

Brooksbank School



Brooksbank School in Halifax, West Yorkshire, is the second largest secondary school in the area, with over 1500 students.

The school itself was built in 1911, with parts being extended in the early 1960s. Therefore certain areas of the school, including the school hall, needed to be brought into the 21st century – but on a very tight budget.

Achieving comfortable acoustics in learning environments can be a real challenge. The hall at Brooksbank School had to function as an examination hall, an assembly room, a theatre and a dining room, so clearly the ceiling has to be able to accommodate all of these varying acoustic demands. The original ceiling was a barrel shaped, timber lined structure that was not appropriate for any of the hall's functioning purposes. Due to budget constraints, an entirely new ceiling was out of the question, and so the architect, Peter Gallagher of Langtry Langton, put forward the idea of using Armstrong canopies, and painting the original ceiling above to a black finish;

“Armstrong Optima canopies are perfect for use in a space such as this, especially when the budget isn't available to completely replace the ceiling. The Optima canopies provided high levels of sound absorption helping to achieve the right level of reverberation for improved intelligibility and the curved visual provided an elegant yet stylish finish to the school hall. Ceiling contractor Acorn Ceilings Ltd installed 40 Optima canopies. The curve of the original ceiling meant that the design and positioning of the panels was crucial. Jane Blackburn, school administrator, said “The overall effect is exactly what we were looking for – we are delighted with the finished result”.