

Lord Lawson of Beamish Community School

The school is a mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 18.

In line with the National Curriculum these pupils are taught in broad bands appropriate to their individual abilities with various option opportunities being introduced as they progress. Every student as part of the KS4 Curriculum follows a GNVQ course with choices being made from a variety of courses. The school offers a daily act of worship and is open to children of all religious faiths and creeds.

The existing school is built on a house block basis and has nine buildings, some interconnected with four units of a temporary nature. Most of these buildings were built in the late 60's. The gross internal area of the existing school buildings is 12,777 m².

The new school facilities will address the following areas of concern of the existing buildings:

- Generally the teaching accommodation is 'as built' which is cramped and often below current DfES net area standards. There are no ground floor reception, management or administration offices.
- The car park, school entrance and internal road layouts are particularly unsuitable and daily cause safety concerns.
- The running costs of the existing buildings are uneconomic.
- The existing buildings have high levels of asbestos, which must be carefully managed with regards to repairs and maintenance.

The new school building incorporates a building management system in the heating and ventilation systems resulting in the energy efficient operation of the building.

Other facts about the new school facilities include:

- It will cater for 1500 pupils.
- The gross internal floor area of the new school facilities is 12,780m² over 3 floors.
- Construction has been planned and programmed so there is no need for temporary classrooms.
- Work represents a capital investment in the region of £21 million.
- The new school has 34 general classrooms, 9 ICT rooms, 10 science laboratories, together with design, technology, art and music classrooms.
- External facilities include a floodlit multi use games area, artificial turf sports pitch and sports field to Sport England standards.
- Construction work on the new buildings began in February 2006.
- New school buildings ready for occupation for the start of the Autumn term 2007/2008.

- Following demolition of old school buildings, external works complete in Summer Term 2007/2008.