



ALEXANDRA COLLEGE DUBLIN

Parent Gathering – Strategic Education & Master Plan Launch Overview & Questions

For the benefit of parents who were unable to attend our launch on 9th October, we hope the following questions – along with the links to the plans – provide a good insight into our exciting ambitions for Alexandra College and the girls in our care. We are grateful to those who attended on the 9th, and would appreciate you sharing highlights of the evening with fellow parents. The below includes some of the questions asked at the gathering.

Why are the strategic education and master plans important now?

True to our founding principles, Alexandra College is continually at the forefront of girls' education. As the 50th anniversary of our time in Milltown draws closer, we are ever mindful that how the girls learn and therefore the environment in which they learn are evolving rapidly. As Alexandra College continues to grow, and to fulfill our intention of being leaders in girls' education, both in Ireland and on the global stage, we need to ensure the best physical and functional spaces that are most conducive to learning for our students.

What do these plans entail?

The holistic education of the girls is paramount. Our responsibility is not alone to their academic progress but also to their spiritual, pastoral, physical and mental wellbeing. Our strategic education plan clearly outlines eight commitments which reflect Alexandra's core values and mission for the betterment of the girls and their future.

To complement these strategic elements, the proposed master plan will ensure a student centered campus. It will reflect the consolidation and expansion of the existing buildings around three interconnected hubs – the Junior School, the Senior School and the Boarding facilities. One of the most important aspects will be the pedestrian focus which will include landscaped quadrangles, an outdoor classroom and various different spaces in which the girls can learn.

How long will these take?

The education component is already underway, and we are currently developing individual plans for each of the eight commitments.

From a physical perspective, we envision a seven-phase development, over a three to five-year period – subject to finance. It is hoped that work will commence in the summer of 2019, with a completion date in time for our 50th anniversary on the Milltown campus, in 2022.

Additional short-term projects are also included – for example outdoor seating; and enhancements to the Sixth Form area, with a more comfortable and social space for the older girls.

Will parts of the College be closed during the redevelopment?

No. We propose to carry out the major work during holiday periods, thus avoiding any disruptions.

How was the master plan devised?

In consultation with the various College committees and the architect, we have been guided through all possibilities. The plans shared reflect the most comprehensive and cost efficient approach.

Are you planning to increase student numbers?

No. Our numbers will be 600 girls in the Senior School (including 170 boarders) and 300 in the Junior School.

How long will the third level students be on campus?

It is envisioned that these students (all female, including past pupils) will remain until 2020. This timeline can be accelerated, based on our progress with financing. Currently, the third level students are a good source of revenue for the College which will have a positive impact on the achievement of our overall plans.

What are the plans for the boarding facilities?

We hope the new residence will be ready by 2020, at which time the building in Rathmines will be returned to the RCB. Given the increasing numbers and interest in our boarding school, it was necessary to make this interim move to Rathmines. In the meantime, a lot of work was undertaken at Rathmines during the summer to ensure the boarders' comfort; for example the provision of new furniture, carpeting and two refurbished tennis courts.

Has consideration be given to a swimming pool, bicycle park and outdoor space?

We are currently discussing our options with the architects. There will be an emphasis on outdoor space, with increased provision for both the Junior and Senior Schools cyclists. A swimming pool has not been mentioned, as typically it can be costly and poses a safety risk.

Will there be a library and other special spaces?

We already have a well-stocked library which we plan to upgrade and allow access to our Junior School students as well. We hope to provide a multi-purpose space (to include a dining hall and some theatre provision), after school study room and sound proofed rehearsal spaces for music. Many of these details have yet to be determined.

What environmental considerations have been discussed?

On application for planning permission, the College will be required to submit various environmental reports to the local authorities. At that stage, the inclusion of solar panels, sustainable energy, the use of rainwater and green roofs will be determined.

What is the cost of the master plan?

The overall cost is in the region of €35 million over a five-year period.

How will it be funded?

Through prudent financial oversight, financing and philanthropy, we are confident of securing our goal of €35 million. The fundraising plan is currently being developed – we anticipate some of the cost will be supported through the generosity of parents, alumnae and friends of the College.

What if the financial goal is not reached?

We understand these are ambitious plans, thus the phasing and multi-year approach. Depending on the pace of fundraising progress, we may have to extend the project timeline.

*Alexandra College – Strategic Education & Master Plan
Parent Gathering – Overview & Questions*

Will the fees be affected by this project?

No. The master plan will be paid for from some College reserves, borrowing and fundraising.

Why cannot fees pay for this?

Fees pay for the general operating costs of Alexandra College, including teachers' salaries, maintenance, catering staff and on-going upkeep. Any major capital work, refurbishment and new buildings have to be funded separately.

What happens the annual contribution we have been paying?

This funding has enabled important work such as refurbishment of the Junior School gym and classrooms. We hope this will continue and contribute towards the overall fundraising for the master plan.

Will the Department of Education & Skills provide support?

No, it will not support capital expenditure for fee-charging schools.

Who will be asked to support the fundraising?

The College hopes that the entire Alexandra community will consider their involvement – parents, past pupils, past parents, grandparents and friends of the College.

How will the fundraising plan be developed?

In preparing the most effective strategy, we want to ensure it is one that is well informed by a wide audience. Over the coming months, we will seek insight from parents, alumnae, College and staff leadership – through one-on-one conversations, focus groups and an electronic survey.

What if I have additional questions?

Please submit these to the Principal (barbaraennis@alexandracollege.ie) and we will endeavour to answer all queries.