



Press Release  
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## Newfield School makes sound investment in Armstrong Ceilings

The Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Sheffield School Building Programme is one of the largest in the country and is being completed by Paradigm – a consortium led by Taylor Woodrow. It will ensure the rebuilding, refurbishing and/or upgrading of ICT provision for all of Sheffield's secondary schools, including those for pupils with special needs. The full BSF programme in Sheffield alone is valued at an estimated £400m.

Newfield Secondary School, a comprehensive school for around 900 11–16 year olds, is situated in the south of Sheffield. As one of the first to come forward from Sheffield's BSF programme, this project set the benchmark and established precedents for future school buildings in Sheffield and beyond.

Building Bulletin 93, which came into effect in July 2003, brought with it sweeping changes as to how we must now design and construct schools. All school buildings are now subject to detailed design checks and on-site inspection by building control officers. The aim of BB93 is to provide a simple but comprehensive guide for everyone involved in the design of new school buildings. Section 1 of Building Bulletin 93 describes the 'Specification of acoustic performance', giving the performance targets for compliance with the Requirement from Part E of the Building Regulations 2000 (as amended):

'Each room or other space in a school building shall have the acoustic conditions and the insulation against disturbance by noise appropriate to its normal use.'



However, despite the fact that school premises are covered by government legislation to ensure otherwise, many educational buildings still suffer from poor acoustics. This interferes with the ability of teachers and pupils to communicate, which in turn can lead to lack of concentration amongst



pupils and impairment of learning. As the ceiling forms the main uninterrupted surface in teaching spaces, it is good practice to use this area to provide the necessary treatments. However, these in turn will vary from room to room, depending on its function and purpose – for example, whether it is to be used primarily for speech or for music.

The ceilings were chosen in line with the strict specification from the architect.

Jana Bareham, of HLM Architects, Sheffield, said 'The right kind of acoustics are crucial in teaching spaces, not only within a classroom but also to minimise interference from outside corridors, so pupils are not disturbed during lessons. Armstrong was able to offer a wide range of ceiling tiles with variable sound absorption qualities, according to the rooms they were to be used in'.

Armstrong ceilings came in on budget without any compromise in quality or aesthetic appearance. A variety of materials were chosen for acoustics, cost and aesthetics respectively, Dune Max Tegular mineral tiles, Orcal Clip In 5mm metal tiles and special customised Madera wood tiles. Dune Max produces a calculated reverberation time of 0.60 seconds for a typical classroom. This is an optimum result as defined by the Department of Education.

SCS Ltd, a recognised Armstrong Omega contractor, installed some 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of Armstrong tiles. Nick Skill of SCS explained 'Armstrong ceiling tiles are easy to install and are perfect for the education environment due to their robust handling properties. As a valued Omega ceiling contractor we have vast experience in working with and installing Armstrong ceiling products which means we can offer the best service to the education sector'.

Newfield School reopened for pupils in January 2009.

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