

YSGOL Y GRAIG, MERTHYR TYDFIL



LOCATION: MERTHYR TYDFIL

CLIENT: MERTHYR TYDFIL CBC

COMPLETION: 2021

VALUE: £6M

SIZE: 2000 M²

SERVICE: ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS, LANDSCAPE

SECTOR: EDUCATION

CONTRACTOR: KIER

LANDSCAPE: AUSTIN-SMITH:LORD

STRUCTURES: CB3 CONSULT

SERVICES: SABA CONSULT

Ysgol Y Graig is a new build, 240 pupil, one form entry primary and nursery school in Merthyr Tydfil. The County Borough Council progressed the design to Stage 3, prior to appointing design and build contractor Kier. Austin-Smith:Lord worked in consultation with the Local Authority Architect to take the project through detailed design and construction.

The school achieved a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating and included PV panels, maximising daylight, and a hybrid ventilation solution.

Located on a constricted and sloping urban site surrounded by residential streets, the school maximises the potential of the site, and provides high quality learning spaces arranged around a central heart space.



The design overcame challenging site conditions, including a sloping angular plot with tight vehicular access routes. The landscape design included a forest schools area, playgrounds and pedestrian access steps and ramp with integrated planting solving the steep access challenge to the front of the school.

Austin-Smith:Lord reviewed the Stage 3 design in relation to current Building Regulations, coordinated structural and services design input and adjusted the design accordingly using Level 2 BIM. The local authority architect was keen to retain the open central heart space which was achieved through a fire engineered fire escape solution.

Ground floor classrooms for nursery & KS1 have access to covered outside learning space supporting the future new Welsh Curriculum which places increased importance on outside learning.

The central heart space provided break-out learning space and included bespoke joinery cloak storage elements giving character to the space and provide identity to the classes with colour coordination.

Bespoke teaching walls within the classrooms contain storage, white boards and interactive teaching screens, providing a neat and practical solution for services.

The scheme was designed to be fully accessible to all building users. Acoustic considerations within spaces included suspended acoustic rafts and sound absorbing wall panels to reduce reverberation times for optimal teaching acoustics. Within the school hall the wall panels provide colour and character with a colourful linear pattern.

The school hall will be used by the local community for use outside school hours, requiring design considerations for access and security as well as durability and acoustics.

Austin-Smith:Lord is delighted that the scheme has been received very well by the Local Authority and school staff and pupils.