

School Expansion Update

Edition 21

15th July 2020

As we hurtle towards the end of the academic year, I am writing to provide an update on our current expansion project. In my last correspondence relating to the building work, parents will recall the issues regarding distribution and availability of labour and goods and the impact this was having on progress of the first phase. There are still some concerns regarding availability of supplies and goods, however these are slowly coming through and effective preparation by the construction team has meant that works are continuing.

The phasing of the building work is still available on our website. Simply put, the original plan was to;

- Phase 1 Construct new hall, new car park, learning resource room extending the current library and outdoor Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).
- Phase 2 Reconstruct the dining room and kitchens into a performing arts block.
- Phase 3 Reconstruct the hall, music room and tech room into Year 6 and Reception classrooms and toilets.
- Phase 4 Reconstruct the administration area and construct new entrance at the front of the school and new staffroom.

The pandemic has had an impact on the timescales of the individual phases. The whole project was planned to be handed over to the school in Summer 2021 and this deadline remains. Where possible, multiple works are happening simultaneously to claw back time and as a school we are doing all we can to accommodate the team.

Phase 1 has moved on considerably and the team are pushing on where they can. Having stood in the space, which will be our new hall, it is every bit as impressive as I had hoped. The MUGA is almost complete and feels enormous. We really have gained a considerable amount of hard standing which will be useful both as a playtime and curriculum resource. Works to the field will commence in the Summer holidays and much needed levelling, drainage and then reseeding will take place. The field will then be out of action for the Autumn term and part of the Spring Term as it grows. The new car park is also in the final stages of completion meaning the temporary car park will be removed as part of the wider field works.

Following project meetings, it has been agreed that Phase 2 timescales are to be brought forward as this suits the schools needs and requirements and ensures that additional space is available from half term, once the old hall, music room and tech room are taken over as part of Phase 3, which will run concurrently with Phase 2. Whilst the music room is a lovely room to have, it's capacity to provide additional space for other activities in school such as music lessons is incredibly limited as it is a single, large room. The new performing arts block will provide 3 excellent sized rooms – 1 room which will be larger than the current music room and two well sized rooms for group work – storage will also be available. This space will also double up as a resource for our FOLPs team to use for future events. It is anticipated that this will be handed over to the school late in the Autumn Term. The new suite of classrooms will be ready for the start of the academic year 2021, as will the administration block.

From September 2020, the Studio will become an additional classroom for the academic year 2020 - 2021. It is slightly larger than our iQuad, currently used by one of Year 3 classes, and has washroom facilities, storage and kitchenette area. From September 2021, the iQuad and Studio will no longer

be used as classrooms and will become additional ancillary spaces. We no longer require a room for technology as this isn't how we use our devices – they really need to be in the classrooms. As parents will understand, the need to travel to another room to use technology is quite an alien concept for children as the technology goes with or to them at home.

Drainage and cabling works to the front of the school are pressing on as the team are aiming to make best use of the time and resources. Whilst this wasn't part of the phasing originally and might look a little unsightly for a while, it has meant that other works can be brought forward.

Once spaces are handed over to the school, we might take a little time to "live in" the space before we add extra touches. This way, we ensure that funds are used effectively to resource in such a way which really works for the children and staff using rooms on a day to day basis. We also want to ensure that rooms can be used for a number of purposes rather than dedicate rooms to a particular subject or theme. This way, they work harder for us!

From September, the expansion updates will commence once again. In the meantime, if there is news over the Summer holiday period, parents will receive notification by email.

Best wishes
Sam Porter