

# TESTING THE DESIGN BRIEF FOR MARBLE HILL PLAYCENTRES AGAINST GOOD PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS

12 March 2019, Martin Habel

## 1. Guidance

- 1.1. The guidance for design is taken not only from legislative minimum requirements but also from researched briefs for achieving good practice.
- 1.2. One reference is Building Bulletin 102\* issued by the Dept for Children, Schools and Families: "Designing for disabled children and children with special educational needs. Guidance for mainstream and special needs schools."
- 1.3. A second reference as the comparative is Kent County Council Brief: "Early Years Foundation Stage Setting Standards for Learning, Development and Care from birth to five" 2011 by Sayer, M., Knowler H., Bushell, V. **Appendix [\*]**

This document references:

- Equality Act
- BS8300:2009
- 2010 Design of Buildings to meet the needs of disable persons
- Education (School and Premises Act) 1999

## 2. Building Bulletin 102

2.1. This emphasises

- means of escape for the disabled
- ergonomic details
- accessible circulation
- more space
- safe clearance around furniture
- good acoustics
- visual contrast and texture
- reduced levels of stimuli
- sensory elements
- flexibility
- promotion of health and wellbeing
- specialist medical facilities

2.2. Notable statements are:

pg 36 "For new build accommodation, reducing the recommended floor area is not advisable"

pg 43 "Climbing stairs is part of the learning process"

pg 43 "Special schools need greater overall circulation than mainstream schools...usually at least 25% of the gross internal area

## 3. Early Years Design Brief

- 3.1. Taking a notional class unit of 35 then extrapolating from the KCC brief with reductions for the ability to share toilets, etc in part and additions for special needs:

Area per unit =

	Brief for standard nursery	Extrapolating for benchmark
	26 places	35 places
Teaching	70m <sup>2</sup>	94m <sup>2</sup> (+35%)
Kitchen/Serving	10-12m <sup>2</sup>	10m <sup>2</sup>
Pupil Toilets	12m <sup>2</sup>	12m <sup>2</sup> (MDN own)
Disabled Toilet/Staff	6m <sup>2</sup>	6m <sup>2</sup>
Shower	3m <sup>2</sup>	3m <sup>2</sup> (one for Nursery)
Entrance/Coats	8m <sup>2</sup>	8m <sup>2</sup>
Resource Centre	4m <sup>2</sup>	4m <sup>2</sup>
Medical Room	4m <sup>2</sup>	shared (see below)
TOTAL per unit	129-131m <sup>2</sup>	137m <sup>2</sup>

This works on the basis of generally free flowing space with no designated corridors.

Therefore, 4 user units (OOC, Nursery, Skylarks, OKMT) might require a total of 548m<sup>2</sup> as base area before adjustments to special provision.

Deductions:

- Only 2 kitchens needed = -20m<sup>2</sup>
- Sharing by Nursery of non-nursery units of toilets = -40m<sup>2</sup>

Additions:

- Special Needs add 25% to area for 2 units = +68M<sup>2</sup>
- Special assisted change and hoist = +9m<sup>2</sup>
- Shared toilets, + music and AP adjacent = +10m<sup>2</sup>
- Baby change x 2 = +6m<sup>2</sup>
- 2 sensory rooms = +20m<sup>2</sup>
- Shared Cookery base = +10m<sup>2</sup>
- Medical room = +4m<sup>2</sup>

TOTAL required for 4 units at 137m<sup>2</sup> each, less deductions, plus additions = 615m<sup>2</sup>

Plus flexible interior Adventure Play area and community space = +100m<sup>2</sup>  
(Adventure Play interior is based on what is operational experience at the site.)

TOTAL= 715m<sup>2</sup>

*Drawn brief* = 796m<sup>2</sup>, which includes specialist provision for music therapy, office space for the charities, and more.

#### 4. The Flexible Approach

4.1. The calculations in section 3 can only serve as a check that the designated area overall is neither excessive nor inappropriately small. In reality, the different users

share certain facilities, having core areas from which they can expand. For Skylarks and OKMT, the same user groups are often shared. The user number is a benchmark that, because of the nature of the building, can allow for growth. What would be pure circulation in any other design is valuable user space for therapeutic socialising.

## **5. Conclusion**

The drawn design brief matches the requirements for good practice design and is neither excessive nor undersized.

\*Note that this area guidance is superseded by BB104, but general guidance is still relevant.