



Kingsland Primary School

Case Study of an Award Winning School



Architecture+DesignScotland
Ailttearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

Kingsland Primary School

An Award-Winning School: The Comments



^ Main Entrance to the School



^ Classroom exterior

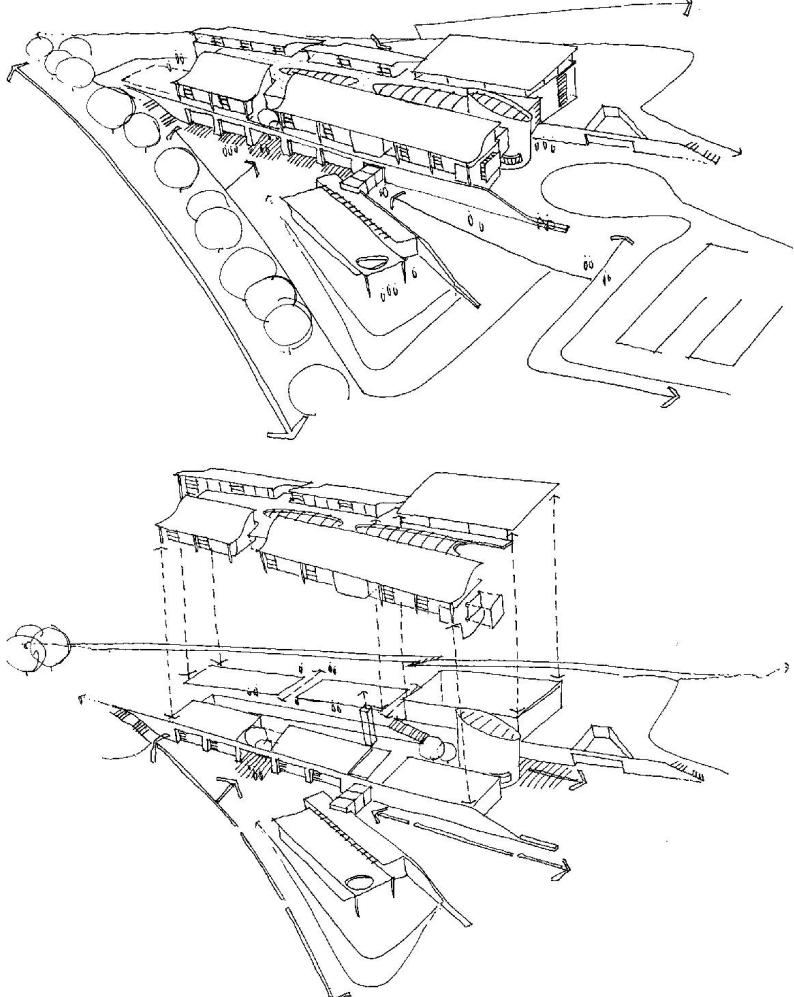
Building of the Year Award, EAA Awards 2011

"The School is sensitively located on a prominent gateway site on the outskirts of Peebles, sitting into the side of a hill located above the River Tweed. Extensive use is made of incorporating both indoor and outdoor spaces into the building design. The completed building provides a stimulating environment for teachers and pupils that noticeably enhances learning and well-being."

Best Education Building 2011, Scottish Design Awards 2011

"What I liked about Kingsland Primary School is that it uses local stone, it produces a really nice sense of street with classrooms off it giving a nice sense of perspective and a sense of grounding the building in the landscape.

"For younger kids in education where they're taught is a hugely important memory that they'll take with them through their lives and I think in this case the architecture has helped to produce a place and a space which is something that they will cherish."



<< Front Page: Classroom exterior
> Right: Concept Sketches

Kingsland Primary School

Context

Kingsland Primary School is built on the edge of Peebles, on an elevation overlooking the town. This positioning of the school provides wonderful views across the surrounding valley, and sends a strong message about the importance placed on education in Peebles, and the Scottish Borders.

Parents and children approach the school by walking up a short slope from the car park. The Headteacher's office is located just next to entrance and so she is able to see everyone approaching and can greet them as they arrive in the morning.

Entrance

The school has an impressive façade, with dry stone walling, metal sculptures and poetry on the main wall as you approach. The entrance is a small, secure lobby, with a reception window and a meeting room on either side of it. The meeting room works well as it allows people to come and go to meetings without having to enter the secure part of the school. The school notes that the lobby space itself would benefit from being larger to accommodate more people, and in particular more buggies.

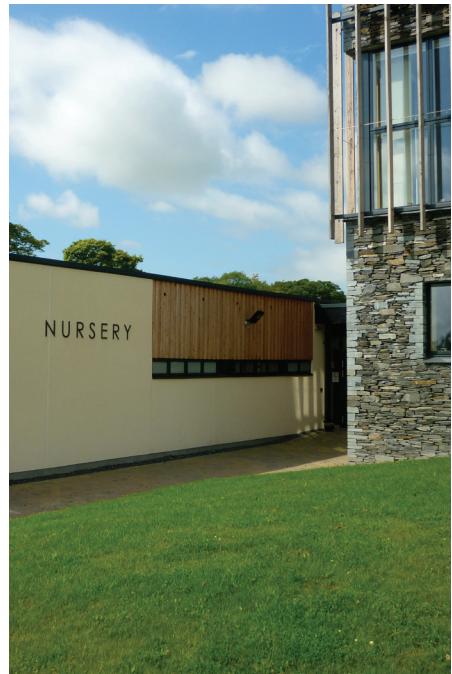
Layout of School

The nursery building is situated to left of the main door, and has its own entrance and identity. Whilst it is connected to the school internally and can be accessed via the main entrance, it is a small self-contained building, with its own outdoor space.

There is a fence between the outdoor space of the Nursery and lower primary, however there is an important visual link between the two, and the pupils can easily travel between both areas. This is important for the transition between the Nursery and the Primary School.

Transitions between classes throughout the school have also been taken into consideration - the lower primary year groups are on the ground floor, and the upper school pupils are situated on the first floor.

All but four classrooms have access to the outdoors. Different classes have access to different areas - the nursery has its own garden, the lower years have a grassy area to the front and the upper primaries have their own veranda. The middle classes on the top floor have access to the outdoor space at the rear of the building.



^ Entrance to the Nursery



^ Secure lobby with meeting room

Kingsland Primary School

Design Features



^ Double space classroom

Teaching Spaces

In the lower school, a flexible space has been created by incorporating a movable wall within a large room, positioned to allow two classrooms to become one. This is of benefit particularly for a year group which doesn't fit into a standard classroom - at Kingsland their current Primary 1 has 47 pupils. The benefits are further increased as it also encourages team teaching, and joined up working between classes. The headteacher would recommend incorporating this feature in future designs.

Core classrooms are also a good size (64sq metres), and work really well. The central heating panels on the ceilings work well, as do the windows which open manually.

There are a number of tutorial rooms and breakout spaces along the corridor, which are easily accessible and allow for supervised small group working and one-one tuition. There are two small tutorial rooms on the upper floor which are full of light, and with rounded walls - they are attractive spaces to work in, and as a result are well used spaces.

Windows and Natural Light

The classrooms are light and bright from floor to ceiling windows, which make the spaces feel open, and also provide a strong visual link to the outdoor spaces. The amount of glazing does mean that there is a reduction of space for display purposes.

Cloakrooms and Corridors

The cloakrooms are recessed off the corridors, with a partition which prevents all the children's coats and bags from spilling into the hall. They are colour coded to match the associated classroom, which the children love as it gives them a sense of classroom identity and belonging.

The upper corridor is filled with natural light which streams in from the roof lights spaced along its length. Light wells originally planned for the lower corridor were cut from the budget leaving this corridor less bright.

Fittings and Finishings

The palette of finishes throughout the school has been kept to a minimum, with timber and white rendering on the ceilings and walls. Metal work and piping on the ceilings have been left exposed. Although the material and colour selection is straightforward, the school has a fresh and light aesthetic.



^ Lots of natural light and connection to the outdoors

>> Top: Corridor with light wells, with recessed cloakrooms
Bottom: Outdoor veranda for the Primary 7's



Kingsland Primary School

Key Lessons

Classrooms with Moveable Walls

By creating large, double spaced classrooms that have moveable partition walls, there is flexibility to accommodate different class sizes and teaching styles.

Use simple materials and colour in the interiors

Kingsland feels fresh and light, partly because the finishes and fittings have been kept simple, with white rendering and timber used in the corridors and classrooms. This not only looks good, but doesn't divert large amounts of budget into these areas.

Lots of natural light

Full height glazing in the classrooms let in a lot of light and allows for a strong connection between inside and outside space.

Personalised Touches

There are a number of personalised touches, which have really supported the move to a new school and given a sense of ownership and identity. Personalised tiles with the handprints of the pupils from the old school are displayed along the corridor above the cloakrooms. These were created in the old school and brought into the new school. There are also photos on the entrance wall of those pupils who were involved in the early consultations, but had gone to high school before the new school was opened.

Non-teaching Areas

There is a large dining area and gym hall, with a partition between the two. When the partition is open the whole school can fit in the space. It is also used by the community in the evening and weekends for various events. The room works well for these activities, although sound can travel and disturb separate groups.

There remains an issue with the lock down facility, the purpose of which is to ensure that the teaching areas are not accessible when the community are using the building. However, due to the configuration of the stairwells and access to the toilet facilities, it is still difficult to keep people out of the teaching areas.

The library is a large space overlooking the town and surrounding countryside, and can hold a third of the school. The pupils really like the space, which has a tall ceiling, full length windows, and the fantastic views.

Storage

In addition to an extremely well organised central resource area, each classroom has its own storage cupboard. The Headteacher feels that given the ample communal storage, the cupboards within each classroom can lead to individual accumulation of materials.

Outdoors

The outdoors at Kingsland are a really big feature of the school. There is a lot of different outdoor space for the pupils to run around in, with views across the surrounding area. The design has taken advantage of the space to create access outside for the majority of the classrooms. Doors to the outdoors are a major asset, and are used often.



Project Information

Location:	Peebles
Architects:	Archial Architects (formerly SMC Parr)
Client:	Scottish Borders Council
Completion Year:	2010
Age Range of Pupils:	Nursery to Primary 7
School Roll:	400 pupils (approx.)
Awards:	Winner of EAA Building of the Year 2011 Edinburgh Architectural Association Awards (EAA)
	Winner of Education Building or Project Award Scottish Design Awards 2011
	Highly Commended for Excellence in Design for Teaching and Learning: Primary BCSE Best of British Schools Awards 2011

This Case Study has been produced by the Schools Programme at Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS). For more information about what we do, visit SmarterPlaces.org.

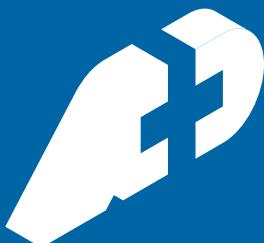
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Produced in association with

With thanks to Scottish Borders Council and Kingsland Primary School

