

St. John Primary School - Landscape Scheme


Location:

Basingstoke, Hampshire

Client:

St. John Primary School and the Diocese of Basingstoke

Value: £34,000

Completed: August 2009

Specialist teams:

HCC Property Services Landscape Design

St. John School is an aided school that lies in the heart of Basingstoke, Hampshire. HCC Property Services Landscape Team were approached by the client to remodel, extend and improve their reception playground to reflect the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum' statutory guidance introduced in 2008. The existing space was in a poor state of repair, offering no shade and limited meaningful play .

Central to the design proposal was the provision of free flow learning, and child led play so children can access a fully equipped space at any time. The design promotes creative, imaginative, active & passive play with distinct zones, and encourages children in hands on play and learning.

The result is a warm and welcoming space that allows children to socialise with their peers and explore a rich mix of activities in any weather condition.

The timber stage has tall sides for draping cloth and creating pirates and fairy tale spaces – the blackboard can become a stage set, with images of sceneries chalked on. Pupils can practice their dance steps, or use the ghetto blaster to sing to the class. The children do their own chalkings on the new bike and trike track so the space goes from being a fire station to a roundabout at their whim, and bring out clip boards to make list of whose turn it is, or how fast they go round. The track is enclosed with cloth panels so bikes do not dominate. The difference in level has enabled the creation of a soft rubber surface bank for rolling balls and toys, and large scale water play.

Key Benefits

- Reshaping the limited space available has provided the school with an entire new slant on delivering the curriculum by offering distinct yet flexible zones to bring the learning outside no matter what the weather.
- The permanent furniture, equipment and canopy minimises set-up time, freeing teacher time, and extends the children's daily learning experiences.
- Teachers can easily bring out a range of learning materials and cover curriculum subjects outdoors.

“ The children thrive on the area- the home base has been a cave, under the sea, shops... the children perform and experiment, roll cars, dance to the audience... they are out there playing all the time... they did not want to be out for so long before, they really love it and come into the school more confident. ”

Viv Hubbard, Reception Teacher



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