

Holy Cross Primary School

Location: Swindon, UK

Client: Diocese of Clifton

Dates of involvement: 2012 - 2015

Construction Cost: £3.5M

Size: 1,915sqm

Awards:

- Off-Site Awards Best Use of Timber - Highly Commended
- Off-Site Awards Public Sector Project of the Year - Highly Commended
- Structural Timber Awards - Finalist in the Education and Architect Categories
- LABC Building Excellence Awards Regional Finalist

“The features of the school which especially excite staff are the spacious reception area and children’s entrance, the fact that each class has its own designated outdoor space and the general feeling of openness and light throughout the building. Teachers like the breakout areas and management enjoys the fact that a walk up through the building facilitates a snapshot of the school at work.”

Tony McAteer, Headteacher

Imagine a place to learn that promotes wellbeing.

This innovative off-site manufactured school was developed from a Cullinan Studio-led research collaboration responding to the Government’s challenge to reduce cost and increase speed of delivery for primary school buildings. By reinterpreting the legislative spatial guidelines, we have created an innovative school that enables clever use of space, for dynamic learning environments.

Optimising the pupils’ and teachers’ wellbeing is at heart of the design. Key aims included the use of natural timber which is proven to reduce stress, generous circulation that enables learning and play to extend beyond the classrooms, high pitched ceilings with roof windows to create plenty of light and fresh air, and large windows looking out on surrounding fields with each classroom then opening directly on to outdoor play space.

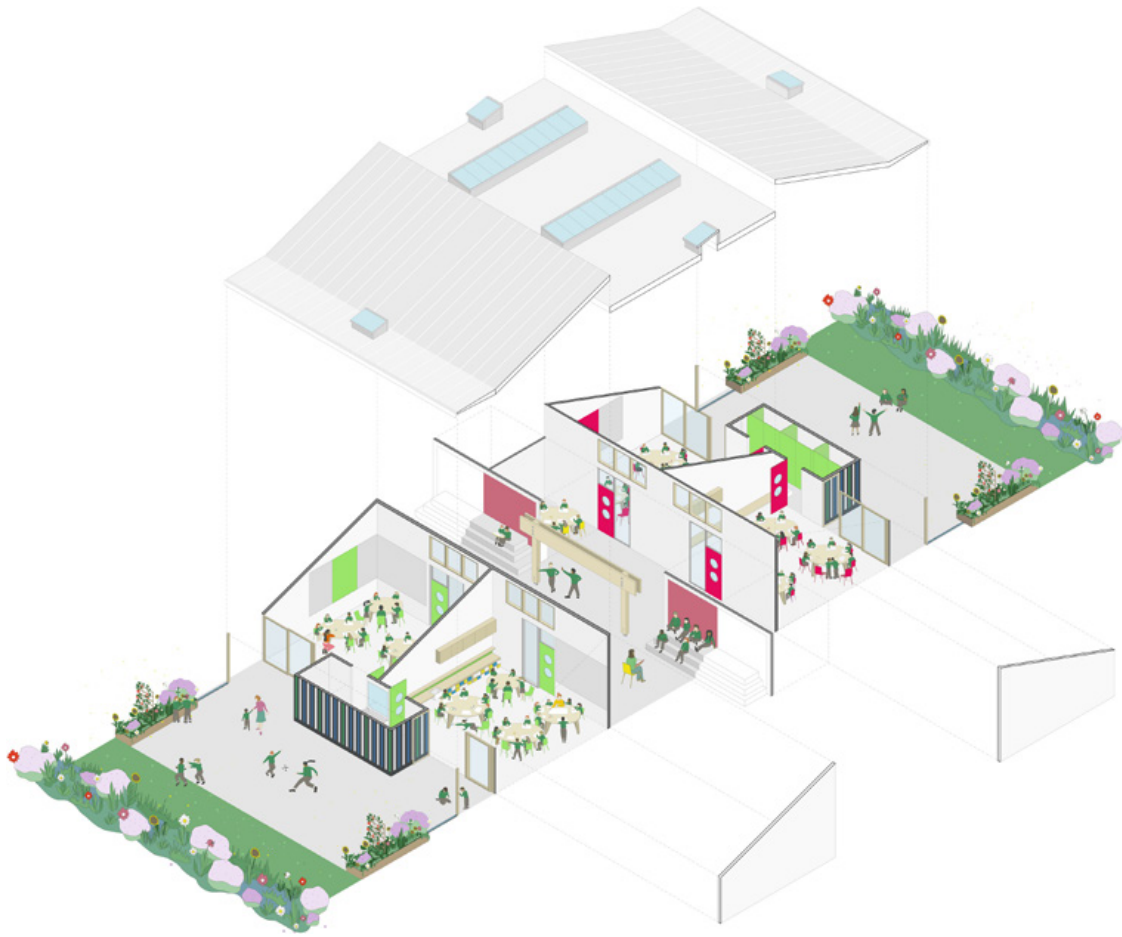
Collaborating with Smith & Wallwork Structural Engineers, Cundall Environmental Engineers, Peter Gittins & Associates Cost Planners and national timber-frame manufacturer Steward Milne, we combined our experience in creating successful learning environments to develop a low carbon, off-site modular system that can be adapted to suit both the requirements of a site and the educational aspirations of the building’s users.

The main reception and hall are close to the street and can be opened out-of-hours for community use while safely closing off the classrooms. The character and arrangement of these spaces creates a welcoming environment for all who use it.

We continue to develop innovative designs for places of education, drawing from the achievements of Holy Cross as a benchmark of what can be achieved through collaboration stakeholders, designers and constructors.



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Above: Exploded axonometric section - The single storey building with sloping roofs allows all classrooms to have direct access to covered external learning spaces with views over the playing fields. It also ensures internal spaces have excellent natural light and ventilation.

