



North Denes Primary School, Norfolk

North Denes Primary School is a new 2-form entry school in Great Yarmouth, catering for up to 420 pupils.

Summary

North Denes Primary School relocated to a brand-new building in October 2020 giving the Headteacher and her staff the perfect opportunity to rethink how they and their pupils use their spaces and to work with designers and architects to create a modern 21st Century learning environment. The library was a vital part of the plan as the school wanted to embed a reading culture and promote reading for pleasure at every opportunity.

The challenge

The school is located in an area of high deprivation with just under half of its pupils eligible for free school meals. "Encouraging children to read at home is a huge challenge, very few children have access to books outside of school" says Jackie Tasker, Business Manager. The new school was a great opportunity to raise the status of reading by creating an attractive reading space for use by all ages.

"We love the new space; it feels much more open and is a real selling point when showing parents around."

Jackie Tasker - Business Manager

BookSpace

How BookSpace helped

The brief was to create an open-plan layout which offered flexibility, plenty of book display and areas for group work and relaxed reading. Using BookSpace's unique school library shelving system, the BookSpace designers drew up a plan which included a combination of wall shelving, mid-floor straight and curved bookcases and integrated seating to create a layout with different zones for different purposes. Curved shelving is always a good addition to any library space as it helps to make the area feel softer and more free-flowing. All the mid-floor shelving is mobile and the heavy-duty castors make it easy to move and reconfigure the library layout in a matter of minutes.

"The old library was damp, cold and had IT blackspots. We just had shelving around the edges and tables in the middle but it felt cramped and uninviting. The new library is a different story... we love the new space; it feels much more open and is a real selling point when showing parents around" says Jackie.

The school wanted a special feature for the library which would help to reinforce positive messages around reading and make the library a place where children want to visit. The school chose BookSpace's ever-popular Reading Hideaway which has seating on the inside and face-forward book display on the outside which is designed to encourage children to choose a book independently and to provide a safe and comfy space in which to read.

The school was keen to create a calm, relaxing reading environment for the children and move away from the bright, primary colours of the old library. Choosing a natural maple finish, white shelving together with



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Gary Underhill - NPS Group

a deep, red accent for the walls and soft-furnishings resulted in a clean, stylish look which complemented the school branding. White book shelving is an increasing popular choice, especially for those schools who want the library to act as a decompression zone where children can visit to enjoy some quiet time. A simple colour scheme also allows the books to be the hero of the library as it doesn't compete with the bright book covers, it complements them.



The new library was installed in October half-term and it didn't take long to fill the shelves. "We're so pleased with the result! Due to the pandemic, we haven't been able to officially open the library yet but now the children are back we can't wait to see their reactions!" says Jackie.

Working with BookSpace

Most BookSpace projects are organised directly with the staff at the school via our free design service but in the case of North Denes Primary School we worked with Gary Underhill from NPS Group who were responsible for refurbishing the whole of the school. We have worked with NPS on over 50 projects as they can see the value that a specialist library company adds to a project.

"Having worked closely with the BookSpace team for several years, we have always been impressed by the designs, quality and installation service. From the initial design through to installation, the process is simple and our clients are always thrilled with the results" Gary Underhill, NPS Group.