



SEND School Opening

Prestley Wood Academy, Alconbury Weald's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) school welcomed its first 70 students to a brand new £36 million bespoke facility in early September.

Delivered on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council and run by Horizons Education Trust, Prestley Wood Academy caters for pupils aged 4-19 years old. Following a staggered start for its first cohort, numbers will gradually rise to 150 over the next few years. The school will form part of the Alconbury Weald Education Campus, which will see the addition of a new Secondary School currently scheduled to open in September 2027.

Prestley Wood boasts some of the best SEN facilities in the region. This includes two sensory rooms, a state-of-the-art hydrotherapy pool, trampoline room, soft play and much more. The outside areas have also been transformed with soft landscaping, including 120 new trees planted and wildflower areas created, alongside the installation of outside play and gym equipment and a multi-use games area (MUGA).

Aligned with Cambridgeshire County Council's plans to be Net Zero by 2045, Prestley Wood Academy has been built with sustainability in mind, with 200 photovoltaic panels installed as well as an energy efficient air source heat pump system.

The sustainable nature and landscape design of the school will support the curriculum to provide a range of initiatives including residential and educational visits and forest school learning.

Prestley Wood Academy is run as its own school but with strong links to Huntingdon's nearby Spring Common Academy Trust, which is part of the same Horizons Education Trust.

Caroline Place, Head Teacher for Prestley Wood Academy, said: "It has been fantastic to watch the school building coming together. It's an amazing space and we're really excited to be establishing a new school here. Everyone is starting to settle in and there's a real buzz at the start of the school day. It's lovely to walk in and be greeted by so many smiles and so much enthusiasm."

