

Estate Management Vision and Strategy

Every child matters and no child is ever left behind..."

"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;
for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."
Luke 18:15-17

Policy Reviewed: 4th February 2026

Version: 4

Date of Next Review: Every two years

Responsible Officer: CEO

Vision Statement:

“Every child matters and no child is ever left behind”

Let the children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Luke +

At the DNDLT we believe everyone in our Trust is a child of God, adults and children alike. Every individual and every school matters, all are valued and celebrated, and no one should be left behind.

As a Diocesan Trust of the Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham we are here to serve children, and schools of all faiths and none. We welcome both Church of England and Community Schools to join us to serve our communities in the North East of England as part of our Trust family whilst remaining unique and distinct within their local context.

The Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust is a place where we strive for the best outcomes for our children and staff. We work hard to achieve equity and flourishing for everyone. We want our staff and children to feel valued and celebrated given the opportunity to innovate and reach their full potential. We want our schools to be at the heart of their communities serving them in the way they know best, knowing they will be supported, encouraged and affirmed by a dedicated and specialist team

1. DNDLT Vision for our Estate

Our vision for our Estate must be based on our vision for the Trust and the children it serves as a whole, *“Every child matters and no child is ever left behind”* and we must ensure our buildings and facilities form part of supporting and enabling every child to flourish in their potential. Our overall vision for the estate is:-

- Our buildings should be safe and secure, warm and dry, ensuring and supporting effective safeguarding of all of our children at all times
- Our buildings should provide appropriate facilities for supporting the delivery of a good education and a broad and balanced curriculum
- Spending on our buildings should be prioritised on a defined hierarchy of needs (see schedule 1) and must be administered in line with our finance policy and revenue and capital budgets and with regard to our climate and sustainability policy.
- Any available funding will be allocated fairly between schools according to the hierarchy of needs and all schools (regardless of size) will be supported in bids for capital funding where appropriate (in line with the hierarchy of needs) by the central team.
- Community and stakeholder relationships and accessibility to all will always be considered when planning building projects and works to the DNDLT estate

- We will ensure compliance with Health and Safety laws and our obligations to our children, staff and community, working in partnership with DNDLT Health and Safety advisors.
- Our schools will utilise the Every Business Management compliance software to ensure oversight of statutory Health and Safety and compliance requirements.
- Decisions about the estate will, where possible, be taken with a consideration for long term impact and future sustainability including in relation to impact on the climate and carbon emissions, in line with the climate and sustainability policy.

2. Estate Management Strategy

School Asset Management plans

- 2.1 Each school maintains an Asset Management plan which is reviewed and submitted to the central team on an annual basis via the Every compliance software. This plan gives an overview of key areas of risk in respect of maintenance and buildings.
- 2.2 Schools should also highlight any risks to education and capacity requirements in the Asset Management plans to enable full consideration of any projects requiring funding.

Building works

- 2.3 The DNDLT accesses School Condition Allowance Funding and also pools Devolved Formula Capital for capital works. Priority of capital works from these funds will be led by the DNDLT Central Team but with the input of our appointed professional consultants in order that there remains an element of impartiality in respect to where any capital funding is allocated. A final decision will be made by DNDLT senior Central Team, with school leaders and site staff informed well in advance of any works commencing on site.
- 2.4 The DNDLT will, upon application and details of the project, consider bids from school to use revenue reserves to fund capital projects provided there are sufficient reserves available and the project will support delivery of the curriculum in school.
- 2.5 Planning for any works required to a school will always be consulted upon with the Head Teacher, Local Academy Council and staff. In the event of an expansion or new build full consultation will take place with stakeholders in line with the *“Making significant changes to an open academy”* guidance.
- 2.6 When planning building works specialist project managers will be appointed to ensure a quality assured process and standard of work. The DNDLT will ensure this is in line with the Trust finance policy and that proper procurement policies are carried out by those engaged. The impact of building works on school buildings will be carefully considered when planning projects and the DNDLT will endeavour to ensure impact on education is minimised and carried out outside of school hours wherever possible.

Insurance

- 2.7 Capital works are covered via an annual insurance policy that includes all capital funded building works, up to a value of £1m, which covers all DNDLT school sites. The DNDLT is also covered by the Risk Protection Arrangement through the DfE. Each school has a business continuity plan to ensure plans are in place in the event of problems with school buildings or access.

Health and Safety

- 2.8 Health and Safety during any building works will be paramount and such works will be planned to ensure the safety of children, staff, construction operatives and the general public will not be put at risk by building works.
- 2.9 The DNDLT Health and Safety advisors carry out regular visits and work with the schools to undertake compliance checks and risk assessments. In the event non-compliance is identified this will be highlighted to the Head Teacher and the Central Team to ensure actions are put in place to maintain compliance.
- 2.10 The DNDLT is committed to complying with its responsibilities in relation to asbestos management in line with the DNDLT Asbestos Statement of Intent.
- 2.11 The DNDLT will seek to ensure, via the Asset Management planning process in schools and Health and Safety compliance visits that proper maintenance and servicing is carried out to ensure longevity of estate assets.
- 2.12 The DNDLT Health and Safety audit via our Health and Safety consultants ensures that compulsory training is undertaken and additional training is also available when required. Caretaking and Estates staff will be provided with appropriate training to their role.

Schedule 1

Hierarchy of Needs

Table showing the defined hierarchy of needs when prioritising spending and funding allocations on school buildings

1	Compliance with Statute
2	Structural stability
3	Wind and Weathertight
4	Delivery of curriculum
5	Environmental impact
6	Overall enhancement of facilities