



Reception Classroom Building, Bedfordshire

Client: Southill Lower School

Project value: £180,000

Problem:

This local village school is set in a rural location within Southill, itself part of a large country estate near Biggleswade. The school needed extra space to accommodate their Reception Class, and because the school had limited land for expansion, the clear choice was to convert a long slim brick outbuilding at the rear of the site which had recently been used for storage. However, a structural survey revealed that the building could not be economically restored. The close proximity of the site to its neighbours also posed a number of liaison issues. Demolition seemed the only feasible option.

Solution:

After close consultation with school staff, governors and the local authority, we devised a scheme to demolish the old outbuilding and replace it with a new building on an almost identical footprint. This satisfied the planning department as we also ensured the design replicated the old building, using the most attractive features such as the distinctive buff brick and pitched tiled roof. The school needed storage for play equipment, and so a separate room was provided with external access.

Result:

The school has benefitted from a modern classroom with its own en-suite WC facilities; all built to modern construction standards. The building is economical to run and provides a fit for purpose new classroom for the children. There is also a neat external canopy for outdoor play. Headteacher Fran Murray said, "Previously we had employed an architect to draw up our development plans, but then we needed someone who could really push the project forward and PCMS Design were very suited to that role. Throughout the project, they were full of good ideas, including at the aftercare stage. I hope to work with PCMS Design in the future, and wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to anyone looking for a design and project management solution."