



Telephone | Ffôn: 02920 499549 📞
Email | Eboost: roathparkprm@cardiff.gov.uk ✉️

The School's Governing Body
Roath Park Primary School
Pen-Y-Wain Road
Roath
Cardiff
CF24 4BB

Dear First Minister, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Cardiff East MS,

We are writing to you on behalf of our learning community at Roath Park Primary School. Our letter outlines problems we are facing with the school building and is complimented by a letter written by our Year 6 Senedd Team at Roath Park Primary School. We have sought authority from various representatives at Cardiff Council before contacting you and have sent a copy of this letter to the relevant persons.

Our school was built in 1895 and is a Grade II listed building. It has served as a community and learning hub for residents of Roath for nearly 130 years. You can find out more about the school here: [RPPS - History of the School](#)

Brickwork, stonework and masonry

In November 2021, during high winds, one of the finials came off the roof of the school building and landed on Pen-Y-Wain Road. Upon investigation, it was deemed that some of the brickwork, stonework and other decorative masonry on the façade and roof of the building is loose and unsafe. A likely cause for the materials loosening is buddleia which grows within the cracks in the mortar and affects the building's structure. Over time, this could prove to be an even greater issue than it is now.

The walls providing a boundary to the school premises are also in need of repair. Alike the façade and roof, buddleia has found its way between the cracks in the mortar and is causing further damage as it grows.

Windows and roof

Further air, ground and digital surveys have been conducted since December 2021. These have identified issues with the roof and some windows. As of yet, no work has been undertaken to repair or replace any of the aforementioned issues. Water ingress is an issue across the school site with leaks occurring through some windows, parts of the roof and internally as a result of guttering and brickwork being loose outside.

Cardiff Council's involvement

Cardiff Council's 'School Organisation and Planning' team are accountable for resolving the issues outlined above. We haven't received as much information from SOP as we would like, especially as the school community ask about proposed works frequently.

"Living Together, Learning Together, Growing Together" | "Byw Gyda'n Gilydd, Dysgu Gyda'n Gilydd, Tyfu Gyda'n Gilydd"

Headteacher | Pennaeth: Mr. Lewis Fitzgerald
Deputy Headteacher | Dirprwy Bennaeth: Ms. Jane Marker
Website: <https://www.roathparkprimaryschool.co.uk>
Official Twitter: @roathparkprm



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In December 2021 scaffolding was erected at the front of the school building. Its primary purpose was to prevent any loose items from falling on pedestrians or those entering / exiting the school premises. The scaffolding remains in place and serves the same purpose of preventing items from potentially falling from height.

Recently, representatives from Cardiff Council have explained that they do not have the capital to carry out all of the works on the school building. A phased approach is expected but a date for commencement has not been communicated. There has been an incredibly amount of bureaucracy leading to this point – this has been handled largely by the school leadership team.

Cardiff Council have stated the funding provided by Welsh Government to historic schools like ours does not equate to the same amount allocated to new school buildings. This is a shame because we, as a Governing Body, remember Welsh Government's commitment to 'deliver schools fit for the 21st Century'. Our experience falls far short of this – we are trying to equip learners for the 21st Century without a safe building and environment to do so. We would like to be recognised as a school that requires additional capital to complete essential works. At present we do not have a sustainable community for learning and this must change now in order to benefit future generations.

Our thoughts

Funding two and a half years' worth of costs for scaffolding to prevent items falling from height is not the best use of public funds. Repairing and replacing some, if not all of the issues outlined above, would provide greater value for money.

We ask whether Welsh Government officials, along with colleagues from Cardiff Council, would like to visit our school. The Governing Body and leadership team would appreciate a discussion about essential repairs and maintenance work to be completed and where the funding will come from.

We have attached photos of our school building for your reference. These show the building before the scaffolding was erected in 2021 and the degradation that has occurred since. We work closely with our Health and Safety Officer to ensure that the school site is safe for pupils and visitors. However, we are losing spaces due to further damage and our small school site is becoming even smaller over time. This situation requires some urgent attention and a clear plan for works to be carried out.

Yours faithfully,

The Governing Body & Leadership Team at Roath Park Primary School

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Roath Park Primary School – photo taken in 2019



Roath Park Primary School – Scaffolding erected in December 2021



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Buddleia growing between masonry



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Damage due to water ingress



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Cc: Vaughan Gething MS – First Minister, Welsh Government
Cc: Lynne Neagle MS – Cabinet Secretary for Education, Welsh Government
Cc: Jenny Rathbone MS – Constituency Member (Cardiff East), Welsh Government
Cc: Melanie Godfrey – Director of Education, Cardiff LA
Cc: Richard Portas – Programme Director (School Organisation and Planning), Cardiff LA
Cc: Derek Walker – Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

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