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# Education: something missing in school buildings

Mike Malina, director of Energy Solutions Associates, and an energy auditor, urges schools to forget the green bling and concentrate on getting the basics right first

**IT CONCERNS ME** that a number of schools are making teaching support staff redundant because they have run over budget and are starved of vital resources. Yet schools could do more to make themselves more energy efficient and help reduce these annual budgetary crises.

In my experience the biggest flaw with school buildings is that they are managed by teachers. Now before I upset the teaching profession, I will qualify my position by saying that my wife is a teacher, I'm a parent and I've been a school governor, so I do have a good understanding of how schools work. Teachers should be allowed to concentrate on the education curriculum.

Ideally, schools should have a building or facilities manager or

share a post dedicated to this role over a local area, but so few have the budgets to do this. It would pay dividends for local education authorities to fund these posts as getting control of energy use would ultimately be self financing.

## Poor energy performance

The state our current school building stock is poor.

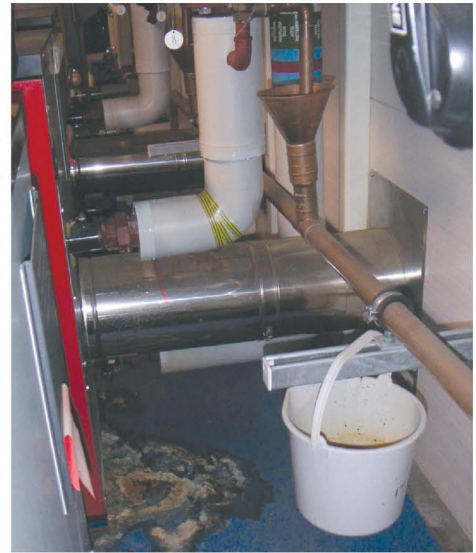
I've carried out many energy surveys on school buildings and they have shown very poor results for energy performance. The buildings have, over time, been poorly managed and suffered from neglect in maintenance and often have very dated building services and poor control regimes.

Some of this is so basic and I'm shocked at the poor state of commissioning and general handover

of building services operation.

It's a shame that when you tend to read or hear about schools, it always seems to be the latest big new glossy buildings, and how much the government is spending on these. Yet the majority of school buildings are already built and are often antiquated and in desperate need of a comprehensive programme of refurbishment.

The current school building stock was designed for a different model of teaching. Therefore we need an imaginative approach to how we refurbish these



Why is it we always seem to see the bucket or drip tray in school plantrooms?

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