



ESTATE VISION

Date of last review	March 2024
Date of next review	March 2026
Policy type	Non-statutory

Review period	Two years
Committee	Resources

Jesus said, 'I am the Good Shepherd... I know my sheep and my sheep know me.' John 10.14

Our school vision

We are inspired to be a vibrant, joyful community in which we know and love one another, leading together and growing together by:

- Appreciating everyone and everything around us
- Making one another feel safe
- Sharing, so no one feels left out
- Living well together in love
- Moving forward together in hope

Introduction

The school was founded in 1833 to serve the people of the parish of Bayford. In time it grew to serve the neighbouring village of Brickendon and those communities surrounding the two villages which had no local school. The school moved from its original site to the present one in 1965, and much of the present building dates from that time.

Although always primarily for children, the Trust Deed of 1857 allows for use of the school estate for adult education.

Our vision for our estate is built upon both our Trust Deed and our current vision for our school as a learning community. This vision statement is intended to cover the period from 2024 to our bicentenary in 2033.

As a school we are fully committed to doing all we reasonably can to manage the school estate to reflect and support our overall vision for our school. The estate is not the school, the people are the school, but as a community we require a place in which we can safely work together and learn together, and we require facilities to enrich and support the educational activities which are at the heart of who we are and what we aspire to become.

Strategic assumptions behind our estate vision

We are at present a 0.5 form entry primary school with nursery provision. Having studied the demographics of our natural catchment area we do not believe that the communities which we serve will require us to grow in size, and we recognise that the present school estate offers limited scope to do so, unless a completely new building with greater capacity were to be built on the same footprint as the present building but over two storeys. However we note that were a new 0.5FE primary school to be built today, it would have a greater floor area than we presently have and facilities which we currently lack.

We recognise that the long term financial and administrative viability of small schools is currently in question, and that there are arguments in favour of closer cooperation between schools which turn, for example, on better support and resourcing for staff. However, we believe that the case for retaining small schools within village communities remains strong. As a school we are open to exploring positively options which may arise between 2024 and 2033 to

restructure the administrative and institutional basis on which the school operates, for example by joining an academy trust, but we remain committed to keeping a school and nursery open in Bayford regardless of the structure which underpins that school. On that basis we believe that developing our school estate is as important as ever. We will not allow our estate to suffer from a form of 'planning blight' in which uncertainty about future restructuring would prevent us working to develop a secure, sustainable and stimulating learning environment.

We do not expect that public finances in the next nine years will allow for major reconstruction, so our strategy is based on the understanding that we will need to work to develop our existing estate rather than expect to replace it.

Finally we are aware that our climate is changing and will continue to do so despite efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Consequently a building approaching sixty years old will be ill suited not only to keeping our activities in the building sheltered and warm in winter, but also to maintaining comfortable conditions in summer. Our estate must be adapted to cope with extremes of temperature and increased rainfall.

Our vision for our school estate in 2033

The present school site and much of the present building date from 1965. Although three significant, but modest extensions have been added over the last sixty years, the current estate still models assumptions about educational needs and the built environment which are vastly outdated. Our fundamental vision is that we work to reconfigure our existing estate to meet our current and future needs, in so far as is practical and in so far as it can be achieved in a way which delivers value for money and genuine educational gains.

Our four key objectives are:

To reduce the environmental impact of our use and occupation of the estate

Our ultimate goal is to become genuinely climate neutral or, in other words, that through our use and occupation of the estate we will reduce all greenhouse gas emissions to the point of zero while eliminating all other negative environmental impacts that we as a school may cause. We believe that this is probably not achievable in the next nine years, but as a step along that way we are challenging ourselves to reach net-zero carbon emissions from our use and occupation of our estate.

To adapt our estate to the changing climate

Our estates' capacity to handle extremes of rainfall, higher quantities of surface and groundwater, and extremes of temperature, must be assessed and plans made to increase resilience. Our objective is to make our estate climate resilient by 2033, for example by ensuring insulation not only keeps heat in the building in winter, but outside in summer.

To develop the estate by making provision for facilities which we lack

Taking as a model the Department for Education's design guidelines for new mainstream schools, we will identify the ways in which either by area or category of

space our existing estate is deficient. Our objective is then to carry out a feasibility study and prioritise and implement projects by which we can work towards meeting the teaching and learning requirements of the twenty first century.

To become a more inclusive and equal community by making our estate fully accessible

Our estate is not fully accessible and does not make provision for all people. For example, there is no accessible adult WC. Our objective is that by 2033 we will provide safe and equal use of our estate for all people, including provision of equivalent access to the site and all areas of the school building and lighting levels which meet the needs of people with low vision. All new projects to develop our estate must be based on principles of equal and inclusive design.

Principles for management of our estate

Our vision and objectives will guide the management of our estate. In particular our estate strategy will take this document as its starting point.

Our management of our estate will be directed by the following principles:

- Aside from routine repair and maintenance, no project will be approved or implemented which does not demonstrably contribute to the achievement of one or more of our three key objectives set out in this vision statement.
- All such projects must be developed in partnership with the whole school community. Projects should arise not merely from professional advice and guidance but from discussion and consultation with governors, staff, pupils and parents. The development of our estate is an educational opportunity for the whole school community and a way in which our community values can and should be expressed.
- All proposed projects must demonstrate the impact which is expected, the costs which are anticipated, and the way in which overall they align with and deliver the objectives and values of the school.
- Value for money must be a consideration in the planning and approval of any project. The governors must be assured that any proposed project to achieve or partially achieve one of our four objectives is both cost-effective and a greater priority in terms of expected impact than other potential projects of the same scope and cost.

Approval and review

This document was approved by the governing body at its meeting on 18th March 2024 and will be reviewed every two years by the full governing body after consideration by the Resources Committee.

Signed.....Chair of Governors

Date.....