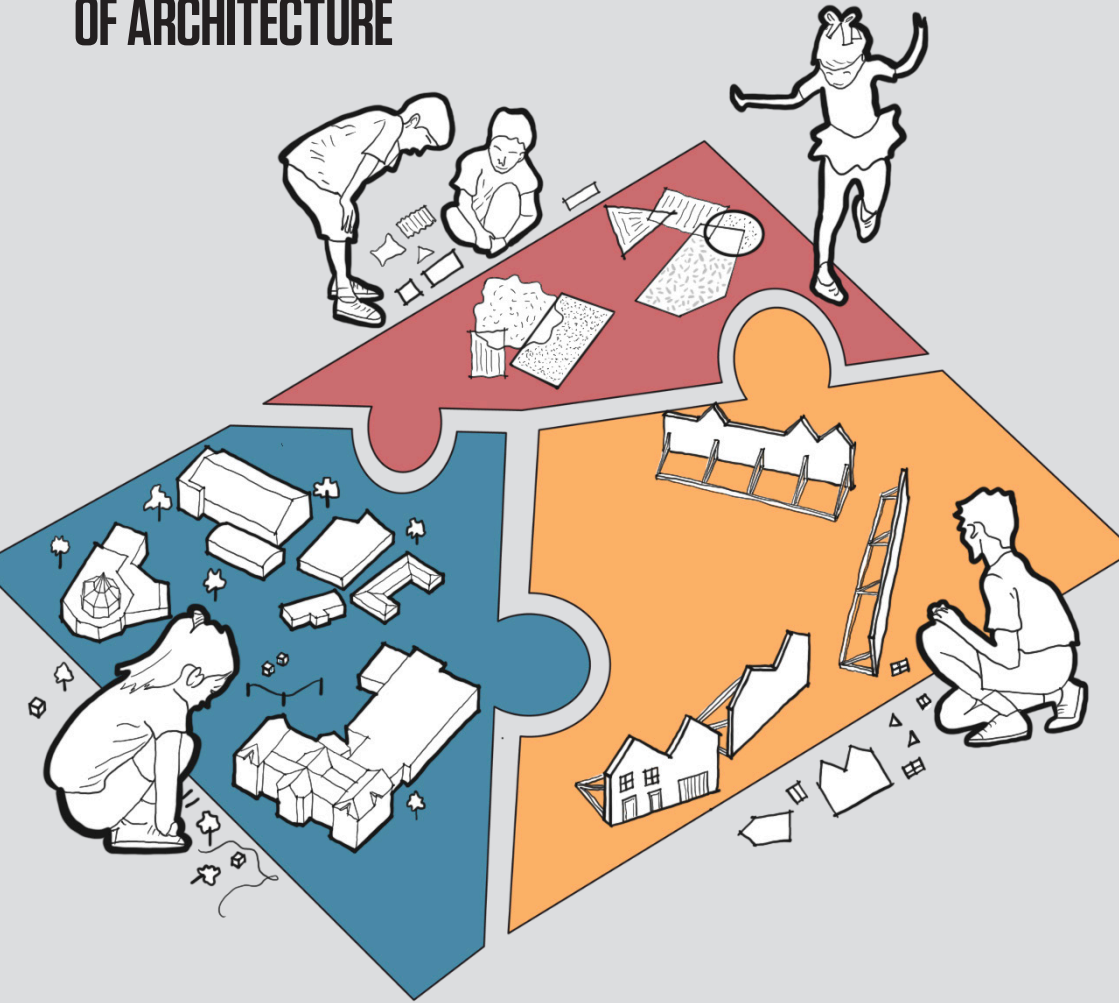


MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



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**MSA
LIVE 24**

Team

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Chenming Li (BA2)

Letitia Zhao (BA2)

Liu Ruiyi (BA2)

Zhengyou Chen (BA2)

Arya Aravindakshan (MLA1)

Partners

Our collaborators for this project are Laura Sanderson and Oswald Road Primary School.

Laura is an architect, educator and creative who loves people and places. Until around a year ago, Laura was the Deputy Programme Leader of the MArch at MSA and the Atelier Leader of Continuity in Architecture. Since leaving MSA, Laura has worked as a Research Associate with the Women of the Welfare Landscape, took on a Creative Residency at the Museum of Science and Industry and is currently working on the development of a new project with Heritage Schools, as well as being a regular Visiting Tutor at MSA. Laura loves long walks, huge cups of tea, good books and bad telly!

Oswald Road Primary School is beyond excited to partner on this project. We are working with Year 4 and their teachers have shared a few words with us - "We are the Year 4 teachers at Oswald Road who are lucky (and excited) to be involved in the Little Architects project. Aside from our classes, we each have our different roles within school. Hayley is curriculum lead for phonics, Helen for history and Christian for PE. Not only do we love planning lessons and teaching the children, but we get on pretty well too - we even have our own card club on a Friday. To date the winning tally is even!"

Introduction

Little Architects

The project revolves around community engagement through an unforgettable workshop where children will transform into architects for a day where they explore and expand their creativity by redesigning their neighbourhood through three engaging modes. The action week was spent preparing for the two day workshop which took place during the 16th and 17th of May. The project involved a myriad of students from BA1, BA2, MArch1, MLA and MAAU who came together and were passionate to empower young minds. Together, we created an enriching experience that fostered a sense of belonging and ownership over everyday spaces for these children. Stay tuned to witness our young minds at work and to see the positive impact they'll make on their surroundings!

The action week was divided into three phases. First phase was the introduction of the project to the team and learning necessary skills. The second involved preparing everything necessary for the workshop, and finally the workshop itself. This publication will only cover a bit of the preparation involved and concentrate more on the workshop outputs.

The project was conceived in December 2024, when Laura and the teachers of Oswald Road Primary School met with the MArch and MAAU students. Over the next few months, many discussions were held and the project took shape. The end goal was clear and everyone looked forward to May. When the action week started, the rest of the team was assembled. This was followed by prepping the new members in order to get everything together for the workshop. If you want to know more about the first two parts, you can head over to our blog which was maintained daily on the MSA Live page.

The outputs from the workshop were ultimately showcased in a small exhibition which took place after school hours at Oswald Road. Parents who came in to pick up their children were invited in to take a look at the creative designs.

The Story of Chorlton

History & Evolution

Chorlton is a suburban area of Manchester, England, three miles southwest of the city centre. By the 9th century, there was an Anglo-Saxon settlement here. In the Middle Ages, improved drainage methods led to population growth. In the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, its rural character made it popular among the middle class.

Historically, Chorlton was a village on Lancashire's southern border with Cheshire, and a township within the ancient parish of Manchester. It was incorporated into the city of Manchester in 1904. Chorlton borders Stretford, Sale, Didsbury, Withington, and Whalley Range. The River Mersey runs past Chorlton along its southern boundary. The area's eastern boundary has changed since the 19th century because of incorporation into the City of Manchester and division into wards.

This was explained to the children in the form of simple illustrations. The story itself was simplified - Chorlton being a simple town at first, saw its first expansion after a railroad from Manchester was constructed in 1880. A little context was given to this covering the topics of industrial revolution and the world's first railroad from Manchester to Liverpool. The introduction of a new railroad to Chorlton resulted in a small train station (which is now replaced by a modern train station at the same location). From then on, the town developed rapidly. A school, library, banks and plenty of shops were built to support the growing community. Almost all of the buildings are still used for the same purposes.

A side-by-side comparison was shown to the children, and they were excited to see how the buildings had evolved and changed. Everyday buildings shown as neighbourhood monuments was a fun element to add into the workshop. This study and education about their neighbourhood set up the perfect stage for the activities which were to follow.

Image Top (Left):
Chorlton Primary School
- 1958

Image Top (Right):
Chorlton Primary School
- 2024

Image Middle-Top (Left):
Four Banks - 1958

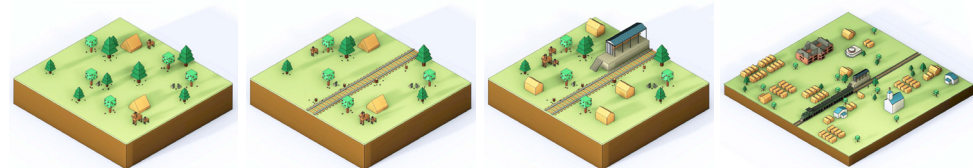
Image Middle-Top (Right):
Four Banks - 2024

Image Middle-Bottom
(Left):
Shops in Wilbraham Road
- 1961

Image Middle-Bottom
(Right):
Shops in Wilbraham Road
- 2024

Image Bottom (Left):
Chorlton Library - 1958

Image Bottom (Right):
Chorlton Library - 2024



The Evolution of Chorlton

The Workshops

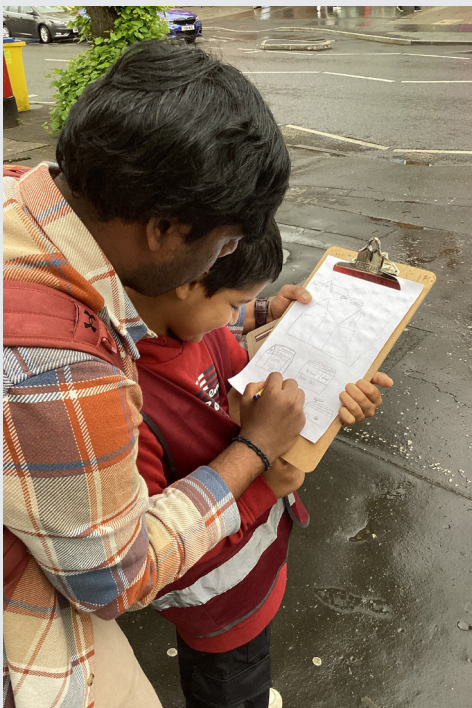
Day 01 - Urban Sketching

Day one started off with a presentation in the big hall at Oswald Road Primary School. Kids from all three sections of Year 4 gathered after lunch for a short presentation. The presentation introduced the world of architecture to the kids, many of whom were excited to share their prevailing knowledge on it - owing to their parents practicing architecture. We dipped our toes in the basics of architecture - built, interiors and landscape, and later delved into the role of architects in everyday life. After making architecture look like its the coolest job in the world, we introduced the history of Manchester and Chorlton in a fun, graphic manner to keep things interesting. This portion included the comparison of buildings in 1900s to buildings now, and segued into the activity for the day - Urban Sketching. The children were given instructions on what to do with no restrictions on creativity. Each class set off on separate routes, covering the various landmarks shown in the presentation. We took a brisk walk into the neighbourhood with excited kids ready to draw the first thing that grabbed their attention. Many drew the buildings around them with a few even sketching small details like flowers and birds. Some also included life drawings by drawing their friends! After spending an hour on the pathways (attracting pedestrians' attention and having fun), we returned to the school to wrap it up. It was a promising start and the urban sketching workshop got the creative juices flowing for everyone.

Day 02 - Redesigning the Neighbourhood

The second day was set up to bring the designer out of the kids. The three classes covered three different aspects of architectural design - plans, elevations and models. Ms.Craven's class explored designing through plans, Mr.Burton's class explored their creativity through model-making and Ms.Savage's class redesigned existing buildings through exterior elevations. A block model was made to help illustrate the spaces involved. This was built on Sketchup andd Rhino to be 3D printed, thereby introducing new softwares to the BA students. Tutorials were held for a whole day to familiarise the applications. Each class was given an exciting name and briefed on the activities to come. The following were the three categories for the workshop:

- CLASS 4-A (Ms. Hayley Craven): Plan-it Pilots led by Dakun and Arya**
- CLASS 4-B (Mr. Christian Burton): Model Masters led by Maega and Varsha**
- CLASS 4-C (Ms. Helen Savage): Elevation Explorers led by Karthik**



1. Plan-it Pilots

Preparation

Plan-it Pilots revolves around redesigning a portion of the block containing buildings which are to be demolished. The task given to the children was to use various textures, colours and tools to reimagine the corner of their block and propose a design for the space if they were the architects. Preparation for this workshop involved a part of the block model (done through documentation, digital modelling and 3D printing) and A0 sheets containing the site plan for the kids to design on (done through documentation, digital drafting and printing) .

Workshop and Results

The kids were excited to be a plan a new program for their block. It was easy to get them accustomed to the concept of "plans" owing to this generation's easy accessibility to digital maps on phones. The day was separated into three sessions (followed by all classes). The first and second sessions were used to plan and design the area. This project involved introducing new concepts of site planning. The children took up the challenge and executed it perfectly. They planned many activity oriented areas like ice rinks, water slides, skate parks and football pitches. Some also created museum spaces and moved from plans to facades. There was no empty space left since every part was well-thought with landscaping. The kids shared their work in the last session and got to meet some practising architects too!



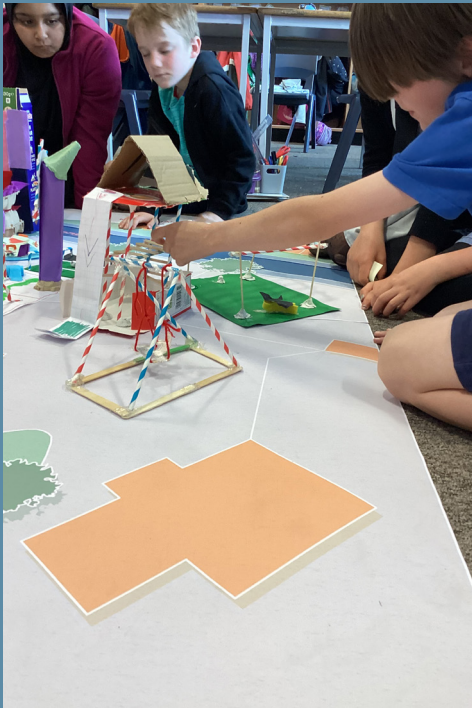
2. Model Masters

Preparation

Model Masters revolves around designing the school's playground area. The task given to the children was to use various materials like paper straws, ice cream sticks, clay, thread, felt paper, egg cartons, cereal boxes, etc to design play structures for their playground if they were incharge. Preparation for this workshop involved a part of the block model (done through documentation, digital modelling and 3D printing) and A0 sheets containing the site plan for the kids to design on (done through documentation, digital drafting and printing) .

Workshop and Results

The children were eager to start designing play structures and immediately formed a sense of ownership over their playground. Many designed their favourite ones to play on while others came up with new "Super-Structures" of their own. The first session was used to plan and design their components. The second was used to draft "approval drawings" for their structure. This pushed them to visualize in 2D after completing the 3D part. They showed off their creations in the last session to the whole class by explaining their model, its structure and the materials used. This was followed by a Q&A session with a few real-life architects. The day concluded with an exhibition where they saw the designs made by all three classes combined.



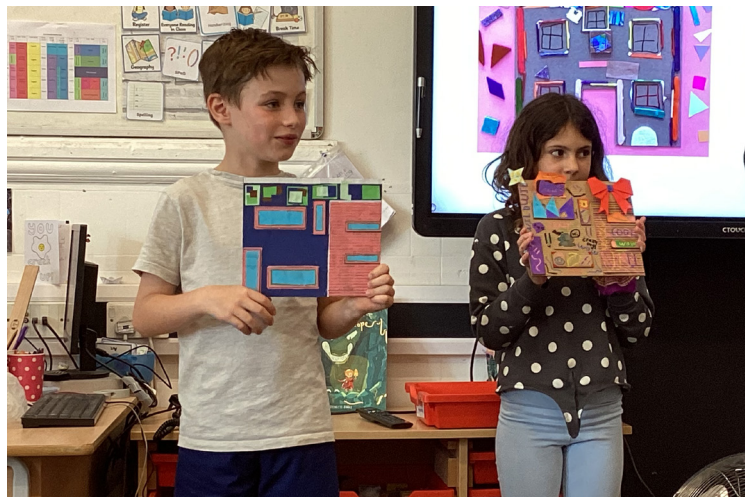
3. Elevation Explorers

Preparation

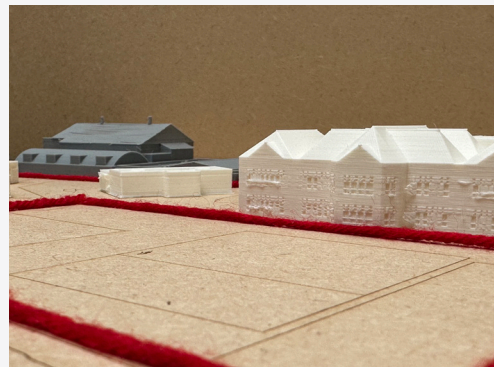
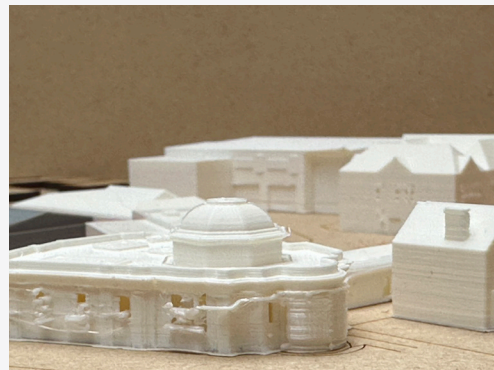
Elevation Explorers revolves around rethinking the school's facade - both old and new. The task given to the children was to use the kit of parts given to them to redesign the exterior elevation of their school if they were the architects. Preparation for this workshop involved a part of the block model (done through documentation, digital modelling and 3D printing) and creating the elevation blueprints for the kids to design on (done through documentation, digital drafting and laser-cutting).

Workshop and Results

The workshop was centered around the videogame "Fortnite" to grab the kids' attention and draw parallels of building and protecting from the videogame world to real world. The kids loved this concept and so we acted from the reaction received and navigated the whole day through games and other fun activities. They used many colourful tools to bring the school's facade to life and even integrated new functions into the facade. Many added trees and creatures to the wall, some drew graffiti on them and some even added bows to "make them prettier". The first two sessions were used to design and showcase their creations. The real-life architects came in for the third session, following a similar structure to the previous classes. This was followed by a game of "Pictionary", which was used as a tool to introduce perception and communication.



The Exhibition



Images on Left Page:
Architectural model of a
block in Chorlton done by
MSA students

Images on Right Page:
The Exhibition held at
Oswald Road Primary
School on 17th May
showcasing all three
workshop outputs done by
Year 4 children



ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA foundation, year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects are for community benefit or have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts joined for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 6 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

msalive@mmu.ac.uk

BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2024

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