Earlier today Consell de Formentera President Alejandra Ferrer was joined by two regional government representatives —First Minister Francina Armengol and Minister of Education and Vocational Training Martí March— on a visit of the new primary school and nursery (*escoleta*) in Sant Ferran. Also on hand at the gathering were Margalida Ferrer, the Balearic Ministry of Education's envoy in the Pine Islands; Antoni Morante, the director general of the regional office of planning, management and centres; school administrative staff and the parents' association at the school.

President Ferrer welcomed the opening of the new buildings and said they were "the object of enormous demand among islanders". She also praised the school's parents' association for their collaboration and "their immense patience", adding a special word for the "Herculean efforts of administrative and teaching staff". The president asserted that the two freshly opened centres were a reflection of "this administration's commitment to quality education for zero to three year olds, in terms of both material and human resources".

First Minister Armengol called it "a very important day for the island of Formentera" and applauded "islanders' patience during this long wait". "These schools were the object of great demand", continued Armengol. "Our dream was to keep moving the Govern's educational policies forward", she confided, "and this is a dream come true".

A new nursery and primary school valued at nearly €7M

With a budget of €6.7 million, plans for the new school and nursery called for a building that could accommodate two classes at each grade level: six pre-primary classrooms (for children aged three to six) and twelve primary rooms (for ages six to twelve). All told, there is capacity for 450 pupils. The school sits on a 11,037m2 plot located on the outskirts of Sant Ferran and next to the municipal nursery, which also accommodates 74 children (aged zero to three) and two groups per grade level. At present, the Sant Ferran Primary School has 328 pupils and 30.5 teachers.

The building is comb-shaped; its spine, which runs parallel to the access road, features administrative offices, an assembly hall with street access and a canteen. The canteen is shared by the school and nursery and doubles as a space to accommodate early arrivals.

The primary school is split into three pavilions; the first contains common areas like the library, computer lab, teachers' lounge and multi-purpose room as well as support and small-group classrooms. Meanwhile, the other two pavilions are home to 12 standard classroom units, situated on either side of a central corridor.

A porch area shared by the nursery and pre-primary school separates the recreational areas of these levels from the primary school playground. It also serves to communicate the playgrounds of the nursery and pre-primary school. The primary school gymnasium is located at the back of these modules.

Building costs for the pre-primary and primary school were covered by the Balearic Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, while Formentera's government picked up the tab for the municipal nursery. All told, total investment topped €6.7 million. The school sits on a 11,037 m2 plot located on the outskirts of Sant Ferran. In total, construction of the nursery required investment from local government to the tune of €1,118,000 .

The new nursery has a classroom for one to two year olds and a classroom for two to three year olds — age groups that were previously covered at Escoleta des Camí Vell pending construction of the new centre. Only two of the building's six classrooms are currently in use, with the other rooms entering into activity as needs require.

Designated a priority in the Balearic Ministry of Education's Educational Infrastructure Plan (2016-2023), the new school is one example of the attempt to meet needs for educational infrastructure in an orderly and objective way in the region.

The Directorate General of European Funding chose the new schools for financing from the REACT-EU fund as part of the European Union's COVID-19 pandemic response, part of the ERDF Operational Programme 2014-2020 for the Balearic Islands.

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