

Education – St Paul’s School – Building for excellence

- **AIA UK Award 2020** – “clearly designed for learning and interaction”
- **Concrete Society 2020 - Highly Commended**- “The simplicity of the finishes at St Paul’s belies the co-operation of all parties in achieving near perfect in-situ finishes to tight tolerances. The quality precast concrete completes the clean structural form exhibited throughout.”
- **London RIBA Awards – shortlisted**

PROJECT

St Paul’s School Phase 1 and 2

CUSTOMER

St Paul’s School

LOCATION

Barnes

CONTRACT

Two Stage Design and Build

Need

St Paul's School located on the River Thames at Barnes, is a top independent boy's school. To promote and sustain the excellence of the education offered, the school embarked on an ambitious £50m scheme to modernise and improve their campus and teaching facilities.

Undertaken in two consecutive schemes over three years, the first phase created a central school hub designed to fit seamlessly with the existing Founder's Court. An impressive library capturing views of the Thames formed the centre piece of one wing. The second phase completed the courtyard configuration with a teaching block, performance hall and chancel, which exploited the benefits of natural materials and natural ventilation for these flowing sustainable spaces.

Throughout the demolition of the life-expired buildings and construction of their modern replacements, it was essential that the students continued to learn and thrive in this academic environment.

Solution

Close engagement with the school and detailed planning and programming was the foundation for delivering a scheme of this magnitude and duration.

A schedule of regular, well planned consultations was established from the outset. By understanding the schools evolving needs, their busy times, and planned events it was possible to efficiently dovetail in the major activities and deliveries.

The architect's vision was high quality natural finishes showcasing timber panelling and fair-faced concrete to achieve impressive robust spaces with acoustic and thermal comfort. The design required major in-situ activities, but every opportunity was taken to incorporate off-site manufactured components, as part of reducing disruption to school life and improving quality.

Detailed advanced planning and sharing of knowledge has been a central feature to delivering this two-phase scheme. Early

workshops focussed in on the critical activities and enabled the team to resource correctly for compliance checking during the intense production phases. Lean techniques which included visual aids and data collection apps augmented a 'just in time' delivery approach which kept the programme on schedule and kept the school functioning as normal.

Outcome

Over the 3 years, a close partnership developed that engendered transparent decision making and the flow of knowledge from phase to phase. These relationships extended to the students with opportunities to be inspired by architecture and engineering through pupil tailored events.

St Paul's approach has delivered an impressive new addition which not only provides 56 classrooms and offices but also creates agile spaces that encourage debate, interaction, and learning. Overlooking the Thames, with natural light and quality finishes, the new environment will sustain future generations of students.