

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the big picture/goals of renewal?

Renewal is about meeting the needs and aspirations of children and young people.

It means not only revitalising damaged infrastructure but also enhancing education outcomes.

It provides an opportunity to prioritise actions that have a positive impact on learners in greatest need of assistance, and to establish closer connections across the system, from the early years through to post-compulsory education.

For further information, please view the Shaping Education website:

shapingeducation.minedu.govt.nz

where you will find the Education Renewal Recovery Programme – ‘Directions for Education Renewal in greater Christchurch’ - which outlines the vision for renewal confirmed during consultation with the community in May this year.

What has underpinned the approach to renewal?

Renewal is about both restoring services and enhancing educational outcomes for the learners of today and generations to follow.

People movement, land and building damage are the catalysts for change.

Why then, when you are revitalising the network, is it proposed to close or merge some schools?

A strong education network is vital for the renewal of greater Christchurch. The extent of damage and ongoing impact of people movement mean it cannot be restored the way it was.

We need to accept in areas that have been depopulated we will have to do things differently, which will inevitably mean some change to services. The viability of individual schools and increased demand for new schools are a key consideration going forward.

No decisions have, however, yet been made. Boards of schools proposed to close or merge have until December 7 to consult with their communities and report back.

What support are boards of trustee’s getting around the consultation process?

The Ministry has, in consultation with boards, appointed and funded a facilitator to assist with the process. This is a suitably skilled member of the school community or other person known to the board.

How can I ensure my views are heard?

The board of trustees of your school will formally consult with your community about the proposal. This can take many forms from surveys to public meetings. This will be decided by the board so you will need to contact your school to understand how you can participate.

What would proposed closure or merger mean for my school and my community?

Closing or merging a school would enable funding to be invested in enhanced education provision for all learners across an education community to support the provision of modern learning environments for a larger number of students.

Enable funding to be invested in enhanced education

This could include the provision of appropriate shared facilities across schools within a learning community cluster that can be used both by schools and the community and other agencies as appropriate.

The Ministry will ensure appropriate provision for all learners to support any changes that may result from consultation, provide information around enrolment options to families and required support.

What are these modern learning environments?

Think flexibility and accessibility.

Modern learning environments are spaces that provide teachers with the ability to use innovative and imaginative teaching practices. They are not your traditional classrooms. They are spaces designed to keep pace with the way modern children learn and give them all the flexibility they need to keep developing into the future.

Is this what you mean when you talk 21st century schools?

Yes. School environments influence teaching and learning and as these practices have changed over the past 20 years, our school environments also need to change.

Modern schools are already being created elsewhere. There is an opportunity to apply that new thinking and development as we renew education in greater Christchurch.

Just how soon might we see this modern thinking reflected in our schools?

A new school is to be built at Pegasus Town. This is to address accelerated growth in the wake of the earthquakes. Waikuku School will relocate as part of the establishment of new facilities.

Consultants have also been engaged to advance project planning for the rebuild of Halswell Primary School, which was badly damaged in the September earthquake. The school will be rebuilt on its existing site.

It takes time to build a new school from scratch but it is hoped to open both facilities sometime in 2014.

There will also be consultation with the Rolleston community around the shape of new provision for the township. This includes considering some of the innovative provision and building options identified through consultation.

Where can I find out more information?

We have provided details of the proposals for closure and merger and the rationale for change for each school on the shaping education website. www.shapingeducation.minedu.govt.nz.

This information is provided under the renewal tab. You can also contact us through the website to ask any questions or seek clarification of any information.

The Education Renewal Recovery Programme – ‘Directions for Education Renewal in greater Christchurch’ – and the analysis of the 550 submissions lodged during consultation can also be downloaded.