



7 July 2025

Dear Families

Over the last 18 months, we have been working hard with Trust and Department for Education partners to develop plans for the future of The Dukeries Academy site.

This has been an extensive piece of work, and I would like to share with you the progress made on plans for the school. The proposals are outlined below and have been provided by our colleagues at The Department for Education.

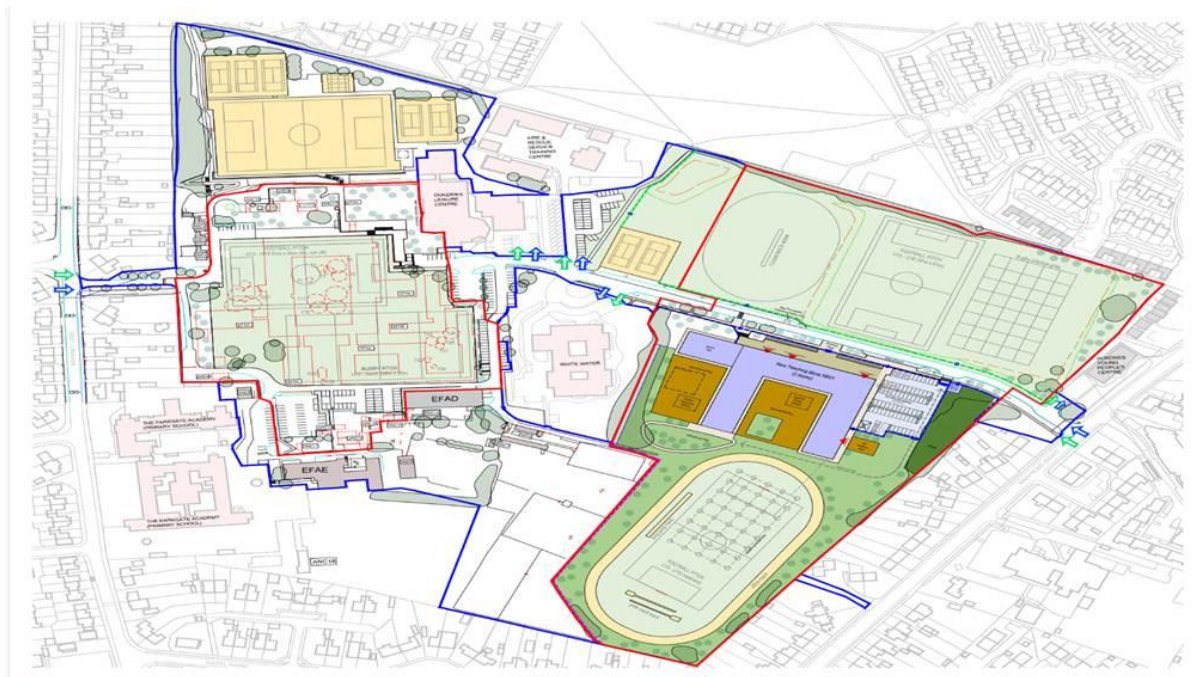
It is a very exciting and important time for both the Academy and our local community. I do hope that our families will be pleased with the developments below. As always, I am open to any communication this, so please contact the Academy office if you have any questions.

Department for Education Update

Together with The Dukeries, the Department for Education (DfE) has been working on a project to bring the buildings at the school up to date. We began with a thorough condition assessment of the estate, and we have two key messages we would like to share:

1. The buildings are safe for their current use, but in very poor condition.
2. The buildings need significant investment to fully support The Dukeries Academy in their aspirations, and to support the future of all the children who do, and will, attend.

We are really pleased to say that the DfE went to market on 22 April 2025 with a proposal to fully replace the secondary school with a modern, fit for purpose building that will achieve net zero carbon in operation. The further education buildings on site will not be affected, nor will the third-party assets, which includes the leisure centre. We also recognise how important access across the site is to residents, and we will be working hard to ensure that this is maintained throughout, without compromising the safety of the children. To give the supplier community a good idea of what we want, we have gone to market with a scheme that should look something like this on completion:



We will remove three of the school's main buildings (where all school activity currently takes place), and replace those with some new, outdoor sporting facilities, and there will be some additional facilities up to the north of the new build too.

It is worth saying that we don't want to stifle innovation, so we will give contractors an opportunity to present back an option that might look different to the above, but we will make sure that we test that against all of the hard work The Dukeries Academy and the DfE have already put into this to make sure the school gets the best solution.

What next

By the summer we expect to have appointed a construction partner to help us develop the scheme and then we will go into detailed design. When we are ready, we will present a full planning application and secure permission to go ahead with the full proposal – during this period, we will be conducting a formal consultation to give the local community an opportunity to contribute to the plans. From now, we expect that process to take around a year, with the build starting after Summer 2026. The building handover is expected Spring 2028 with the finalisation of all construction works on site set for Winter 2028.

We hope that these developments are exciting for the school community, and we look forward to engaging with all our local partners as the project progresses.

Kind regards

M. Brett

Mr M Brett
Principal

