

PRESS RELEASE

13th May 2004

Keep out means welcome!



Photographs and images at 300dpi available

Children at Holy Trinity School in Ashton had an extra lesson as a reward for their good behaviour!

The school is next to the new headquarters building for the New Charter Housing Trust Group, *Cavendish 249*, in Ashton-under-Lyne, Greater Manchester. Work started on the 48,000sq ft office development at the end of January 2003 and was completed this month. The landlord identified the potential attraction to local children of a major construction site, and has been working with the school over the last 18 months to highlight the dangers of building sites.

Several projects have been run by the teachers and New Charter to get the simple message across - kids and construction don't mix. Among these was a competition to design safety



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notices, which many children enthusiastically took part. But the prize for all the children was a guided tour round the new building once finished, and this week New Charter kept its promise.

The children were shown round the building, whose striking design features a 25metre high central glazed atrium and a spectacular staircase. They were interested to finally see inside the building, and fascinated to learn the rainwater is collected from the roof to help flush the toilets!

Afterwards, the children had orange juice and cakes in the central atrium and took home balloons, fun books and pens as a reminder of their unusual lesson.

Deputy Head Teacher at Holy Trinity, Vicky Hewitt said, “There’s a lot of construction going on near to our school on Ashton Moss. It’s natural for the children to be curious, but we’ve made them aware of the dangers. It’s been “keep out” until today, when they’ve been made to feel most welcome. It’s a nice reward for their good behaviour. We hope it’s a regular part of our future curriculum”.

Ian Munro, Group Chief Executive of New Charter commented, “We’re a big business in Tameside. Our new home next to neighbours Holy Trinity houses over 370 staff. We are extremely pleased the children understood our safety message and kept clear of our building during construction. Today, their reward for understanding our message was a tour round the offices, with some treats at the end. I’m sure they’ve learnt something from

the visit and also the importance of being a good neighbour. Thanks to Holy Trinity staff and children”.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter formed in 1999 as the new landlords to own and manage nearly 16,400 properties transferred from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester. With a turnover of £49million a year and a workforce of almost 800, New Charter is one of the twenty largest Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog.
2. Cavendish 249 was built largely on a site cleared of unfit terraced housing as part of the Ashton Renewal Area programme in 1999. The site was sold by Tameside MBC to New Charter who also assembled four other adjacent pieces of land in private deals. The building includes a Board room, purpose designed IT training room, a learning centre, tenants resource room and a prayer room as well as the usual office facilities.
3. The building is passively ventilated and boasts a range of environmentally friendly features that were key to its design. Windows and lighting are computer controlled; there's a high standard of insulation; and heat and power are generated from a roof-mounted Combined Heat and Power Unit. Work on the headquarters started at the end of January 2003 by Williams Tarr Construction Ltd. The build project of £5.4m has been delivered on budget and to a superb standard.
4. The location of the school and New Charter's headquarters is close to the Ashton Moss development, is next to the proposed Metrolink extension from Manchester and only 600 yards away from the M60 Manchester Orbital motorway.
5. Photographs of visit and scanned images of children's colouring competition available on request.

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