



Downs View

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Accommodation issues ... good news!

For a change I am writing solely to give you some **very good news indeed**.

Many years ago I secured a substantial capital bid via the central Govt 'Aiming High' initiative to redevelop the old Ash Cottage building (in conjunction with Extratime) to be a better space for out of hours activities and extended services.

Not long after I won the bid for **£146,000**, BHCC decided that we couldn't keep the brick cottage so we have had to hold the money indefinitely as there was no legitimate area to spend it on. For years there has been much discussion about the circumstances under which the money could be spent.

Finally after my consistent pressure for a decision over years, BHCC have agreed that the money can now be spent. Moreover they have agreed they won't use it to offset the escalated costs for the new build (now overspent and costing a total of £6.6m). Since the SEND proposal for the hubs to offer extended services I have been very worried that this money would be taken back. So, this is really good news ... as long as I can justify the spending of this money as appropriate to the support of extended services. I have run the plan by Extratime as they were the joint bidder and they are happy with the plan. It fits with the hub model.

Obviously in addition to this injection of capital support we have the substantial money from the Friends of Downs View, the monies I have secured from the Fonthill Foundation for the trampoline room, two other £5k donations, the Rocking Horse sensory room funding. We have also had a brilliant offer from the builders in that they have said that they will create a path for wheelchair users through the 'forest schools' area by the field in the summer.

We can therefore do a lot of work and I am continuing to work with these and other groups to get yet more support.

Please note that none of this money can go on staffing or revenue costs, it has to be buildings and potentially some equipment.

Having consulted with the leadership team, teachers, Zoe Anstey and Extratime, we have a broad range of priorities for improving the main building in Woodingdean, especially to improve the old parts which are not subject to the refurbishment.



We will therefore be commissioning and undertaking a number of the following works to improve the Woodingdean site overall:

- Major refurbishment of the hydro pool areas: changing rooms, main pool and splash pool (how much is done is dependent on estimates received)
- Installation of powered doors to upper & lower corridors and hall
- Sub divide mobiles on playground to create small group areas (essential).
- Internal door locks & security in existing building so that out of hours users cannot access classrooms.
- Fencing so that there is a secure border for the 'forest schools' area as well as creating a fenced area for football and ball games
- Remove and reinstall the Hollingdean outdoor gym equipment to the Woodingdean site as part of the landscaping around new build, potentially separately fenced.
- Potentially getting new flooring in corridors, new carpet in existing reception area.
- Replacing or repainting cupboard doors in the main building to uplift classrooms along with fresh paint for woodwork, doors and walls.

As you can see we hope to improve the school site overall so there is not such a difference between new and old.

The New Building

Last week Abi Hill (office manager) was able to film a new video of the current works in the new extensions to school. The film has been uploaded to the Downs View YouTube channel. The link is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IX-2PRpb_1Y. There is also a link on our website.

Do have a look, you will be very pleased to see how far the work is progressing.

And other good news....

With health funding delegated to Downs View to support the work of the 'hub' I have commissioned two days per week in addition to the core offer of **Occupational Therapy** services for Downs View. From September, Karen Milton, will work directly for Downs View on those two days to specifically support the sensory and self-regulation needs of a number of children and students. She will undertake much more focused work around some classes and will work closely with Dan Whiley (Lead Teacher for ASC). There will also be engagement with parents. Vanessa will communicate more about this in September once the programme is underway and the referral process is in place.

There will be another letter later in the week about September.

Take care and stay well.



Adrian Carver
Executive Headteacher