





# Force Shields

This is the fifth attempt at an opening line. You know why? We reckon this case study is just about the most inspiring place we've ever visited. And, frankly, we're worried we can't do it justice. Put it this way, if we were still at school we would want to be a pupil there. Blown away at the time, and now, eight days later, struggling to write a piece that even gets close, we're still blown away.

Yes, this is about a school. Harton Technology College to be precise. But when you boil it down to the bare bones, it's actually about something else. Purposeful aspiration was a phrase used a couple of times during our visit, and that'll do nicely.

Our host is Chris Braybook, Harton's Deputy Head. She fizzes. The kind of educationalist you want your kids to be nurtured by. 'You can have it if you want it, it's just a question of hard work and attitude,' she says...and she means it. Harton means it. 'The school is designed to be aspirational and purposeful. We wanted a professional working >>>>

Photography by Kristen McCluskie - [www.kristenmccluskie.com](http://www.kristenmccluskie.com)



## Case Study



►►informal spaces. The result is variety, informality, openness – and no corridors. It's like a modern corporate space in concept.

'It's a good specification too,' adds Ronnie. 'Money was spent in the right areas – and that was a prime focus in the showcase spaces – we aimed for a lot of transparency in breakout areas. There's an openness throughout as the design supports the College's ethos of passive supervision. The design breaks down 'them and us' barriers. The students also contributed in our workshops as we looked for high quality and appropriate use of colours.'

That high specification is all apparent during our tour of the college. Glazed Polar partitioning from Komfort adds to the openness of the design. Top spec surfaces from the likes of InterfaceFLOR, Muraspec and Forbo add style and subtlety that work well with sleek Orangebox breakout pieces. The ceilings too are carefully considered, with Armstrong's Axiom C canopy 'rafts' and Optima tiles used to achieve impressive acoustic levels – as well as providing the 'open' ceilings referred to by Ronnie.

In fact, if it wasn't for the minor matter of 245 miles between Harton and Saffron Walden, we would happily have spent several hours more touring the impressive space.

Ronnie's explanation of the contemporary, open design of the new block makes total sense in the context of the college's aspirations. This is a place which is driven by the pursuit of excellence, a sense of never settling for second best. Let's be right about this – the pursuit of excellence is the only way forward for all our kids, not least for those from the North East.

And we're sorry about the faltering opening sentence that started this piece – we worry we don't do Harton justice. So, in contrast to our stuttering start, how about a very definite ending?

Harton Technology College is simply inspiring ●

### essential ingredients

Client • **Harton Technology College** | Architect • **Ryder Architecture**

Furniture • [www.british-thornton.co.uk](http://www.british-thornton.co.uk)  
[www.globaltotaloffice.com](http://www.globaltotaloffice.com)  
[www.orangebox.com](http://www.orangebox.com)  
[www.radford.co.uk](http://www.radford.co.uk)  
[www.swandene.com](http://www.swandene.com)  
[www.auditoria-services.com](http://www.auditoria-services.com)

Ceilings • [www.armstrong-ceilings.co.uk](http://www.armstrong-ceilings.co.uk)

Wallcoverings • [www.muraspec.com/digital](http://www.muraspec.com/digital)

Wall Panels • [www.soundsorba.com](http://www.soundsorba.com)

Flooring • [www.interfaceflor.eu](http://www.interfaceflor.eu)  
[www.forbo-flooring.co.uk](http://www.forbo-flooring.co.uk)  
[www.flowcrete.co.uk](http://www.flowcrete.co.uk)  
[www.johnstonestrade.co.uk](http://www.johnstonestrade.co.uk)

Internal Glazed Doors & Screens • [www.komfort.com](http://www.komfort.com)

Internal Signage • [www.rivermeade.com](http://www.rivermeade.com)