

## Education First Language School

Education First is an international language school that operates in several locations across the world. Their school on Hills Road in Cambridge was established over 30 years ago in a large late-Victorian villa to the south of the city centre. The villa had been used previously as a boarding house before being poorly converted and extended in the 1980's for use as a language school.

The schools facilities were in need of radical improvement and the primary aspiration was to provide better quality classrooms and more appropriate communal facilities than previously existed. It was also stipulated that classrooms should be, as far as possible, naturally lit and naturally ventilated. Accommodation includes 20 classrooms each to accommodate 17 students, as well as IT, administrative and dining facilities sufficient for up to 360 students and 40 staff at any one time.



# NRAP ARCHITECTS

The innovative and progressive design of the school creates a relaxed and studious atmosphere. Naturally lit and ventilated classrooms are arranged on two levels around a series of linked communal spaces and a double height atrium. Translucent glass screens in place of white boards allow projected images to be simultaneously viewed in the classroom and the atrium space. North-facing roof lights within the extension provide a high level of natural lighting without generating glare or overheating.

Floors have been removed within the retained building to create a dramatic triple-height space in the heart of the institution. Elsewhere floor levels have been adjusted to allow disabled access to every room. The relatively compact layout and deep plan creates an energy efficient envelope, enclosing well-lit and generous spaces. Sustainability measures also include an array of solar cells on the roof and high levels of insulation within the new extension.



