



Actress Melissa Johns (left) with Lesma, an ex-pupil from Royal Free Hospital children's school

Image: Camden Council

# New school campus opens to help educate children in hospital

A new school campus has been opened for children in hospital and other youngsters who struggle to attend mainstream education.

The campus has been opened by the Royal Free Hospital Children's School at the historic Konstam building in Hampstead, with the ribbon cut by former teaching assistant-turned-actress Melissa Johns.

It provides education for young patients aged five to 16 in the paediatric wards at the Royal Free, alongside outreach programmes previously run from two separate sites, which are now at the Konstam Centre in Chester Road, off Swain's Lane.

"This relocation gives us greater stability," headteacher Alex Yates said. "Our outreach services now operate under one roof for the first time, which means we can focus on meeting needs and increasing the number of youngsters we can support."

The school also runs alternative education for youngsters going through

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medical or mental health issues, including those under the care of the Royal Free's eating disorders service who are unable to go to a mainstream school.

It has specialist support in educational, speech and drama therapy, with 40 youngsters currently getting full or part-time learning. It also does therapy dog sessions, weekly visits to an equine centre and sports activities at the Royal Free's recreation club and Pirate Castle centre in Camden Lock.

One former pupil called Jack, now aged 25, who spoke at the opening, revealed how he "didn't engage with mainstream education but wanted to come to school". He praised the work of the centre as essential.

The centre has been refurbished with cash from Camden Council and is now also able to provide space for a nursery for Highgate's Brookfield Primary School.

Cllr Marcus Boyland said: "Moving this service to the Konstam Centre is making a huge difference to children and is providing long-term stability for the school. This is an outstanding school for vulnerable children who are not able to get mainstream education."

Lessons are also run for youngsters in Royal Free wards, along with other programmes at the Konstam Centre for up to 50 youngsters. The Royal Free NHS Foundation Trust serves Camden, Barnet and parts of Haringey and Enfield.

The Konstam building was opened originally as a children's hospital in 1922 by the Konstam family, named after two brothers killed on the Western Front in the First World War.

Jack Konstam died in the Battle of the Somme in 1915 his German cousin was killed in the same battle fighting on the other side. Jack's older brother Norman was killed two years later.

## Antisemitic graffiti in toilet

Staff at a school quickly closed a toilet to students after "unacceptable" antisemitic graffiti was found.

Channing School for Girls, an independent girls' school in at Highgate Hill, swiftly reacted after reports of the vandalism in the student toilets at lunchtime on Thursday, November 2.

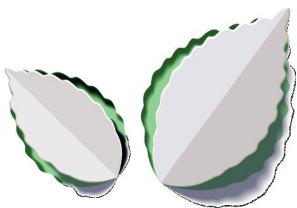
Responding to the report, the school told papers: "Unfortunately, a number of students saw what had been written and they, and their families, have been understandably shocked and upset.

"We have reassured them that it is being dealt with and reminded them and the rest of the community of the places and people to which they can go for support. Our pastoral team has already reached out to several individuals to provide support."

The school statement continued: "We have reminded the whole school that antisemitism is abhorrent, unacceptable and will not be tolerated."

The incident has been reported to the police and the Community Security Trust, a charity that tackles antisemitism.

An internal investigation is also taking place at Channing School.



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Source: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), 2005 - 2020  
European Forests: EU27 + Norway, Switzerland and the UK.

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