



# *“Connecting People, Places and Learning”*

## Learning Estate Strategy • November 2021



**Education & Children’s Services**  
**Improving Lives Together**  
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



## What is the Learning Estate?

Education & Children's Services (ECS) provide a wide range of services to all communities in Perth and Kinross including Education (Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Additional Support Needs) and Children, Young People and Family Services.

In order to provide these services, ECS, along with other Services, manages a large number of property assets including schools, community campuses and child and family centres.

The Learning Estate consists of 70 primary schools, 11 secondary schools, 1 stand-alone Nursery<sup>1</sup>, and 1 Additional Support Needs (ASN) school.

The Learning Estate needs to be fit for purpose to provide modern public services that meet the current and future needs of our communities.

## Why do we need a Learning Estate Strategy?

Schools are integral parts of the communities they serve. They impact on the lives of not only pupils and their families, but on the wider community, including adult learners, library users, sports enthusiasts, businesses and members of clubs and associations. They provide local employment and access to facilities, which would otherwise not be available in the local community and often provide a focus for community life.

It is important that such a significant and valuable asset is managed in an efficient and effective manner while meeting the wider strategic objectives of the Council and benefiting our communities.

Our strategy considers the development and management of the Learning Estate in the context of meeting national and local outcomes, planning ahead and providing best value and benefits to our communities.

<sup>1</sup> Due to flooding, City of Perth Early Childhood Centre (COPECC) (stand-alone nursery) is currently operating within Goodlyburn Primary School on an interim basis.



# How does the Learning Estate fit the wider strategic context?







The Learning Estate is a significant asset which is fundamental to the delivery of national and local outcomes leading to improved lives for the people of Perth and Kinross.

## National Outcomes




The Scottish Government and COSLA have shown their commitment to invest in the Learning Estate through their strategy 'Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy: Connecting People, Places and Learning'. The national strategy recognises the importance of the Learning Estate in supporting outcomes that are necessary for a more successful Scotland.

The national Learning Estate Strategy is aligned to the education policy aims set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF) of achieving excellence and equity for all children and young people and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

The strategy details the specific national outcomes to which it primarily relates as:

-  *we grow up loved, safe and respected;*
-  *we are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society;*
-  *we are healthy and active;*
-  *we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe;*
-  *we have thriving and innovative businesses with quality jobs and fair work for everyone; and*
-  *we have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.*

Our Learning Estate should support the three key national education and skills priorities:

-  *Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC);*
-  *Curriculum for Excellence; and*
-  *Developing the Young Workforce (DYW).*






## Perth and Kinross Outcomes

These national outcomes are reflected in the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Local Outcome Plan 2017-2027.

The vision of the Community Planning Partnership is:

*“Creating a confident, ambitious and fairer Perth and Kinross, for all who live and work here.”*

We have five strategic objectives to deliver our vision:

-  *Giving every child the best start in life.*
-  *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens.*
-  *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy.*
-  *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives.*
-  *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.*

The Learning Estate Strategy aligns with and complements the Council's recently approved Investment Blueprint and 30-year Investment Plan. Representing approximately 80% of the Council's property estate, the Learning Estate Strategy will help to inform development of the Council's Corporate Property Asset Management Strategy which will set out the future strategy direction for all Council owned property assets.

Aligned with the national and local priorities are specific Education & Children's Services priorities, which the Learning Estate and the Strategy must support. These are to:

- 🌸 *Raise achievement for all.*
- 🌸 *Support and protect vulnerable children and families.*
- 🌸 *Improve the quality of life for individuals and communities.*
- 🌸 *Enable the delivery of high-quality public services.*





# What are our aspirations for the Learning Estate?

The shared vision of local government and the Scottish Government for the Learning Estate is articulated in ‘*Scotland’s Learning Estate Strategy: Connecting People, Places and Learning*’. This vision is for:

*“a Learning Estate which supports excellence and equity for all”.*

The guiding principles of the national strategy and therefore of our Learning Estate strategy are as follows:

- 1 Learning environments should support and facilitate excellent joined up learning and teaching to meet the needs of all learners.*
- 2 Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners.*
- 3 The Learning Estate should be well-managed and maintained, making the best of existing resources, maximising occupancy and representing and delivering best value.*
- 4 The condition and suitability of learning environments should support and enhance their function.*
- 5 Learning environments should serve the wider community, and where appropriate, be integrated with the delivery of other public services in line with the place principle.*
- 6 Learning environments should be greener, more sustainable, allow safe and accessible routes and be digitally enabled.*
- 7 Outdoor learning, and the use of outdoor learning environments, should be maximised.*
- 8 Good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision-making processes should lead to better outcomes for all.*
- 9 Collaboration across the Learning Estate, and collaboration with partners in localities, should support maximising its full potential.*
- 10 Investment in Scotland’s Learning Estate should contribute towards improving learning outcomes and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.*



# What is influencing our future direction?

The Learning Estate has been developed over many years and will continue to support our local and national priorities for years to come. The longevity of the Learning Estate requires it to adapt to changes in learning, legislation, technology and society.

Key drivers for change in the life of this Strategy are considered in terms of political, economic, social, technical, legal and environmental influences on the Learning Estate and the Learning Estate Strategy. The detailed PESTLE analysis is contained in the Learning Estate Management Plan (**Appendix 2**).

Category	Drivers
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30-year blueprint for Scotland's infrastructure</li> <li>Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Plan</li> <li>Council's Investment Blueprint and 30-year Investment Plan</li> <li>After-school and holiday care</li> <li>Gaelic Medium Education</li> <li>Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Review</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased demand on the construction industry</li> <li>Tender price inflation</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Perth &amp; Kinross Offer</li> <li>Population change</li> </ul>
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Strategy</li> <li>Construction Quality</li> <li>Revised Building Standard Regulations</li> <li>Council's Interim Climate Emergency Report</li> <li>Net Zero Low-Carbon Building Standard</li> </ul>
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Education (Scotland) Act 2016</li> <li>The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015</li> <li>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting Scotland's Future: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2019-2020 - net zero-carbon targets</li> <li>COVID-19 measures</li> </ul>



# What opportunities do we have for improvement?

The aim of this strategy is to deliver on the vision and the aspirations of the 'Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy: Connecting People, Places and Learning' report.

The basis of the national strategy is a set of principles, which we would seek to aspire to.

We have reviewed the processes, strategies and policies that Perth and Kinross have in place which deliver on the principles of the Scottish Government Learning Estate Strategy. This is detailed in **Appendix 1A**.






Overall there are significant synergies between how we manage the Learning Estate and the principles of the new national Learning Estate Strategy.

However, we have identified opportunities for improvement that we will take forward as part of this new strategy which are as follows.

## 1 We will encourage a place-based, collaborative, consultative approach to our management of the Learning Estate.

*(Principles 5, 8, 9 and 10)*


### Actions:

-  *We will collaborate with the Corporate Asset Management Team and other public sector partners to improve the effective use of the wider property portfolio in geographic areas, including promoting the use of schools for community-based activities.*
-  *We will engage with place-based activities in other Services, including the development of Local Place Plans (LPPs).*
-  *We will continue to engage with users and communities, as part of our place-based approach to developing the Learning Estate. We will focus on improving our engagement through using the Council's consultation toolkit, guidance and consultation hub. We will benchmark with other local authorities (LAs) on engagement with parents, pupils and communities.*
-  *We will improve our engagement with children and young people as part of our responsibilities under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).*
-  *We will also consider how we can manage the Learning Estate in line with The Perth & Kinross Offer.*

**2 We will develop a plan for the Learning Estate to form part of the Council's '30-year Blueprint for Investment'.**

*(Principle 3)*



**Actions:**

-  *We will use our prioritisation framework to develop plans for investment beyond the current 10-year capital programme, taking into account any place-based priorities.*
-  *As part of the Blueprint, we will review the secondary school estate.*

**3 We will manage and develop the Learning Estate to progress towards low-carbon targets.**

*(Principle 5)*



**Actions:**

-  *All public buildings are intended to be exemplars of best practice of a low-carbon estate. The Learning Estate forms a significant part of the Perth and Kinross property estate, therefore, it is highly likely that all new-build properties and major extensions will have either low-carbon or zero-carbon considerations within the design solutions.*
-  *Behaviours can also have a positive impact on reducing carbon and we will work with colleagues, pupils and other Learning Estate users to encourage behaviours which support low-carbon targets.*

**4 We will increase our focus on outdoor learning environments when managing and developing the Learning Estate.**

*(Principles 1,3,6,7)*

**Actions:**

-  *We will consider the outdoor learning environment in the planning and development of all capital projects.*
-  *We will review outdoor learning facilities across the Learning Estate, in line with the Council's Play Strategy and plan a programme of improvement.*



# Summary

The purpose of this strategy is to recognise the importance of the Learning Estate in delivering some of the primary objectives of the Council and the Scottish Government, and to ensure that we have a clear understanding of where we want to be, and how we get there.

This strategy details the overall strategic context of the strategy, how we currently deliver on the principles of the national Learning Estate Strategy and our way forward in terms of improvement actions.

Our conclusion is that we are already focused on many of the principles of the national strategy, however, there are a number of key areas for improvement through this strategy. These actions will be taken forward through the Learning Estate Management Plan (LEMP) which partners this strategy.



**Principle 1**

*Learning environments should support and facilitate excellent joined-up learning and teaching to meet the need of all learners.*





Young people are sensitive to their environment and need spaces that inspire and motivate them. They respond to colour, natural light, a sense of space, access to technology and quality of facilities, which make them feel valued and respected.

At the core of recent pedagogical development is the concept of personalised learning, driving toward improving educational outcomes for the individual through tailoring learning toward the needs of the individual. As new patterns of learning and teaching are being developed, learning spaces are required which are adaptable to accommodate whole class, collaborative group work, paired learning and individual study.

In terms of new school builds, significant work has taken place to develop a standard brief of requirements and technical standards on which designs are based. These documents are updated through lessons learned, which includes feedback from pupils and staff, and changes in regulation or guidance. The brief and technical standards are designed to enhance the teaching and learning environment and create a consistent approach.

Although the brief of requirements and technical standards also apply for refurbishment projects, it is not always possible to achieve all of the desired outcomes due to restrictions of the existing buildings and sites.

In addition to new-builds and major refurbishment projects, there are a number of programmes which improve learning environments. These include:

-  *technical upgrades to improve practical learning environments;*
-  *furniture and blind upgrades;*
-  *accessibility; and*
-  *Wi-Fi and audio-visual upgrades.*



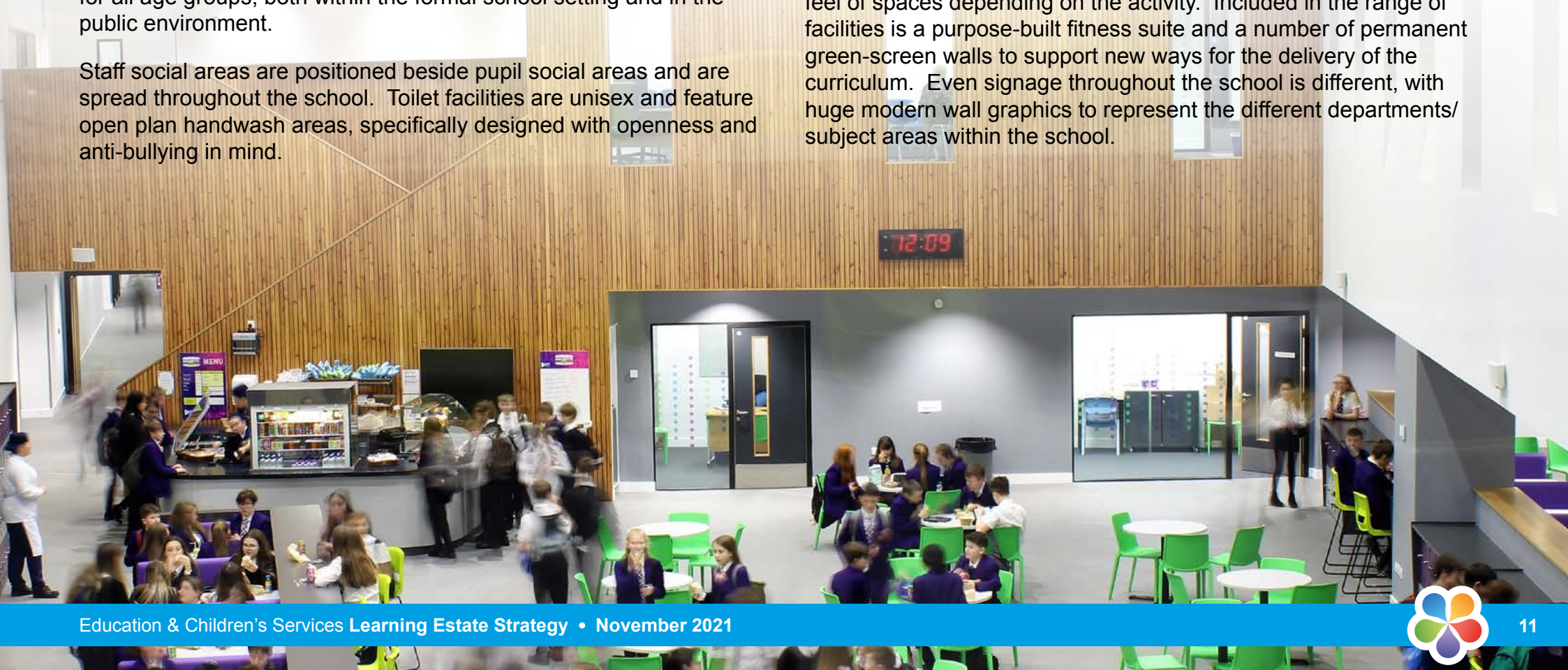
## Case Study: Bertha Park High School

**Bertha Park High School** is the latest addition to the Perth and Kinross Learning Estate. Taking into account '*lessons learned*' from previous school construction projects, this brand-new school, which opened in August 2019, was designed taking on board the latest guidance and in consultation with a range of principal teachers and educational specialists. The results are a flexible and modern learning environment designed to meet the needs of all learners.

The school provides well-designed spaces, both internally and externally, that encourage opportunities for positive social interaction for all age groups, both within the formal school setting and in the public environment.

Staff social areas are positioned beside pupil social areas and are spread throughout the school. Toilet facilities are unisex and feature open plan handwash areas, specifically designed with openness and anti-bullying in mind.

The new school is a barrier-free environment, ensuring full access for the integration of learners and other users. Throughout the school, spaces are flexible and multi-use, for example, the central amphitheatre/stage area, situated at the heart of the school, provides a space for staff and pupils to come together and it can be used for school meetings or evening stage performances. The stage itself doubles as a dance studio, which can also be closed off to form a sealed quiet space for use during exam periods. Learning Plazas can be used for teaching and as social spaces, designed with furniture that can be quickly reconfigured to change the shape and feel of spaces depending on the activity. Included in the range of facilities is a purpose-built fitness suite and a number of permanent green-screen walls to support new ways for the delivery of the curriculum. Even signage throughout the school is different, with huge modern wall graphics to represent the different departments/subject areas within the school.











## Principle 2

*Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners.*

## Wellbeing

ECS has a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Consultative Committee which oversees performance monitoring, training and incident reporting data on a quarterly basis. A range of services, processes and procedures are in place to ensure the wellbeing of children within the school buildings and grounds. These include:

-  cyclical building condition surveys;
-  planned preventative maintenance regimes;
-  reactive maintenance;
-  equipment maintenance and testing;
-  fire safety and compliance;
-  management of any asbestos containing materials in buildings;
-  risk assessment; and
-  health, safety and wellbeing training courses.





## Inclusion

At Perth & Kinross Council, we believe that inclusive education is the foundation for an inclusive society and is the responsibility of everyone. We aim to value diversity and support an ambition for all children and young people to achieve their full potential.

We recognise that social inclusion and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different groups can only be achieved by incorporating equalities into the planning, implementation and monitoring processes for all Council services, including the learning environment.



We support inclusion through:

-  *our Accessibility Strategy 2019-21 recognises the Curriculum for Excellence as the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated;*
-  *making accessibility and inclusion a fundamental part of our design standards resulting in new or upgraded school buildings being accessible and inclusive where possible;*
-  *an ongoing accessibility programme which focuses on Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) upgrades; and*
-  *making adaptations for individuals to ensure that the school building and outdoor space meets their needs.*

## Transition

The learning environment can support learner transitions. More than 50% of our school buildings accommodate nursery children. Where possible, these children are accommodated next to early years classrooms, allowing for joint learning opportunities and familiarisation in order to ease transition. The incorporation of break-out spaces in our design standards, encourages this approach across all stages and ages.


## Case Study: Personal Care Room Coupar Angus Primary School




A key priority has been to provide improved changing spaces within schools. In August 2021, a personal care room was installed within the ASN base at Coupar Angus Primary School. Feedback regarding this project is provided here by the Headteacher:

*“The personal care room has made a big difference to pupils in the Intensive Support Provision and also the staff. The pupils now have a bathroom which meets their needs fully and affords them some dignity during personal care routines. There is space to allow them to learn dressing, teeth brushing and other self-care skills, and they no longer have to share the space with other pupils, so there is more privacy. The location of the room (nearer to the classroom) means that transitions are much easier and less time consuming, allowing support staff to return to class much quicker to help support the learning for all pupils. The new electric, adjustable bed is of great benefit, being safer for both staff and pupils. Staff no longer have to lift pupils which is safer for both parties, and the bed can be raised to a comfortable height to avoid the risk of back pain or injury due to bending.”*







### Principle 3

*The Learning Estate should be well-managed and maintained, making the best use of existing resources, maximising occupancy and representing and delivering best values.*

Since 2016, we have been progressing with our **School Estate Transformation Programme** . This programme seeks to:

-  *maximise occupancy of our school buildings;*
-  *ensure that all school buildings are rated as A or B, ie at least satisfactory for condition and suitability; and*
-  *prioritise life-expired buildings within the Learning Estate for replacement.*

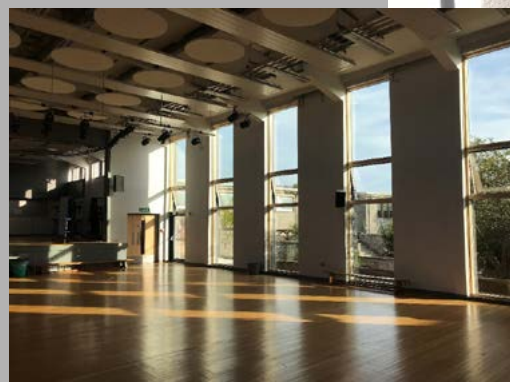
The outcomes of the programme to date are:

-  *the planned refurbishment of two primary schools;*
-  *a new primary school to replace two existing primary schools;*
-  *new nursery accommodation to promote an increased primary school roll in two schools;*
-  *the permanent closure of three primary schools;*
-  *a new school to accommodate children from housebuilding to the North and Northwest of Perth City; and*
-  *the development of the Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership (HPLP) (see Principle 9 case study).*

The capital programme for the Learning Estate is prioritised through an integrated investment process which allows key priorities to be identified through bringing together the priorities and resources from both ECS and Property Services. Corporate Asset Management also contributes towards the prioritisation of investment through consideration of locality planning.

Best value in the Learning Estate is also supported by the following Council strategies:

- ✿ *Energy Policy and Strategy;*
- ✿ *Property Asset Management Strategy;*
- ✿ *Property Maintenance Strategy and Investment Plan; and*
- ✿ **Procurement Strategy** .



## Case Study: 1140 Hours Programme

By August 2021, all 3 and 4-year-olds and some eligible 2-year-olds were entitled to 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). In planning for the expansion, the Council looked to existing resources in order to meet the demand for spaces.

The project team undertook an extensive review and developed a proposed profile of provision across 11 local geographical areas (ELC groups). These geographical areas were based on ensuring that there is a mix of local authority, private provider/voluntary settings within reasonable travelling distances for families.

Officers audited all nurseries to determine the use of space and whether accommodation within the school could be used to extend current provision.

A significant programme of works took place to increase the physical capacity of the nursery estate without adding to the Council's asset base.

The programme included:

- ✿ *1 standalone nursery building;*
- ✿ *4 extensions;*
- ✿ *12 refurbishments/reconfigurations; and*
- ✿ *2 outdoor provisions.*

In certain locations (eg, Letham and Rattray Primary Schools), these works were planned to coincide with larger improvement works to school infrastructure, resulting in improvements to the wider school learning environment.

The 1140 hours expansion programme is an excellent example of delivering best value through maximising occupancy and making the best use of existing resources.

**Principle 4**

*The condition and suitability of learning environments should support and enhance their function.*

Condition is a measure of the current state of the fabric of the school building and whether it is safe and secure. We undertake condition surveys on a risk-based approach and examine various areas such as electrical, mechanical and building elements.

Suitability is a measure of whether a school is fit for the purpose of delivering the education curriculum. We undertake suitability surveys on a cyclical basis within schools. This allows us to determine how well spaces are being used in ways that contribute to supporting the delivery of the curriculum and identify any areas where improvements require to be made to enhance their function.

The Council currently has a robust process in place for collecting data on the condition and suitability of our Learning Estate. This data is collected and reported in line with Scottish Government Core Facts and is held in our Property Management System; Concerto. Data is assessed in line with Council strategies to identify programmes of work for building maintenance to sustain the life of existing properties and identify the need for new build construction projects where appropriate.



## Case Study: Replacement of Kinross Primary School

Kinross Primary School was replaced as a result of assessment of all the available information on condition. The school was identified as being in condition C (Poor - showing major defects and/or not operating adequately) with a suitability rating of B (Satisfactory - performing well but with minor problems). It had a separate, temporary nursery building and the level of maintenance to sustain the life of the building was uneconomical. The need for a replacement school was identified and added to the Investment Programme. The new energy-efficient Kinross Primary School opened in 2017. Some of the things that parents and pupils told the school were:

*"Friendly, energetic, secure. Space of creative learning opportunities."*

*"Fantastic environment promoting inclusion, transparency and open learning."*

*"I love that we are growing plants and herbs next to the reading shack."*  
(Joseph)

*"The new school is a lovely environment with lots of space and room to work."*  
(Maisie)

*"I like the climbing wall."*  
(Lexie)

*"I think it is a fabulous building that stands out."*  
(Lucy)

*"I like the playground very much."*  
(Sophie)

**Principle 5**  
*Learning environments should serve the wider community, and where appropriate, be integrated with the delivery of other public services in line with the place principle.*

ECS is responsible for the delivery of services for children, young people and families and people in the justice system. We recognise that the Learning Estate provides high-quality environments across all our priorities for working with children, young people and families: the best start; learning and achievement; health and wellbeing; care and equity; and safety and protection. This can vary from opportunities to deliver support for mental health and wellbeing, youth work and in some cases providing a staff base for youth workers, social work teams and places for families to meet with the team of professionals working with them. For example, the Children & Families Social Work Team for Strathearn and Kinross are based all-year round at The Community School of Auchterarder.

The statutory obligation to support meaningful contact between children, their brothers and sisters, as well as extended family, has been increased in 2021. It is therefore a priority that the provision of easily accessible, local, quality spaces for this is available within the Learning Estate. The implementation of this strategy for ECS will help ensure we meet our statutory responsibilities across all the communities in Perth and Kinross.

We have also created a focus for educational, civic and cultural life through our six community campus buildings. The campuses are based in Aberfeldy, Blairgowrie, Crieff, Kinross and Perth.

The larger campuses at Strathearn Community Campus (Crieff), Loch Leven Community Campus (Kinross), Breadalbane Community Campus (Aberfeldy) and North Inch Community Campus (Perth) are termed '*hub*' campuses as they offer a wide range of services. All facilities within the community campuses are available for individual, club and organisation hire.

The wider community facilities available in campuses include libraries, registration services, museums and leisure including swimming.

A number of different Council teams work from integrated team bases at the campuses at Loch Leven, Breadalbane, North Inch and Strathearn. These include staff from Housing, Roads, Countryside Rangers and Registration.

In addition to the community campuses, there are 28 schools currently available for let<sup>2</sup> to the wider community. Accommodation available for hire varies but typically includes assembly halls, sports halls, gymnasiums, theatre and Astro turf pitches.

## Case Study: Strathearn and Kinross Child Care Social Work Team

The Strathearn and Kinross Childcare Social Work Team has been based within The Community School of Auchterarder for a number of years.

Co-location within the school gives the local community better and more rapid access to the social work support they need. It has improved communications and relationships with our education colleagues and allows for better joined-up working when planning to meet the needs of the vulnerable children and families within that community. The base in The Community School of Auchterarder allows the social work team to be centrally located within the very large rural area they cover and it reduces travelling time.

Staff within Services for Children Young People & Families are legally obligated to organise and facilitate physical contact between Looked-After and accommodated children and their families. This needs to be done in a way that minimises the travelling between communities for the children in particular. Therefore, access to good quality, safe spaces within their own communities, particularly in the rural areas, is crucial. Currently, contact takes place within in the Crieff Campus in both primary and secondary schools for several families. The availability of locally-located contact centres reduces travel time for children, reduces stress for families as they are in familiar and more easily accessible environments with better public transport links.

The inclusion of community-accessible, quality spaces for statutory contacts within the Learning Estate Strategy for Education & Children's Services would help ensure we meet our statutory responsibilities across all the communities in Perth and Kinross.

<sup>2</sup> Current COVID-19 restrictions apply to lets.





## Principle 6

*Learning environments should be greener, more sustainable, allow safe and accessible routes for walking, cycling and wheeling and be digitally-enabled.*

## Climate Strategy/Greener More Sustainable


The strategy for new/refurbished Learning Estate buildings is currently under scrutiny in light of the Scottish Government's request for amendment to the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets (Scotland) Bill, which will result in net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland by 2045. In view of this ambitious target, Perth & Kinross Council (PKC) has adopted an interim Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan.

Property Services have been focused on sustainability within the Learning Estate for some time now through the following strategies:

-  **Renewable Technologies** - *Our Energy Team works with our engineers and architects to investigate the best existing and emerging technologies appropriate to each site. For many years now, we have installed photovoltaic panels, where appropriate, on our new school estate buildings and many of our new schools run on biomass boilers.*
-  **Reducing energy consumption** - *Measures include LED lighting upgrades, heating and building control system upgrades, improved building insulation and replacing inefficient heating and hot water systems with renewable technologies. This work is ongoing.*
-  **Design Principles and Best Practice** - *PKC have continuously pursued a 'fabric first' approach to new school buildings and have achieved airtight, thermally-efficient buildings. In future, this will be married with both MVHR (mechanical ventilation and heat recovery) and with maximised passive control of solar gains.*
-  **Sustainable Design and Materials Used** - *We invest where possible in refurbishment and improvement of traditional stone-built buildings, whilst replacing energy inefficient prefabricated units. This ensures that the embodied carbon retained in our estate is protected and we make best use of the quality buildings we already have. In new school buildings, we have*



*previously utilised light-weight materials such as timber frame construction with hemp fibre and reconstituted wood fibre insulation, all of which have low embodied carbon compared with steel/masonry/concrete structures and oil-based insulation products.*

 **Biodiversity** - *We engage with environmental consultants and landscape architects to plan and carry out work in ways which mitigate against permanent habitat loss, and where we can, we attempt to improve biodiversity by, eg installing indigenous green roofs, bat nesting boxes and bee-friendly planting.*

In addition to *‘technical’ solutions*, there must be **behavioural change** in the use of energy and also for sustainability and the support of other green initiatives.

In Perth and Kinross, 78 Council learning establishments are registered with the Eco-Schools programme - 30 have achieved the Green Flag Award, an internationally recognised achievement for schools and nurseries committed to Learning for Sustainability.

## Case Study: Improved Energy Performance at Madderty Primary School

Before improvement works were carried out, Madderty Primary School had an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Level G, but had the potential to meet Level B. The building's energy performance was very poor due to the site having poor insulation and being heated by an inefficient electric storage system. The building had two cylinders for hot water which operated 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

The building was modelled using energy software which helped identify key areas where the Council could reduce energy consumption. Wall insulation was improved, a new Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) heating system was installed and classrooms and staff areas are now heated by radiators and fan convectors. Hot water is now provided by one cylinder primarily heated by the ASHP. The system has room-by-room control and a master programmer managed remotely by the Council. Solar film was installed to reduce heat build-up in the south facing conservatory during summer months.

The building has now achieved an EPC Level B and is saving more than 70% in electricity consumption and reduced carbon emissions by 31 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year - making the building greener and more sustainable.



## Safe and Accessible Travel Routes

The Council works with a wide range of partners to facilitate and encourage active travel to and from schools. The *'Promoting Sustainable Travel & Road Safety in Schools'* guide is available for teachers to advise how active travel initiatives can be incorporated into the curriculum. Schools are also encouraged to have a School Travel Plan. This plan helps to establish current travel modes for pupils and explore the difficulties they experience getting to school. These plans help identify areas for improvement. In addition, the Road Safety team undertake route assessments to determine where alternative arrangements must be made for safety reasons or where a spend to save initiative could be undertaken to encourage active travel.

Other travel initiatives include our iBike Officer, who works with schools, parents and carers to encourage young people to cycle more often and consider travelling actively to school, whether that is walking, cycling, wheeling or scooting.

The Bikeability Scotland programme also encourages active travel to school and delivers essential cycle training support to pupils, giving them the ability to ride safely and confidently on the road.

## Case Study: Smarter Choices, Smarter Places

Smarter Choices, Smarter Places is a behaviour change programme aimed at encouraging members of the public to walk, cycle or wheel as part of their everyday journeys. This has involved Perth & Kinross Council engaging Living Streets to commission the **WOW Travel Tracker** , the year-round walk to school challenge aimed at encouraging and enabling more children and their families to walk to school and rewarding them with badges for their efforts. The WOW programme has resulted in a good level of engagements with the schools, resulting in four of our schools taking top spots in Living Street Scotland's National Walk of Fame competition (Arngask Primary School, Meigle Primary School, St Ninians Primary School and Pitcairn Primary School).

## Digital Strategy

The national and local current labour market information details an economic need for the development of digital skills in the future workforce, indicating that around 90% of all jobs now contain a digital element. It is therefore vital that, alongside strengthening and cultivating the core skills of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, there is also a clear focus on the development of digital literacy and digital skills in our children and young people in order to prepare them well for their future. To achieve this, there is a need for relevant and appropriate learning experiences which provides opportunities for all young people to develop all the skills they require.

A comprehensive programme of improvements, including a Wi-Fi and audio-visual (AV) equipment roll-out is underway to improve the digital infrastructure in all Perth and Kinross schools and good progress is being made. When completed, this programme will result in significant improvements in Wi-Fi coverage and speed for schools as well as access to interactive smart display equipment.

The Digital Strategy will be supported by a national programme to roll-out high-speed broadband in Scotland.

**Principle 7**  
*Outdoor learning  
and the use of  
outdoor learning  
environments should be  
maximised.*

We have long valued the importance of play for children and families and welcomed both the Play Strategy for Scotland and supporting Action Plan, published by the Scottish Government.

Working in partnership with a wide range of organisations, the Council developed the [Perth and Kinross Play Framework](#) and Action Plan. This has been supported by Play Scotland. Our Play Framework reflects the four themes from the national strategy: Play at home; nursery, early years, childcare and schools; Play in the community and; Positive support to encourage play.

Our nurseries, early years, childcare and schools are places where children and young people enjoy high-quality play opportunities, including outdoor free play in all weathers in stimulating spaces on a daily basis. As part of the recent 1140 hours expansion, two outdoor nursery provisions were created.

A variety of built and natural resources are available across the Learning Estate. All establishments have access to an outside play area. In addition, several other amenities are available, depending on the site, including grass and tarmacked play areas; fixed play equipment; outdoor covered soft play; multi use games area (MUGAs); allotments; football pitches; an athletics arena; running tracks; climbing walls and outdoor classrooms. Due to the largely rural nature of Perth and Kinross, many schools have easy access to rich outdoor learning environments which help to facilitate aspects of the curriculum such as Forest Schools.

Property Services and ECS work closely together to establish strategies for redevelopment on school sites which encourage pupils to engage with the outdoors. Easy access to outside covered space, green play space and giving over space for the development of school gardens and nursery mud kitchens – these considerations are becoming more embedded with each project undertaken.



## Case Study: Outdoor Learning at Goodlyburn

Goodlyburn Nursery is located within Goodlyburn Primary School within the North Perth Early Learning and Childcare Community. The outdoor area was improved and developed as part of the 1140 Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, giving the children daily access to a dynamic outdoor space for playing and learning. New resources such as outdoor clothing were also provided to ensure that all children can enjoy the full space in every season. Outdoor Learning is an integral part of the curriculum at Goodlyburn Primary School and the recently built outdoor classroom provides additional shelter and an area for children to develop a wide range of skills for life.

Children have direct access to the large and secure outdoor area from the nursery classroom and the staff encourage free

flow between the indoor and outdoor areas in all weathers. This allows the children a rich choice of activities and child-led play opportunities. There are a wide range of open-ended natural resources to encourage curiosity and imagination, and the variety ensures that there are different opportunities for children to problem-solve, investigate, and enhance their fine and gross motor skills. The children are supported by staff to engage in risky play which builds confidence and resilience, while also provides opportunities for the children to work co-operatively, develop their communication and language skills, and enhance planning and decision-making skills. The range of areas (seated, grass and paved) ensures that practitioners can easily provide rich cross-curricular activities outdoors that provide effective learning experiences in a safe but inspiring environment.





## Principle 8

*Good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision-making processes should lead to better outcomes for all.*

Consultation forms a key part of managing the Council's Learning Estate and feeds into a number of key activities including capital investment projects and transformation of the Learning Estate.

User reference groups are created for each capital project, feedback is also collected from users after projects have been completed. At the end of the process, lessons learned are captured which help to evaluate the project, including how well relationships/communications with stakeholders were managed throughout the project and what can be improved for next time.

Informal drop-in sessions and feedback gathering are an essential part of the School Estate Transformation Programme. In all cases, feedback is sought from staff, pupils, parents and the wider community. Feedback is reported to Elected Members and made available to the public, taking account of data protection/anonymity. The outcomes of decisions are posted publicly alongside feedback from consultations, helping complete the consultation loop.

To facilitate meaningful engagements with communities, the Council created a set of toolkits and [consultation guidance](#), based on the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#). The Council recently adopted a [consultation hub](#) for co-ordinating online consultations. This corporate-wide system enables teams to draw on intelligence gathered by other parts of the Council, helping them to take a wider perspective when considering making improvements.

## Case Study: Consultation with Logierait Community

Logierait Primary School was identified as part of the Council's School Estate Transformation programme due to low numbers of pupils.

Initially, Council Officers held a workshop with education colleagues to review the data available for the school. This helped form the basis for a consultation with the community around Logierait Primary School. Informal drop-in sessions were held for school staff and the wider community. These sessions presented an opportunity for people to discuss information about the school and offer views on possible options for the school's future. Online questionnaires were also made available. The community drop-in session was attended by 76 people and 64 online questionnaires were completed during the consultation.

Feedback gathered from the community showed that the community felt a lack of childcare options in the local area was having an impact on the school roll for Logierait Primary School, with parents choosing to send their children to schools where these options were available.

Further investigation by the Council on data provided by NHS Tayside indicated that there could be enough pre-school children living in the area to establish a small ELC provision at Logierait Primary School.

In March 2019, Council Officers held individual follow up consultations with parents from the local area to establish if there would be demand for nursery provision at the school and the answer was yes. Works are now underway to install the new nursery provision at the school, with the new provision estimated to be available to families from 2020. By directly engaging with the community, we were able to get a better understanding of local issues that may be impacting on the school roll. It is hoped that the new ELC provision will help towards developing a sustainable roll at Logierait Primary School.

**Principle 9**  
*Collaboration across the Learning Estate, and collaboration with partners in localities, should support maximising its full potential; and finally.*

PKC collaborates across a wide variety of forums, networks and with a wide variety of organisations to support the management and development of the Learning Estate. We collaborate both formally and informally with other local authorities, the Scottish Government and the private sector in the management and development of the Learning Estate.

Examples of this collaboration include:

- ✿ *sharing good practice through the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT). The SFT work closely with all Scottish LAs to develop guidance and share good practice. Recent initiatives include the Construction Quality Assurance Initiative which is aimed at encouraging the public and private sectors to work closer together with a 'get it right first time' approach. PKC is one of the pilot LAs in this initiative;*
- ✿ *working with partner authorities in the East Central Hub to consider strategic approaches to Learning Estate development and investment including joint workshops with other LAs;*
- ✿ *networking through the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) Resources Group. This network has been integral to the implementation of the 1140 hours expansion; and*
- ✿ *linking with colleagues from Dundee City Council, Angus Council and NHS Tayside through the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC). Learning Estates colleagues from TRIC LAs worked closely together, including running joint sessions, to consult on the possibility of a joint 2-18 community learning campus.*



## Case Study: Highland Perthshire Learning Partnership (HPLP)

The HPLP aims to encourage a more collaborative approach to education across Highland Perthshire.

The Partnership is composed of Senior Leadership Teams of Breadalbane Academy, Pitlochry High School, Perth College UHI, young people, parents/carers and representatives of the wider community.

One of the key ambitions of the HPLP is to create a new Perth College UHI Learning Hub located in Pitlochry High School. Both schools work closely with the college to provide opportunities for learners in Highland Perthshire who may not know what they want to study when they leave school or need additional support to be able to follow their chosen career path.

This includes opportunities such as a Foundation Apprenticeship course offered at SCQF Level 6 in Childcare where four local young people are benefiting from accessing that qualification in their locality.

This is a real connection to available jobs in these communities. A New Opportunities course is also providing community access to an entry level online course that provides access to a wide range of further education opportunities.

The Perth College offer in Highland Perthshire will broaden over time, providing courses that benefit the wider community. Courses will be sector-specific and relevant to the local labour market. Over the next 5-10 years, the Partnership will develop online and remote studies for learners in Highland Perthshire, working towards use of ICT to reduce the amount of time learners spend travelling.






As part of this collaboration, adaptations are planned for the Pitlochry High School building, to create a college hub. The college hub will be based in the secondary department of Pitlochry High School and will be able to function independently or as part of the secondary campus depending on requirements.


**Principle 10**  
*Investment in Scotland's Learning Estate should contribute towards improving learning outcomes and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.*

Since 2010, £115m has been invested in capital projects for the Learning Estate. Further investment has been made by colleagues in Property Services for planned maintenance. In addition, the Scottish Government contributed £32.5m towards Bertha Park High School.





This investment has resulted in improved teaching and learning environments but has also contributed towards economic growth.

Investment in the Learning Estate contributes towards **economic growth** in a number of key areas:

-  *providing facilities for educating the future workforce;*
-  *providing facilities for community learning;*
-  *providing ELC facilities allowing parents to work, study or train;*
-  *providing capacity in schools to support additional pupil numbers from housebuilding; and*
-  *delivering community benefits through the construction projects.*

All contracts with PKC are developed with regard to our [Sustainable Procurement Policy](#) , the aim of which is to embed **social, economic or environmental benefit** into all of the contracts we require to deliver our services to communities. The Council is committed to working with communities and businesses to achieve social value from the money we spend. We do this by including Community Benefit clauses in as many of our contracts as possible.

Community Benefits generally fall into one of four classifications: employment; skills and training; SME and third sector; and environmental. Benefits which have been delivered through projects for the Learning Estate include:

-  *employment of graduates and apprentices;*
-  *work placements;*
-  *working with pupils to encourage interest in a career in the construction industry; and*
-  *use of local subcontractors.*

## Case Study: The Creation of an Engineering Hub for Senior Pupils (Inspiring Learning Spaces)

The Scottish Government made money available to encourage local authorities to re-imagine teaching and learning spaces. The intention was that local authorities would invest in low cost and high impact interventions.

PKC used the £300,000 towards the creation of an Engineering Hub. This project aims to promote, change and encourage ambition for individuals; encourage integrated learning spaces between schools and further education; and enable senior pupils to access vocational qualifications earlier.

At St John's RC Academy, the Engineering Hub initiative has provided an opportunity to reintroduce Engineering Science into the school curriculum.

In 2020, we saw the first set of certificated National 4 and 5 students and their results were very positive, both against relative internal subjects and the national virtual comparator school.

This cohort have continued to study Higher Engineering Science. They have also been joined by several pupils who were looking for a complimentary science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject to support their Maths and Physics qualifications. Several have now secured places at universities and colleges to study engineering-based disciplines.

St John's RC Academy are now building a regular and sustainable uptake for this subject that is attracting pupils who would not have traditionally studied within the department or considered an engineering career pathway.

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