

Westminster Education Forum policy conference:

Next steps for school buildings in England

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 15th January 2026

Taking place online



Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 9.05 **Assessing the condition of the education estate, progress of the School Rebuilding Programme, and considerations for policy and delivery**
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Priorities for use of funding, maintenance, rebuilding, and future planning for school buildings**
funding commitments in the 2025 Spending Review and Infrastructure Strategy / rollout and expansion of the School Rebuilding Programme and planning for schools not currently included / long-term planning and annual budgets / coordinating central and local capital decisions / national construction frameworks and delivery models across multi-academy trusts and local authorities / procurement, risk, and construction sector capacity / addressing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete and asbestos / building safety oversight, transparency, responsibilities, accountability, and communication / insights from recent condition surveys / balancing short-term remediation with long-term functionality and design quality / mitigating impact on learning and staff
Tim Warneford, Partner, Warneford Consulting
Councillor Nick Bennett, Deputy Leader and Lead Member, Resources and Climate Change, East Sussex County Council
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, construction
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **Working with schools to meet community needs**
Lara Newman, Chief Executive, LocatED
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.35 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.40 Break
- 10.50 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.55 **Developing cross-sector collaboration to support net zero goals in the education estate**
Senior representative, energy
- 11.05 **Next steps for decarbonisation and retrofitting in the education estate**
retrofitting ageing stock to improve energy efficiency / designing for long-term sustainability and whole-life carbon reduction / integrating smart systems, renewables, and green spaces / managing funding, timelines, and supply chains under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme / funding gaps following closure of PSDS and the Low-Carbon Skills Fund / engaging delivery partners including Great British Energy / reconciling heritage preservation and green priorities / aligning environmental goals with operational and educational needs
Alex Green, Head, Let's Go Zero, Ashden
Senior representative, construction
Senior representative, school
- 11.20 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 **Priorities for modernisation and improving access and inclusion**
improving physical accessibility and inclusive learning environments / integrating digital learning infrastructure and flexible use of space / addressing regional variation in estate condition and investment / equity between schools, settings and communities / addressing the impact of poor building conditions on staff retention and recruitment
Senior representative, school
Senior representative, local authority
Senior representative, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Senior representative, construction
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Policy priorities for the education estate and achieving net zero**
Dr Jonathan Dewsbury, Director, Education Estates and Net Zero, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Education Forum