



PUBLIC SECTOR EDUCATION

DKA

DESIGN AND INNOVATION FOR THE BEST LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

What can be more important than education? Learning is the basis of knowledge, skills, aspirations and achievement. It determines who we are. Creating environments that enhance learning and inspire individuals is a privilege, and not one we take lightly. The formula for a great learning environment is complex. It includes the basics: size, shape, comfort, safety, equipment and services, but also less tangible items such as image, character, and the way a building helps create a sense of community. We mould these elements to match the ethos, aims and aspirations of the educational organisations we serve.

WHY DKA?

We have extensive experience of designing educational environments for all ages, from nursery, through primary and secondary to further education, along with a particular expertise in designing for students with special needs. We understand the complex elements that contribute to the perfect learning environment, and the raft of associated guidelines and legislation to comply with.

We know that educational providers vary in organisation, ethos and approach, to suit the different students they serve and the localities in which they are based. We have learned to be good listeners, finding out the unique aspects of each organisation in order to create buildings that fit their specific needs. However, consultation is not just about listening, it is also about communication, and we utilise a variety of techniques including models and computer generated images, to convey our ideas in an easy, accessible manner. We also enjoy including students in the design process through workshops, questionnaires and presentations.

Although all state schools are publicly funded, the works are procured in a variety of ways, and are sometimes served by different guidelines and legislation. We work directly for academies, local authorities, contractors, and for the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) as part of a design and build team. As a result we understand the protocols and procedures of each approach, and where beneficial, can bring expertise from one to inform another.

We are not just experts in design, we also understand the impact construction has on both health and safety and the operational requirements of a school. We work closely with schools to minimise risk and disruption, so they can enjoy watching their new building emerge.

SERVICES

Our education experience covers new build, refurbishment and extensions for Nurseries, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Sixth Form Centres, Further Education, Higher Education, Special Needs, ESFA Schools, Free Schools, Adult Learning and Training Centres. This covers traditional classrooms, sports halls, performance and music spaces, laboratories, vocational training and student accommodation. We provide architecture, lead designer and interior design services. We can also act as Principal Designer for CDM 2015.



MENDIP FREE SCHOOL

A CALM ENVIRONMENT TAKES THE STRESS OUT OF LEARNING

DKA were appointed by Sir Robert McAlpine as lead designer for The Mendip School, a special school serving 120 pupils aged four to nine years with autism, language, and social communication needs, located on the Bath and West Showground in Shepton Mallet.

Funded by the ESFA through the Free School programme, the project was subject to strict standard specifications, especially environmental criteria, requiring high levels of even daylight and draft free, low energy ventilation. However, the unique nature of a special school is anything but standard, and the accommodation and functional requirements had to be developed from scratch, through close consultation with the school. Of particular concern was developing a school where all ages of pupils could happily coexist by suitable division without losing that 'one school' feeling. Wrapping the rooms around a central courtyard keeps primary and secondary pupils apart, whilst providing a central focus to unite the school.

High specification and low budget are difficult to balance. A firm focus on function and efficiency enabled the creation of an attractive simple scheme that is easy and enjoyable to use. The light, spacious classrooms open onto enclosed external teaching spaces with playgrounds and panoramic views over the Somerset countryside beyond, whilst the central courtyard provides an enclosed, sheltered, safe space at the heart of the school. The result is a building we are all proud of that is proving to be a fantastic environment for learning.



STONEHENGE SECONDARY SCHOOL

CREATING A CAMPUS FOR LEARNING

DKA are lead designer for a new classroom block and performing arts centre at Stonehenge School in Amesbury. The classroom block provides capacity for expansion by 300 pupils, and the performing arts centre replaces the existing lower school building which is in poor condition. The classroom block started in January 2018, and the performing arts centre will follow once funding has been secured. These buildings are the first two phases of a masterplan strategy which eventually leads to the replacement of all the existing accommodation on site.

The existing buildings at Stonehenge School, along with the games courts, external social spaces, and a small playing field are located on a long narrow site lined with residential properties. The main playing fields are located on a separate site a short distance away. A split site solution was not acceptable to the school, so the new buildings had to be located on the main school site, and the small playing field was the only suitable space available. The small site and close proximity of residential properties required a sensitive solution to satisfy the planning authority whilst the new entrance needed to make a big impact. The solution was to place the new two-storey entrance building at the front of the site, along the access road, screened by existing, mature trees, and the performing arts centre to the rear of the site with the single storey elements of hall, drama studio and dance studio closest to the residential properties beyond. A courtyard between the two buildings, with a covered dining space, provides an external focus for the school and a suitable entrance space for the performing arts centre.

Phase 1: Main Entrance and Classroom Block

The classrooms of this two-storey building are wrapped around a central day lit atrium, with the main entrance and offices facing onto the landscaped pedestrian route, existing trees, and access road beyond. Two pitched roof wings sit comfortably within the residential surroundings, while a two-storey colonnade provides the impact and shelter required by the main entrance. The classroom facades have large regular windows set into robust brickwork. Between these solid classroom elements are the two-storey glazing to the entrance façade, and the glazed student entrances off the courtyard. The main entrance opens into the central atrium, which provides a dramatic internal focus and a valuable student social space.

Phase 2: Performing Arts Centre

The performing arts centre is a startlingly modern addition to the school. The continuous glazing to the ground floor circulation, sheltered by a colonnade, provides an open, welcoming entrance, whilst the green panels to the first floor music suite enliven the façade. On the opposite side of the building the hall, drama and dance studios are expressed as three simple, stepped volumes with subdued, brick facades and minimal glazing to present a sensitive elevation to the adjacent residential buildings.



ASHTON GATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CREATIVE RE-USE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS FOR EDUCATION

Working with Bristol City Council, DKA converted a former tobacco warehouse in Bristol into a three-storey primary school. Although the building is not listed, it is an important landmark in south Bristol and contributes to the character of the local area. We made minimal external changes to preserve the imposing brickwork street frontage whilst making significant internal alterations to create interesting teaching spaces.

The project had to deliver 16 classrooms for junior pupils and a new school hall despite the limitations on external space. Through careful space planning we were able to achieve a layout that worked with the existing building structural grid, made best use of the tall floor to ceiling heights and gave separation between year groups. The rear yard was used for a small playground and a new lift shaft helped solve some of the former factory's level changes.

A key intervention was the hall space, which had to be carved out of an existing office extension. Through a combined architectural and engineering effort, selective removal of floor slabs and beams allowed the creation of a new hall within the current footprint, without the need to remove the existing roof. The resulting school has modern amenities combined with the character and solidity of the existing building offering a unique and exciting environment for pupils and staff.



RIDGEWAY FARM ACADEMY

SIMPLE, FUNCTIONAL AND FLOODED WITH DAYLIGHT

Ridgeway Farm Academy is a primary school delivered through a Section 106 agreement. DKA were appointed by Beard Construction to carry out the detail design of a planning scheme produced by others. However, the design needed changes to meet Wiltshire Council's standards so DKA's appointment included reconfiguring the internal layout within the footprint of the original scheme. DKA and the design team created a simpler, more efficient layout, with a tall central circulation space lit by clerestory windows that transforms the interior. The addition of opening roof lights to the classrooms has created a building where daylight and fresh air permeates every corner.

The hall, which follows the original design, is a tall attractive space, with an irregular arrangement of windows providing high levels of daylight, and a roof mounted, low energy, ventilation system supplying draft-free, fresh air, without the intrusive noise of the adjacent road. Despite the early redesign, the building and grounds were completed on time and within budget.



OLD SARUM PRIMARY SCHOOL



DOUBLING EXISTING SCHOOL INTAKE TO TWO-FORM ENTRY

Old Sarum Primary School extension was carefully designed to avoid dominating the site, situated adjacent to the large volume of the hall. Echoing the architectural language of the existing buildings, a generous roof overhang to the classrooms provides depth and interest and by controlling solar gains, aids the passive environmental strategy.

To facilitate doubling the school from a single to a two-form entry, land was allocated under a section 106 agreement. A key challenge during construction has been working within a live school environment. The outcome has been worth persevering with and the school are thrilled with their new addition.

SHELDON SCHOOL DANCE STUDIO



EFA FUNDED STANDALONE STUDIO

DKA created designs for a successful EFA funding bid for Sheldon School, an Academy in Chippenham. The scheme replaces two existing poor quality huts with a new 250sqm building incorporating a classroom and dance studio. The building has large windows and rooflights to bathe the studio in natural light. Early concepts were modelling with environmental software to achieve the correct balance of glazing and solar gain. The studio will have a wide variety of uses from ballet to after school dance clubs. The project started on site July 2017 with completion programmed for early 2018.

OTHER PROJECTS

- WRITHLINGTON SCHOOL (NEW BUILD SECONDARY SCHOOL)
- BRADLEY STOKE SECONDARY SCHOOL (NEW BUILD SECONDARY SCHOOL)
- TRAFALGAR SCHOOL (NEW TEACHING BLOCK AND SPORTS HALL)
- FOSSE WAY SCHOOL (NINE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS CLASSROOMS)
- BRISTOL BRUNEL ACADEMY (CYBER CAFÉ)
- MANOR FIELDS (NEW BUILD 210 PLACE PRIMARY)
- BRUNEL FIELD (NEW BUILD 420 PLACE PRIMARY)
- SEA MILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL (210 PLACE PRIMARY) AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE
- EASTON PRIMARY SCHOOL (2FE TO 3FE EXPANSION)
- BRIDGE FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL (2FE TO 3FE EXPANSION)

KEY PEOPLE

ANDY BATTY

SENIOR ARCHITECT - BA (HONS) BARCH

Andy has led our Education team since 2003. He places a strong emphasis on consultation, believing that engagement with stakeholders maximises the potential value of a project to school and community and can also be an educational, inspiring and enjoyable process in itself. This approach results in buildings that are not only visually and spatially exciting, but also finely tuned to users' needs and aspirations. As a qualified DQI Facilitator, he also runs independent consultation events on projects designed by others.



FABIEN COUPAT

DIRECTOR - BSC (HONS) MARCH ARB BREEAM ASSESSOR

Fabien has been at DKA for over 15 years, becoming director in 2017. Fabien's education experience includes primary and secondary schools for local authorities and independent schools. He is capable of running large teams and managing stakeholder engagement. Fabien manages our resourcing needs, and is actively involved in maintaining our Quality Management System (QMS). In 2009 he became a Qualified BREEAM Assessor for Education Projects.



SAM PERRY

ARCHITECT - BA (HONS) MARCH PG DIP ARCH ARB RIBA

After receiving a Distinction on the Master of Architecture course at Plymouth University and qualifying as an architect in 2013 Sam has developed a broad range of experience in the education, residential, commercial and charity sectors. He prioritises collaboration between clients, consultants and contractors and is passionate about environmental sustainability.



ABOUT DKA

We apply our design vision and technical expertise to create buildings that are expertly designed, carefully resourced and robustly built.

A firm built on reputation and referral, we are a Bath based independent architectural practice celebrating a proud 25-year history based on quality and relationships.

We pride ourselves on being reliable, personable and professional experts in our respective fields across a multi-sector portfolio of work including residential, commercial, education, healthcare, engineering and defence ranging in size from £0.5m to £50m.

We are an ISO9001 registered practice offering architectural services, master planning, interior design, project management, BIM management and design co-ordination services.

DKA understand that good design must stand the test of time, so for a short time we, as architects, are custodians of the future creating the foundations for the societies of tomorrow.

We look forward to working with you on your next project.

DKA: DESIGNING THE FUTURE, TODAY

"STAFF ARE VERY PERSONABLE AND LISTEN TO THE CLIENT REQUIREMENTS RATHER THAN TRYING TO IMPRESS THEIR OWN INTERPRETATION... SOMETHING THAT PROVES INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT WITHIN THE EDUCATION SECTOR"

LOCAL AUTHORITY EDUCATION PROJECT MANAGER

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