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# THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



St James Catholic High School, winners of last year's Environment Competition. Picture courtesy Barnet Voluntary Service Council.

## How are you helping the environment?

By John Dearing

Schools, youth groups, voluntary groups, residents' associations and faith groups are among those being invited to enter this year's Environment Competition, which is free and open to all community groups in Barnet.

To enter, simply carry out a project that helps to improve your local environment and then submit a short report. Thanks to the sponsorship of McDonald's and an anonymous donor, there are great prizes for this year's competition, including a first prize of £750 and further cash prizes of up to £1,000 at the judges' discretion. St James Catholic High School, Colindale, was the winner of

the last Environment Competition in June this year and was presented with its prize by the Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet.

The St James 'e-Squad' has an ongoing programme of projects including recycling and creating a vegetable garden. The school will be spending the money on further environmental projects.

Entry packs for The

Environment Competition 2006/7 can be downloaded from [www.barnetvsc.org.uk](http://www.barnetvsc.org.uk) or requested from 020 8364 8400. The registration form needs to be returned to Barnet Voluntary Service Council by Friday 3 November and the project report by Friday 23 February 2007.

The Environment Competition Steering Group consists of representatives from the voluntary and community sectors, Local Agenda 21 Groups, Barnet Voluntary Service Council (BVSC) and McDonald's Restaurants Ltd, with help from Barnet Council.

## Academy will widen school choice

By Rebecca Smith

Ambitious plans to open a City Academy in North Finchley have won vital Government backing. It is hoped the Academy will give many East Finchley families a greater secondary school choice.

The Finchley Academy is due to open its doors in September 2008 on the site of the former Christ Church school in Hilton Avenue, North Finchley, which closed in August 2005. It will specialise in design and the built environment.

The main sponsor of the Academy is the Church of England's London Diocesan Board for Education. The Academy will have a "distinctive Christian identity", although it is planned to reserve 50 per cent of places for pupils from the local community with no religious affiliation.

### Serving the whole community

Sylvia Duthie, East Finchley resident and former chair of governors at Holy Trinity School, is a member of the Finchley Academy

Steering group. She said: "I am actively involved, as a member of the London Diocesan Board for Schools, in the development of the Academy because of the poor access children in East Finchley have when it comes to Secondary Transfer. I am very excited that in September 2008 we will have a new school for the future, equipped for the 21st century.

"Our vision will be to grow a brand new school year by year which will be a centre of excellence in providing the whole curriculum, with the specialist focus of Design and the Built Environment. It will be a Church of England Foundation but half the places will be community places. It is our mission to serve the whole community, as is true of all our Church schools."

### Practical skills

The Finchley Academy will be a co-educational school for 11-18 year olds. There will be six forms of entry from 11-16 and up to 250 places for 16-18 year olds. Alongside the traditional GCSEs and A-levels, vocational diplomas and skills will also be taught in a Practical Skills Centre to be created on the site.

In September 2008 there will be a Year 7 intake of 162 pupils, working up to a full roll by 2011. The sixth form will initially recruit 50 students in 2010, rising to 250 by 2013.

The London Diocesan Board for Schools already has a successful track record in developing City Academies, including the Greig City Academy in Crouch End. It is now looking for suitable sponsors to join them in the project.

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