

## Guidance on the Constructional Standards for Schools

From 1 April 2001, maintained schools ceased to have exemption from the Building Regulations and are now subject to normal building control procedures.

This guidance lists the Approved documents accompanying the Building Regulations which now apply to school buildings, together with certain school specific standards, contained in the DfES Constructional Standards. These should continue to be applied to building works at schools until such time as they are absorbed into the Approved Documents. This guidance clarifies what they are, *with such amendments as necessary to reflect changes in the Approved Documents since 1997.*

There are many other regulations which also apply to the construction of school buildings which are outside the scope of the Building Regulations, eg, The Construction (Design and Management Regulations) 1994 and the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. These other regulations are not listed below, as the intention is only to give guidance on how the new Building Control arrangements impact on Constructional Standards for Schools.

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## **Guidance to the DfES Constructional Standards for School Buildings April 2001**

From 1 April 2001, LEA maintained schools ceased to have exemption from the Building Regulations. As a result, building works at schools are now treated in the same way as in other user groups and are subject to normal building control procedures. This is a change in the approval process, and does not affect the standards applicable to schools. The change does not in any way affect the status of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999, which continues to apply to all schools.

For many years the DfES has set constructional standards for schools, the most recent ones being the 1997 Constructional Standards. Most of these particular requirements for school buildings have been embodied in the Approved Documents (ADs) which provide guidance on the Building Regulations. However, it may be some time before the few remaining school specific standards within the Constructional Standards are absorbed into the relevant ADs. It has been agreed with DTLR that designers and builders should continue to have regard to these standards for building works at maintained schools, until such time as the relevant ADs have been revised. These standards relate to the subjects addressed by parts E, F, K, L and M of the Building Regulations and either supplement the regulations or, where regulations exist, provide additional guidance to that contained in the ADs. The following table lists what these standards are.

### **Notes**

1. References to "Part A", "Part B", "Part C", "Part D", "Part E", "Part F", "Part G", "Part H", "Part J", "Part K", "Part L", and to "Part M" are references to the Parts in Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2000. The ADs issued by the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, which give practical guidance on possible ways of complying with the Building Regulations. There is an AD for each Part of Schedule 1, and to support Regulation 7 of the Building Regulations 2000 (materials and workmanship).

## CONSTRUCTIONAL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOLS: *APRIL 2001*

These are the Approved Documents (see Note on page 2), varied or supplemented as indicated in the table below. The variations must be read alongside the relevant Building Regulation and associated Approved Document.

<b>SUBJECT APPROVED</b>	<b>RELEVANT PART OR REGULATION AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENT</b>
1. Materials	<b>Approved Document <i>Materials and Workmanship: to support regulation 7</i></b>
2. Structure	<b>Part A</b>
3. Fire	<b>Part B</b>
4. Site Preparation Resistance to moisture	<b>Part C</b>
5. Toxic Substances – Cavity Insulation	<b>Part D</b>
6. Acoustics	Section A of Building Bulletin 87 <sup>1</sup> . Section A of BB87 will be replaced by Building Bulletin 93 <sup>2</sup> <i>Acoustic Design of Schools, to be published in 2001</i> . NB Part E of the Building Regulations covers sound insulation between dwellings. DTLR are consulting on the benefit of incorporating the Constructional Standard on acoustics in this Part. Until this is done, DfES guidance should be followed.
7. Environmental Conditions	<b>Part F</b> refers to the ventilation requirements of BB87 <sup>1</sup> as an appropriate design standard for schools
8. Conservation of fuel and power	The main provisions are set out in the DfES's Building Bulletin 87, entitled Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools (Revision of Design Note 17), published in 1997, available from the Stationery Office.
9. Drainage and Waste Disposal	<b>Part H</b>
10. Heat Producing Appliances	<b>Part J</b>
11. Protection from Falling - Stairs	<b>Part K</b> subject to the overriding variations listed below.  <b>K1 Stairs and ramps</b>  1. Rises

**1.3b** – add a new sentence “ In schools the maximum rise should

**Table 1** – add a new row to item 2

		Max rise	Min going
School	internal	170	250 (280 preferred)
Stair	external	150	280

2. Handrail height

**1.27** – in paragraph 1, line 5, after ‘buildings’ add ‘and schools.’  
Add a new paragraph, following paragraph 2, “In schools with pupils aged 12 years and younger, consideration should be given to the provision of a second handrail at a lower level. For infants, the lower handrail height should be 600mm.

12. Facilities for Disabled People

**Part M**, subject to the overriding variations listed below.

Paragraph 0.9 entitled Educational Establishments, shall Not apply.

1. Escape routes

In multi-storey buildings refuges should be provided at all stairways, on each upper level, and the width of stairways should allow for wheelchair evacuation unless a special lift for evacuating disabled people is provided (BS 5810).

Ramps

1.19c – for schools, substitute “is not steeper than 1 in 20, if individual flights are no longer than 10.0m, or no steeper than 1 in 16, if individual flights are no longer than 6.0m, or no steeper than 1 in 12, if individual flights are no longer than 3.0m”

13. Glazing Materials and Disposal

**Part N**

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<sup>1</sup> The 1997 printed Edition of Building Bulletin 87, *Guidelines for Environmental Design of Schools*, ISBN 0 11 271013 1, available from the Stationery Office, price £13.95, is now out of date. Section A on Acoustics will be replaced by Building Bulletin 93. For information on further updates of Building Bulletin 87, including downloads of the current revision of Section F “Energy (carbon dioxide) rating” and its associated spreadsheet, see the Schools Building and Design Unit website [www.dfes.gov.uk/schbldgs/env.htm](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schbldgs/env.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Building Bulletin 93, *Acoustic Design of Schools* is to be published by The Stationery Office in 2001.

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<sup>3</sup> Proposed changes to Part L and AD L were published by DTLR as an Interim Draft in March 2001. They include reference to BB87<sup>1</sup> as a Whole Building Method route to compliance. The proposed changes to the Building Regulations and to Approved Document L are expected to be made in August 2001 and to come into effect 6 months later. ***On that date schools should follow the advice in the Part L AD's.*** The intention is that two new editions of **Part L** will be published, one **(L1)** covering dwellings and the other **(L2)** covering other types of buildings including schools. Schools will also need to comply with the other proposed changes to Part L, which are not covered by the Whole Building Method. Appendix D3 of the Interim draft: Routes to compliance for non-domestic buildings lists the other proposed requirements, which include: achieving satisfactory air-tightness of the building envelope; ensuring continuity of fabric insulation, particularly regarding thermal bridging at junctions and around openings; inspection and commissioning of the Building Services systems; provision of a satisfactory building log-book; and the preparation of a metering strategy and installation of sufficient meters and sub-meters.