

LORD KITCHENER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LOCATION

Vancouver, British Columbia

COMPLETION

2012

CAPACITY

480 students

ARCHITECT

IBI Group / IBI / HB Architects

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Read Jones Christoffersen
Consulting Engineers

**CONSTRUCTION MANAGER /
GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

Heatherbrae Builders

GLULAM FABRICATOR

Western Archrib

PROJECT OWNER

School District No. 39 Vancouver

B.C. GOVERNMENT MINISTRY

Ministry of Education

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Lord Kitchener Elementary School was established in 1914 in what was then the municipality of Point Grey, now the neighbourhood of Dunbar on Vancouver's west side. The original wooden schoolhouse reached capacity in the early 1920s, when a second masonry building was constructed alongside it, followed over the ensuing decades by other additions and alterations.

This project involved the rehabilitation and relocation of the original heritage schoolhouse, the demolition of the later structures and the construction of a new building. This has brought all 480 kindergarten to grade seven students together in a single connected environment, and facilitated the implementation of 21st-century learning principles.

In terms of building organization, this involves breaking down the traditional divisions between classrooms, project and resource spaces, and creating smaller learning communities in which educational and resource spaces are integrated. This arrangement is intended to encourage team teaching and independent learning modalities through the linking of indoor and outdoor educational and social opportunities.

In addition, the school includes a 'community commons' area at the main entrance, that serves as a student drop-off point, an informal meeting place and a more formal venue for concerts and performances of various kinds. The commons area is generous enough to permit the entire school to gather for presentations and announcements. The two-storey space features a 'grand staircase' that links the two levels of learning studios.



Photo courtesy of Michael Sherman Photography

“The use of wood in Lord Kitchener School connects us with the natural environment. The visual appeal of our school is its modern design which is highlighted by the warmth of the wood features.”

Catherine Feniak, Principal, Lord Kitchener Elementary School

WOOD USE

The retention of the original 1914 wood structure was contingent on it being upgraded to substantially conform to the health and safety provisions of the Vancouver Building Bylaw. From a heritage perspective, the restoration of the building included the installation of new wood siding and replica wood windows all painted to match the existing building. Attached to this original building and extending eastward to form an ‘L’ in plan, the new structure also uses wood extensively.

The most prominent structural uses of wood are in the library, which features spruce glulam beams, and in the exterior porch and canopy areas, which feature

inclined, turned spruce glulam posts. Exterior soffits are finished in tongue and groove fir boards, and windows and doors are also trimmed with fir.

The gymnasium, multipurpose room, commons area and corridors are lined with medium density fibreboard panels with fir trims. The larger spaces, including the library, have slatted wood acoustic ‘clouds’, and birch millwork is used throughout the building.

Many of the surfaces with which the students come in contact are made of wood, because of its unique visual and tactile qualities. These include window sills and window seats, doors and trims, toilet partitions, and seating steps in the common area.



Photos courtesy of Michael Sherman Photography

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia’s market development agency for forest products.

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