‘Buildings that display a genuine concern for young people and the educational experience.’

BD Education Architect of the Year

Schools
Across the world there is an increasing demand for excellent schools. The education of young people is recognised as a key to future growth, prosperity and competitiveness of nations and regions. There is a difficult balancing act to perform: upholding age old values but also tuning into current and fast changing trends in learning and communication.

In all of our projects, across commercial and public sectors, we work closely with our clients to understand their organisations and their operational needs. This is reflected in designs that have time and again proved their value. Every project we design is tailored to each client’s needs and vision to create a strong and unique identity, to instil pride in students and staff, and to provide an environment that attracts, nurtures and inspires future generations.

The success of our buildings is well recognised. We have received over 20 awards for our education buildings, including the RIBA Sorrel Foundation Award for the Best School Design for Minster School.

Penoyre & Prasad bring strategic thinking and design skills to the most complex of projects, from small schools to campus masterplans. We provide an holistic design service, engaging directly with you to develop buildings that respond to your specific cultural and environmental contexts. Our buildings also harness latest technologies and international best practice, creating educational environments that are embedded in local culture while meeting the needs of an ever-changing globalised economy.

Sustainable design is at the core of our approach. We are working on low/zero-carbon developments, designing low energy, low environmental impact buildings. In all our projects adaptability is key to achieving real long-term sustainability. We create long-term loose-fit buildings flexible enough to accommodate evolving methods of education while encouraging the collaboration that is central to effective learning.

We are expert at extracting the best value from sites and situations whether designing a new building, multiple schools on a single site, or refurbishing an existing estate to provide transformational educational facilities for the future. As Client Design Advisors, Penoyre & Prasad also provide advice to a number of educational clients to facilitate procurement of major education projects.

Collaboration is central to our way of working. Through our expanding international portfolio including the Middle East, we are developing strong and successful international affiliations with local partners. By teaming our international knowledge of best practice with local expertise, we can provide a high-value, cost-effective team of experts to meet your needs.

‘We’ve ended up with something very special and unusual. The best fusion of design and functionality that I have seen. Bar none.’

Michael Whitworth
Principal
Wren Academy
Penoyre & Prasad have designed many distinctive and award-winning schools and academies which help realise a particular educational ethos and vision and which reflect the specialisms and aspirations of the schools.

Creating identity

Our designs create a strong identity for each school and an increased sense of belonging and ownership for staff and pupils. They have also been honoured by award bodies for their wider contribution to neighbourhood environments and for raising the civic status of schools.

Our targeted consultative design process ensures that investment in capital projects is made wisely and that resources are diverted to key areas and features which support the client’s vision.

At Minster School (right and bottom right), the design reflects the school’s specialisms in music and humanities and its historic and spiritual roots. Purpose built lockers, designed with the students, reinforce the school’s collective identity.

At Merchants’ Academy, the sponsors wanted to create an exemplary educational establishment for some of the region’s poorest and most disadvantaged students, and to help address poor attendance and behaviour.

Part of our strategy to achieve this was to create a building that did not look or feel like a school. The front façade features a mural by artist Todd Hansen that has become representative of the school and a beacon of its success and status in the community.
Effective learning environments

Our projects feature legible layouts with an emphasis on natural light and transparency to create uplifting and accessible spaces with strong visual connections between indoors and outdoors.

We create a wide variety of internal and external spaces which use colour and texture detailing to engage and stimulate pupils and encourage participation in their own educational experience.

The external learning environment has become increasingly important both as a learning resource, and to enable students to understand the natural world.

At Wren Academy (below), a school with a specialism in the built environment, the expressed steel structure permeates classrooms and communal spaces giving students an immediate and material reference point.

At Merchants’ Academy in Bristol (left), landscaping features include a central, enclosed courtyard forming the heart of the school and individual teaching gardens.

“...it’s not just that the building facilitates effective teaching in well designed classrooms, but the layout as a whole facilitates a state of mind - purposeful, safe and creating a sense of pride.”

Michael Whitworth, Principal
Wren Academy
RIBA Sorrell Foundation
Schools Award 2009:
Minster School

‘This building never lets us
down — whatever we ask of it.’

Phil Blinston, Executive Headteacher
Minster School
We have the vision to unlock the potential of existing estates, the buildings and the spaces between them. Our buildings engage with their surroundings and are designed to make the most of their sites.

**Designs that make the best of your assets**

All of our school commissions involve strategic site masterplans that best deliver educational facilities on existing and new sites.

We appraise in detail building location, form and scale, access, site constraints and planning considerations. We also appraise the site capacity for revenue generating development. Internally, whether working with existing buildings or new, we optimise the flexibility of space, tailoring it to the long-term needs of the individual school.

Whether it’s the use of technology and furniture, the need for storage and special services, the provision of external learning environments or social spaces, each design provides an integrated solution, one that services the needs of today and accommodates the changes of tomorrow.

Our design for the redevelopment of Middle Row Primary School in London (left and bottom), maximises the value of the tight site creating a new two-form entry school, nursery and Speech and Language unit with more play area than it currently enjoys in addition to land sales on three residential and mixed use plots that part fund the school redevelopment. The planning committee praised the ‘excellent design’, citing it as ‘purposeful, practical and sitting well on the site’.

The co-located UCL Academy and Swiss Cottage Special School (above and right) provides a lesson in maximising tight urban land use whilst boldly and positively contributing to the local cityscape.
Unlocking the potential of your existing buildings

Site and budget constraints often point towards a design solution that requires the transformation of existing buildings to enhance or create specialist facilities, or to bring a number of existing buildings together within a unified campus. We are experienced in the thorough assessment required of existing facilities in order to properly understand their real strengths and weaknesses, mitigate risk and maximise investment.

Our design for Charter School in London (bottom) transformed a tired 1950s campus into an exemplary modern learning environment. The design features newly glazed circulation routes and a new entrance space, formed by roofing over an unused courtyard, with a sculptural tree-like structure that supports a partially glazed roof. The main four storey teaching block was stripped back to its frame, rebuilt and re-invigorated with high performance multi-coloured cladding.

Careful re-configuration of the existing assembly halls at Wren Academy (left) and St Mark’s Academy (right) gave each school a vibrant, renewed social heart with greatly increased space utilisation for dining, learning, and performance.
Penoyre & Prasad create low energy, sustainable buildings, that save money and reduce carbon emissions.

Low energy design

Our environmental strategies are robust and pragmatic. We evaluate energy issues at the outset of the design to maximise the potential effects of building positioning, massing and orientation, daylighting and site potential. After that we design to reduce carbon in the fuel supply and optimise energy efficiency through efficient service installations and controls.

Our systematic post-occupancy evaluations mean we are continuously improving and refining our approach to take account of user behaviour and new technologies, and working with clients to help them achieve their own long-term sustainability objectives.

Crouch Hill Community Park (this page) adds a new school to this neighbourhood while removing 90 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year. The project, which includes a school, nursery, youth centre and community park, transforms an unkempt piece of land into an exemplary carbon negative development with a BREEAM rating of Outstanding and award for Highest Scoring BREEAM Project.

Sunand Prasad, senior partner at Penoyre & Prasad continues to fulfil a unique role as an international spokesperson and lobbyist on the role and responsibilities of the design profession in tackling climate change.

He is a member of the London Mayor’s Design Advisory Panel and of the Government’s Green Construction Board. While President of the RIBA between 2007-2009, Sunand was named one of the UK’s top 50 environmentalists by the Independent on Sunday for his work in greening the profession and encouraging carbon zero design.
Kings College Dubai (left) provides the highest standard of education, tailor-made for modern Dubai. The 20,000m² school comprises an early years centre and primary and secondary schools within a unified campus. Working closely with the head teacher and client, we masterplanned this high quality all-through school with on-site residential accommodation and an Olympic sized swimming pool to provide a campus that meets the educational needs and vision for an international school of stature.

Our competition proposals for Doha College (below left) provide an holistic environment for 1,700 pupils aged 3 – 18. The design provides varied settings to learn, play and grow, in an integrated campus where landscape and building, pupils and staff, community and school, come together. Roof-top play areas and courtyards maximise the use of the tight site.

Ajman Academy (above) is a new all-through IB-curriculum school for 1,080 children, with the school’s various elements arranged around a series of linked courtyards and outdoor play areas. The heart of the campus contains the publicly accessible facilities, accessed via a double height entrance hall. Traditional regional architectural motifs are used in a contemporary way to create an environmentally responsive design. Screens, roof overhangs, canopies and trees are deployed to provide solar shading while allowing daylight to penetrate the building. The masterplan allows the campus to be built in three phases.

Our design principles are based on a learning-centred modular approach, inspired by the region’s history and future. A series of linked settings will create an holistic learning and development journey for each student, within a sustainable learning landscape which is strongly connected to nature.

Our masterplanning work for Qatar Foundation’s two new Qatar Academies (below right) developed a ‘kit-of-parts’ approach that could produce an optimum campus masterplan for each site. The 60,000m² schools will each provide a unique curriculum of dual-language instruction and incorporate community and commercial facilities.

We design schools to be right for their location, culture, users and investors.
The pre-cast concrete panel structure adopted for the project facilitated the fast construction as well as contributing to the success of the environmental strategy and a 40% carbon emissions reduction.

At John Perryn School (right) an exceptionally successful partnering approach between the architects and contractors resulted in a primary school designed and constructed, on budget, in less than two years.

The Pears National Centre for Autism (left) is a pioneering education centre that maximises life chances for children with autism. Designed following extensive, immersive consultation with the client organisation, the positive impact on behaviour of the calm building environment has been noted by staff and professionals.

Penoyre & Prasad have designed over 40 educational projects. Our knowledge of construction techniques and procurement methods means that our design solutions are always appropriate, buildable and economically efficient.

We have an extensive experience in primary and special school design, having delivered a number of pioneering and pathfinder projects. We advise a number of Local Authorities on SEN and primary school design at strategic and project levels.

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Selected Education and Sustainability Awards

2014
AJ100 ‘Sustainable Practice of the Year’: Winner

Green Apple Award: Wimbledon College of Art
Swiss Cottage Specialist SEN School: Camden Design Awards, Highly Commended

2013
BD Architect of the Year Award: Education Architect of the Year Finalist
RIBA Award: Shortlist, Ruskin College
AJ100 ‘Value Excellence’ Award: Shortlist, Crouch Hill Community Park

2012
Retrofit Expo Awards, ‘Domestic Retrofit Project of the Year’: Retrofit for Living, shortlist
AJ100, ‘Most Sustainable Practice’ Award, shortlist
BREEAM Award for Highest Scoring Project, Education Sector: Crouch Hill Park

2010
BD Architect of the Year Award: Runner-up, Education Architect of the Year
Guildford Society, Good Design Award: Guildford School of Acting Building
Ealing Civic Society Award: Winner, John Perryn School

2009
RIBA Sorrel Foundation Schools Award: Minster School
RIBA Sorrel Foundation Schools Award: Finalist, Merchants’ Academy
RIBA Award: Minster School
RIBA Award: Merchants’ Academy
Civic Trust Award: Commendation, University of Portsmouth Library
BCSE Award, Inspiring Design: Minster School

2008
BD Architect of the Year Award: Education Architect of the Year
Civic Trust Award: Commendation, University of Portsmouth Library
BCSE Award, Inspiring Design: Highly Commended, Minster School
BCSE Award, ‘Best Client Team on a School Project’: Highly Commended, Minster School
BCSE Award, ‘Best School Architect’: Highly Commended
Portsmouth Society Award: University of Portsmouth Library

2006
Civic Trust Award: Commendation, Prior Weston School Temporary Accommodation
Green Apple Award: SCORE Complex

2005
RIBA Award: Prior Weston School Temporary Accommodation

2004
Civic Trust Award: Commendation, Charter School
Green Apple Award: The Millennium Centre, Eastbrookend Country Park

2003
RIBA Award: Charter School
Aluminium Imagination Award: Charter School

2001
FX International Design Award: Finalist, Charter School

2000
Building Services Award, ‘Environmental Initiative of the Year’: Great Notley Discovery Centre

For further information please contact:

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Penoyre & Prasad is a multi-sectoral architectural practice.
To see more visit:

penoyreprasad.com