MATERIAL
CONSIDERATIONS
A NATURAL FACTORY

CASE STUDY
HAZELWOOD SCHOOL
Timber technologies
A palette of highly textured natural materials was used which would be stimulating to touch and smell. Naturally weathering timber, reclaimed slate tiles and zinc were used externally. As navigation and orientation through the building was so critical, a ‘sensory wall’ was developed, which doubled as a storage wall. This wall is clad in natural cork tiles, which has warmth and tactile qualities and provides signifiers or messages along the route to confirm the children’s location within the school, allowing them to move around the school with a level of freedom.

The laminated timber structure is constructed from European whitewood which has been clad in Siberian larch.

Special timber-related features
Due to high levels of traffic noise around the site, the school was designed to have high levels of acoustic insulation. This was partially achieved through ‘air plenums’, which allow for natural ventilation, while reducing the ingress of external noise to an acceptable level. The air intake plenum at low level is integrated into a thick wall which has many purposes, including storage. Externally, air filters through modified timber cladding boards, while internally the ventilation grill is integrated as part of the storage door panel.
**Name of building**
Hazelwood School

**Date completed**
2007

**Building type**
Education

**Location**
Glasgow

**Architect**
GM + AD Architects

**Client**
Glasgow City Council

**Main contractor / timber supplier**
Swift Horsman Ltd

**Anticipated lifespan of building**
30 years

**Awards**

- **WAN AWARDS:**
  - World Education Building of the Year 2009, High Commendation
  - IDA International Design Awards 2009
  - RIAI Irish Architecture Awards 2009, Highly Commended
  - Premio Internazionale Dedalo Minosse Alla Committenza Di Architettura 2008, Selected
  - Civic Trust Award 2008
  - Design Share – Honor Award 2008
  - Glasgow Institute of Architects 2008
  - World Architecture Festival Awards 2008, Shortlisted
  - Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design International Architecture Award 2008
  - Roses Design and Advertising Awards 2008, Best Public Building, Silver
  - Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, Andrew Doolan Award 2007, Best Building In Scotland, Final Shortlist

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**Background to building**

Hazelwood School caters for 60 students with multiple disabilities, aged from 2 to 19. Each student has a combination of two or more of the following impairments: visual impairment, hearing impairment, mobility or cognitive impairment. The design focused on creating a safe, stimulating environment for both pupils and staff. The design is aimed at eliminating any institutional aspects and avoiding conventional or standard details, creating a bespoke design that incorporates visual, sound and tactile clues.

The school is set within a landscaped green adjacent to Bellahouston Park in Glasgow, which is surrounded by mature lime trees with three beech trees in the centre. The building snakes through the site, curving around the existing trees, creating a series of small garden spaces, and maximising the potential for more intimate external teaching environments.

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**Material Considerations**

A Natural Factory

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