

Press release

10 October 2006

London Academy, Edgware opens

Designed by Foster and Partners, the London Academy, Edgware, was launched on Tuesday 10 October by the Rt Hon David Cameron MP. Located on the playing fields of the former Edgware School in the London Borough of Barnet, the new school forms part of the Governments current Academies Programme seeking to improve educational standards. The Academy will specialise in Business, Enterprise, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for 1425 pupils, while also facilitating after-school use to promote lifelong learning. This development will also set in motion the regeneration of the local area by creating not only a centre of educational excellence, but also a catalyst for urban renewal and a valued facility for the wider community.

The design concept is driven by the educational vision of the Academy. Students are organised into a lower and upper school, each with home bases on separate levels around individual atria. Each home base level accommodates one year-group with its own social area, toilets and staff facilities, minimising movement, enhancing a sense of identity and improving security. This combines the benefits of learning in a smaller community, within a large school environment.

The Academy is structured around a top-lit three-storey atrium, which lets daylight into the heart of the building and acts as a focus for the school. Functioning as a social hub, the atrium connects the lower and upper school and the common facilities, such as the theatre, library and restaurant areas, while also accommodating the vertical circulation routes.

The specialist teaching spaces are located along the noisier north side of the site, while the home bases open up on the south to the sheltered play areas. Staff rooms are spread throughout the building, overlooking the communal atrium and home bases. Indoor sports facilities are located in a separate wing of the Academy and the outdoor facilities are linked by a pedestrian bridge, which allows safe access across a busy carriageway. London Academy will cater for students with special educational needs within the curriculum and will also provide the central facility for speech and language therapy for secondary students in Barnet.

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