The goal of the residential component of the Hazelwood School for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment is to foster a connection with the natural environment through the inclusion of natural and thermal elements within the architectural form. There is no doubt that including gardens, trees, and other natural forms into the design of our buildings creates more “pleasant” spaces for its occupants. It is also obvious that the thermal comfort of a buildings occupants is important, which can be seen in the extensive mechanical systems that currently encompass a great deal of space in most contemporary construction. Indeed, thermal comfort has become so important that some institutions and private groups have considered encasing entire buildings in conditioned space (Heschong, 1979). Yet beyond simply making a space more pleasant because it has appealing gardens and thermal comfort, connectivity to nature and the natural environment over all has been shown to have effects on a persons mental/physical condition (Ulrich, 1984) and the cognitive development of children (Tai, 2006). In addition to proving important in a child's cognitive development, in various studies over 70% of people have been shown to find natural environments the cause of positive mood changes, and picture natural environments when asked to think of a relaxing, peaceful space (Marcus, 1999). In turn, relying simply on air conditioning and other modern thermal controls eliminate our connection with the world at large, and cuts off our vital connection with the natural environment. Therefore instead of accepting the standard approach of creating an entirely sealed off and sterile environment, the question becomes: is a more permeable approach that embraces the natural world more desirable? Further, how does such a permeable design allow children to interact with the natural environment in a non-traditional sense? Creating spaces for children with sensory impairment that are sensitive to their needs while stimulating their fully functioning senses (such as touch, thermal stimulus, smell) presents the opportunity for residents to interact with the world at large despite any impairment; an important factor in the development of children with various handicaps (Moore, 1979).