

IMPROVING PRIMARY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION



The Trinity Catholic Primary School is a large primary school, which opened in 2004 following the amalgamation of three smaller primary schools. The school serves an area of severe social deprivation, with high levels of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The school's facilities were outdated and a new school was planned complete with a Sure Start nursery to replace it. This new two form entry Voluntary Aided School with the Liverpool Archdiocese was to be delivered through a variation of the Jarvis PFI contract with Liverpool City Council.

Following the demise of Jarvis, it was concluded that the project would be funded through traditional methods and not PFI. EC Harris was appointed to manage the tender process and the delivery of the new school.

Creating solutions

The Jarvis design was no longer compliant with modern DCSF guidelines when the project re-started. All stakeholders agreed that significant design changes were needed.

It was not possible to completely redesign the building due to time constraints for moving the children out of the temporary accommodation on a nearby site. EC Harris effectively coordinated this challenging re-design process within a tight timescale, ensuring changes made met DCSF standards and were within overall quality, cost and programme targets.

In the construction phase of the project there were two main issues on site, these involved the discovery of over 500 cubic metres of contaminated land and serious problems with the electricity mains connections. EC Harris worked with the relevant stakeholders to overcome these problems and drive the project forward.

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“The investment has resulted in the creation of a flexible and desirable learning environment which will underpin the achievement of better learning outcomes for generations.”

Despite these issues, the school building was completed within the contract period of just 56 weeks and on budget. This was a considerable achievement considering the cost of the contaminated land remediation works and the subsequent delays.

The total final outturn cost for the completed new school including the Sure Start unit, new furniture and new ICT equipment was £6.2m - on budget and within the DSCF grant aid set three years earlier (at the outset of the project).

Adding value

Through value engineering, the team was also able to accommodate a variation in the design, adding an extension for the provision of extended services. This additional area allows the school to provide before and after school clubs, which can help improve learning outcomes and promote a sense of community.

The new school's impact on the wider community has also been transformational. The closure of roads, reclamation of waste land, demolition of aged buildings and creation of a single and extensive site, including large external play areas, has helped catalyse wider regeneration.

The community now has a school in an attractive and functional building that is modern, light and designed with children's learning needs in mind. The bringing together of Sure Start, Extended School and Primary School facilities also offers great advantages for local families.

The Trinity Catholic Primary School is now enjoyed by hundreds of young people across the area. The investment made by the DCSF, Liverpool Archdiocese and supported by Liverpool City Council has resulted in the creation of a flexible and desirable learning environment which will underpin the achievement of better learning outcomes for young people for generations.

Richard A Jones

Associate

e richarda.jones@echarris.com

w echarris.com/public