

## Stepping Stone School, Hindhead



### Challenge:

The historical and cultural significance of the Grade II listed Undershaw House and the myriad concerns of local and national stakeholders, demanded a considerate scheme that consolidated and preserved the original built core and restored the property to its former grandeur. At the same time the scheme was required to meet the special educational and care needs of young people between 7 and 18 who had acquired processing delays as a result of chronic medical and mental conditions, and for whom mainstream education would prove too challenging and a full special school, too limiting.

### Solution:

At a cost of almost £5million, the Undershaw House development by Nye Saunders has significantly increased the space available to the school, allowing it to increase enrollment to some 64 pupils in 2016-2017. Set in three acres of mature garden, the adaptation of the Surrey Vernacular style house reinforces the idea of the school as a 'home away from home'. The original design is principally in stretcher-bonded red brick, with a tile hung upper storey and gables and a tiled roof. The original core building has been refurbished and re-purposed throughout, with a low quality multi-storey extension to the rear demolished and replaced with a modest single-storey addition, and a poorly-designed historic extension to the East Wing replaced by a new part single, part two-storey purpose-built extension offering c. 990 sq. m of new floorspace, housing a music room, physiotherapy area and hydrotherapy pool at ground floor, and classrooms and specialised art, design and science spaces at first floor level. Sitting alongside, linked by this extension is a stunning, two-storey building that takes inspiration from Undershaw's historic vernacular. The use of stretcher-bonded Ibstock wirecut/extruded Chester Red Blend is key to establishing aesthetic and architectural consistency across a design, which complements, rather than competes, with Doyle's original core. Similar references are apparent throughout, and particularly so in the dormer and gable roof design. The scale and massing of the new extension allow Undershaw to remain readable as a house – a critical design consideration. Whilst the extensive use of brickwork at ground floor provides a robust and contextually-sensitive foundation within, and upon which, glazing and cladding are



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# CASE STUDY

set to deliver the extension a distinctly contemporary architectural identity.

*Architect:* Nye Saunders

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**Brick:**

Chester Red Blend