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Response to Lessons Learnt  
Executive Summary

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Inspiring learning, aspiring nation



## Executive Summary

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In 2009 Scotland embarked on a journey to deliver a better quality schools estate that would offer young people in Scotland the best start in life. In order to support this Scottish Futures Trust carried out a review of 28 secondary schools to draw out lessons learnt about how we were building learning spaces.

As part of the Scotland's Schools for the Future programme, Midlothian Council and East Renfrewshire Council were identified to act as a pilot. The Councils worked together to deliver their joint requirements: the replacement of two secondary schools, Lasswade High School in Midlothian and Eastwood High School in East Renfrewshire. In addition, the two Councils, in conjunction with SFT, used a single procurement process, undertook collaborative working, explored supply chain initiatives and a common approach to design to redefine the idea of school.

This response to the Lessons Learnt project has reviewed the process and product of the pilots against the nine key themes identified in the Lessons Learnt review through a series of interviews with the users (learners, staff, parents and community users) and commissioners (Scottish Government, SFT, Local Authorities).

The message from users and local authority project teams is positive. The spaces provide open, flexible, and inspiring environments. The schools feel like part of the community, enabled in particular by community use of sports and leisure facilities. Users report that the spaces raise aspirations.







*"Having facilities like we now have maximises the opportunities for pupils and teachers and has really improved learning."*

Elaine Regan, Principal Teacher of Creative and Performing Arts, Eastwood High School

Users identified key successes as the open plan design supporting a sense of community and informal learning, improved circulation in corridors and impressive atrium spaces with a variety of uses. Areas where improvements could be made include teaching staff feel the loss of a central staff room reduces their opportunity for social interaction and collegiality, inconsistencies in the level and range of consultation and some departments have had some practical difficulties with the end design e.g. technical, additional support needs and SMT offices. It was also felt that there were greater opportunities for social spaces outside, and more inspiring outdoor design.

Local authority project teams agreed that whilst the value of collaboration is a significant success, there is also a recognition that it can be a difficult process. There were calls for centralised access to specialist skill sets and opportunities to improve the value engineering stage by making the pricing available up front.

Theme	Key Successes
<b>Circulation</b>	Intervisibility, pupil interaction, improved corridor behaviour, natural light, passive supervision, sense of learning
<b>Internal Environment</b>	Steps taken to tackle heating, ventilation issues but some concerns still remain around particular functions i.e. Home Economics or internal classrooms with unopenable windows
<b>Staff and Student Spaces</b>	Social spaces for students, social and adaptable use of atrium area, flexible and accessible staff bases
<b>Dining Areas</b>	Subdivision of dining options, reduced congestion, good seating, social areas
<b>Community Use</b>	Positive community links, two different but successful community models, sense of pride within community, improved connections
<b>Classrooms</b>	Improved technology, improved classroom facilities within practical subjects, highly valued and popular PE facilities with a options to suit every learner, spaces which allow self-guided and personal learning, flexible spaces
<b>External Spaces</b>	Attractive multi-purpose spaces, good outdoor learning opportunities, popular and well used sports facilities
<b>Student Lockers and Student Toilets</b>	Well located, well integrated, positive benefits of design



*"A School should be at the heart of its community ..... the pupil behavior and pupil ethos is improved by the fact they have friends and family around the school during the school day... there really is a community feeling in Lasswade."*

Alan Williamson, Headteacher, Lasswade High School

Schools are complex buildings. Creating the schools for the future requires sustained leadership to build and maintain a shared vision; allow time and support for innovation, with the appropriate risks taken at the appropriate level of decision making; enabling experimentation and learning to use new space imaginatively. It was observed that success is about putting in place a process of continuous development, and clarity on the way success is measured, at Scottish Government, local authority and school levels.







# SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

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