

# FITZALAN HIGH SCHOOL, CARDIFF



<b>LOCATION:</b> CARDIFF
<b>CLIENT:</b> CARDIFF CITY COUNCIL
<b>COMPLETION:</b> 2023
<b>VALUE:</b> £45M
<b>SIZE:</b> 17762M <sup>2</sup>
<b>SERVICE:</b> ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS, LANDSCAPE
<b>SECTOR:</b> EDUCATION
<b>CONTRACTOR:</b> KIER
<b>LANDSCAPE:</b> AUSTIN-SMITH:LORD
<b>STRUCTURES:</b> JUBB
<b>SERVICES:</b> AECOM
<b>COST CONSULTANT:</b> MACE
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b> CAPITA

Austin-Smith:Lord were appointed as part of Kier’s winning team to lead the design for the new Fitzalan High School after a mini competition based on a detailed brief, which called for the provision of a replacement new 11-18 high school at 10FE including 350 post 16 places. The Design Team worked closely with Cardiff Council and their advisors, as well as the School, to realise the vision for a sustainable learning community aligned to the new flexible curriculum.

Located on a site close to the existing school, and sharing facilities with the adjacent Cardiff International Sports Campus, the completed project represents a significant new facility for the pupils, staff and local community.



The design focused on providing a sectional adjacencies approach to departments to encourage more relationships and work between them. The building is arranged broadly in learning clusters with each cluster supported by a range of space types and sizes, supportive of project based and thematic learning.

The simple massing of the 3 functional elements of the school are expressed in their scale and materiality. The whole school is accommodated within a single 3-storey ‘superblock’ arrangement, with a simple and efficient form set on a modular design grid providing an excellent framework in which we have created a wide range of exciting, flexible and adaptable learning spaces within.

The form and mass of the building has been cleverly manipulated to provide a legible, inspiring and visually striking building. The sports accommodation and swimming pool are located in smaller scale blocks that wrap around to form an entrance plaza to the front of the school.

The school is positioned at the front of site giving maximum prominence on the public frontage, providing a clearly identifiable

presence to the pupils, staff and the wider community. The public face to the school and adjacent sports building is defined with a south facing landscaped plaza, with key spaces positioned to animate the façade and be visible to the public, including the main entrance to the school and sports centre, the swimming pool, activity studio, Post 16 café and LRC.

Exploiting the sectional arrangement of spaces, circulation and voids is key to the success of a superblock school design. The location of the heart space and potential

to open up the halls either side of this has provided a key opportunity to create space large enough to bring most of the 10FE school together.

Halls are positioned at the heart of the school, arranged in a dramatic sequence of spaces cutting diagonally through the building section, with main hall at ground, accessed from front and pupil entrance, spilling onto the dining space, allowing options for accommodating whole school events and engaging with Creative Partners and the wider community.

