

PROMONTORIO

KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL CASCAIS
CASCAIS, PORTUGAL
2025–2021

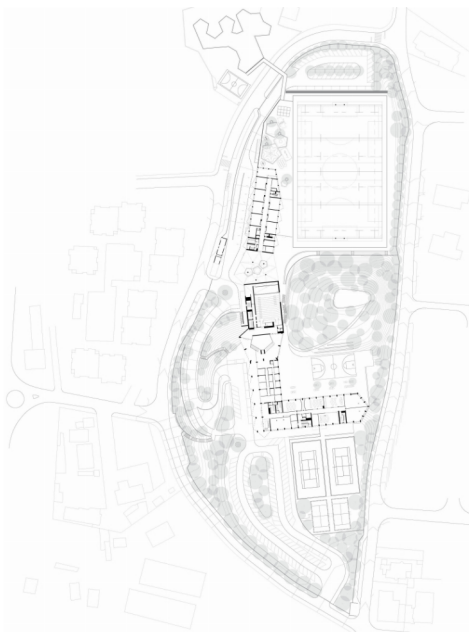
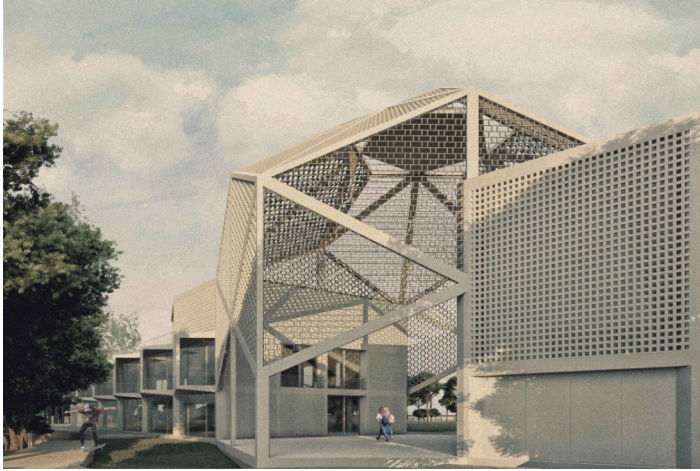
Located in Lisbon's west coast, a world-class international school for 1,200 high-powered sports and performing arts students from kindergarten to 12th grade, including boarding

King's College School is part of the Inspired Education Group, which acquired PaRK Schools in Portugal. With a teaching programme focused on competitive sports and performing arts, the site is adjacent to the existing PaRK International School in Cascais (Park Kindergarten) — designed and built by the practice between 2008 and 2015 — whereby the new school campus will offer a wider programme, catering for over 1,200 external students up to 18 years old, besides providing boarding services for 50 students. With a plot area of 4 ha, its planned facilities comprise two gymnasiums, football and rugby pitches, tennis and padle courts and an indoor swimming pool, as well as performing arts spaces for dance and drama, and acoustic rooms for musical practice. In addition to the classrooms, it includes science labs, a multi-purpose hall, auditorium and extensive landscaped areas.

The plot occupies the highly complex site of a deeply excavated former stone quarry, meaning that the first consideration in the project was the strategic infilling of the existing voids and to topographically reconfigure it, achieved by distributing the programme over a system of basements. The building mass is shaped as an L, with its longer side facing east. In addition to the voids, the terrain cascades from north to south. The school is divided in two major programmes, whose frontage is for the most part occupied by the drop-off point. The primary students' wing, for younger children, is located on the lower southern edge and connected by a pedestrian bridge across the road to the existing kindergarten, while the secondary students' wing and the boarding facilities are located in the remainder of the eastern volume, all of it facing north.

The winter garden (primary school) and the vertical hub (secondary school) act like hinges, articulating and segregating the different programmes and corresponding respectively to each of the dedicated drop-offs. These landmark structures, derivative of pentagonal honeycomb prisms, not only mark the entrances but also function as their respective foyers. While the winter garden is a semi-enclosed lattice structure that fundamentally provides shading between the double-storey primary school and the canteen, the vertical hub interconnects all the circulation flows from the secondary school. At ground-floor level (+82.00), it functions as the atrium for the auditorium, connecting to the reception, administration, classroom wings, science labs, and ultimately to the senior schoolyard. Further down, making use of the topographic infill of the hollows of the quarry, the double-height gym and the pool facilities are located below grade. Similarly making use of the infill, further south the rugby/soccer field rests partially on top of a slab that has the school parking below.

Following the ethos of the adjacent kindergarten, the materialisation of the ensemble consists mostly of an assembly of white precast elements, together with a lattice system of terracotta hollow bricks that let light through while preserving the privacy of each room. The odd system of zigzags and jagged angles that permeates the whole design, in the form of verandas and cantilevers, has been devised to match the complexity of the programme to the abrupt discrepancies in the topography, fostering an organic diversity that echoes the spirit of the school.



Location: Estrada do Rodizio 51, Cascais, Portugal

Client: O Parque-Ensino de Crianças, SA

Scope of services: Architecture and interior design

Project brief: Primary and secondary school

Plot area: 4 ha

Gross floor area: 16,190 sq. m

Construction cost: EUR 45m (estimated)

Project status: 2021 (concept design) – 2025 (estimated completion)

Rendering: 4+Arquitectos