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Chimneys breathe fresh air into Barnsley Academy classrooms

Students at the new Barnsley Academy in Yorkshire are enjoying the benefits of fresh air indoors with the help of thermal chimneys and a building management system installed by BG Controls.

The recently opened Barnsley Academy is an independent organisation sponsored by the United Learning Trust to bring quality educational opportunities to over 500 students aged 11 to 19. Building controls specialist, BG Controls, was appointed by national building services provider NG Bailey to fit a sophisticated building management system that would control and manage the heating and ventilation for the 10,350 sq ft purpose-built building. Unusually, this includes the operation of fresh air chimneys, which are located throughout the building, to bring ventilation to the Academy's 43 naturally ventilated classrooms.

A fan extracts stale air out of each room and up the chimney, whilst fresh air is pulled in through windows. Staff are then able to control the amount of air entering vents into the classroom via a simple wall-mounted control box. There is also a pushbutton to provide a fan boost if needed. At night, the fresh air vents are reset back to closed. BG engineers carried out the complete building controls installation at the site before the students entered the building for the first time at the beginning of March.

"The natural ventilation made possible by the chimneys is a sustainable resource which delivers healthy fresh air to the classrooms", says BG Controls project manager, Simon Shaw. "By having local control over the ventilation in each classroom, staff can be sure their students are benefitting from healthy and comfortable surroundings, which are also productive learning environments."

"The system runs very effectively and has been of great interest to our students," says Lesley Dickinson, finance director at Barnsley Academy. "It will provide a project topic for them to undertake to fully understand the system, its aims and the effect on their environment."