

News

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Morgan Sindall and Careers Wales inspire the next generation of construction workers

School children from across South Wales have taken part in the final of “Construct IT”: an inter-cluster school competition designed to inspire the next generation of construction workers.

Hosted by Morgan Sindall, in partnership with Careers Wales and Business in the Community (BITC), this has been a standout year for the competition due to two separate school clusters entering the competition – the first time something of this scale has been achieved.

Teams of Year Eight pupils from schools across the valleys and Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) took part in the contest. The event was delivered under the Business Class programme, a BITC scheme funded by the Welsh Government and delivered by Careers Wales, which aims to forge links between employers and schools.

Pupils from 14 schools competed in the competition, during which they were paired with Morgan Sindall representatives who guided and supported them during the process, before helping to choose the winning team.

The pupils were tasked with designing the floorplan of a new primary school, while ensuring they stayed within the budget and design brief. Working in teams of six, the activities helped pupils to strengthen their interpersonal, organisational and communication skills.

The day culminated in presentations given by each team, where pupils introduced their team, and explained their design and the rationale behind it. The students also had to demonstrate an understanding of the financial implications when presenting their ideas.

The aim of the event was to highlight the range of career paths within construction and challenge stereotypical perceptions of the industry. It also helped to improve the youngsters’ understanding of the wider world of work, the career choices available to them and how they could build on their employability skills.

The schools participating in the challenge included Cyfarthfa, Aberdare, Hawthorn, Greenfield, Ebbw Fawr, Abertillery, Bishop Hedley, Tonypany, Ferndale, Pen-y-Dre, Tonyrefail, Brynmawr, Afon Taf and Pontypridd High.

Students from Tonyrefail School were crowned the eventual winners. Morgan Sindall is currently on site at Tonyrefail and working with RCT Council to deliver a transformative £44m upgrade to the facilities there.

Mike Little, community engagement manager at Morgan Sindall, said: “Events like this provide a great opportunity for us to engage with students from across the region – enabling them to explore the construction industry and careers within the sector.

“The contest has brought together a record number of schools and the participants produced some amazing work throughout the contest. It was great to see their enthusiasm and talent shining through.

“Morgan Sindall is committed to developing a future-fit workforce and encouraging the next

generation of construction professionals, so we were very pleased to have the opportunity to support this great event. "We look forward to working alongside BITC and Careers Wales on future projects."

Matt Appleby, director of BITC Cymru, said: "This fantastic opportunity has enabled pupils to interact with employers face to face and it's the first time so many schools have linked up.

"By linking employers to schools, pupils are able to gain first-hand experience with working in a team environment and developing a variety of life skills."

Graham Bowd, chief executive of Careers Wales, said: "The winning team demonstrated outstanding team work, innovative thinking and clear communication skills; all important skills that are key to business success.

"These sorts of challenges give school pupils the chance to develop a variety of extra-curricular skills that they wouldn't necessarily be able to develop in their school classrooms.

"Business Class brings industries and young people together in a way which is accessible to school pupils. This event demonstrated the range of careers available within the construction industry.

"With an equal ratio of boys and girls in each team, this task was particularly aimed at challenging gender stereotypes within the construction industry."

For more information about Morgan Sindall, please contact Ellie Riddy at Influential on 0161 935 8474 or email riddy@thisisinfluential.com