

CAMDEN: QUEX ROAD, ST EUGENE DE MAZENOD CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEW EXTERNAL FIRE ESCAPE STAIRCASE

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The school currently stores coats and outerwear at the bottom of the staircase which leads to classrooms 3, 4 and 6. This is the only escape structure/route for these areas that could be used in the event of a fire. The school have spent time investigating alternative areas for the storage of coats and outerwear but there simply is no suitable alternative space available within the existing building.

The Governors have been concerned about this situation for some time and have attempted to resolve it with internal reorganisation. This process has not been successful. As a result in November 2014 the Governors commissioned a fire risk assessment which was carried out by the London Borough of Camden fire office. This provided the Governors with confirmation that the fire escape route as it stands poses a risk to the occupants of classrooms 3, 4 and 6 and any other adjacent rooms. The following are extracts from the fire risk assessment relating to this stairwell:

“Staircase which leads to years 3, 4 and 6, PPA inspections and resources room has a cloakroom in this area at the foot of the stairs. This should not be the case. A fire here could smoke-log the stairs making it impassable.”

“There are areas which are on escape routes which have combustible materials lining the walls and at the foot of escape stairs cloakrooms are provided which have the potential to burn and smoke-log staircases and means of escape routes. This should be avoided.”

In order to address the current situation the school have undertaken a feasibility study to look at the possible provision of a new external fire escape staircase. The scheme would include the following:

- New external galvanised steel escape staircase
- Replacement of 5No existing windows to provide fire rated equivalents
- 2No new fire rated external doors (including replacement of 1No existing door to ground floor)
- New external emergency bulkhead lighting to the escape staircase

The staircase will be particularly visible from Mazenod Avenue, mainly screened by trees and vegetation. The view from the north will also be screened by existing playground canopies.