

St James Catholic Primary School



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Located in Brighton, Victoria, St James Catholic Primary School has recently undergone an impressive renovation. The undertaking saw the old, dilapidated school building transformed into a contemporary, sophisticated, and functional learning centre. With a new internal air bridge cleverly connecting two adjacent parts of the school, previously separated by a public laneway, the renovated educational facility has been aptly dubbed a 'School in the Sky'.

Baldasso Cortese, an architecture, interiors, and urban design practice, was engaged to modernise the space, creating a positive learning environment rich in transparency, connectedness, and breakout opportunities.

In a modern, sophisticated, and functional educational setting, flooring plays a crucial role in delivering the desired visual outcomes while also providing the practical benefits required in a school setting. Baldasso Cortese needed a flooring solution that was fit for purpose. Ben Percy, Baldasso Cortese's Associate Director, explains: "Carpets are important because in a school setting, they get heavy use so must have robust functionality and they are where we can get a bit of texture and colour."

Baldasso Cortese wanted a flooring solution that was easy to maintain whilst at the same time provide the required level of sophistication and design options. "In an educational setting, it's crucial to get flooring right, and the budgets are often quite tight. So, the price point, quality and durability are equally important, and Interface gets that mix right." Ben expands.

The practice specified a selection of Interface's modular flooring options including carpet tiles from the World Woven collection throughout the educational spaces and the more durable Luxury Vinyl Tile Set Collection in the staff areas.

"Interface products allow us to be more sophisticated than a standard carpet," he says. "For instance, we can use the planks in educational spaces rather than the standard



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Ben Percy, Baldasso Cortese's Associate Director



carpet square often associated with a more corporate, office-like setting.” Ben adds that Interface has excellent product development, and the designs are always on-trend.

The variety of patterns and colours enabled the team to define specific zones within each floor level. “That assisted with way-finding and helped break up the space,” says Ben. The combination of muted neutrals and subtle pastels ranging from Charcoal Tweed and Fuchsia Warp to Moorland and Highland Warp reinvigorated the space, elevating the refined profile of the interiors. It also allowed the project team to highlight specific zones and breakout areas without creating any visual barriers. This sense of connectedness was vital where breakout spaces were concerned. “These micro breakouts allow a teacher to work directly with one or two students, without them feeling separated from their colleagues in the classroom,” explains Ben.

Interface’s commitment to running a business in a way that creates a climate fit for life played a role in Baldasso Cortese’s product selection process. “We need suppliers to take more responsibility for the planet we’re on, and we need cradle-to-cradle materials - so they can be taken back and recycled into more products reducing waste to landfill.” Ben says passionately.

Playing a role in this ambitious undertaking, Interface’s products contributed to creating a meaningful, inspiring, and functional learning experience that fosters connectivity and shows significant consideration for environmental outcomes. This aptly reflects the brand’s philosophy around +Positive spaces, which puts making better products for happier people and a healthier planet at the core of what they do.

Through Interface’s Carbon Neutral Floors program Baldasso Cortese purchased 235sqm of carbon neutral flooring. Resulting in the retirement of 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which is the equivalent of the emissions from a car travelling 8,087kms. This covers all emissions associated with manufacturing, use and maintenance of the floor.

Project Details

Architect: Baldasso Cortese
Project: St James Catholic Primary School, Brighton, VIC
Products: World Woven: WW860 Charcoal Tweed, WW865 Fuchsia Warp, Moorland Warp, Highland Warp
LVT: Level Set Textured Woodgrains - Antique Light Oak