


acoustics

There I was writing an article for Special Children on acoustics and all of a sudden the government made an announcement. Maybe I should try writing about world peace next time. Anyway, I learnt a lot about the issues of acoustics, especially in new buildings which seem to favour large open spaces, glass, concrete and busy areas for people to congregate in. These large echoey spaces make it hard for deaf pupils but also cause problems for kids who are learning English or those learning a foreign language who need to hear pronunciation very clearly. The National Deaf Children's Society has been pressing for better buildings. Then there was Sir Alan Steer's report which shows that poor acoustics are one of the causes of bad behaviour. Kids can't hear, don't pay attention and find something else to do in the classroom. We've all seen it happen.

Despite the overwhelming body of evidence that acoustics matter, the head teachers I have spoken to recently said they did not want to spend their money on improving acoustics. Then, almost out of the blue, last Friday -16th October- the government issued a press release, 'Acoustic testing to be made compulsory in all Building Schools for the Future projects.' Yep that will do nicely.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0191