



Press Release
June 29th 2011

MT Electrical Upgrade Helps Boost Pupil Independence

Student rooms within two newly created accommodation blocks at the West of England School for young people with little or no sight have been equipped with Marshall-Tufflex's fully curved Odyssey trunking system with red back boxes, which meet Part M of the Building Regulations and also Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.

The regional centre in Devon, which provides specialist education and care to those with visual impairment, is a 'High Performing Specialist School' whose patron is HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

As many of the students that attend the school have severe and complex disabilities, including visual impairment, mechanical and electrical services consultant, Engineering Design Practice (EDP) of Exeter, was asked to design the new blocks with user-friendly technology. This included future-proofed data and power supplies and advanced access and monitoring systems. Prior to the upgrades the accommodation was more basic and students were more reliant on teacher assistance.

EDP chose Marshall-Tufflex's CAT 6 compliant three-compartment PVC-U Odyssey as the containment system for the data and power supplies together with access and monitoring systems. It was supplied by Edmundson Electrical of Torquay and installed by Vincent Building Services, also of Torquay, to run horizontally above bed heads and vertically alongside doors within 14 new bed-sitting rooms. Main contractor for the project was Midas Interiors.

As a result, the two accommodation blocks, which include bedroom, kitchen and living facilities, now have automatic opening doors allowing safe, secure and easy access using a key fob. Each room is also equipped with a sound activated monitoring system and nurse call with infrared receivers incorporated into the trunking, which also carries the data and power services for TVs and PCs.

"We didn't want a square type of trunking, which becomes littered with bits and bobs or a commercial looking system for what is someone's living space," said Adrian Knighton, Electrical Engineer, EDP. "Odyssey's neatly curved profile was ideal; it looks really good and is easier to clean than traditional trunking. However most important to these units, which house physically disabled 'learners', was the fact that Odyssey has in-built coloured Part M compliant accessory boxes, which work really well. By colour contrasting Odyssey in white with red back boxes the partially sighted pupils at the school are better able to differentiate and operate the switches. In addition to this, the use of red back boxes and red rocker switches provided a primary colour scheme to enhance the decorative feel of the areas."

Due to its aesthetically pleasing neat and tidy all-curved profile, Odyssey is proving increasingly popular in educational as well as healthcare and commercial installations. It is equipped with adjustable internal and external bends, a built-in cable tray and extensive range of moulded fittings that allow a bend radius for CAT 6 compliance. Additionally, its unique range of accessory boxes, which can be used with standard white plate accessories, offers a simple, attractive and cost-effective way of providing colour contrasting for the visually impaired, whilst meeting Building Regulations.

"The client is really pleased with Odyssey, as are the users. It's all up and running and we have had no problems with it at all," concluded Adrian Knighton of EDP.

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