

Tain Royal Academy: Community Collaboration to Build a Classroom in School Grounds



Key Facts

Where: In the centre of the small town of Tain on the Dornoch Firth in the Highlands. They share a campus with Tain Royal Academy Community Complex.

School Roll: 480 approx.

What: A class of pupils built a classroom in the school grounds to give themselves dedicated space for their Construction Skills course.

Summary:

Pupils had previously made hour long trips to Inverness College each week to attend the Construction Skills course, however it was decided that this was not efficient use of school time. Space was not available in the school building, so pupils suggested that they build a classroom in the grounds of the school.

A range of local businesses supported the technical detail of the build, however the physical structure was constructed by the pupils who worked closely with their Technical teacher. The work was accomplished during the timetabled periods, as well as two additional afternoons.

The site was treated as a professional working site, and pupils were appointed roles and responsibilities, such as Site Safety Officer. They worked in all weathers in order to build a fully functioning classroom designed to meet the needs of their course.

The outcome is a spacious, well lit classroom which has generous space for class activities. Though it is for use by the Construction class, other departments have asked to borrow the space for other uses.

Education Benefit:

- Real life context and challenges which cannot be experienced in the classroom
- Health and Safety, and Risk Assessments can be integrated as part of the curriculum, and part of the learning experience
- Discuss obstacles with pupils and encourage them to take responsibility
- Pupils learn how to access the environment safely and responsibly

Key Messages

- **Full support from class teacher and management team. A project can build confidence of staff and provide encouragement to take on new challenges**
- **Harness the experience, skills and good will of the local community (including professional bodies)**
- **Take on board ideas of pupils, who use experiences as part of the curriculum**