

## **Schools Condition Allocations (SCA) Grant for VA schools**

Every year the Gloucester Diocese Board of Education (GDBE) receives a SCA grant to support all 35 of our VA schools. The GDBE agrees each year to follow the terms and conditions of the grant which includes the following areas for scrutiny by the DfE and ESFA.

- confirming and, where appropriate, demonstrating that all committed Funding has been spent on agreed Funded Activities in line with the purposes of the Funding (and in line with schools' and the dioceses' estate vision, strategy, and asset management plans).
- obtaining information to demonstrate that dioceses have an understanding of the estate and are able to formulate a plan for its maintenance through a prioritised programme of maintenance works, informed by up to date and costed condition data - to enable schools to ensure buildings remain in safe, working condition.
- confirming and, where appropriate, demonstrating that schools have policies and procedures that ensure buildings support the provision of a safe environment for children and staff, and comply with all relevant regulations, including, but not limited to, those related to health and safety (The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974), fire safety and the control and management of asbestos.
- confirming and, where appropriate, demonstrating that there are clear, documented roles and responsibilities, processes and procedures covering: governance, budget and finance, performance management and other data related to the estate, procurement and delivery of projects, and emergency planning.
- confirming and, where appropriate, demonstrating that sound financial and delivery governance is in place, including a robust and value for money approach to prioritising, planning, procuring, and delivering Funded Activities; and
- confirming and, where appropriate, demonstrating that full records and an audit trail of decisions, procurement, project delivery and finances are kept.

The Gloucester Diocese Board of Education has produced an Asset Management Plan which sets out strategically and operationally how it will comply with these expectations.

A summary of the key conditions of the SCA grant is set out below.

- The grant available covers 90% of total expenditure. The balance of 10% is funded through the governor's contribution and is based on the gross cost of the project. In some cases, the school can request for their payment to be profiled over a number of years. This will be at the discretion of the GDBE.
- The project is inclusive of VAT and cannot be reclaimed.
- Grant can only be spent on the project agreed between the school and GDBE.
- The governing body (GB) of a VA school is responsible for meeting the capital expenditure necessary for the purposes of maintaining and improving that school, with the exception of any expenditure relating to playing fields or any other building structure erected thereon in connection with the use of playing fields (responsibility of the local authority). GB's are responsible for maintaining an environment that is safe and in good working order for children to learn, and are expected to priorities tackling poor condition, addressing building compliance issues, and dealing with health & safety and energy efficiency issues. Dioceses must play an oversight role in ensuring that GB's are upholding these responsibilities.
- The DfE may at any time request information from the GDBE and the school to ensure that the conditions of the SCA grant are being adhered to. This will include a requirement for a school to produce an up to date Premises Development Plan (see GDBE template) when

applying for an SCA grant and from December 2021 evidence of an annual Health and Safety check (see GDBE H&S template).

- SCA grant allocations will be made based on the evidence from site visits by the Strategic lead for Buildings and appointed GDBE surveyors, Schools' Premises Development Plans, H&S compliance, and other relevant reports. This information will be assessed against the qualifying criteria contained in the GDBE AMP.

a. Serious issues relating to Health and Safety.

c. Avoiding whole or part school closure is due to a condition or H&S issue.

d. SCA funding being used fairly across all VA schools over a cycle of years.

e. Following the principles set out by the DfE regarding the use of the grant e.g., building compliance and condition, Health and Safety, value for money and energy efficiency.

f. Where additional funding streams (SI06, Basic Need Grant and donations) are available but may be time limited the SCA grant may be used to support larger projects.

g. Schools that face specific additional challenges related to site and buildings which ordinarily other schools aren't facing e.g., OFSTED/SIAMS actions, aged buildings, change in pupil needs.

h. Being part of a project that has been progressing but has been phased due to its cost or complexity.

i. Whether the project will have lasting benefit as well as a positive impact on children.