

To: The Cabinet

From : Moorland Primary School Governing Body

28/10/2022

At our Governors' meeting we were updated on the ongoing delays to the planned building works for our school and understand that the decision to progress now rests with you.

Whilst these delays are both frustrating and disappointing and makes the management of our school extremely difficult, our overwhelming concern is about the ongoing degeneration of some of our current building which has not been adequately repaired or replaced pending the long-awaited building project. Of most concern to us is the Early Years building. Both the external and internal fabric have been unacceptable for some considerable time and as the governing body we unanimously agree that, in our opinion, the current building is no longer fit for purpose and is posing a risk to the health and wellbeing of our youngest children and our staff.

The Governors originally wrote to the council in 2016/17 providing an outline of issues and photographic evidence about the state of the early years building. At that time the children were sitting on floors covered in rugs and carpets covering damp mould, mould up the walls, water coming through the ceilings, and teachers being interrupted constantly on rainy days to bail water out of the classroom and gutters literally overflowing inside due to the sub-standard conditions of the building.

5 years later the situation has still not improved and reception children are still being subjected to the same conditions and our teachers are still having to cope with unacceptable working conditions. This cannot continue any longer. Moorland Primary serves its community above and beyond the realms of many other counterparts in Cardiff, serving an area with families struggling to survive in a time of austerity and cost of living crisis. These families do not have the time or the capacity to launch a campaign and battle with their local council to provide a basic standard of working and learning environment for their children and the teachers who work tirelessly to serve their needs. That is why, we as Governors are now saying enough is enough.

This building is still permanently damp, there is still black mould evident on both walls and flooring. When there is rain, the drains, which run inside the building, overflow and cause water to pool on flooring surfaces which are used for children's seating. The toilets are very poorly maintained, with several not functioning at all. The building permanently smells damp. The ceiling regularly falls in.

As a governing body we are responsible for ensuring that our children have a safe and healthy environment in which to learn and thrive and we no longer feel that we can discharge that responsibility for our Early Years' children. We are deeply concerned about the risk of respiratory and other illness which our children are developing and are now considering getting independent advice about the potential long term health impacts of this environment on children and the school's employees.

We have had numerous visits from council and contractor employees and there appears to be agreement with our opinion. What we now need is urgent action to address these concerns with practical and timely solutions.

We need the following to happen without any further delay:-

- That there is a single point of contact who has delegated authority to make decisions about the required work and has accountability for keeping the school informed of decisions, actions and timescales.
- That the money is made available and contractors are engaged with immediate effect.
- Any issues that require urgent resolution to provide a safe and healthy environment are not subject to delay or cause significant cost implications for the school.
- That a report is commissioned about the current safety of the structure due to extensive water damage and that work is prioritised to keep our children safe.

We want to move forward swiftly and constructively in collaboration with the Council to finally give our children the environment which they deserve.