



St Andrew the Apostle

Greek Orthodox School



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Press Release - Blessing of the Foundations

June 6th 2023

Tuesday 6th June marked the blessing of the laying of the foundations for the new building at St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School on Brunswick Park Road. His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain, who recently blessed King Charles III on his Coronation at Westminster Abbey, was on hand to conduct a service of blessing of the foundations of the new school and of the community who will use it. The blessing was attended by Theresa Villiers MP, Councillor Nagus Narenthira Mayor of Barnet and Councillor Tony Vouros as well as founding staff and governors of the school.

The Archbishop offered prayers that the project be established on the rock of faith and cornerstone that is Jesus Christ and that it would enrich the lives of its young people.

Archdeacon Dr George Tsourous, the Archbishop's representative on the Governing Body explained: 'In the service, we collectively recognise and seek God's guidance and protection for the construction and use of the new facility.

The act of blessing a school building extends beyond asking for divine protection and guidance for the physical structure. The blessings also call upon God to be present in all interactions within the new building, whether these are between teachers and students, among peers, or with the wider community. The prayers invoke grace, wisdom and love to permeate all relationships and all learning that will take place within the building's walls.

As such, by having the foundations blessed, the school and the Church demonstrate their commitment to the holistic development of students, catering to their spiritual, mental, and emotional growth, in addition to their academic progress; a holistic and spiritually nurturing educational environment'.

Mary Karaolis, the Chair of Governors and a founding governor said: 'After ten years our prayers are finally answered: this is the culmination of a great deal of planning and hard work, from the school, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Russell Education Trust, the DfE and local partners. The school has really flourished in the last decade with the students in our founding cohort now graduating from University this summer!'

Dr Hills, the new Head teacher said: 'When you visit St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School there is a palpable buzz about the school, a real feeling of being proud to belong to something bigger than oneself, and the sense of a community that is great in spirit, with the confidence to go out and achieve big things. Even with the incredible new build and facilities we will remain a school on a human scale, with a uniquely Greek Orthodox ethos, where every individual can feel valued, known and nurtured, whatever their background or religious identity. The outstanding new building and sports facilities will soon be ready to take things to the next level, building upon the exceptional pastoral, sporting and academic foundations already in place. As a football fan I am particularly excited by the development of a wonderful new all-weather pitch: we are already district champions at several age groups and we want St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School to be a real hub of sporting as well as academic excellence for girls and boys of all ages'.



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Stelios Stylianou, Project Director from the Department for Education said 'Today marks a significant milestone in our journey to a brand new and permanent home for St Andrew the Apostle school. I am honoured to have been invited to join the celebrations and blessing of the foundations today, made even more special for me as I am part of the Greek Orthodox community here in London. It has been a challenging journey for us all so far, only made possible because of the commitment from a huge number of people. I am now looking forward to overseeing the construction phase and delivering a school building students, teachers and parents have been waiting for and I know will be proud of for many years and generations to come.'

Brian Comer, Co-Founder and Chairman of The Comer Group, who provided the land as part of the wider development of North London Business Park said: 'The commencement of works to construct a brand new school building for St. Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School is the first step in transforming the North London Business Park into a fantastic community-led mixed-use development that is Royal Brunswick Park. The school forms part of a crucial section of the site, which will provide modern state-of-the-art educational and sports facilities, with an exceptional array of pitches and courts for the wider community. There will also be further green spaces, parks and natural enclaves, with high-quality homes and community hubs to be delivered across the wider scheme in future phases.'

Ends





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