

#### Issue: February 2025

SELF-FINANCED APPROVAL FORM (SFA)

This form must be completed for any proposed building projects, including planned repairs and maintenance, refurbishment, remodelling, new build and external works; where orders/contracts will be placed directly by the school.

**You should complete this form in accordance with the Guidance Notes below the form.**

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| **PROJECT DETAILS** |

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| 1. School: |  |
| 1. School contact(s) and email for the project: |  |
| 1. State any non-school users affected by the project e.g. pre-school/playgroup: |  |
| 1. Description of the proposed project/works: |  |
| 1. Is new build proposed: | Yes No  *If the proposal includes new build, see guidance note section 3.1* |
| 1. Ownership: Who is the owner of the buildings and land affected by the project: | Oxfordshire County Council , Trustees/Diocese  Other |
| 1. Estimated total project cost: | £  *If the total project cost will be above £100,000, see guidance note section 7.1* |
| 1. Proposed dates of works | Start on site date:Click or tap to enter a date.  Completion date: Click or tap to enter a date. |

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| **CAPACITY** |

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| 1. Change in Capacity:Will the project reconfigure or change your school’s accommodation? | Yes No  *If yes, provide details below* |

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| **Block and Rooms Affected** | **New Room Usage** | **m2** | **Comments** |
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| **PROJECT MANAGEMENT & CONTRACTORS** |

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| 1. Project Manager: Who is responsible for managing the project to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements. | By the school – name of competent person:  By property consultant – name and contact details: |
| 1. Will the total project costs exceed £100,000 or is the project deemed complex: | Below £100,000 and low complexity  Above £100,000 and/or higher complexity  *If the project is complex or if the total project cost will be above £100,00 see guidance note, section 7.1.* |
| 1. For higher complexity work it is important to seek advice from OCC to ensure appropriate scrutiny and governance process is followed. | Confirm advice has been sought from OCC with regards to ensure the appropriate scrutiny and governance process is followed. |

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| 1. Name and contact details of contractor: |  |
| 1. Insurances | Confirmation the contractor has £5 million Public Liability Insurance cover: **Yes**  I have sought advice from the Insurance Team as to the appropriate level of Professional Indemnity cover for the designer (generally £5 million): Yes |

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| **HEALTH & SAFETY** |

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| 1. [Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/index.htm) | As the client I am aware of my duties under CDM 2015 regulations: **Yes**  Confirm whether the project is a HSE [notifiable construction project](https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/faq/index.htm#notifications) using online form F10: **Yes**  **N/A**  Confirm the following parties have been appointed:  Name of competent Principal Designer:  Name of competent Principal Contractor: |
| 1. Building engineering services | Confirm that the contractor will be required to carry out checks including utilities plans and safe digging practices to identify the location of all (visible and hidden) that may be affected; before works commence: **Yes**  **N/A**  Confirm that the capacity of the services involved have been professionally tested, measured and assessed for capability regarding total demand / loading following this work:  **Yes  No  N/A**  Indicate which of the following services are affected by the work:  Gas , LPG , Oil  Heating system including boilers , Hot water , Cold water  Electrical system , Photovoltaic cells (solar panels)  Drainage (storm and foul) |
| 1. [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm) | Confirm that a project specific asbestos ‘Refurbishment and Demolition (R&D) Survey’ will be conducted prior to any work as defined by CAR 2012; that the contractor is competent and experienced in carrying out these types of works. The asbestos R&D survey will be shared with all contractors.  **Yes** **, N/A**  Are any known asbestos materials affected by your proposed project?  **Yes** **, N/A**  Has a competent (licenced) contractor been appointed to carry out any removal work?  **Yes** **, N/A**  Confirm any surveys and clearance certificates will be sent to the [fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk) on completion for uploading in Concerto.  **Yes** **, N/A** |

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| **STATUTORY APPROVALS** |

*Evidence is required to show that you have the correct consents for sections 18 & 19.*

*Undertaking any work without the correct consents is against the law.*

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| 1. Building Regulations | Confirm that a Building Control Officer of the relevant **District Council** or an **Approved Inspector** was contacted on Click or tap to enter a date. to discuss if the proposed works require Building Regulations consent.  Is Building Regulations consent required?  **Yes** *If yes, provide reference number:*  **No** *If no, provide copy of email confirming this.* |
| 1. Planning Permission | Confirm the **Local Planning Authority** (District Council) was contacted on  Click or tap to enter a date.to discuss what planning consents will be required.  Is Planning consent required? **Yes**  **No**  *Provide evidence of either the planning approval decision or confirmation that it is not required.* |

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| **SUBMISSION SIGNATURE** |

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| 1. Declaration | I confirm that the details on this SFA application are accurate and that I have read the SFA guidance notes (below) as part of this application. |
| Headteacher:  Date: |  |
| Chair of School Governors:  Date: |  |

Submit the form with all associated supportive documentation to: [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

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| **REVIEW and DECISION – COMPLETED BY OCC** |

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| 1. Decision | APPROVED - The school may proceed  NOT APPROVED - The school may not proceed, refer to sections 22 and 23. |

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| 1. Comments and Feedback: |

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| 1. Further information/details required:     Please send all additional information listed to [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk) |

**SELF-FINANCED APPROVAL GUIDANCE NOTES**

1. Introduction

For this form, the following terms and abbreviations relate to:

School Maintained Schools

OCC Oxfordshire County Council

SFA Self-Financed Approval protocol, process and pro forma

P&A Property & Assets

It is advised that you discuss your proposal with P&A before submitting your SFA form. Your proposal will be reviewed, and advice given with regards to the need to comply with Statutory Approvals, legislation and if applicable the latest school design standards, before you commit time and/or funding. Often the process is straight-forward and therefore an SFA application can be reviewed and approved within a reasonable timeframe.

These guidance notes are an essential checklist to ensure that each requirement is met in your SFA submission. This protocol applies to all construction, refurbishment, planned repair and maintenance projects and external works that affect the buildings, services or grounds. This includes works proposed by a non-school user on the school site (e.g. a pre-school).

Applications that have been completed correctly and include all required supporting documentation should be processed within 2 weeks of the date received. Submissions for projects which have not been previously discussed with P&A, or that do not contain all relevant and requested supportive documentation may take longer.

OCC has a legal obligation to ensure that changes to its premises comply with all current Building Standards and legislative requirements. Consequently, any work which does not comply with the appropriate specifications and is deemed to constitute a risk to health and safety, or structural integrity, may result in that part of the buildings having to be closed while the necessary remedial works are carried out. The costs of such work will be charged against the school’s funds.

OCC’s Insurers have instructed that wooden structures (e.g. outdoor classroom, temporary building, shed, shelter) cannot be located within 6m of a building, without the prior consent of OCC’s Insurance Team. Such consent will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

1. Completing the SFA form

PROJECT DETAILS

1-3: Contact Details

Enter the school name and the name of whoever is the most suitable person to contact (e.g. Headteacher or School Business Manager), along with their email and phone number. If more than 1 person, enter all details.

If the project involves a non-school user (e.g. playgroup / pre-school); enter their details.

4: Description of project

Provide a brief description, and scope of the proposed work. If the space available is insufficient; attach a separate document.

For external works, a marked-up site plan should be provided. For new build and internal remodel projects; drawings should be provided, showing dimensions and m² areas. This information is required to update the school’s digital plans, property database and net capacity calculation.

Copies of your existing building floor plans, and site plans are available from P&A if needed.

**5: New Build – Possible Section 77 Application to the DfE**

DfE guidance covers any new build that will be located on land that is termed as ‘playing field’ which means land that is not a building, car park, swimming pool, bin store or vehicle access. Therefore hard/soft play, habitat, woodland etc are classed as playing field.

Your proposal may require an application to the ESFA under ‘Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 – Disposal of Playing Fields’ for further information: [Submit a school land transaction proposal - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-school-land-transaction-proposal)

For proposals on OCC land, the application can be submitted by the governing body or OCC; however, for non-OCC land (i.e. Trustees owned) it is not required.

On previous OCC projects it has become clear that the ESFA are keen to receive mitigation proposals to show how the area of land subject to the change of use, will be mitigated. This has been achieved by:

* fencing a piece of land that isn’t currently used by pupils, so that it can safely be used;
* the school entering into an agreement to use off-site land for recreation/PE/Forest School use
* Offering to enhance the existing play provision

If your proposal will be for new build on OCC land, then you should contact P&A immediately.

This process could add months onto the length of your programme and so it should not be ignored.

6: Ownership

It is essential to determine at the outset the ownership of any land or buildings affected by the proposed scheme, as in some cases this may restrict your ability to proceed.

For CE Controlled Schools, it is common for OCC to only own the playing field, but you should check who owns the land and buildings affected, contact P&A who can verify the ownership details.

You should also ensure that there are no legal agreements (e.g. Joint-Use-Agreements, easements, leases, licenses or rights of way that may be affected by or inhibit the scope of your proposals. Work undertaken on an SFA basis is on the understanding that OCC’s rights with regards to alteration, reallocation or disposal of the premises at a future date are not affected.

7: Estimated Total Project Cost

The total project cost should include your costs for all works (including enabling works), all consultants’ fees, surveys and investigations, and (if applicable) an application for Planning Approval and an application for Building Regs approval. The project budget should allow for a contingency as no other funding streams are available from OCC.

For projects costing £100,000 or more, see guidance note 11.

It is the school’s responsibility to advise any third-party sponsor that SFA approval has been granted, where required to secure the release of conditional funding.

For all new build and repair and maintenance works, notification should be sent to the Insurance Team, by email, of the project value and nature of works so that they can update their records accordingly. They do not need to be notified about any small value projects, such as the installation of external fencing or play equipment. You can contact the Insurance Team by emailing: [insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

8: Proposed dates of works

These refer to the dates when it is anticipated that the works will start and complete.

For new build and complex internal remodelling; you should seek the advice of an experienced Project/Programme Manager to take account of the length of the various project stages, and (if required) OCC’s internal scrutiny.

CAPACITY

9: Change in Capacity

If your project will result in a change in school accommodation, then the knock-in effect may result in a change in your school’s net capacity. Before you submit your SFA application, you must provide details of the existing and proposed room use, room numbers (taken from the digital plans) and the m² areas of the rooms affected so that OCC can consider the impact of your proposal on your school’s net capacity. This information will be assessed by P&A and Children’s Services, and you should not proceed until your proposed has been approved.

Once your project has been completed; confirm the room-use changes to P&A so that OCC’s master drawings can be updated.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & CONTRACTOR

10: Project Management

For projects that propose new build, and/or complex internal remodelling, the school should obtain the services of a competent professional or organisation to manage the project from start to finish, this cannot be the contractor.

If you employ Consultants (architect, project manager etc); you must ensure that your written brief to them specifies their responsibility to secure all appropriate consents, and that that all design and construction works must conform to all current legislative standards.

The Project Manager cannot be employed by the Contractor, as they must ensure that the Contractor carries out the works as per the agreed specification and design; and that the Contractor is meeting all H&S legislation and any additional H&S requirements of the school.

Please note that if the Property Consultant is providing professional advice and guidance in relation to the works, there is a requirement for them to hold Professional Indemnity insurance cover. This is required to protect the school (and the Council) for any financial losses due to errors or omissions in the advice provided. The level required is dependent upon the value of the project itself, the risk and potential value of any financial loss and the cost for putting right. Please contact the Insurance Team with information about the project for them to advise of the appropriate level of cover required. The Insurance Team contact email is [insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

11-12: Complying with Additional OCC Project Management Requirements

Any project that is deemed as complex and/or will result in a total project cost of above £100,000 will be subject to OCC’s internal scrutiny, and which may require some or all the requirements listed below:

* Approval of the selection of competent Consultants to project manage and design your scheme.
* Provide evidence of all necessary insurances (e.g. professional indemnity) for all Consultants.
* Submission of design proposals to be reviewed by in-house technical advisors

13-14: Contractor

The appointed contractor must be competent and suitably qualified. Ensure that the contractor holds both Public Liability Insurance of no less than £5m and Employer’s Liability Insurance, and that a note of the Council’s interest is endorsed on the contractor’s policy. A copy of the contractor’s current certificate of public liability insurance is to be held on your project file.

Volunteers are covered by OCC’s third-party insurance for claims resulting from the negligence of OCC, its employees and other volunteers. This cover assumes that all persons carrying out those tasks are competent, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

15: Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM)

The 2015 CDM Regulations apply to all construction work.

The regulations place legal duties on the client, a term which includes the Head Teacher, Governors and other managers of the premises. For projects with more than one contractor, you must appoint a competent Principal Designer who will advise in respect of design and construction health and safety, and safety risk management. If more than one contractor will be utilised, as well as a Principal Designer, a Principal Contractor should be appointed. These appointments must be made by the client in writing.

A project is notifiable to the Health & Safety Executive if the duration on site will be more than 30 working days with more than 20 workers on site; or if more than 500-person days will be used (number of contractors’ operatives x number of days worked)

16: Services

The term ‘main services’ includes gas, electricity, mains water, foul & storm drainage, ICT data and comms.

If your project will connect onto existing main services e.g. Photovoltaic Voltage (Solar) panels, within the school building or externally on the site, then you must seek advice from a competent professional regarding any which may be affected by this project. For new build projects; you should obtain written approval from your electricity and gas service providers and from Thames Water, confirming that the location of the proposed new build is acceptable.

For new build project; full assessments should be carried out at the design stage where any proposals will increase the demands on existing main services, to assess whether the school’s existing provision can cope with the increased load. Your consultant should demonstrate that the existing supplies are sufficient to meet any increased demand, or that provision will be made for increasing the capacity of the necessary services; including all associated costs.

Utility companies often require long lead times to action an upgrade of service capacity. Should this be required, you should contact the Energy Team at OCC to discuss and arrange appropriate connection agreements, metering and energy supply contracts (new or amendment to existing). Contact: [energy.team@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Energy.Team@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

OCC manage their own utility contracts and usage and can confirm what action you need to take and how they can assist you. However, they will not calculate the additional load requirements as this task is for your consultants to carry out and verify. If an increase is required, then consideration must be given to potential future expansion of your school.

You will need to ensure that all electrical work complies with current electrical regulations and for gas related work, a ‘Gas Safe Register’ contractor must be used.

When a new build is proposed; the area involved must be scanned by a competent person to identify the location of all services prior to starting work. A record of the survey results must be retained on site.

17: Asbestos

Your Asbestos Management folder will contain a copy of the Asbestos Register and guidance on the procedures for dealing with asbestos.

Attention is drawn to the probability that all buildings constructed prior to 2000 could have asbestos containing materials (ACM). The register and management survey are NOT sufficient and will not identify all asbestos materials.

Where your project involves the disturbance of any part of the building, you must arrange for a Refurbishment & Demolition (R&D) Asbestos Survey as early as possible; and if any asbestos is found, its removal must be arranged before construction starts.

Note that projects involving main services could require connections into the school plant room; and therefore, the area of the plant room affected should be included in any R&D asbestos survey.

To obtain a copy of the latest asbestos register including any information on known asbestos email the [fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or access via concerto the OCC property management system.

STATUTORY APPROVALS

18: Building Regulations

If your project will affect the building fabric, structures, services or drainage, then it may require Building Regulations approval, and you must contact your local district council building control team to enquire if Building Regulations approval is required. Provide the name/company of the Building Control Inspector and date of communication and provide a copy of any communication if Building Regulations approval is not required or an application reference if approval is required.

19: Planning Permission

If your project involves extending, demolishing or changing the appearance of the building (i.e. new windows or doors) then planning approval may be required. If the project requires listed building consent or is within a Conservation Area, then approval from your Local Planning Authority may be necessary for a project involving only external works. If you are unsure if any of these apply, then you should contact P&AP&A initially to discuss your proposal and contact your Local Planning Authority (district council) for advice.

It is not advised to place any orders for construction works until planning approval has been obtained or until your Local Planning Authority have advised you in writing that approval isn’t required.

On the form, you should enter details of your enquiry with your Local District Planning Authority and if it has been confirmed that planning approval isn’t required; attach a copy of emails to evidence this.

Protected Species: Several species of animal and their breeding/resting places are protected by legislation from being captured, injured, killed or disturbed. Protected species must be shown to have been a material consideration in the planning process and addressing the issue early will help avoid costly and unexpected delays. For advice, email: [communities.ecology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:communities.ecology@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

20: Signing the Form

Both the Headteacher and the Chair of Governor’s must sign and date the form before sending it with the associated documents to [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

REVIEW AND DECISION

Checking Process

If your proposal includes new build and/or remodelling of existing accommodation; P&A will check that the proposed works meet with guidance on school space standards and statutory requirements, and that the proposed works are compatible with any future expansion plans.

For projects that are complex and/or greater than £100,000 in value, P&A will work alongside you, your Governors and your Consultants to ensure that the proposal meets with all current school standards and that all necessary checks have been made and risks mitigated.

Approval will not be granted for projects that do not conform, although P&A will work with you where possible to agree modifications which will enable the project to proceed.

Procedure After Project Completion

* OCC’s master CAD drawings will need to be updated if your project has altered the building layout or added to or removed buildings. Send as-built drawings to [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
* Confirm to P&A when any change in accommodation use commences so that the net capacity calculation can be updated by Children’s Services.
* If applicable, you should review your Emergency Evacuation Plan.
* If applicable, you should review your Fire Risk Assessment.
* Notify the OCC Insurance Team of any policy amendments: [Insurance | Oxfordshire Schools](https://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/insurance)

Contact Numbers for Help and Guidance

Property & Assets

SFA process and enquiries about completing the form [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Property Information e.g. Asbestos Register [fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fmservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Energy e.g. metering [energy.team@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:energy.team@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Ecology [communities.ecology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:communities.ecology@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Health and Safety [healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Insurance [insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Local Authority Planning and Building Control (for contact details visit their website)

[Planning and Building Control – Oxford City Council](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/planning-building-control)

[Planning and Building Control - Cherwell District Council](https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/9/planning-and-building)

[Planning and Building Control - South Oxfordshire District Council](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/)

[Planning and Building Control - Vale of White Horse District Council](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/planning-and-development/)

[Planning and Building Control - West Oxfordshire District Council](https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/)