

# Research Centre for Learning and Teaching

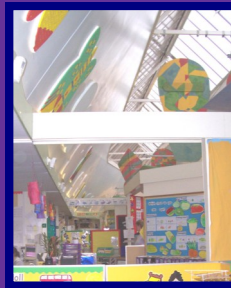
## LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

### How does the physical environment affect learning?



#### What do the school premises of the past have to tell us about Building Schools for the Future?

In 2003, the Government committed to renewing, through replacement or refurbishment, the entire stock of state English secondary schools: Building Schools for the Future. CfLaT has been involved in reviewing historical developments and disseminating lessons learnt from previous waves of school building. The outcomes from this work are widely cited nationally and Centre members are acknowledged as experts in the field.



#### What can communities do in practice to make the most of their environment?

CfLaT recognizes the physical environment does not determine learning or teaching, but it can help or hinder particular approaches. To develop their premises, schools need to build on the extensive, yet complex, knowledge and experience of their users, including learners, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and the wider community.



#### Can the participation of users support the design process?

Consultation over school buildings has tended in the past to centre on educators, and so miss out direct involvement of students and other key users. This is changing and members of CfLaT have worked with local secondary schools and other partners to develop a range of tools to support this process.

*“The relationship between people and their environment is complex and therefore any outcomes from a change in setting are likely to be produced through an involved chain of events. It is the defining and understanding of these mediating chains that is key and must take account of issues relating to ownership, relevance, purpose and permanence”.*  
(Woolner et al., 2007, p.62)



For more information about the Centre's work on Learning Environments see:

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/>



