

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2023**

**QUESTIONS ASKED BY AN ELECTED MEMBER UNDER**  
**STANDING ORDER 7**

**Question asked by Mrs. A. Hack:**

“In a recent survey, 22,000 school buildings were assessed from which a report that was published in May 2021. In this report 260\* school buildings in Leicestershire and Rutland\* were identified as grade C (poor) and more worryingly 77 were classified as category D condition which is described in the report as Life expired or at serious risk of imminent failure.

\*the report includes 22 schools in Rutland.

1. As the authority responsible for allocating students to school, what oversight does the County Council have over the condition of Leicestershire Schools?

There was a recent round of funding announced by the Government, 32 schools in Leicestershire have been allocated funding for 38 different improvement projects. Works included a recently transferred academy school Ravenhurst Primary in my division for ‘Life Expired Condition Roof. Of the remaining projects the word ‘urgent’ appears 21 times. This funding was in addition to the 5 schools selected for rebuilds. Which seems to offer repairs to a fraction of the schools identified in the 2021 report.

2. Does the authority have a clear view to the condition of the remaining schools that are maintained as well as those managed by the Multi Academy Trusts. This includes the safety of children and the workforce at the sites that have been identified as having category C and D defects?
3. What liaison does Leicestershire County Council have with the Head Teachers about the condition of Leicestershire Schools?
4. If the information is available, can Councillors receive an update on the condition of the schools highlighted with category C/D defects within their divisions?
5. Of the school estate that has been transferred from locally maintained (including Ravenhurst in my division), was there a clear maintenance plan agreed ahead of any transfer and how is the condition of the schools managed where there have been Category C and D defects in the buildings?
6. For the remaining maintained school, what is the inspection regime for managing the school estate and how does this change when schools are transferred to Academies?”

**Reply by the Chairman:**

1. Leicestershire county Council is responsible for assessing the condition of maintained Leicestershire Schools. Maintained Schools are inspected every 5 years, as recommended by Department for Education (DfE). The inspection information is then used to plan the maintenance required on the buildings.
2. The authority has a record of the condition of the Maintained schools, including sites that have been identified as having category C and D defects. LCC have a record of the condition of those Academy schools, where the Multi-Academy Trust's (MAT) commissions the Council for a professional fee to carry out a survey.
3. The authority has good relationships with maintained school head teachers and those MAT's that buy into the Council's property scheme
4. The Department can share with Councillors the information for maintained schools in their area.
5. In the process of academy transfer the maintenance of buildings becomes the responsibility of the Trust. As part of the transfer process the Trust undertakes due diligence on school building condition and negotiates depending on the situation. There is an offer of continuing with the Council's buyback scheme. If after academisation there is a need to repair / replace the MAT can apply for funding to do so.
6. The frequency of inspection of Maintained Schools is every five years, as recommended by DfE. Once a school transfers to Academy, the Property is removed from the inspection list. Property Ops are available to carry out a Condition survey for the Academy, for a Professional Fee.