

£1.8 billion to keep schools in top condition

Every school in England will be able to access a share of almost £1.8 billion this year to help keep their buildings in the best possible condition.

The annual allocations provided to maintain school buildings will increase by over 20% to £1.8 billion this financial year, helping deliver the government's commitment to build back better from the pandemic.

This comes on top of the one-off funding injection of £560 million announced by the Prime Minister last year, making sure the condition of school buildings doesn't hold any child back from achieving their potential.

The first wave of the School Rebuilding Programme announced last year is also on track, with site inspections and detailed planning work with the 50 schools involved meaning the first rebuild projects will start from this autumn.

Schools Minister Baroness Berridge said:

I know teachers and heads are spending every hour of the working day thinking about how they can make sure the students at their schools recover from the impact of the pandemic, and making sure all children and staff remain safe following the welcome return to face to face teaching.

Alongside our ambitious rebuilding programme for the schools in the worst condition, this government is making sure every school has the investment and financial support it needs to build back better for its students.

Local authorities, larger multi-academy trusts and Voluntary Aided school bodies, such as dioceses, have been allocated condition funding in accordance with the latest data on their estates.

Smaller academy trusts and sixth form colleges schools have been able to submit bids to the department for funding through the Condition Improvement Fund process, so those that have essential maintenance needs do not lose out. In addition, all schools have been allocated individual funding in accordance with their size.

Further details about the School Rebuilding Programme will be set out later in 2021. Projects will range from replacing or refurbishing individual buildings through to whole school rebuilds.

The department also plans to consult this year to gather views on how schools are prioritised for future rounds of the long-term programme, including how

evidence about schools' condition need may be provided to support prioritisation.

ENDS