



REFERENCE REPORT

**Collège Jean Mermoz,
Biscarrosse,
France**

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All About Flooring. **All About You.**

A school that relies on environmentally sound materials

Building:	Collège départemental HQE, Biscarosse, France
Developer:	Departmental general council
Products:	noraplan® stone acoustic, colour 2491, installed area 4,000 m ²
Architects:	LCR Architectes, Balma, www.ecophon.com
Year of installation:	2009
Installation areas:	Corridors, classrooms
Special features:	Special covering for footfall sound absorption

The French provincial town of Biscarosse has experienced an unusual growth in population over recent decades. Since 1960, the number of inhabitants has quadrupled. This growth obviously had consequences not only for the

urban infrastructure, but in particular for the education system. The town's only school was incapable of coping with the rise in pupil numbers as it was already operating at the limits of its capacity. For this reason, the general council of the local department decided to build an additional school. The Collège départemental HQE, which opened in 2009, currently has 300 pupils, although it can take up to 650 children.

The architects' office LCR ARCHITECTES was commissioned to design the new school. It was instructed to plan a building that not only meets ecological requirements, but also has a contemporary architecture that fits into the natural surroundings. For example, the building was equipped with a photovoltaic system. Rainwater is also trapped and fed back into the service water system. Furthermore, the architects chose natural building materials such as wood for the walls and an environmentally compatible rubber covering for the floor.

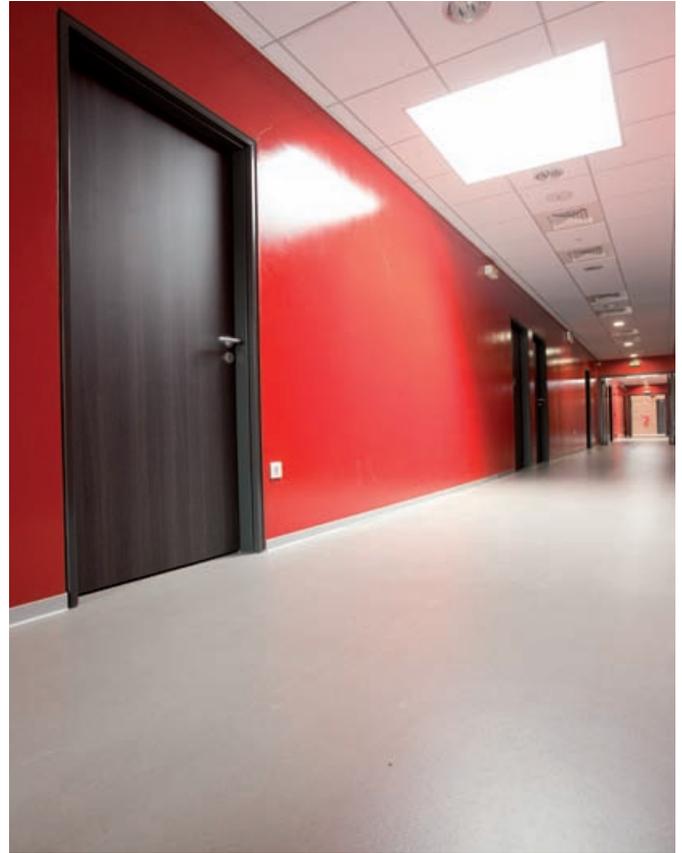


Indoor air quality as the prime factor

Due to the ecological requirements, the quality of the indoor air was always at the top of the list as far as the building project partners were concerned. For this reason, the architects decided in favour of a floor covering from nora systems. Most rubber floor coverings produced by the global market leader have been bearing the internationally acknowledged "Blue Angel" environmental label in compliance with the qualification guideline RAL UZ 120 since 2006, the very first resilient floor covering to do so, and have been certified for their low emission levels and health protection properties.

All standard products from nora systems have also been awarded the GREENGUARD certificate for indoor air quality and, due to their low-emission materials, contribute to the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) performance credits for indoor environmental quality. They do not contain any PVC, plasticizers (phthalates) or halogens (e.g. chlorine) either. This means that fire does not trigger the release of hydrogen-chloride gas, which can cause acid burns in the respiratory tract and forms hydrochloric acid if it comes into contact with extinguishing water. The emission of substances in harmful concentrations can

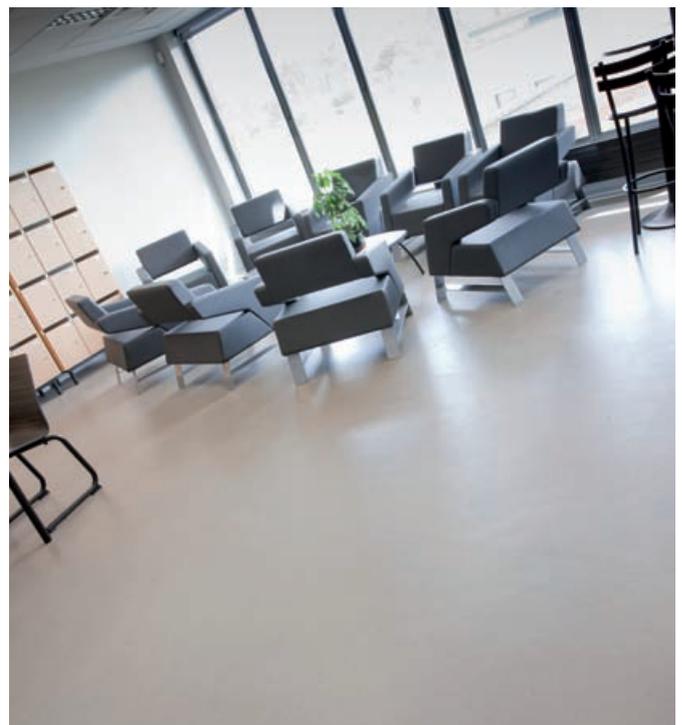
be excluded with nora floor coverings as well. This makes them absolutely safe for use by children even when they are in immediate contact with the floor.



Outstanding footfall sound absorption

The outstanding footfall sound absorption of nora floor coverings with their high degree of impact sound attenuation (20 dB) was another important factor for the architects of the Collège départemental HQE. The noraplan stone acoustic laid in the school's corridors and classrooms dampens the sound of footsteps, thereby contributing to the good spatial acoustics. nora floor coverings are pleasantly warm to walk on, as well.

Another criterion which played a major role in the selection of the materials to be used in the new school were the costs of maintaining the floor covering. As Xavier Ratynski, architect and managing director of LCR ARCHITECTES, points out, "the fact that a coating is not required is a really persuasive argument for customers because the cleaning costs are usually a worrying factor."

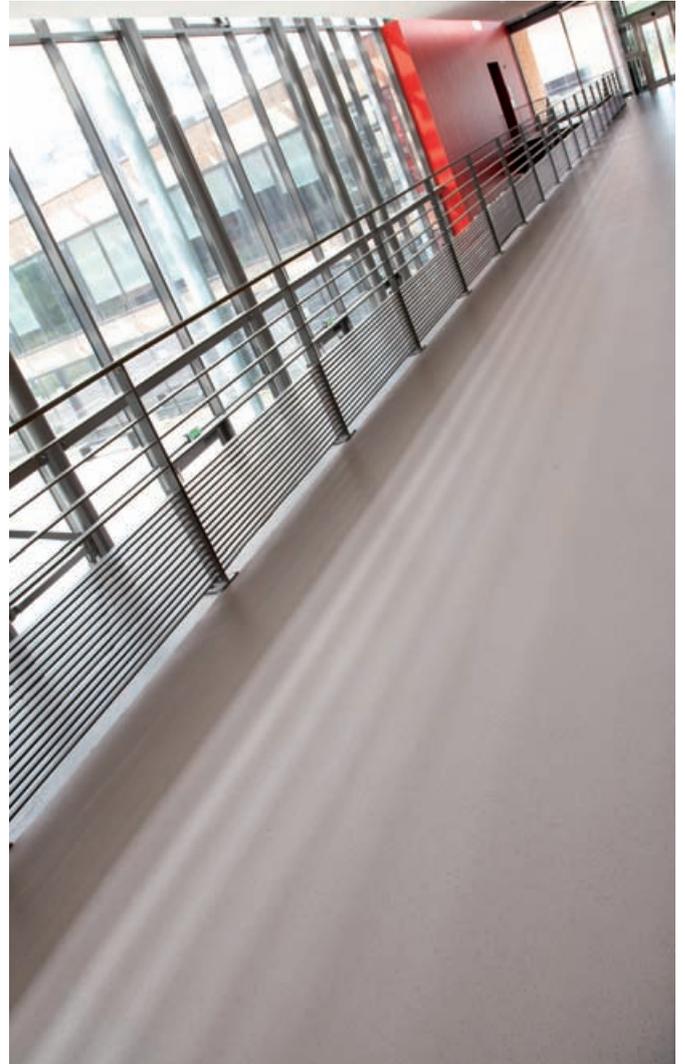


Design and functionality

From an aesthetic point of view, "I was enticed by nora's range of colours, and particularly by the natural tones," says Ratynskj. "Another aspect is that the joints are virtually invisible, which underlines the uniform appearance that was stipulated for this kind of building. The matt surface structure enhances this effect. I avoid surface structures that reflect sunlight. Overall, I was convinced by the clarity and elegance of the product (noraplan stone acoustic)."

The nora systems range features electrostatically conductive and dissipative floor coverings for special purposes, as well as coverings that are practically lye and acid-resistant and are extremely hard-wearing. High resistance to stains, easy cleaning, as well as a top non-slip safety classification (up to R11) in compliance with DIN 51130 and BGR 181, round off its list of merits.

nora rubber floor coverings make a significant contribution all round to creating a performance-stimulating and feel-good atmosphere at the Collège départemental HQE - to the benefit of both pupils and teachers.



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Please contact us for further details

nora flooring systems UK Ltd. (Great Britain)
Phone: +44 1788 513160

Headquarter: nora systems GmbH (Germany)
Phone: +49 6201 66 33
www.nora.com

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