

Council rent threat 'disgraceful' says MP

THE financial future of Paddington Academy is shrouded in confusion over rent.

The Academy was due to move into a purpose-built campus in Maryland Road by Christmas, but delays in construction have meant the date has now been pushed back to September 2007.

The Academy will remain in its existing home in North Wharf

Road in the meantime, and its sponsor, United Learning Trust, says it does not expect to be charged rent during this period.

But Westminster Council's chief executive, Peter Rogers, said: "A report is being prepared but no decision has been taken. We expect the contractor to pay United Learning Trust as a contract penalty and that will be used to pay the rent (for

North Wharf Road). The Academy has a budget in place to meet the running costs of the school."

MP Karen Buck described the situation as disgraceful.

"Any attempt to add to the financial burden of this school is an outrage," she said. "When the site is sold it will bring in tens of millions of pounds. We should be pulling together to help the school."