



# Northumberland County Council

## SCHOOL REORGANISATION IN PONTELAND Update Autumn 2018 issue 2



### Kier Construction awarded the contract for schools and leisure project

Northumberland County Council has awarded the contract to Kier Construction for the landmark project to create a combined schools and leisure campus in Ponteland. The development will see the existing Ponteland leisure centre demolished and new build leisure centre and a state of the art secondary school and primary school.

The project will consist of state of the art facilities included within two brand new school buildings and a fantastic new leisure facility to include; swimming pool, fitness suite, badminton courts, Clip N Climb, soft play, outdoor sports fields, a full size 3G pitch and a library.



Kier Construction has a strong track record in delivering first-class educational and local community buildings. Their aim is to create learning environments in which students can thrive.

The investment into the schools and leisure in Ponteland will provide a state-of-the-art facilities for the community and an excellent learning environment for children and young people in the area.

The development will see the existing Ponteland leisure centre demolished and replaced with a new build leisure centre and a modern secondary school and primary school.

In addition, work is well underway to expand the accommodation on the existing high school, to ensure the temporary accommodation can be provided to accommodate the additional secondary pupils in September 2019.

The new development is scheduled for completion by September 2020.



# Darras Hall Primary School

## Minister opens new Darras Hall Primary School building



The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP dropped in at the official opening of the new £5.8million Darras Hall Primary School on 08 October 2018 to meet pupils, teachers and local politicians - and unveiled a plaque to declare the school officially open.

The Secretary of State or Education was given a tour of the school and saw children working in their new classrooms. Pupils then sang their school song before he was invited to unveil a plaque and say a few words to the assembled school and visitors.

The new primary school, built by Northumberland County Council, features state of the art facilities including 15 classrooms, 'learning streets' on the ground and first floors, two multi use studios, a hall that can be used for both school and community events and a library and reading area.

An outside classroom and a wildlife and garden area will allow the children to grow their own vegetables. The school is also set to have a playing field and multi-use outdoor play area, which are due for completion in November.

Cllr Wayne Daley, cabinet member for children's services and deputy leader of Northumberland County Council welcomed the Secretary of State to the school saying: "We were delighted that Mr Hinds was able to join us today and to officially declare this fantastic new school open. This major investment in education in the county has created great new learning and teaching environments for pupils and staff."



During the visit Cllr Daley took the opportunity to discuss some key issues with the Government Minister, including improving educational outcomes in the region, rural schools, and how Northumberland County Council is working with both academies and maintained schools on school improvement. They discussed the challenges faced in education in the county and opportunities available within Northumberland, as well as the National Funding

Formula and how the council wishes to work with the Regional Schools Commissioner to improve education.

Cllr Daley added: “We discussed our desire to have local solutions to meet local needs. As a council we want what is in the best for all young people in Northumberland - regardless of whether they attend an academy or a maintained school.

“I also highlighted to the minister the pressure on our SEND services and our wish to ensure that we have enough suitable places for all children regardless of their individual needs.

“We had very constructive discussions and I hope that we can work together to ensure that all children in Northumberland, as well as in the wider North of Tyne area, have access to the best possible education.”

Damian Hinds was in the North East to unveil a £24m investment to boost social mobility and raise the aspirations of young people in this region. He said “It was a pleasure to see the infectious enthusiasm of teachers and pupils at Darras Hall Primary School and I look forward to seeing them flourish in the coming years.”



The investment into Darras Hall Primary School is part of a wider £57m investment by Northumberland County Council in education and leisure across the Ponteland partnership, which includes a new leisure centre, library and primary and secondary schools set to be built on the site of the existing leisure centre.

