# Hazlehead Academy parents push for safer, inspiring £120m rebuild amid capacity concerns



Pupils and parents at Hazlehead Academy have voiced their eagerness to see the existing “dingy and grim” school replaced, as plans for a new £120 million structure advance. Recent planning submissions have revealed insights from consultations that highlight the significant dissatisfaction with the current campus environment, which many view as uninspired and unwelcoming.

In particular, concerns have been amplified following a serious incident where a pupil was injured during a knife attack, prompting parents to reconsider their children's safety and education at Hazlehead. Frustrations over the school’s security measures are particularly prominent, with educators reporting inconsistencies in the CCTV system that hinder proper surveillance of students. Teachers have characterised the building as “dark and dingy,” detracting from the learning atmosphere.

The existing facilities have been described as dull and poorly maintained, with reports noting that outdoor areas lack adequate shelter and appeal. Students and teachers alike have lamented the uninviting entrance, stating that it does little to create a welcoming environment. The feedback gathered from recent consultations indicates a strong desire for a school that not only meets safety standards but also provides a more inspiring and engaging learning space.

The architects' plans for the new Hazlehead Academy are ambitious. Designed to accommodate 1,600 pupils, the three-storey building will include modern sports facilities such as a sports hall, multiple gymnasiums, and dedicated spaces for fitness and dance classes. While images of the proposed structure were unveiled in February, the anticipation continues to build as stakeholders await the groundbreaking scheduled for next year, with expectations for students to move into the new facility by 2028.

Safety remains a focal point for both pupils and educators. Younger students have expressed feelings of intimidation in poorly supervised areas, such as toilets, calling for enhanced security measures in the new build to ensure a safer environment. Parents have echoed these sentiments, citing concerns regarding hygiene and supervision in current facilities. Their collective anxieties have underscored a need for significant improvements in school management and maintenance.

Moreover, the decision to cut the bus service from Mannofield has further complicated the situation for families who rely on transport options to ensure their children’s safe travel to school. Parents have highlighted the increased burden this has placed on their daily routines, as walking or cycling is not always a viable option, particularly in inclement weather or for younger children.

The financial backing for the new project derives from a substantial investment by Aberdeen City Council, which received funding from the Scottish Government aimed at improving the educational estate across the region. This initiative is part of a broader movement to refurbish or rebuild outdated school facilities. Councillors are optimistic about how this investment will enhance the learning experience and overall environment for Hazlehead Academy’s students.

However, even as plans for the new academy progress, concerns loom about future capacity. Forecasts indicate that by 2030, the new school could be over capacity, with projected enrolments exceeding the designed limits by 5%. This potential overcrowding reflects demographic changes and an expanding catchment area, necessitating careful planning and resource management to accommodate a growing student population.

As the community and authorities work together towards the establishment of a new Hazlehead Academy, the voices of pupils and parents remain integral in shaping a facility that addresses their needs and aspirations, providing a safe, vibrant, and conducive environment for learning.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Paragraph 6
3. Paragraph 7
4. Paragraphs 8, 9
5. Paragraph 10
6. Paragraph 11
7. Paragraph 12

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6758804/pupils-and-parents-want-grim-hazlehead-academy-bulldozed/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6758804/pupils-and-parents-want-grim-hazlehead-academy-bulldozed/> - An article detailing the dissatisfaction of pupils and parents with Hazlehead Academy's current state, describing it as 'dingy and grim.' It discusses plans for a new £120 million building, highlighting concerns about the existing school's security measures, appearance, and recent incidents, including a knife attack. The article also mentions the school's capacity to accommodate 1,600 pupils and the involvement of parents and staff in consultations regarding the new facility.
3. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/education/5489578/hazlehead-bus-cut-leaves-parents-facing-transport-dilemma/> - This article addresses the challenges faced by parents at Hazlehead Academy due to the Aberdeen City Council's decision to cut the bus service from Mannofield. It highlights the difficulties parents encounter in ensuring their children's safe commute to school, especially when walking or cycling isn't feasible. The piece includes perspectives from parents expressing concerns over the lack of transportation options and the potential impact on students' education and well-being.
4. <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/news/hazlehead-academy-gets-major-funding-boost> - Aberdeen City Council has secured significant funding from the Scottish Government for a new Hazlehead Academy. The funding, part of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, aims to deliver new or refurbished school buildings. Councillors express optimism about the positive impact this investment will have on the school's facilities and the educational experience of students.
5. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6663324/new-hazlehead-academy-school-roll-forecast/> - The article discusses forecasts indicating that the new Hazlehead Academy, set to open with a capacity of 1,600 pupils, could be overcapacity within two years. Projections suggest the school may have 5% more pupils than its capacity by 2030. The piece explores factors contributing to this potential overcrowding, including demographic changes and the expansion of the school's catchment area.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/nov/28/headteachers-tell-of-worsening-behaviour-of-pupils-and-parents> - Headteachers in England report a decline in pupil behavior and a lack of support from some parents. The article highlights instances of non-compliance, increased aggression, and challenges in enforcing school policies. It also discusses the impact of these issues on staff well-being and the broader school environment.
7. <https://www.scotsman.com/education/raac-schools-scotland-four-schools-with-raac-have-been-waiting-since-last-year-for-revamp-funding-from-scottish-government-4283422> - The article reveals that four schools in Scotland, including Hazlehead Academy, have been awaiting funding from the Scottish Government for refurbishment due to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). The funding, intended to address structural issues, has been delayed multiple times, raising concerns about the safety and condition of these educational facilities.