Project: St Cecilia's RC High School, Longridge, Preston

Client: St Cecilia's RC High School (as part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford)

Architect: Greenhalgh & Williams Partnership

Fabricator: Heritage Trade Frames

Installer: Coupe Windows

Product: Curtain walling, windows

A LESSON IN PVC-U FOR ST CECILIA'S RC HIGH SCHOOL

The multi-phase refurbishment of a high school in Lancashire has seen Profile 22 supply state-of-the-art PVC-U curtain walling and window systems to replace existing timber frames, providing staff and pupils with a warmer environment in which to learn.

St Cecilia's RC High School is located on a windy hill in Longridge, Preston, and as such is exposed to the elements, especially during autumn and winter. Architect Paul Flood of Greenhalgh & Williams Architects, explained: "The old timber windows had been in place since the school was built in **1962**. They were in a state of disrepair having been battered by the weather over time, so a key component of our specification was weather-proofing."

For both phases, Profile 22's worked with Greenhalgh & Williams and fabricator, Heritage Trade Frames, to meet this need head on. The Profile 22 SK200 Curtain Wall System was incorporated with the latest Profile 22 Optima casement windows with 1.4 u-values to minimise heat loss.

Laying the foundations

In phase one of the refurbishment, completed in 2014 during term time, locally based Profile 22 Approved Window Contractor, Heritage Trade Frames, replaced 74 windows and a 175m^2 of curtain walling on the three-storey elevation at the front of the school, as well as an adjacent one-storey technology building. Heritage Trade Frames contracted its approved installers, Coupe Windows, to complete the installation.

Funds to undertake capital repairs to voluntary aided religious schools like St Cecilia's are allocated annually through the Local Authority Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) programme, in this instance the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford. A proviso is that funds must be spent in the year they're given. In most cases, refurbishment work on schools is earmarked for the summer holidays to limit disruption to pupils and staff, but allocation of funding outside of this time means this isn't always possible.

Henry Coupe, owner of Coupe Windows, commented: "Due to the timing of the funding for the work, the majority of the installation had to take place in term time, which meant we had to work around pupils and staff and vacate classrooms in a methodical way to minimise disruption and enhance site safety.

"The flexibility of the school and our know-how in these types of environments ensured work was carried out without any significant hitches."

The second phase

The second phase saw the replacement of curtain walling on the rear, three-storey elevation of the school and standard windows on the two-side gables. Again, due to the timing of the funding, the majority of the installation by Coupe Windows had to take place in the 2016 winter term time, with weather conditions posing certain challenges.

However, having completed the installation in phase one, Coupe Windows and the school were able to accommodate for this again – and had the know-how to iron out any issues from the initial phase of work. The work was completed in February 2017, one week ahead of schedule.

Collaboration

Before carrying out this project, Greenhalgh & Williams Architects had worked with other Profile 22 and the Approved Window Contractors network previously. Paul Flood said: "I knew Profile 22 were reputable, well known and offer a great level of support – before, during and after work is completed."

"The Profile 22 in-house design team assisted with the design of the fenestration to help create the right feel and look the school wanted. For example, ahead of phase one they provided the school with before and after pictures from other education projects in their portfolio to demonstrate what could be achieved with PVC-U."

Andrew Reid, commercial sales director at Profile 22, commented: "Future-proofing is about capitalising on the whole-life value of products and satisfying current and prospective technical demands.

To achieve this, we work directly with supply chain partners and our approved network of window contractors addressing issues such as weathering, noise reduction, acoustic and thermal performance."

Mr Ivan Catlow, St Cecilia's head teacher praised the success of the project: "Our new windows definitely look the part. We expect to see a real improvement in keeping the school warm during colder weather, as well as lower energy bills."