

Report on Best Practice Facilities

September 2010

Name and location of facility:

Donaldson School, Scotland

Team for visit:

Regina O'Connell	John MacPolin
Liz McLafferty	Sylvia Nolan
Liam O'Dwyer	Bernard McGlade
Peter Meade	

Date of visit:

30th September – 1st October 2010

Contacts at facility:

CEO of School	Janice MacNeill
Facilities	Ian Duncan and Helen Greene
Residential	Maureen Greig
IT	Elaine Johanfar

Description of services provided at the facility:

School from Preschool to Preparation for Life (3-18 years).
Residence available Monday – Thursday if required.
State of the art sports facilities and education facilities.

Description of the facility itself:

Facility is of a very high standard on 5 acres of ground just outside a small town. The facility is entirely new with the school, preschool and sports facilities together and the residence 50 metres to the rear of the site. The site is surrounded by countryside and forest.

Exterior:

Very attractive building with glass, pvc and brick exterior surrounded by gardens, forest and countryside. Good colour scheme with use of strong colours to emphasise the different usages of the buildings.

Interior:

The interior is state of the art with top class IT and audiology facilities. The lighting is exceptional and the classrooms all have white boards and are sound proofed. There is a Phonak automatic frequency setting in each room to ensure best use of ear phones and cochlear implants.

Environment:

Very attractive mix of gardens, countryside and forest.

Lessons for Village Project:

Lighting – no noise

White boards with built in overhead (unifi 35)

Automatic frequency setter

Lino with thick ceiling tiles or carpet with thin ceiling tiles.

Public areas not especially audiology proofed to mirror hearing world environment.

Don't over specify – keep materials to a standard that are easily replaceable.

Positives for inclusion:

All residential care staff must have qualification in care and sign language

Special indoor courses available

Drain water used to flush toilets

Heating for pool used to heat school

Cover in pool stored under water

Clocks all set centrally

State of the art sensory and audiology room (£80,000)

No tv's in individual rooms in residences

3 pc's per class and 2 trolleys of 6 computers

No fixed furniture

Flexible wiring for computers is vital

Negatives to be avoided:

Space in residence for social interaction too small

Showers need individual and central drain facility

Made error with lights – too high specification

Made error with fire alarms – built into smoke alarm

Positives:

All doors have finger guards

Signage is all custom made

2 mobile white boards available as well as in each classroom

All notice boards covered to protect material

Sound system that is used is infra red based

Colours through building indicate which part of the building you are in

Reception desk curved overhead to improve sound quality with built in loop device

All residence rooms were single occupancy with en-suite, doors lock from inside automatically for safety

Summary:

Great visit, very worthwhile in terms of the Deaf Village and the upgrading of the schools and residences.