



## Desso breathes air-quality into high-school

Project: Brighton Secondary School, SA

One of the Largest School Project Installations Australia-wide

Product: Desso AirMaster®

**A unique air-cleaning carpet tile has become a major contributor to the health and wellbeing of students and staff at Brighton Secondary School – particularly those suffering from asthma and allergies.**

Located in a coastal suburb of Adelaide, Brighton Secondary School (BSS) made a new addition to its buildings in 2016 and sought to specify a flooring product that improved indoor air-quality. As Tarkett SA state manager, Phillip Curtis, said: "The school wanted to be progressive and ensure the new building's environment was the best it can be for the health and wellbeing of occupants," said Mr Curtis.

"A key consideration for the school when specifying the new building's flooring was improving indoor air-quality, particularly for asthmatics.

"Hearing this from the architects, Thomson Rossi, we proposed one of our most innovative flooring products for BSS: Desso AirMaster®.

"Our AirMaster® tile has a unique yarn structure that is designed to trap more tiny dust particles than any other carpet solution on the market.

"Independent testing has found AirMaster® to be four times better than any other carpet solutions in reducing the amount of harmful fine dust particles in the air – and eight times better than other smooth flooring solution.

"By capturing fine particulate matter in its fibres, AirMaster® reduces the amount borne into the indoor environment, making it perfect for asthma and allergy sufferers."





Asthma is the most prevalent burden of disease for Australian children aged up to 14 years. It is a significant contributing factor in disrupting their learning and recreation time – being a common cause of school absenteeism due to related illness.

Asthma Australia said more than 460,000 Australians under the age of 14 have asthma (10.1 percent of population) and that over the period of one year, 42 percent of Australians aged up to 14 had to take time off school due to the condition.

Mr Curtis stressed that not only children benefit from a healthier indoor environment. "Overall, most people in urban environments spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors and, as such, improving indoor air-quality can have an immediate, tangible positive impact on workspace health and wellbeing for all occupants," he said.

Studies by Radboud University in the Netherlands have shown that the concentration of fine dust in a school classroom was dramatically reduced over a two-week period using Desso AirMaster® along with an air purifier. Particulate matter was reduced by 60 percent during the weekend and 30 percent on weekdays.

So successful was the AirMaster® installation in BSS' new building, that two years later the Department of Planning Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) decided to entirely retrofit the rest of the school's flooring with AirMaster®, which now covers all non-wet areas.

Mr Curtis said he was impressed that DPTI was prepared to invest in a flooring product in the interests of BSS' students and staff. "It's a public school and like all schools they need to be prudent about their spending," said Mr Curtis.

"It's a little bit more costly than a standard carpet tile so it was a bit of a leap-of-faith on DPTI's behalf, but AirMaster®'s indoor air-quality advantages are significantly superior to standard carpet tile and they saw the value in improving the environment."

Mr Curtis said the total amount of AirMaster® flooring laid at the school is over 5000m<sup>2</sup>, making it one of the country's largest school installation utilising AirMaster®. "It's a big job, in Adelaide-terms, so it's impressive for us. More importantly, though, such a large volume has a compounding effect throughout the school, making it more successful in terms of air-cleaning than a small area or mixed-flooring installation."

DPTI chose leading Adelaide installers, Next Gen Flooring, to lay the AirMaster® tiles. Only four years old, the company is already flourishing, with 420 percent growth, and having last year won BDO Australia's Fastest Movers SA Award.

Next Gen Flooring project manager, Craig Cooper, said although his present business is relatively new, he has 15 years-prior industry experience and has partnered with Tarkett "since day dot", so the supply choice was an easy one.



"Tarkett knew what we were out-to-achieve in our latest business and they've been there for us," said Mr Cooper. "It's great to know that whatever happens with a job they'll be on-hand. We've built a good foundation."

"We consider ourselves experts in education and health-care sectors. Our reputation is all-important to us, so we need to rely on the products we install and only partner with suppliers who are also experts in their product manufacture, supply and support."

"There are so many variations in products that it makes it challenging to know the intricacies of their properties and related materials."

"When someone such as Tarkett comes to you with a whole product portfolio that has everything you need, it certainly makes life easier for our business. It allows us to target our solutions for our customers."

Such was the case with the BSS AirMaster® installation. "It was the first time we'd used the product and it was interesting to learn that it offered more than your usual textile in terms of air-quality advantages," said Mr Cooper. "It was nice to know we were doing something good for the school without much of a price premium."

"DPTI asked about the price. The pricing was reasonably equivalent and the bonus was in the air-cleaning properties. It also looked fantastic, so we progressed to installation phase."

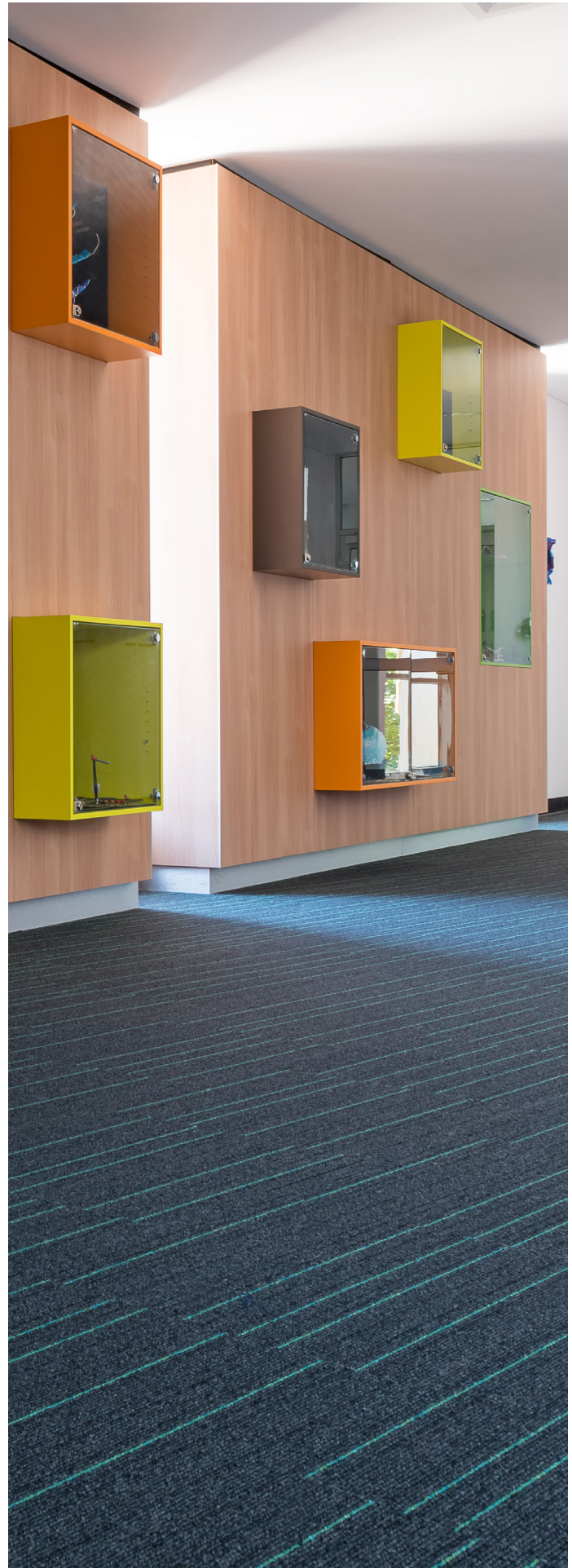
The installation was not without its challenges, however, as Brighton Secondary School venue and facilities manager, Marcus Falckh, explained: "The installation was done while the school was still in full operation," said Mr Falckh. "With such a vast quantity to lay, there were challenges with continually having to block areas off or relocate classes."

Next Gen Flooring's Craig Cooper said he took a solution-oriented approach: "We knew BSS needed to keep their doors open for the daytime running of the school."

"We looked at the job like: 'How are we going to do this? Well, we'll come in on holidays, we'll come in after-hours. We'll plan the moving-of-furniture to minimise disruptions. It was about planning a schedule, preparing our way and moving things back behind us as we went."

"We also encountered some unforeseen issues such as asbestos and multilayered existing flooring, which was hard to pull up because the wrong adhesive had been used."

Once the surface was cleared and prepared, the installation of the tiles itself was fairly straightforward. "Because it has a standard backing on it, AirMaster® is no more difficult to install than our other carpet tiles," said Tarkett's Phillip Curtis. "It's the top layer of the product that offers the unique air-cleaning properties."







Next Gen Flooring's Craig Cooper concurred. "We had to make sure everything was flush and the AirMaster® product was good for that because it has a normal backing," said Mr Cooper. "It allowed us to ensure the bond wasn't broken and that meet-ups were on-song."

"And it was all interconnecting, so a pattern had to be drawn for each tile to run in unison. Some tiles have a bit of a tolerance in them but these were spot-on."

Mr Cooper said BSS staff were enormously enthusiastic and helpful during the installation process. "They were excited to see how it was unfolding. It was literally like rolling out the 'red' carpet. The principal, particularly, was very supportive and impressed by the transformation."

With the job completed, Mr Cooper said he is genuinely proud of his company's work at BSS. "The result is brilliant. We install so many jobs and even our guys were impressed at the way it turned around from looking a bit shabby to absolutely amazing. It was great to see such a pronounced change in the interior landscape. We we take pride in that affect."

It would seem the flooring's positive impression will remain long into the future, with Tarkett's Phillip Curtis having recently revisited the school and found the AirMaster® flooring to be remarkably well-preserved. "For tiles that are quite a few years old, they look in top condition," said Mr Curtis. "I was there a few weeks ago with BSS' Marcus Falckh and remarked that they looked absolutely fantastic."