



# Building for a better future



**Rory McIntyre - Early Years Wales Volunteer of the Year 2021, Cynfran Pre-school, Conwy**

**This award was looking to recognise an outstanding individual or committee who go above and beyond to donate their time to the early years sector.**

Rory was nominated by the staff and committee at Cynfran Pre-school for this award because since joining the committee in 2019 his support to the group has been key to its survival in the face of the pandemic.

Not long after joining the committee, Rory took on the role of Chairperson. Despite working full time and looking after a young family, he embraced the role with energy and enthusiasm – his drive, motivation, compassion, and loyalty have been a huge asset to the group.

Andrea Knight, Manager of Cynfran Pre-school cannot speak highly enough of Rory. She says “during Covid-19 his support was amazing; I truly believe we survived because of his commitment and dedication. He supported staff on furlough, spoke to them and tried to get the best for them all. He sourced grants, information and products to keep the group and staff happy.

**“His support to staff, parents and other committee members has been second to none.**

***He’s always at the end of the phone and always happy to help, he greets everyone with a smile and has bucket loads of compassion. He is extremely committee minded and genuinely cares about his community and the people in it. I can’t put into words what a happy, supportive, caring committed man he is.”***

“Rory has also been the driving force behind our new build. He has attended Zoom meetings, site meetings, spoken to contractors, liaised with the charity commission, our insurance company and CIW. The list is endless.

***“He would be on site after work to help move and build equipment and had deliveries to his home during the summer holiday.”***

## The Build

A new identity wouldn’t be complete without a new building... It all started in August 2017 when we changed our name from Llysfan Playgroup to Cynfran Playgroup. Our small prefab cabin at the back of Ysgol Cynfran, with no toilet facilities, was not creating the welcoming environment we wanted for the children, and we were very limited on how many places we could offer.

In 2019 to support our application to provide the Childcare Offer we submitted a grant application to enhance our building so that we could meet the standard required by Welsh Government and were awarded nearly £450,000 which would enable us to build a purpose-built pre-school on the same grounds as Ysgol Cynfran. Work finally began on the new build in April 2021 as an extension to the previous Year 6 classroom. By mid-May the foundations had been laid, and the build was starting to take shape, with the framework and roof following shortly afterwards enabling work to begin on the interior. By mid-June the building was starting to look like an actual room! The walls had been plastered and windows and doors fitted. By the end of June, the building work was complete and the final touches underway.

We were then able to focus on the outside space. We built a canopy so the children could be outside in all weathers, as well as a lovely-turfed area complete with play equipment including slides, climbing frames and a seesaw, we also have a reading shed and story time area.

By September we were ready to open.

We also decided to change the name to Cynfran Pre-school as the setting was attached to the school and it would better reflect our service. Our new building has the capacity to provide 35 places to families in our community, allowing us to provide essential wrap around care to Ysgol Cynfran Nursery, the Pre-School and to Flying Start families.

Being on site has strengthened our links with the nursery – delivering the Curriculum and collaborating on the topics we’re going to be following each term.

It is in testimony to Rory that the build was completed on time.



Rory works tirelessly to ensure a functional and safe environment is maintained.

Jenni Haven, Treasurer of Cynfran Pre-school has this to say about Rory...

***“Fundraising has always been at the core of Rory’s efforts. He has raised a significant amount of money for the group. Not only has he raised money from activities and events, but also through grants and other funding opportunities. Ensuring that everything possible is done to keep the group solvent.”***

Rory secured a grant that helped the setting purchase balance bikes and helmets for the children.



## You may also be interested in:

- Fundraising through lockdown, *smalltalk*, (winter 2020), pg 22 – 23
- Ten tips for funding success, *smalltalk*, (autumn 2019), pg 26