

**SCHOOL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**

**Maintained Schools**

**Current position for repairs and maintenance for Primary, including Nursery and Special Maintained Schools**

From 1 April 2016 for Primary and Nursery Schools and from 1 April 2015 for Secondary Schools, the local authority has delegated all funding for repairs and maintenance to all schools.

This includes general building repairs and maintenance and statutory compliance work such as water hygiene risk assessment, fixed wire testing, annual lift inspection and servicing, LEV testing, testing and swimming pool water quality testing.  Fire risk assessment, pressure vessels, annual service and Zurich insurance thorough examination via OCC Insurance Team.

Schools should set aside funds each year to enable them to ensure that buildings are well maintained. For longer term and high-cost repair and maintenance works it is expected that schools would identify an earmarked reserve that they would contribute or top up each year from their revenue account. This reserve would be deployed against the schools’ priorities and long-term estate condition needs under the delegated Repair and maintenance responsibilities.

**Sources of Capital Funding**

***Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)***

DFC’s primary purpose is to provide a source of capital funding for schools to address minor capital and condition issues. It can be saved for up to three years.

Once received by OCC from DfE, these monies are transferred to schools via SAP.

Each school receives a fixed sum of £4,000 and a variable amount based on their weighted pupil numbers.

Expenditure using DFC may include: Health and safety works, upgrading of fire and security systems, refurbishment, security – including the improvement to or provision of lighting, fencing and CCTV, energy efficiency and conservation projects, ICT equipment including interactive whiteboards

It cannot be spent on: Redecoration, general repair and maintenance (included in delegated schools’ budgets), the purchase of books and training materials, lease/rental arrangements.

Additionally, it cannot be used for expenditure on small value capital items that fall below the local authority’s de minimis level for schools of £2,000.

Maintained schools should complete the Self-financed and Building Improvement (SFA) form for all projects using DFC. VA schools should consult their Board of Education for the appropriate process.

***School Condition Allocation (SCA)***

The Department for Education allocates funding to the council each year to help maintain and improve the condition of maintained school buildings and grounds.

SCA investment is be prioritised on keeping school buildings safe and in good working order by tackling poor building condition, building compliance, energy efficiency, and health and safety issues.

For maintained schools, this is delivered by OCC Minor Works team as the Schools Structural Maintenance Programme (SSMP).

SSMP monies are to cover major structural issues, large wholesale flat and pitched roofing replacement, boiler and heating system replacements.

These projects are prioritised on a condition/urgency basis using relevant surveys, the most recent of which were undertaken by Ridge on behalf of OCC through 2022/23.

SSMP should only be used for projects over £25k although typical project costs are much higher.

Oxfordshire County Council was allocated £4.3m SCA funding in 2024/5.

VA schools should consult their Board of Education for the appropriate process.

***Loan Scheme for maintained schools***

The Authority operates a loan scheme funded from the collective balances held by schools. All maintained schools are eligible to apply for a loan that can be for:

1. Purchase or replacement of equipment

2. Contribute funding toward premises projects

3. Repair and maintenance responsibilities

4. Energy and environmental improvements

The maximum loan will be up to 5% of the schools’ budget share excluding earmarked grants, or 10% where the loan is in respect of property repairs and maintenance. Equipment loans will normally be for a maximum period of three years. Loans for funding property works and for historic deficits will be for a maximum period of five years. No school will be allowed to have simultaneously a licensed deficit and a loan.

**OCC support contacts**

* For general property advice: [FMservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:FMservicedesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
* For advice on leases and ownership: [estates.team@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:estates.team@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
* For self-finance approvals: [nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.tomkins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
* For health and safety advice: [healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Education contact for property-related matters**

* Jane Maharry: jane.maharry@oxfordshire.gov.uk

**DfE Guidance**

[Good estate management for schools - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools)