



Mother Teresa Children's Centre (South)

Chilomoni, Blantyre



Location

Beehive Main Campus, Chilomoni, Blantyre, Malawi

Type

Children's Centre / Nursery Teaching Spaces

Year of Construction

2010 - 2012

Design Architect

Marty McColl

Project Architect

Giacomo Zanardo

Design Engineer

Sam Youdan

Geotechnical Engineer

Zedi Nyirenda

Project Engineers

Hendrix Mgawana, Chris Sadler and Melvin Hurst

Total Building Area (Approx. GEA)

904m²

Number of Storeys

2

Construction Cost

129,474,677 MWK for MTCC North and South
(£132,157 GBP - rate correct as of 24th August 2020)

Cost per m²

75,539 MWK/m²
(£77 GBP/m²)

“The students, even at their young age, can recognise that the building is special, and the environment that has been created here is dramatically different from what they are used to.” (Fortune Machado, MTCC Room Leader)

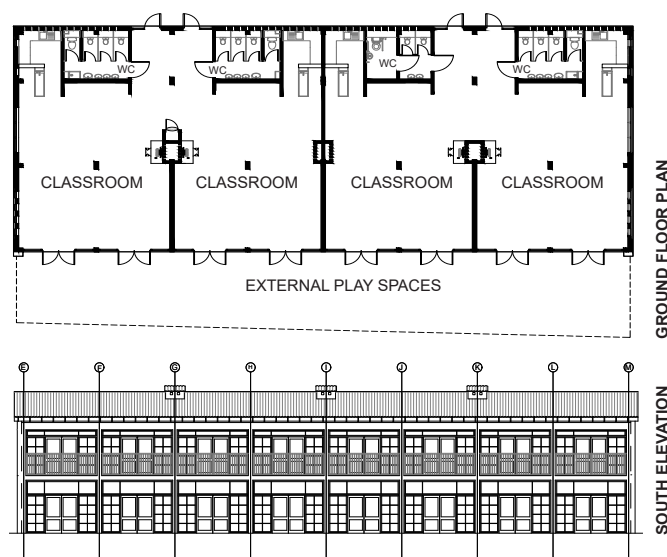
“Evidence shows that the first years of a child’s life set the stage for all future growth. In the earliest years of life, especially from pregnancy to two years old, babies and children need nutrition, protection and stimulation for healthy brain development.”

(UNICEF, Malawi)

Mother Teresa Children's Centre was devised in order to provide severely lacking pre-School education to one the poorest townships in the Southern region of Malawi. The Centre aims to offer an International-standard of pre-School education; two-thirds of the students, who are aged 1-5 years, have fully-sponsored or heavily-subsidised places, so as to ensure that the facility is accessible to the community's neediest families.

An international-standard of construction and design was required to match the Centre's educational aspirations. The building comprises 8 classrooms, set across 2 storeys. Each unit has an area of 70m² and includes integrated WCs and a Kitchen area, removing the need for students to leave the room during the day. External learning spaces are located adjacent to the classrooms, allowing for a range of teaching methods to be implemented.

The building utilises Beehive's site-made 'Hydraform' interlocking blocks (which are formed using local soil) as an infill to the reinforced concrete structural frame. The roof structure comprises a series of timber trusses, which are expressed internally at higher level to create a dramatic and interesting 3D ceiling-scape to the classroom interiors.



Natural ventilation and lighting is successfully created in the classrooms through the use of centralised 'chimneys', honeycomb brick detailing at high levels on the external North walls and full-height, glazed openings to the South facade. The classrooms are cool and comfortable, even in the hottest of months. The building's circulation is via two external 'balcony' corridors to the North of the building, reducing the amount of 'internalised' spaces in the building. Playful, scattered windows populate the East and West facades, many placed at 'child-height,' providing impressive views out to the nearby Michiru Mountain.