be ideally carried out every 5 years. ODBE undertook surveys for all VA schools between April 2019 and April 2020.

Sufficiency Survey

These surveys consider size and functions of rooms in a school to assess their suitability for purpose. The main categories used to assess suitability are related to teaching and learning and therefore tend to be more repair/equipment based (revenue budget) rather than capital. However, they can identify H&S matters which may be considered appropriate for a capital project. For further information, see School Site Guidelines:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-schools-area-guidelines>

Accessibility Plan

Schools must demonstrate how they can enable and improve access for disabled pupils. This includes both making improvements to the physical environment to increase access as well as increasing access to the curriculum and making written information available in a range of ways.

These sources, coupled with your own knowledge and understanding of your site, will help you to develop a premises development plan. A premises plan is an overview of development for your school site and should be organised by priority /need. It should be reviewed by governors on a regular basis.