Formentera president Alejandra Ferrer and Balearic first minister Francina Armengol were joined today at noon by local and regional education chiefs Martí March and Susana Labrador, respectively, at a ceremony inaugurating construction of the new primary school and early-learning *escoleta*.

Also on hand for the gathering were Pilar Costa, who heads Ms Armengol’s office, provincial councillor Sílvia Tur, local vice-presidents Ana Juan and Rafael Ramírez and the Pine Islands’ envoy on education, Margalida Ferrer. Members of the school administration and the association of parents (Apima) attended too, along with representatives of various other authorities.

President Ferrer called it “an important day, because the project set in motion today —construction of two educational centres— is one islanders have clamoured for for years”. “Plus, the one-storey buildings blend in with their surroundings: they’re tailored to Formentera and learning needs here on the island.”

For her part, Armengol touted collaboration between the Consell de Formentera and Govern balear, insisting “it’s what’s behind the best ideas, like for infrastructure such as this, which ticks all the boxes for a better learning environment for our children”.

Councillor Labrador applauded the symbolism inherent in placement of the foundation stone. “It hasn’t been easy making it this far, but we can finally say with certainty that the end is in sight”, she said, applauding the local educational community for “keeping their eyes on the prize all these years” and directing a special nod at the school administration and Apima for their patience.

Armengol, Ferrer, March and Labrador signed written record of the ceremony and oversaw insertion in the building’s foundation of a time capsule — a metal urn containing coins and locally-printed newspapers of the day.

Infrastructure to accommodate 450 children at primary school and 74 at nursery

Plans were drafted by Ibisec and, in the case of the school, include two classrooms for each year level — that is, six groups for what is known in Spain as “infant education” (for children aged three to six) and twelve for primary education (ages six to twelve), accommodating a grand total of 450 pupils. The schools will occupy a 11,037-sq.-m. plot outside Sant Ferran that sits adjacent to the future municipal *escoleta*, which will also accommodate two groups per level (i.e., 74 children aged zero to three spread across six groups).

Money for the €5.8-million primary school will come from the Balearic ministry of education and universities, while the bill for the nursery, which tops €1.1 million, will be picked up by the Formentera government. Ibisec oversees both the project’s tender and execution of works, which must be completed in 14 months. Crews began work in August, and Mr March asserted that work would be finished within the year. “Children will finish the 2020-21 year in this school”, he said.

Tecopsa Hermanos Parrot is a temporary consortium of firms that will carry out the €6.7-million construction plans.

The Govern balear has requested support from the European Regional Development Fund’s 2014-2020 operational programme.

20 February 2020
Department of Communication
Consell de Formentera