

'Groundbreaking' approach provides springboard to independence



A 'GROUNDBREAKING' APPROACH to education is helping disabled students develop their full learning potential – right through to personal hygiene.

Sefton Council has invested £2.5+m in refurbishing and adapting a former primary school into an innovative college for students with special needs, run by the management team from nearby Hugh Baird College, to ease and assist their transition from school to mainstream further education.

The two-storey Thornton College will be able to accommodate up to 60 pupils, who would otherwise have had to travel outside of the borough for supported learning. In addition to appropriate

adaptation of the classrooms, the Council has had two hygiene rooms installed, one on each floor, to enable pupils to undertake personal ablutions with as much dignity as possible, whether they do so independently or supported.

Supplied by Total Hygiene and installed by James Mercer Group for main contractor Conlon Construction, each of the hygiene rooms features a changing bench, height adjustable washbasin,

wetroom shower facilities and Clos-o-Mat 'wash and dry' toilet. The Clos-o-Mat, the only toilet of its kind developed specifically for disabled people, by Total Hygiene, has integral douche and drying facilities which can eliminate the need for manual cleansing. As a result, it improves independence, dignity and hygiene, whilst still offering the ability to be used as a conventional WC.

Pat Farrell, director of estates & resources at Hugh Baird College, elaborated, "Previously, 16–19 year-olds with significant disabilities had to travel outside of the borough to continue their education. The development and opening of Thornton College means they can now progress through vocational studies and other learning in the borough.

We worked closely with local special schools on the design of Thornton College; it was felt the hygiene rooms would be a useful inclusion in addition to the existing school toilets. I am very impressed with the equipment, and how it will help our pupils – even those that need assistance with toileting – to adapt in their development into adulthood."



Total Hygiene is the UK's leading manufacturer and supplier of disabled toileting solutions for both in and out of the home. It is also sponsor of the Changing Places campaign for special accessible toilets in public places. Founded 50 years ago, the company now has over 40,000 Clos-o-Mat toilets installed throughout the UK, some of which are still in daily use 30 years after originally being fitted. Uniquely, Total Hygiene is the only company in its field to have in-house design, installation, commission and service facilities.