

Information Paper

Prioritising maintenance and investment in school buildings

A non-technical guide for head teachers, senior staff, energy team members and site managers/caretakers

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Government allocation of funding for investment in school buildings is returning to an approach that is based on assessments of the condition of the school estate. Well-maintained and attractive learning environments can assist in raising educational standards, and well-maintained schools can be expected to be more productive environments because good internal conditions correlate strongly with factors known to contribute to health and well-being.

In the past, schools have received direct support from technical building professionals within local authorities that can advise on managing each school's estate and identifying maintenance priorities. But now many schools are independently operated and such a resource may not be so readily available. This guide is designed to help school staff to set priorities for investment to help optimise their buildings and grounds.

It describes the principles behind a building investment strategy and its components, together with a range of approaches to its implementation. It lists matters to be considered when identifying investment needs, and presents benchmark information for levels of investment and for typical life cycles of some key elements of buildings. Although much of the background describes changes to funding for maintained schools in England, the advice in this Information Paper is applicable to all schools.

Background

The UK stock of maintained schools comprises thousands of buildings with wide variations in the age and condition of their fabric and services. Carefully targeted investment in maintenance and repair could have a significant impact on the delivery of primary and secondary education.



Figure 1: The improved condition of buildings enhances their suitability for teaching and learning