

# News

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## **Morgan Sindall tops out at Oak Lodge Special Educational Needs School**

Morgan Sindall has celebrated a key milestone in the construction of a £6.8 million expansion project at Oak Lodge School in Barnet.

Oak Lodge School is a special academy, managed by Barnet Special Education Trust, for students aged 11-19 with a range of learning difficulties. The OFSTED rated 'Outstanding' school is a highly-accessible school site to ensure young people with physical disabilities are able to be included in all learning.

Morgan Sindall is delivering a new two-storey building for the school and has held a ceremony to mark the completion of the building's super-structure and external facade.

Students and staff at the school joined the Morgan Sindall project team at the ceremony to celebrate the construction milestone. The school's caretaker, Kevin Bennison, who has been in his post for over 30 years, was given the honour of marking the occasion by placing the last brick tile.

Lynda Walker, Headteacher at Oak Lodge School, said: "The whole school community has been very excited to see this wonderful new structure take shape. Oak Lodge first opened in 1916 before moving to our current site in the 1970s. This building is a fitting celebration of our first 100 years of special education and will be known therefore as 'The Centenary Building'"

Once complete, the new building will house eight classrooms, two therapy rooms, a PE hall, staff preparation areas, and an administration block. It will also feature a music and art therapy room and two wet-room style hygiene rooms with specially-equipped benches that can be raised and lowered to accommodate the student's needs.

The exterior of the building has a very striking dark blue and white polycarbonate cladding, brick tiles, timber cladding and insulated render. The Morgan Sindall project team is also delivering a sensory garden area for students to enjoy. Other external works include the creation of a large easily-accessible car park for the mini-buses that transport many of the students to and from the school.

The steel frame building is on track to achieve a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) rating of Very Good and will be partially powered by photo voltaic panels. The building will be completed in time for the summer term in 2017.

Neil Franklin, area director at Morgan Sindall, said: "We're so pleased to have been able to hold this ceremony to celebrate the key milestone in the expansion of Oak Lodge School. This is a fantastic school, which enables young people of many varied abilities to learn together in an inclusive, accessible environment and our project team has thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the school community during its time on site.

"The completed building will include some outstanding features and will provide a secure, innovative and exciting learning space for pupils and staff. We're looking forward to entering the final phase of works and handing over the keys in time for the summer term."

The Oak Lodge School project follows the successful delivery of a £10 million primary school in

North London. The project was also delivered for the London Borough of Barnet and is a long-awaited addition to London Academy, an existing secondary school in Edgware.

For more information about this news release please contact Niamh Conway at Influential on 0151 239 5000 or email [conway@thisisinfluential.com](mailto:conway@thisisinfluential.com)