



Department
for Education

Education Estates – one year on

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Estates Management



Condition, Resilience &
Decarbonisation



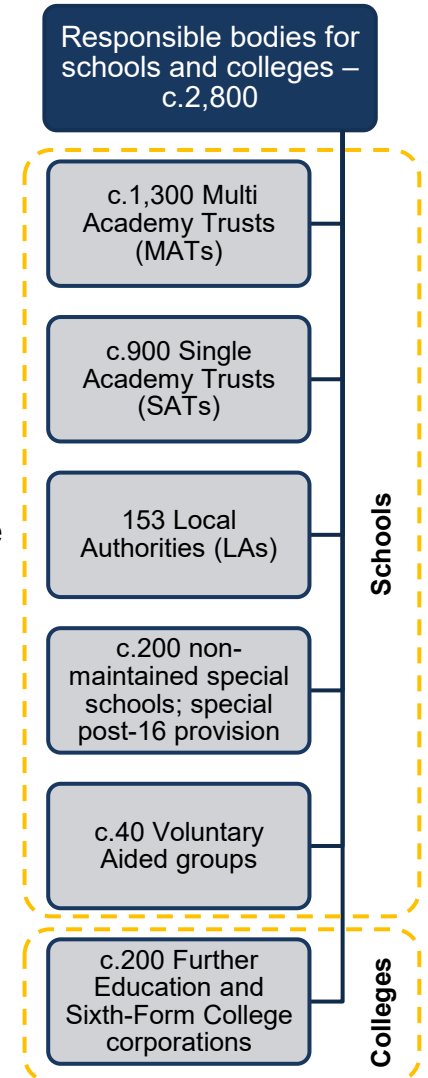
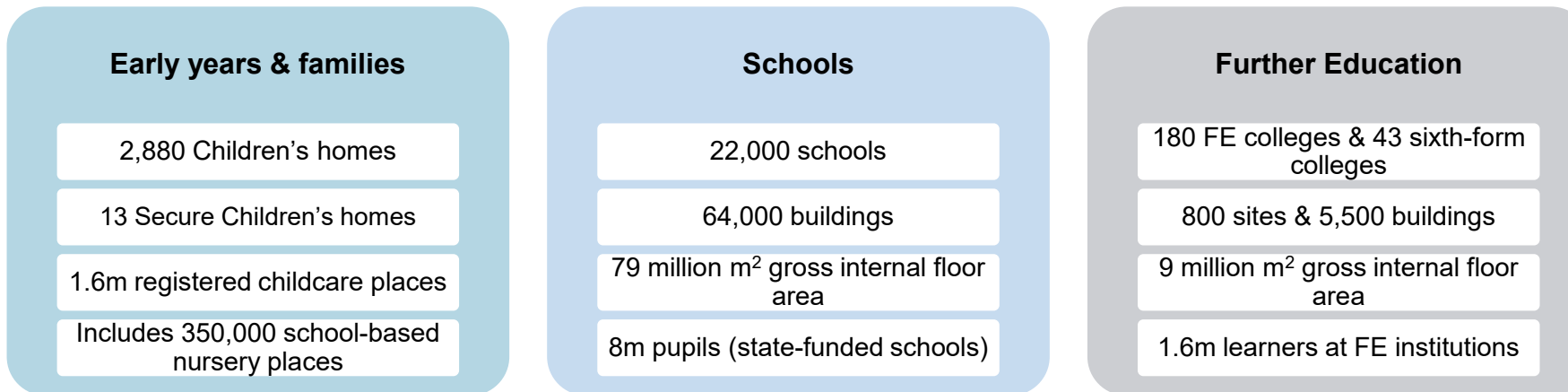
Build & Rebuild



Enabling Functions

The role of the education estate

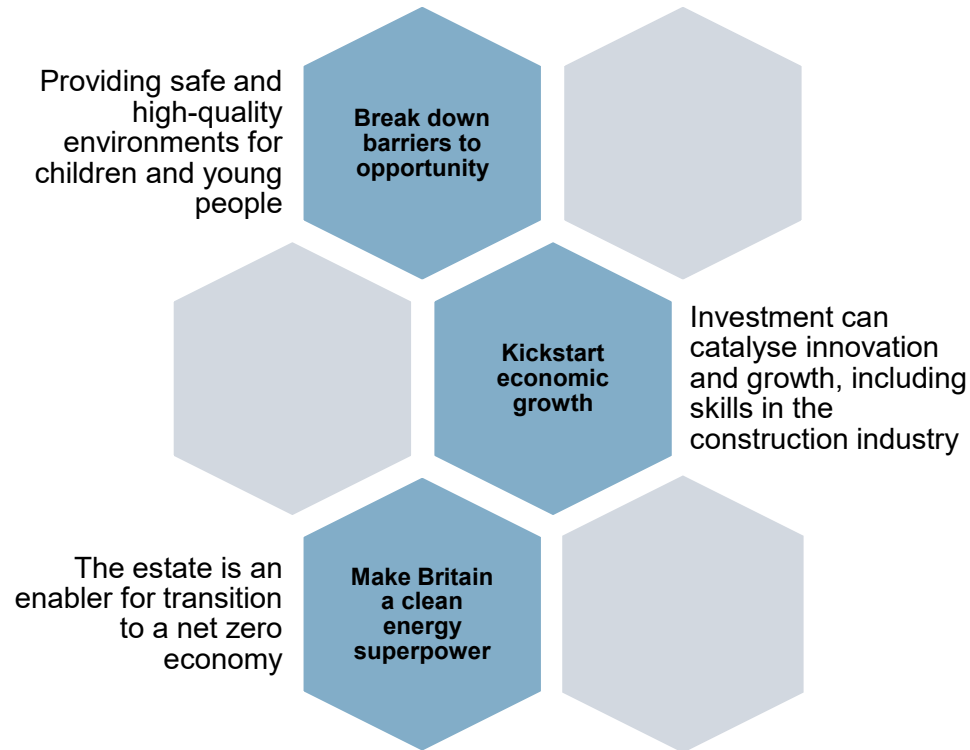
- The education estate is vast with a diverse range of users and needs across **early years**, **schools** and **colleges**.
- It is a complex landscape – there are **c.2,800 Responsible Bodies** for schools and colleges.
- We want the education estate to deliver the best possible outcomes for children, young people and communities but we know there are challenges across the estate including:
 - Large variation in the condition of schools and colleges
 - Structural issues that can lead to emergency interventions and disruption to education
 - The estate is not resilient enough to climate change
 - Education is the public sector's largest emitter of carbon
- We are committed to fixing the foundations through a long-term strategic plan that puts children and young people at its heart.



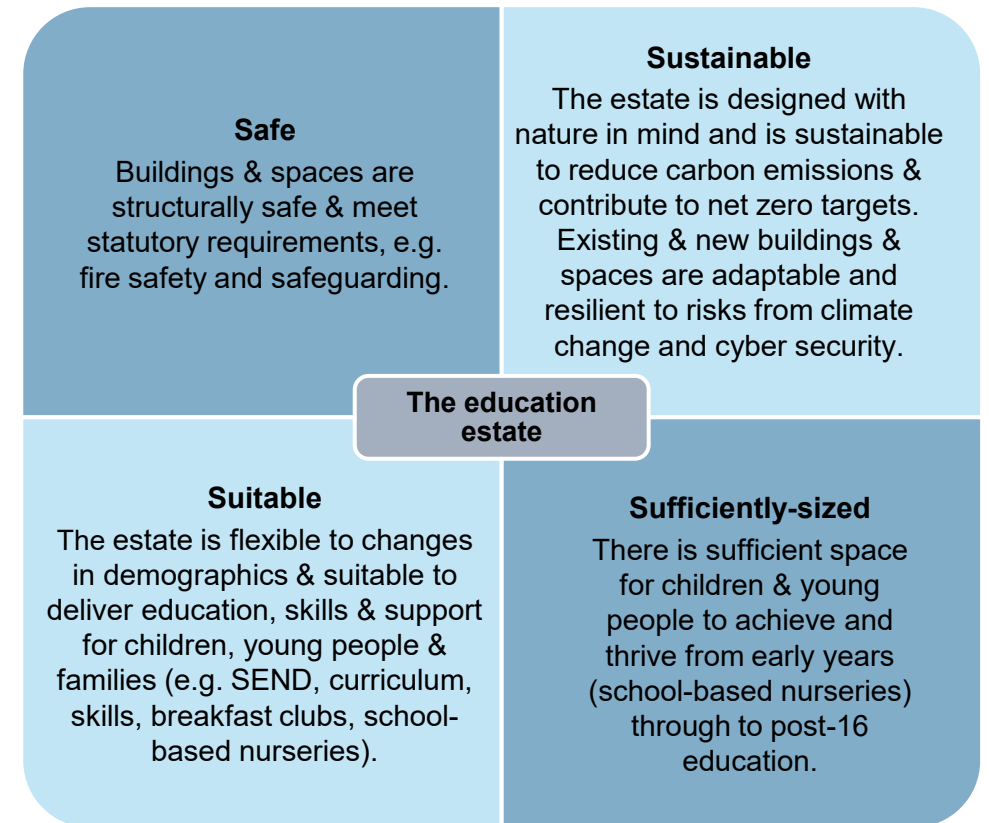
Unlocking the potential of the estate

The education estate has a key role:

- Supporting **education and care outcomes**
- As an **enabler of community, place and growth**
- Supporting **government missions**



- A long-term strategy for the education estate enables us to address challenges as well as unlocking wider benefits.
- Our vision – **supporting brilliant education and care outcomes through an education estate that is safe, sustainable, suitable and sufficiently sized.**



One year on – we're fixing the foundations



Permanently **removing RAAC** from schools and colleges through grant funding or the School Rebuilding Programme



Rebuilding schools through the **School Rebuilding Programme** and expanding the programme with a further 250 schools to be selected



We are **updating the specification for new build schools**, providing learning environments which improve life chances for pupils and their communities



Following the opening of the first **biophilic primary school**, work is underway on a secondary school, creating inspiring, nature-connected learning environments

School estate management standards

Policies and processes required to manage the school estate effectively

April 2025

Published **School Estate Management Standards** that set out practices and processes required to effectively manage the school estate



Upgrading digital infrastructure through **Connect the Classroom** with over 3,700 schools benefiting so far

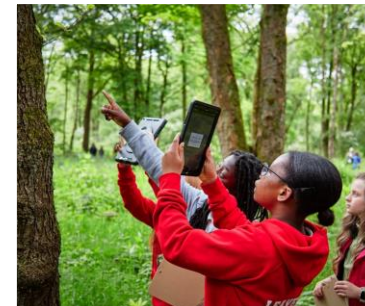


WHAT DOES THE SPENDING REVIEW MEAN FOR EDUCATION?

Set budgets through **Spending Review 2025**, with capital investment set out until 2029-30



The **10 Year Infrastructure Strategy** set out the government's long-term plan for economic, housing and social infrastructure to drive growth



The **National Education Nature Park and Sustainability Support Programme** has reached nearly 9,000 settings



Working with **Great British Energy** to install solar panels and other energy efficiency measures on up to 250 schools and colleges

We are investing in the education estate

Spending Review - capital funding from **2026-27 to 2029-30**, totalling **£31.3 billion**, including:

£2.6bn available for provision of mainstream school places to meet future demographic (c.£1bn already announced)

£375m to support Further Education providers to accommodate increasing student numbers

£200m via the Skills Mission Fund to tackle sector specific shortages, incl. expanding Technical Excellence Colleges

£370m to deliver school-based nurseries

£560m to support vulnerable children, including the refurbishment and expansion of children's homes

10 Year Infrastructure Strategy – long-term funding **through to 2034-35** for:

Long-term **maintenance** funding for schools and colleges – almost £3bn per year by 2034-35 in capital maintenance and renewal, increasing from £2.4bn in 2025-26.*

Almost £20bn investment for the **School Rebuilding Programme**:

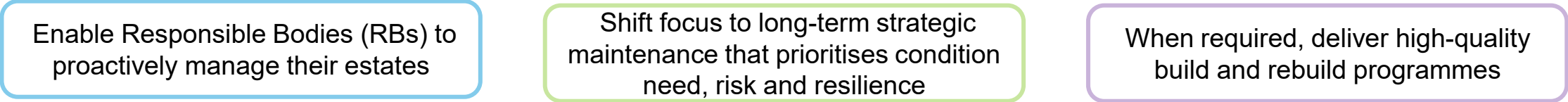
- Delivering rebuilding projects at over 500 schools within the existing programme
- Expanding programme with a further 250 schools to be selected within the next two years

* Long-term funding - increasing annual capital maintenance investment for schools and colleges per year in line with inflation:

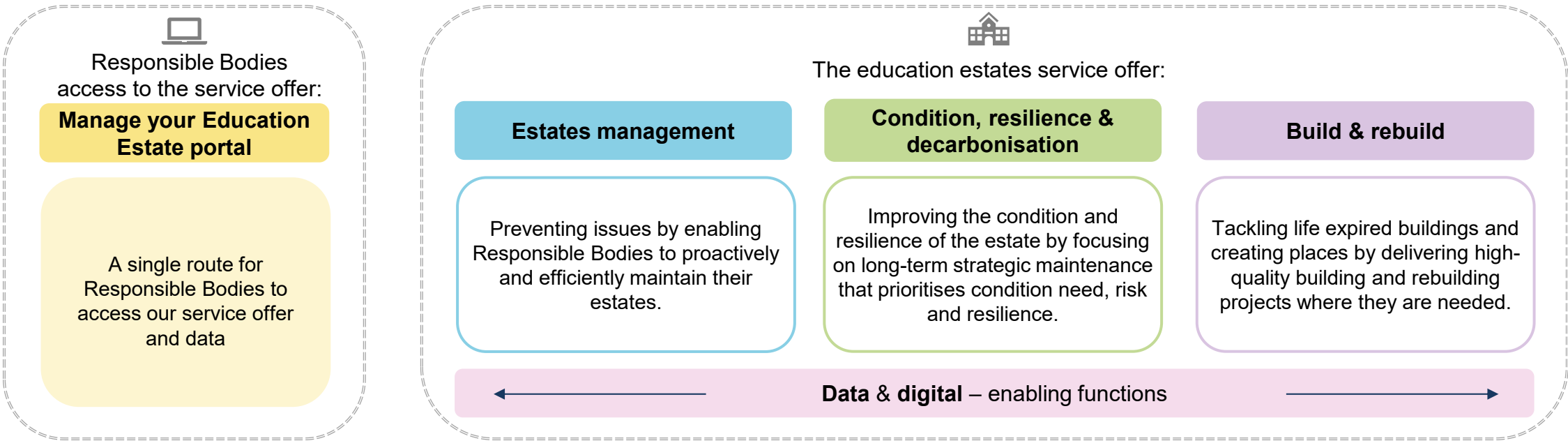
£ billion	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
School & college capital maintenance	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9

The emerging approach to realise our vision

To deliver our vision for the education estate, we need to:



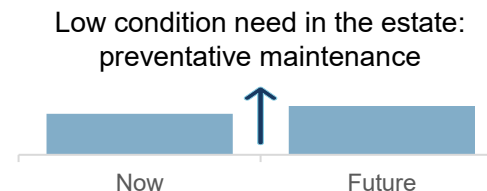
This strategy will provide a framework to support prioritisation of Department for Education programmes and funding alongside more strategic engagement with the sector. It is underpinned by the education estates service offer – bringing together our programmes in a way that is accessible for the sector, organised under three strategic pillars.





Estate Management

Summary: setting out the standards and support to Responsible Bodies for estate management alongside guidance, tools and data so they can proactively and effectively maintain their estates.



Spotlight – DfE School Estate Management Standards

- The School Estate Management Standards were published in April 2025.
- It aims to support schools in a practical and non-judgmental way, to understand expectations, where to start, how to progress, and how to navigate, prioritise and build on good practice and legal requirements.
- The Standards will allow schools to:
 - Understand the principles from baseline to advanced
 - Clarify what 'effective' means in practice
 - Identify gaps
 - Plan and prioritise their own journey

School Estate Management Standards Overview	
Key areas include: strategic estate management, planning and organising resources, understanding and managing and buildings, statutory requirements, health and safety & risk.	
Level 1 - Baseline	The basic essentials that all schools and their responsible bodies should have in place as they begin their journey to becoming fully effective. Some of these are already set out in legislation.
Level 2 - Transitioning	Building on level 1 - the key transition points in good practice in a school's ongoing journey.
Level 3 - Fully effective	All the components that should be in place for schools and their responsible bodies to manage their estate effectively.
Level 4 - Advanced	Additional activities schools and their responsible bodies could undertake to become advanced practitioners.



Condition, Resilience & Decarbonisation

Summary: focusing on long-term strategic maintenance and taking a more strategic approach through our programmes and funding to address poor condition and adapt the estate to mitigate risks such as the effects of climate change, and to ensure the estate is more resilient going forward.

Medium condition need in the estate:
repair, replace & retrofit



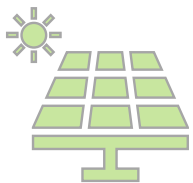
Capital funding for maintenance & renewal, including:

- School Condition Allocation
- Condition Improvement Fund
- FE Condition Allocation



Adaptation & nature recovery, including:

- Sustainability Support Programme
- Resilient Schools Projects & Sustainability Pods
- Schools Water Strategy
- Improving connectivity (e.g. Connect the Classroom)



Energy security & decarbonisation, including:

- Net Zero Accelerator
- Great British Energy Solar Panels
- Low Carbon Heating Projects

We want to build on this by:

- Long-term maintenance funding for schools and colleges
- Continuing to improve our funding model to ensure funding is distributed efficiently and effectively, e.g. continuing to move to more up-to-date CDC2 data in the funding formula
- Simplifying programmes into a clearer offer and taking a more holistic approach to adapt the estate
- Targeting support where it is needed, e.g. Connect the Classroom
- Embedding findings from pathfinders



Spotlight – Net Zero Accelerator & GB Energy Solar Panels

The Net Zero Accelerator Programme aims to facilitate rapid delivery of renewable energy generation and efficiency for the education estate. We are currently working with delivery partners to lead the decarbonisation of 250 schools in 2025/26.

Estimates suggest that solar panels could save a typical secondary school an average of £25,000 per year.

If we look at 11 schools where solar panels were installed before the summer:

- A combined project cost of £1.3m
- A combined yearly energy generation of 851,715 kWh
- These assets are estimated to deliver yearly average net energy bill savings of c.£63,200 and of c.£1.9m over their operating lifetime (assumed to be 30 years)
- Saving 1,000 tonnes of carbon



We've gained **valuable insights**:

- Aggregating procurement and regional delivery not only increases the pace of delivery, but also provides better value for money
- The market is keen to enter the retro-fit market; welcoming measures to reduce barriers to entry
- Data capture is vital to monitor impact but also to drive improved energy efficiency
- There is a potential to do more condition works on each site at the same time to improve outcomes and value for money further



Spotlight – Sustainability Support Programme

The **National Education Nature Park** and **Sustainability Support Programme** has reached nearly 9,000 settings, helping to embed sustainability, climate awareness, and nature connection into education across England.



- Encourages and empowers pupils to explore, map and improve the biodiversity of their school grounds and local green spaces. Together they form a virtual nature park.
- It fosters nature connection, improves mental health, supports biodiversity, and gives children a sense of ownership and pride.



- Helps schools develop and implement climate action plans through quality-assured resources. Supports practical actions like reducing energy use or improving biodiversity on site.
- Promotes a “whole setting” approach — sustainability is part of leadership, teaching, operations, and culture.



- Connects volunteer sustainability experts with schools, nurseries, and colleges to help them develop and implement Climate Action Plans.
- They bring real-world experience, mentor teachers, offer workshops, and help link education to careers in the green economy.

Sustainability in action: Windsor Academy Trust

Target: Net Zero by 2030 across all schools

Results to date:

- Over 300 tonnes CO₂ saved
- 630,000 kWh of clean energy generated
- More than £200,000 annual energy savings
- Named MAT Environmental Trust of the Year





Spotlight – Resilient Schools Project & Sustainability Pods

Resilient Schools Project

- The Resilient Schools Project is testing scalable climate adaptation solutions to inform our national approach to creating climate-resilient learning environments.
- RSP is a low cost, high impact retrofit pilot at four primary schools in Bradford to identify the optimum combination of retrofit interventions.
- The project is delivering four main intervention types – improved ventilation, on-site energy generation, increased site resilience, and upgraded net zero focused ICT.



- We aim to learn the most cost effective and impactful interventions that can deliver a resilient school estate at an affordable cost.

Sustainability Pods

- Our sustainability pods are prototypes for the future standard of school buildings, looking at net-zero in operation to create an excellent sustainable educational environment.
- They are designed to be ultra-low carbon and built entirely from UK timber. The pods prioritise access to the outdoors and are well insulated and well-ventilated with windows that are activated by sensors that measure CO₂ and the temperature.
- Each pod focuses on a different key aspect of education: SEN, STEM and access to sport.





Build & Rebuild

Summary: delivering high-quality projects for the rebuilding or heavy refurbishment of buildings to address acute condition and safety issues, address life expired buildings where renewal is not feasible, and creating school and college places in the right areas to match local need.

High condition need in the estate:
build & rebuild



Spotlight – design and construction standards for new buildings

All DfE-delivered buildings, e.g. the School Rebuilding Programme, follow our design and construction standards:



Net Carbon Zero in Operation,
reducing carbon emissions,
energy use and operating
costs



Resilient to climate change,
designed for a 2°C rise in
average global temperatures;
future-proofed for a 4°C rise



Create a better environment
by enhancing biodiversity &
increasing access to nature



Inclusive approaches to SEN,
e.g. clear wayfinding,
inclusive acoustics, access
to nature



Build quality to increase
longevity and value for
money, and use better
sustainable practices

- These are informed by pilots to test design ideas, e.g. St Mary's biophilic primary school using nature, natural material and access to better facilities to improve health and wellbeing.
- We are currently procuring our next construction framework and schools will be delivered to an updated output specification, providing learning environments which improve life chances for pupils and their communities.



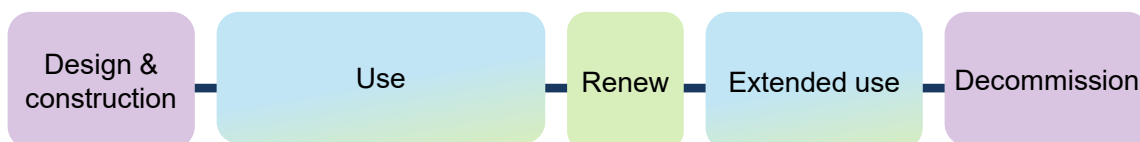
Data and digital

A data strategy:

What: a more strategic and joined up approach to DfE data and the data held by Responsible Bodies to help us collectively make more informed and better decisions across education estates.

Why: we and Responsible Bodies cannot access the information we need quickly and easily so we request more information or make decisions based on poor quality, incomplete or outdated data.

How: transforming our data and digital architecture to capture data to track buildings throughout their lifecycle so we can take a more holistic view of buildings so that when action is taken, it is taken at the right time and at the right level.

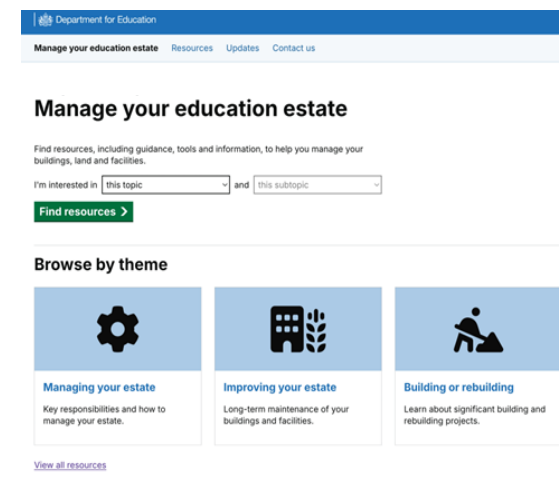


A new digital platform:

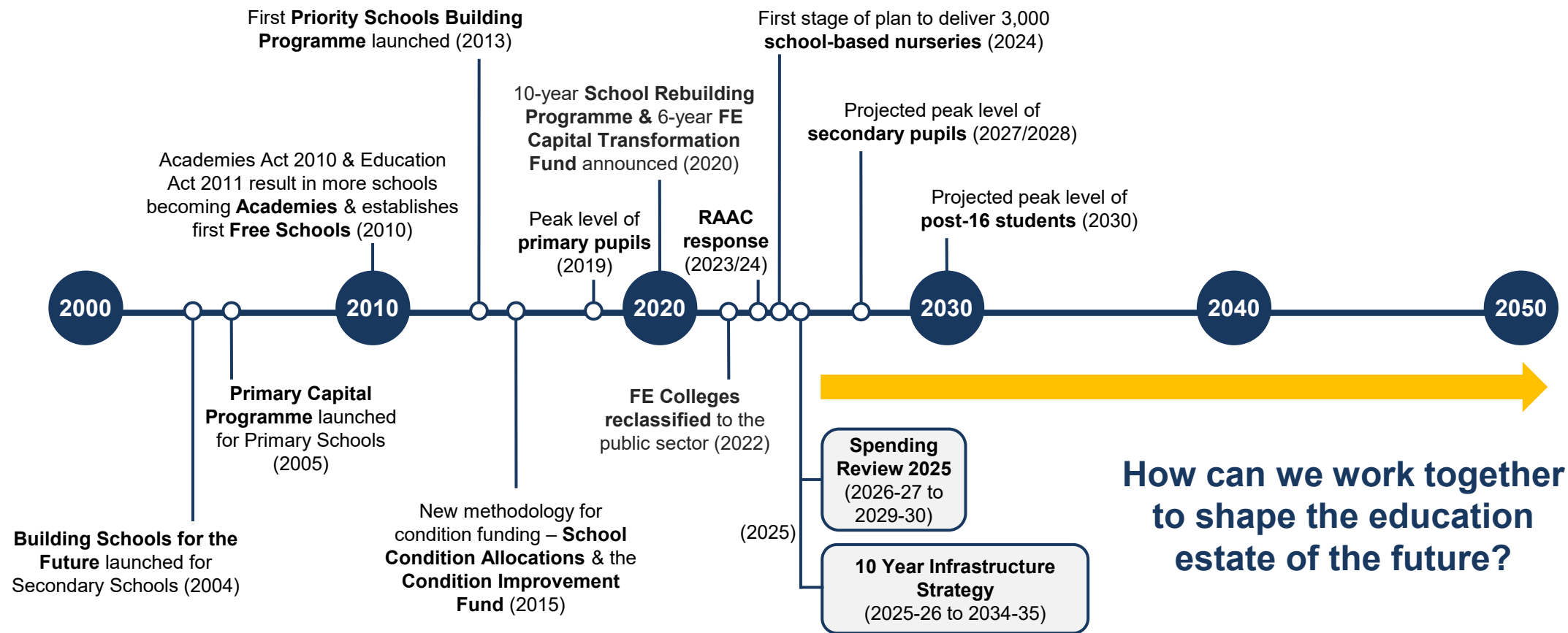
What: a digital platform as the single route for Responsible Bodies to access the service offer and data.

Why: Responsible Bodies currently have to navigate multiple systems and there is not an effective system for Responsible Bodies and DfE to communicate and to share information and data.

How: the portal will enable more efficient and effective engagement; it will support Responsible Bodies to proactively manage their estates with better access to our programmes; it will give both Responsible Bodies and DfE better insights on the estate through data sharing.



We have the opportunity to shape the education estate for the future



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Thank you