

Modernising a 19th century classic

Prep school updates Decimus Burton mansion

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Acoustics

Calmer classrooms thanks to reducing external noise

Lighting

Lighting projects that harness natural light

Heating

Energy-saving systems improve efficiency and reliability



Holmewood House Preparatory School

Set on the borders of both Kent and Sussex, Holmewood House is an independent preparatory school, which boasts a listed 19th century Decimus Burton mansion. It recently created new teaching spaces, including, classrooms, ICT facilities and a large multi-purpose learning hub.

Image: Tim Crocker

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Scotland shows the way

THERE'S something of a Scottish flavour to our first issue of the year. Not because I'm 75% Scot myself and recently celebrated Burn's Night, more because there are so many interesting developments going on in schools there today.

Scotland has, of course, shown the way in education for centuries, from as far back as the 18th and early 19th century, but the last few years have seen many interesting design developments and social advances in the way schools are built and interact with their communities.

Opening up their facilities to far greater use by local people is one of the most important aspects of the new Scottish Enlightenment. The Lasswade Centre, for example, in Midlothian and Eastwood High School in East Renfrewshire are two schools that have been born out of a unique initiative which saw two councils from opposite sides of the country work together to build state of the art schools for their communities. By bringing together in one building extensive public sports facilities, a public library and a café, and making the facilities available into the evenings and at weekends, the schools have placed themselves firmly at the heart of their communities, and even transformed them.

The initiative has proved so successful that other Scottish councils have followed – and many efficiencies and cost savings have been achieved, which of course has also benefitted the local communities as the savings have been diverted to other vital services. English authorities must surely be studying the lessons.

By showing that money is being invested wisely and imaginatively, developments like these have given the Scottish Government confidence to earmark a further £1 bn for the next phase of school building and refurbishment.

None of this is to suggest that English schools don't spend wisely too. This issue is full of projects, in both public and private sector, that deliver excellent value for money.

We also feature sound advice in our Q&A section on how to find that money in order for projects to proceed.

I'm sure you'll discover much within our Jan/Feb issue to admire and inspire. And do let me know what admirable and inspiring projects you too have been working on recently – we want to feature as many as we can.



Andrew Pring

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Mid-twentieth century primary school 'grows up'

EDWARD Williams Architects has completed a roof-top extension to a mid-twentieth-century primary school in Lewisham, developing and detailing the initial designs by Pollard Thomas Edwards Architects. Turnham Primary School needed additional facilities on a restricted site for their expanding pupil numbers. A large extension at roof level allows the school to grow, providing additional facilities in a light-filled space with views across the neighbourhood.

The zinc-clad second floor extension provides extra classrooms, including special education needs (SEN) rooms, and a large hall to accommodate a whole school year of pupils. With a deliberately expressed natural timber structure and lined with birch ply timber panels, the hall is a warm, unimpeded space for assembly, dance and games, flooded with daylight through large windows running along its length. Classrooms are fitted with birch ply cupboards and a neutral palette. For



the toilets, a bold lime green is chosen, using colour to make a stronger cognitive break between transitory spaces and the classroom.

The extension makes space for an ecology terrace with benches and raised planters outside a practical classroom complete with a 'wet area'; here the children grow edible plants and learn about nature systems, plants, and food. All of the new rooms in the extension are naturally ventilated using the Breathing Building system, a low energy natural ventilation solution which uses passive roof terminals in conjunction with opening windows to

ventilate the spaces. Throughout the extension, high acoustic performance is achieved using expressed acoustic panels.

Laura Carrara-Cagni, Director of Edward Williams Architects, said: "Previously squeezed into too few classrooms and with restricted play and creative spaces, it was brilliant to see the children expressing themselves in their bright new hall. Their classrooms are now airy spaces to support their learning, and colourful work!".

www.edwardwilliamsarchitects.com

Willmott Dixon wins £10m Reef Way Special School in Hailsham



of its kind in the area and the state-of-the-art facilities include a learning library, classrooms with safe rooms, dining hall and a MUGA pitch.

Willmott Dixon managing director in South London and Southern Homes Counties, Roger Forsdyke, said: "We have significant experience in delivering SEN and SEMH Schools and are thrilled to win our first contract through the Orbis Framework. The early engagement with our customer and inclusion of our design consortium and supply chain partners ensures we have the best possible preparation to deliver this school for East Sussex County Council."

Project Manager at East Sussex County Council, Annie Atkins, said: "We are delighted to be working with Willmott Dixon. This new school will make a