

Dunrossness Primary School – Refurbishment Update

Following the completion of the temporary classroom removal works and the consultation exercise with pupils, staff and parents, I wanted to provide an update on the progress of the refurbishment proposals and the next steps for the project. The consultation feedback has now been reviewed and shared with the Council's architectural team to help shape the next stage of the design process.

What has happened since the consultation?

Over the past few months, meetings have taken place with the Parent Council, Head Teacher, school staff and local elected members. These discussions have helped ensure that the views gathered through both the consultation process and conversations are properly understood and reflected in the developing plans.

The design team is currently updating initial layout proposals that were produced following previous visits to the school, during which staff and pupils were consulted directly. The updated designs will seek to address many of the themes identified through the consultation, including flexibility of spaces, toilet provision, breakout areas and opportunities for quieter learning environments.

What changes are being considered?

The current drawings remain draft proposals and should be regarded as a starting point for further discussion rather than a final design. The design team will continue to refine these plans as further feedback is received from pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community. Some of the changes currently being explored include:

- Remodelling of the toilet facilities, including additional toilets and improved changing provision.
- Dividing the current pool room into two flexible spaces, potentially using a movable partition that would allow the area to be as flexible as possible.
- Investigating the floor construction within the former swimming pool area and carrying out any remedial works needed.
- Moving the library into the social area (where the fish tank is) to bring it closer to the heart of the school and create a more integrated social and learning space.
- Creating a new flexible learning area within the current library space, again making use of adaptable partitions where appropriate.
- Improving breakout areas throughout the school, including widening access routes and creating additional spaces for regulation, nurture and quiet working.
- Relocating the staff room to a more central area of the building.
- Assessing whether updated furniture and storage solutions could improve the flexibility of existing spaces

These proposals are intended to improve flexibility within the school and give staff better options when supporting the needs of all of our learners

What is happening with the toilets?

Improving the toilet facilities was a recurring theme before and during the consultation process, and it was clear that this was an area where staff, pupils and families felt improvements were needed. As a result, we felt this was a project that could be progressed with a high degree of confidence while the wider refurbishment proposals continued to develop.

We obtained a Building Warrant to refurbish the existing toilet facilities this summer. Unfortunately, when the project was put out to tender, only one submission was received, and the cost was around twice the projected budget. As part of our responsibility to ensure best value, we were unable to award the contract at that point. While this is disappointing, improving the toilet facilities remains a priority for the school and is still one of the key improvements we are seeking to deliver. We will continue to explore options to progress these works as soon as a viable solution can be found.

What are the plans for the outdoor space?

Funding has been identified this year to begin developing the outdoor area at the rear of the school.

The Head Teacher and staff are currently working with pupils to identify what they would like to see in this space. One of the main advantages of this area is that it is significantly more sheltered than many of the existing outdoor spaces at the front of the school.

Our aim is to create an outdoor environment that supports learning, play, wellbeing and social interaction while providing additional usable space for the school community.

This aligns with previous commitments to involve children, staff and the wider community in shaping the outdoor environment.

What happens next?

The design team will continue to develop both the internal and external proposals using feedback from pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community.

Once the proposals have reached a suitable stage of development, further engagement will take place with pupils, staff and parents before any major works are progressed.

It is important to say that not every element of the emerging plans may be deliverable immediately. Construction costs, available budgets and the practical constraints of the existing building will all influence what can be achieved and when. However, the purpose of the current design work is to develop a shared vision for the school and identify the improvements that will have the greatest impact on learners.

The proposed works will then be split into a series of deliverable projects and prioritised in consultation with staff, pupils and the Parent Council. These priorities will be presented to elected members as part of future funding discussions. Where funding is approved, the highest-priority works will be progressed first, with further improvements being delivered as resources become available.

Staying in touch

We will continue to keep parents, carers and the wider school community informed as the proposals develop.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to contribute to the consultation process and the ongoing discussions. The feedback received from pupils, staff and parents is helping to shape plans that will support the needs of current and future learners while making the best use of the school's available spaces.