

**LOVING FOR TODAY,
LEARNING FOR TOMORROW,
FOREVER IN FAITH.**



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
OUTSTANDING

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**Head Teacher
Dr J Inglis**

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To Whom It May Concern,

Staffroom

The current staff room was originally created out of a storage area and with a gross area of just 3m x 5m has always been too small. Furnishings are minimal due to the restricted footprint with a few chairs but no table at which to sit and eat or work. With chairs in situ, there is little more than a 1m width from one seat to that on the opposite side of the room.

This makes lunchtimes a challenge with limited opportunity to sit and converse with colleagues and share information. The low ceiling further adds to the claustrophobic nature of the space. Historic water-damage adds to the depressing feel of the room.

As it hosts the staff kitchen facilities – including microwave and kettle - the room often becomes very hot. With only a high-level window with 50cm opening pane, the flow of fresh air to this cramped and over-crowded space is very restricted. Additionally, the small window limits natural light resulting in a dark, cramped and claustrophobic space which requires the constant use of electric lighting (permanently increasing the carbon footprint of the school as well as energy costs).

Due to limited kitchen cupboards and their poor state, this makes storing dry food items (such as cereals and bread) away difficult resulting in regular pest/vermin issues. This is of particular concern considering the facilities are currently shared with the Breakfast Club and the limited space contains many of their resources.

Space is always at a premium in schools. This is never more so than in a small school with mixed year groups. The inevitable spread of ability across two year groups increases the need for break out spaces in which to work with smaller groups of children placing additional strain on what little space we have.

Teachers have nowhere quiet in which to sit and work. The school library is used for the delivery of lessons alongside timetabled interventions. Additionally, piano/keyboard lessons take place in the hall as well as PE lessons.

We really do utilise every inch of space available which means that when teachers' have their PPA time, there is nowhere in which to work other than the inadequate staffroom. Teachers often have to literally wander the school looking for a vacant space to conduct their PPA. This is not conducive to staff morale especially at the beginning and the end of the day.

The staff room should be maintaining a 'small sanctuary in an otherwise pressurised environment', a place to work undistracted by pupils, an escape away from noisy corridors, a change of scene, a breakout area, and a place to conduct meetings, where staff can connect with one another.

A small extension would facilitate creation of a proper work area in which teachers could work uninterrupted instead of being shuffled from one area to another as a result of the constantly shifting demands on break-out space. It would also a secure space in which to make sensitive phone calls to parents/carers or external agencies which require a degree of confidentiality.



Pipework

The heating system within the school has been extended and adapted over the years as the school has grown from its original Victorian classroom. The staffroom falls at the end of the loop and, as a result the plumbing and pipe work is not capable of producing enough pressure to provide sufficient hot water.

Apart from the waste of clean water (whilst waiting for the hot water to trickle through) this lack of hot water has serious hygiene implications adversely affecting both the ability to wash dirty dishes and thorough hand washing – never more important than now in the light of Covid-19. This issue does not only affect the staffroom but also the staff toilets where the hot water dribbles out of the tap.

Our plumbing and heating engineers advise we have exhausted all methods of increasing the water pressure with the only remaining option being to replace the pipework. Whilst an expensive job in isolation, this problem would automatically be remedied as part of the proposed extension/refurbishment project proposed for the staffroom/breakfast club facility.

Kitchen

Northaw school kitchen is a Transporting Kitchen providing meals not only to Northaw children and staff but also Ponsbourne St Marys CE Primary school in Newgate Street Village. Whilst addressing all the needs outlined above, the repair and refurbishment of the staffroom would also facilitate the remodelling of certain areas of the kitchen to provide a more amendable working space for kitchen staff.

Currently there is not a changing area, kitchen staff have to change into whites in the toilet, and the Head Cook shares her 2m² office, which better represents cupboard, with 3 large fridge/freezers. The staffroom remodelling would allow for the creation of a proper changing area and workspace separate to the area accommodating the white goods. It would also allow for additional power points to be installed. At present there is only one double power socket, meaning the 3 fridge/freezers are plugged into 2 sockets resulting in extension leads needing to be used, which isn't ideal to avoid a power overload.

Summary

In the current educational environment, where schools are trying to increase attainment with a diminishing budget, teacher and staff wellbeing may be overlooked as a 'nice to have' rather than an essential. However, we consider it an essential aspect of school life. In addition, the crucial need to ensure Health & Safety and reduce the risk posed by Coronavirus by ensuring the school has sufficient hot water for hand washing adds huge weight to a bid that was already urgent.

This extension and refurbishment will provide staff with a proper kitchen area to hygienically prepare food, a suitable breakout area, which will have the capacity to seat more staff at one time and sufficient storage space as well as improve the much needed and more suitable, environmentally friendly lighting conditions. A designated workstation and table with permanent internet access will enable sufficient space and support for productive PPA time and assessments, as well as an encouraging space to break away and come together as a team at social distance. This refurbishment will also rectify the limited power sources, plumbing issues, food hygiene challenges and eco-friendly factors which will save money, time, reduce the risk of the spread of viral infections and mean the school can retain the Breakfast Club which provides the extended school support to working families.

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Head Teacher

[Redacted Signature]

Catherine Williams
Chair Of Governors

