Case study - DfE

St Margaret's CofE Primary School

The project involved expanding a primary school's Early Years facility with an approximately 775 m² modular, two-storey classroom building in Manchester.

DfE Framework Alignment: Delivery followed best practice frameworks via North West Construction Hub's Medium Value Framework; Utilised digital construction for compliance, including first Asset Information Model at BIM Level 2.

Educational Outcomes: Provides new nursery facilities and three reception classrooms in modular spaces to support early education pedagogy; Volumetric modular design enabled rapid scale-up to meet increased demand.

Sustainability Goals: The project achieved a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.

DfE Standards: Working closely with the design team, Alan Wood & Partners (AWP) delivered structural engineering solutions aligned with the Department for Education (DfE) requirements. This involved a multi-stage review process, ensuring all drawings and designs were signed off and approved by the DfE. Space planning met DfE standards; Digital modeling ensured compliance with daylighting, acoustics, ventilation, and safeguarding via BIM Level 2 protocols.

Alan Wood & Partners

Location:
Manchester

Client:
Premier Modular Ltd

Architect:
Lovelock Mitchell Architects

Value:
£3m

Structural Engineering

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)

Engineer / Manage / Deliver /

Case study

Cont'd...

Design Solutions: Off-site modular construction erected in just five days on a live school site; Phased installation planned to reduce impact on pupils and school operations as the building is located on an existing school playground.

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC): The building was constructed using a volumetric modular offsite manufacturing process through Premier Modular.

Consultation Process: The design team collaborated with the Department for Education (DfE) and the school to ensure the new facility met all specified requirements. This was achieved through a series of client engagement meetings and design reviews conducted by the DfE.

Feedback Integration: Modular design refinements were driven by school's operational needs and stakeholder input underpinned by the associated design guidance & standards. An example of this would be the crane and module scheduling aligned with holiday periods to minimise disruption.

Drawings & Plans: AWP provided technical drawings and design calculations for superstructure only. The level of detail allowed a client appointed engineer to undertake the substructure and other civil engineering matters.

The strong collaboration between all parties led to the project receiving a Highly Commended award in the Integration and Collaborative Working category at the NWRCA. Additionally, the project won the Digital Construction Award at the North West Regional Construction Awards and was shortlisted as a finalist in the National Constructing Excellence Awards.

Educational Benefits: Bright, modern teaching environment created with minimal operational disruption providing additional capacity for reception and nursery pupils.

Alan Wood & Partners

Location:
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Client:
Premier Modular Ltd

Architect:
Ellis Williams Architects

Value:
£3m

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Cont'd...

Continuous Improvement: Early off-site engagement essential for tight programme restraints. Integration of BIM Level 2 and DCP set precedents for future school projects in the region; Phased crane scheduling enhanced site coordination and minimised impact, valuable for similar live-education expansions.

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