

Pimlico Academy was one of the three sample schools of Westminster's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The new Academy building replaced the existing Pimlico School built at the end of the 1960s. The council made the decision that the future requirements of the school could only be met through redevelopment due to the fact that most of the existing classrooms were inflexible spaces and below current space guidelines in conjunction the "greenhouse" effect of the extensive glazing on the existing south façade.

The new building sought to address the concerns of the existing school and has a capacity of 1262 pupils – 1050 pupils plus a 200 place pupil sixth form and 12 students in the specialist Speech Language and Communications needs unit. In addition to the school brief, the project also provides a new home for Pimlico Library and a new local centre for Westminster's Adult Education Service, running an exciting learning facility with 8 high-tech teaching rooms.

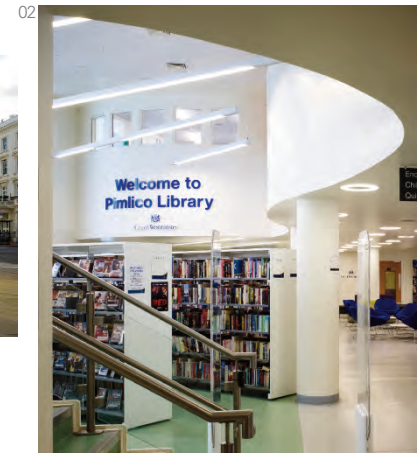
Pimlico Library has been designed as a 'dual purpose' library, serving both the general public and the Academy. It has over 1200sqm of floor space, an enormous number of books,

substantial IT facilities and long opening hours. It runs a regular Reading Group and the children's library holds regular sessions for under 5s and a term-time homework club as well as activities for children during holiday periods.

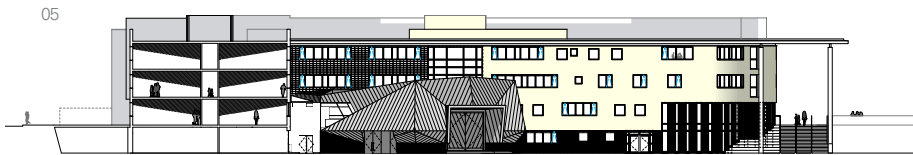
The Academy itself is arranged around a new courtyard, maximising external spaces available on site and offering excellent passive supervision. The layout exploits the interesting site topography with courtyard areas and associated accommodation set a storey below street level offering an acoustically sheltered and secure milling space and a new bustling heart to the school. The visual and performing arts specialism is showcased in the performance hall, clad in zinc metal, at the centre of the courtyard.

The new Academy is already starting to improve the outcomes for its current pupils, as the following extract from OFSTED Inspection of the new Pimlico Academy, rated 'Outstanding' in December 2010 show;

"The newly-built academy buildings are highly secure and students report that they enjoy learning in such a safe and attractive environment.



01 Main Academy entrance
02 Public Library interior
03 Adult Education Centre



Total Area : 12,810 sqm GIA
 Procurement Type : BSF Design & Build
 Local Authority : Westminster City Council

They have a strong awareness of healthy lifestyles; an unusually high number of students enjoy the academy's restaurant facilities and varied sporting activities. Students form a harmonious community and their behaviour is outstanding."

Innovation and sustainability were at the forefront of the design. The original school had to remain in operation on the site during its redevelopment, which created a very complex phased build and decant strategy. Ultimately the new academy building was constructed in 5 phases. As part of the innovation and in order to minimise the disruption to pupils, the Academy's sports hall used the largest single vertical concrete pour in Europe.

A key environmental feature is the Academy's green roof, which provides a habitat for wildlife. In appreciation of the care shown toward the environment across the Westminster BSF scheme, Pimlico Academy was chosen for the launch of the Zero Carbon Task Force Initiative in 2010.

The project won 'Best Community Project' at the 2011 LABC London District Surveyors' Association Awards.

- 01 Main Academy entrance
- 02 Initial sketch
- 03 Street-facing classrooms
- 04 Breakout space
- 05 Elevation