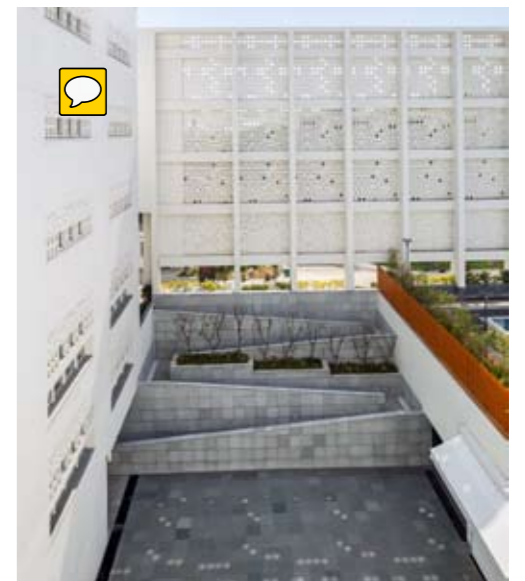


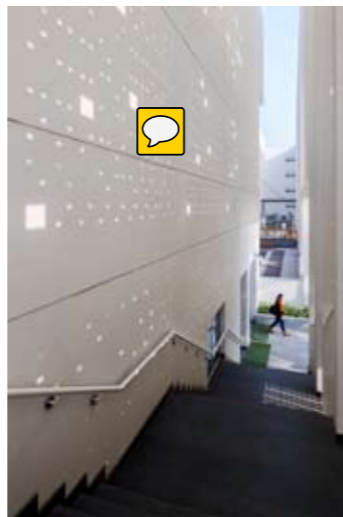
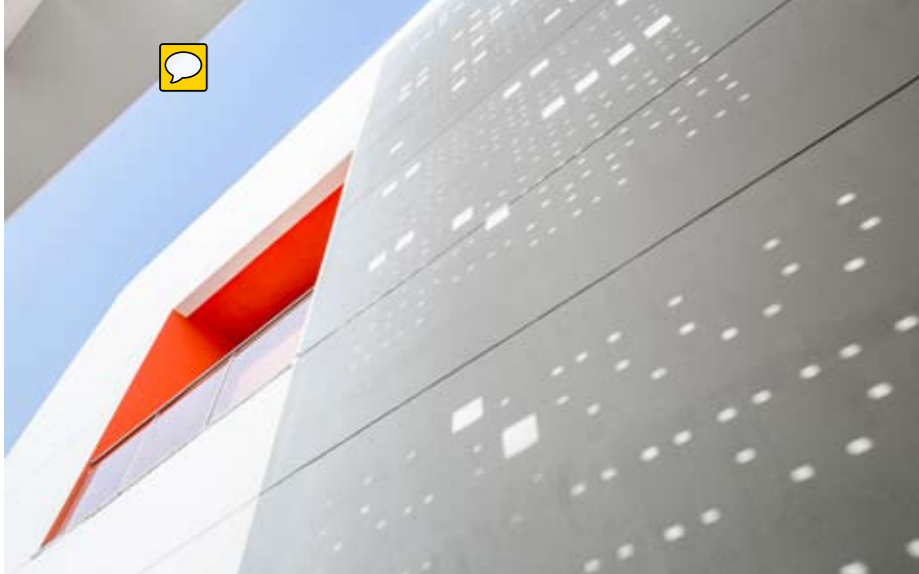


An uber-contemporary scholastic muse

Morphogenesis has created an iconic avatar for The British School in New Delhi, befitting its elevated reputation.

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PHOTOGRAPHS: JATINDER MARWAHA & RANDHIR SINGH.
COURTESY THE BRITISH SCHOOL SOCIETY





Educational institutions and campuses have moved away from being bland, boring boxes to innovatively designed attractive, yet practical buildings. A case in hand is The British School in the capital's elitist Chanakyapuri.

In addition to its reputation as an erudite seat of wisdom, non-curricula events and experiencing social connections, the highly innovative design by Morphogenesis perhaps has also helped the school to increase the capacity and demand skyrocketing.

The perforated white façade

allowing interesting patterns of light to flow internally, is punctuated with lively bright shocks of orange to enhance the absorption of information and facilitate the students' thinking process. Internally, each floor is distinguished with different coloured railings livening up the courtyard. Overall, they created dynamic, functional spaces where students can readily gain motivation.

Morphogenesis' vision for The British School found inspiration in the school's tagline – 'An International education with an Indian soul'. With this as the pri-

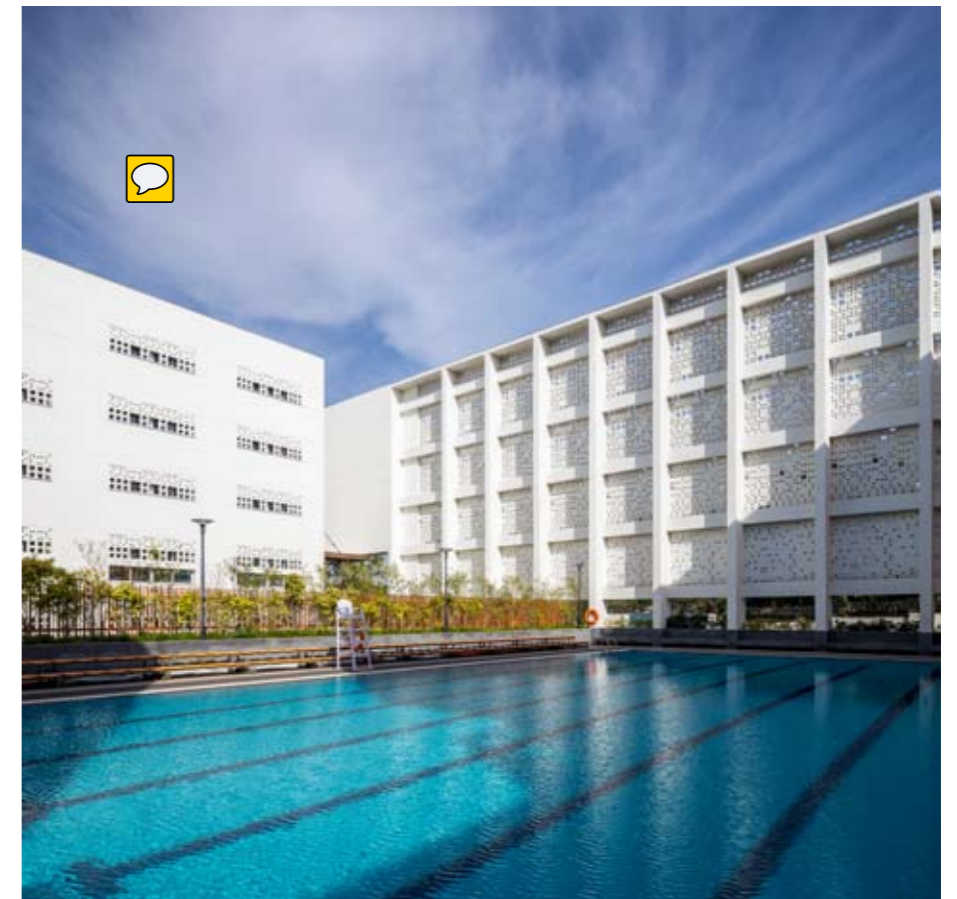
mary focus, Morphogenesis set out to provide a strong cultural context to the global format of education this institution provides. Space was a constraint as there was already an existing building on the present site. The client wanted the new premises for the then current population of 650 students to accommodate an increased, projected number of 1300 students.

Upon commencing work, the principal challenge faced was the construction of the new building on the existing site without disrupting the then present school, which at a later stage would become

redundant and demolished. Starting on Phase I, the only constructible space available enveloped the current premises, presenting multiple challenges simultaneously like construction, phasing and health and safety issues for the students. A strategic approach to phasing was adopted in the form of Phase I comprising of a perimeter block to transfer and accommodate existing operations. Phase II, built on the vacated footprint of the old school, houses additional classrooms, laboratories, sports facilities, arts wing and a performing arts centre.

Keeping in mind the unusually diverse student population, comprising of over 55 nationalities, led Morphogenesis to evolve a socio-culturally inclusive process of detailing the brief. A series of workshops which would be used by various stakeholders such as academicians and student class representatives, of 3 to 18 years of age, was set up. This approach acknowledged diversity and aimed to create an environment that would foster social cohesion and interrelation.

'One amongst many interesting outcomes of this collaboration was the notion of semi-enclosed breakout spaces that are liberally scattered around the school and are constantly being transformed by the way they are occupied. This was in response to the multicultural personality of the school and its strong social agenda, whereby a number of lateral activities take place during a typical school day. These



breakout spaces have been consciously placed along transition areas, such that the activities they facilitate become an integral part of the student experience, enhancing their holistic socio-cultural awareness and demonstrating the school's outreach philosophy at the same time. The multi-functional nature of these spaces helped in optimising the built-up space of this urban school,' says Ar. Sonali Rastogi, Founding Partner, Morphogenesis.

Keeping in view the critical aspect of optimising resources, two key design strategies were deployed. Foremost was to minimise reliance on mechanical systems. Morphogenesis advocated that 50 percent of the school

be non-air-conditioned with traditional passive methods used to temper the environment and optimise energy consumption, creating an environmentally experiential learning environment. The second strategy was that of planning the school as a system of courtyards designed in such a way so that the majority of them were in shade throughout the year, thus making them effective not only as transition spaces but as extended learning environments. The multi-functional nature of the spaces helped in optimising the built-up space of this urban school. Internal courtyards, chajjas (deep overhangs) and verandahs provide opportunities for students to engage with the



outdoors. Taking inspiration from traditional Indian chaupals (outdoor gathering spaces), some congregation spaces now sit in the shade of mature trees. Protecting old trees, creating bioswales, rain gardens and a visible rainwater harvesting system, consciously illustrates Morphogenesis focus on sustainability. Care was taken to protect all existing trees with the students actively involved in the transplantation process.

The classrooms, laboratories, sports facilities, arts wing, performing arts centre and public areas of The British School, have an extremely student-centric yet very contemporary fit out. It is based on the concept that teaching does not have a fixed format so it is all reconfigurable. What Morphogenesis has been able to achieve is that in each of these areas one wall has been identified which is completely activated, whether with digital enablement or reconfigurable storage, leaving the other three walls completely free for students to be creative and reinterpret it as per their need. Furthermore, each classroom has been given three or four different options for how they can be reconfigured. These can be used to study in a cluster format or in a row format or even in a meeting format. This has been made possible with the choice of furniture and the proportion of the classroom.

To increase the air quality even though the classrooms are airconditioned, the comfort temperature has been kept around 26 degrees. The school and Morphogenesis did not believe in making stu-



dents sit in 22 degrees at a time when the external temperature is 47 degrees and make them go through frequent temperature variations.

Sports halls have been

designed keeping in mind that the city will have scarcity of space as time goes along hence everything has been made multifunctional with an attached warmup



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

01 Cafeteria, 02 Toilet, 03 Primary classroom, 04 Library, 05 Reception classroom, 06 Toddler's play area, 07 Nursery classroom, 08 Medical room, 09 Swimming pool, 10 Pre-foyer/art gallery, 11 Black box, 12 Changing rooms, 13 Tuck shop, 14 Spill out, 15 Office, 16 Reception



THIRD FLOOR PLAN

01 Sport's hall below, 02 Toilet, 03 Electrical room, 04 Secondary classroom, 05 Break-out space, 06 Pect room, 07 Graphics room, 08 CAD-CAM/1B art room, 09 Design and technical room, 10 Technician room/store, 11 Resource centre, 12 Staff work room, 13 Secretaries, 14 Sec principal room, 15 Meeting room, 16 Art studio, 17 Sculpture room, 18 C/L auditorium, 19 Pre-foyer below, 20 Aisle



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

01 Media centre/examination hall, 02 Office, 03 Reception, 04 Career guidance room, 05 Primary classroom, 06 Break-out space, 07 Library, 08 Toilets, 09 Language room, 10 Seminar, 11 Music classroom, 12 Music classroom, 13 Procurement, 14 Double height, 15 Green room, 16 Store room, 17 Practice room, 18 Music recital room, 19 Drama studio, 20 Drama classroom



FOURTH FLOOR PLAN

01 Sports hall below, 02 Toilet, 03 Electrical room, 04 Biology lab, 05 Chemistry lab, 06 Break-out space, 07 IB lab, 08 Lab prep room, 09 Chemical store room, 10 Physics lab, 11 Conference, 12 Textile room, 13 Library, 14 Lecture room, 15 Auditorium



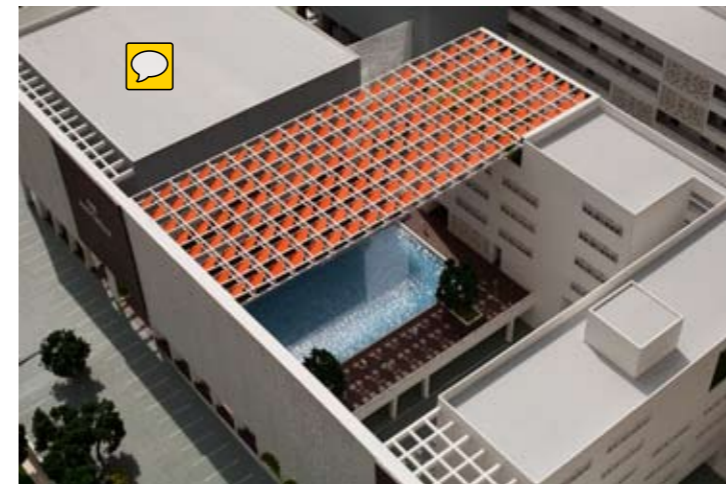
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

01 Office, 02 Store, 03 Gym, 04 Sport's hall, 05 Toilet, 06 Secondary classroom, 07 Break-out space, 08 Library, 09 Primary staff work room, 10 Primary classroom, 11 Language room, 12 Electrical/server room, 13 Seminar, 14 Dance studio, 15 Classroom library, 16 Private office, 17 Board room, 18 IT room, 19 UPS room, 20 Server room, 21 Multimedia room library, 22 Dark room/broadcast studio, 23 Backstage, 24 Stage, 25 Auditorium, 26 Double Ht area, 27 Platform, 28 Auditorium pre-foyer



FIFTH FLOOR PLAN

01 Fire water tank, 02 Domestic water tank, 03 Flushing water tank, 04 Terrace, 05 Electrical room



FACT FILE

TYPOLOGY
Institution

PROJECT
The British School

LOCATION
New Delhi

CLIENT
The British School Society

COMPLETION
2014 Phase I / 2016 Phase II

BUILT-UP AREA
2,97,000 Sq. ft.

SITE AREA
5.30 Acres

ARCHITECTURAL FIRM
Morphogenesis, New Delhi

ARCHITECTURAL TEAM
Ar. Sonali Rastogi, Ar. Manit Rastogi,
T.A Vijayasanam, Neelu Dhar, Apul Tandon,
Neha Madaan

LANDSCAPE DESIGN
Design Cell

STRUCTURE
Optimal Consultant

ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, HVAC & FIRE FIGHTING
AECOM

institution



gym and associated coaching facility allowing five sports to be played competitively by reconfiguring the same hall.

The kindergarten classrooms have been designed in a way where they can become one open hall as all the walls are collapsible. The materials used for flooring and furniture are soft and light for it to be rearranged with ease. The floors are of foam vinyl and are multicoloured to catch the students' imagination, and when required it separates out to form different classrooms.

The arts wing and the performing arts centre are exceptionally well thought through in terms of brief and to fulfill that brief was quite exciting. The 250-seater theatre can be used for lectures as well as events. A Blackbox style theatre, which is a preferred style for most contemporary theatres, has been created

and the space itself is reconfigurable. In addition to this there are recording studios, state-of-the-art facilities and practice rooms for individual tutorials for different musical instruments. All this has been done keeping the students' safety in mind, therefore each room has large vision panels so that no student is ever isolated in any one space. The walls of the entire circulation area of the performing arts center are also used as an exhibition gallery for the numerous pieces of art work that the students create across the various years.

The public areas of the school have again followed the philosophy of less furniture and easy circulation. This is the area where the lockers are placed. Wall spaces have always been used as exhibition areas because there is an endless supply of art that not only displays the cre-

ative work produced by the students for the parents and community to appreciate, but also acts as a sense of curiosity as these students walk through the school.

Breakout spaces have been consciously placed along transition areas, such that the activities they facilitate become an integral part of the student experience, enhancing their holistic socio-cultural awareness and demonstrating the school's outreach philosophy at the same time. The multifunctional nature of these spaces helped in optimising the built-up space of this urban school.

Overall, Morphogenesis' design enhances and enriches the learning experience of The British School's highly diverse student population, both in ages and countries of origin, by providing a contextual richness to their passage through education in India.