

54 new classrooms for schools across Wales to reduce classroom sizes

The new classrooms will be provided to schools that have the largest infant class sizes, and also which have high levels of deprivation and/or additional needs.

The £36m fund is made up of £16m of revenue to assist local authorities in recruiting additional teachers, and £20m of capital which will allow local authorities to build additional classrooms and learning space that are needed to reduce infant class sizes.

Announced in April last year, the revenue element of the grant is funding over 90 additional teachers and over 20 additional teaching assistants in schools throughout Wales, laying the groundwork to reduce infant class sizes.

Today, the Education Minister visited Llanharan Primary School in Rhondda Cynon Taff where work to build a two classroom extension is due to begin in April, giving pupils more space to learn. The school is also benefiting from an additional teacher and a teaching assistant through the funding.

Llanharan Primary school was a prime candidate for the funding, as it has 2 infant classes with over 29 pupils, and has above the national average levels of free school meals.

Kirsty Williams said:

“The issue of class sizes has always been a cause for concern for parents and teachers. I’m therefore delighted to announce capital funding for an additional 54 classrooms to reduce infant class sizes.

“Combined with the £16m we have already invested in appointing over 90 new teachers, this funding will benefit over a 100 schools across Wales.

“Taken into context with our wider reforms of strengthening initial teacher training and professional learning, and doing away with unnecessary bureaucracy, this will make a real difference on the front line; ensuring that every child gets the best start in life.

“By providing schools with new classrooms and additional teachers we can allow teachers to devote more time and attention to individual pupils.

“Not only is this beneficial for the pupil and the teacher, but to the school’s ability to improve as a whole; a central part of our national mission to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap, and deliver an education system which is a source of national pride and

confidence.