

James Gillespie's first phase opened today



The first phase of the £42 million James Gillespie's campus project was officially opened today.

Construction work began on site in January 2013 and the first phase has involved replacement of the existing nursery and gym at James Gillespie's Primary School, along with the creation of two new primary classes within the existing school building.

The new classrooms opened at the start of the new school year in August 2013, with the gym and nursery opening their doors to excited pupils following the September break.

With increasing birth rates in many parts of the city, there has been pressure for nursery places in south Edinburgh. The new nursery will provide an extra twenty part time places for local parents, with forty places available in the morning class and forty in the afternoon class.

The two additional classrooms will also support rising rolls and allow the school to meet demand for places from children living within the school catchment area.

This opening formally marks the end of the first phase of the campus project. Moving to the second phase the existing James Gillespie's High School will be completely replaced in two stages. Demolition work is now well underway on the main school site to allow the construction of the new main teaching block, stage one, to get underway early in the new year.

The development of a new sports complex and an expressive arts complex will be built in the final phase of the project which

is due for completion by summer 2016. In addition, the A-listed Bruntsfield House at the centre of the campus is also undergoing a major refurbishment.

Councillor Paul Godzik, Convener of Education, Children and Families said:- "The James Gillespie's campus project is unique in that it will provide improved facilities for children from three to 18 years on the same site.

"The new facilities at the primary school have been welcomed by parents and staff and give an early indication of the high quality facilities that will be built at the high school."

Paul McGirk, Chief Executive of Hub South East Scotland, said:-"We are delighted with the progress being made on the James Gillespie's Campus. The completion of the nursery and gym represents the first significant milestone in the redevelopment of the whole campus and, as we now begin the construction of the new High School, we look forward to continuing our successful partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council, ensuring children and staff will benefit from modern, fit for purpose facilities."

The project is funded by the Scottish Government through their 'Schools for the Future Programme' which is managed by the Scottish Futures Trust. Morrison Construction have been appointed contractors for the project