

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS STATEMENT

Eastern High School

I am delighted that Estyn inspectors visited Eastern High in November 2017 and have removed it from the category of 'special measures'. They noted that there is a trend of improving results at all key stages, with Mathematics and English improved significantly. They say that performance now compares very well with similar schools. The school moves into the new Eastern Learning Campus buildings in January 2018, in partnership with Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC).

Whitchurch High School

I am also delighted that Estyn inspectors judged that Whitchurch High School has made good progress in respect of the key issues for action identified in the inspection of January 2016. Estyn have now informed the school and the Local Authority that it will remove Whitchurch High School from the list of schools requiring Estyn Review. There will be no further Estyn monitoring visits in relation to this inspection.

Radyr Comprehensive School

In November 2017, Estyn inspectors also judged that Radyr Comprehensive School has made good progress in respect of the key issues for action identified in the inspection of March 2016. Radyr Comprehensive School will now be removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn Review. There will be no further Estyn monitoring visits in relation to this inspection.

21st Century Schools Band B Programme

The Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams AM, announced on 10 November 2017 that £2.3bn had been earmarked to modernise education infrastructure in Wales. The announcement confirmed that the Welsh Government is committed to supporting projects submitted in Outline Strategic Business Cases by local authorities and further education institutions, subject to the approval of business cases for specific schemes. A report, which sets out the proposed schemes in Cardiff under this programme, is expected to be considered by the Cabinet in December 2017.

Admissions Policy

We will be consulting on a number of changes to our Admissions Policy. There is no pre-determined view as to the outcome: oversubscription criteria are a particularly sensitive subject and it was felt that it was desirable to consult on a range of options. Members will have the opportunity to comment as part of the consultation process.

Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Awards

Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC) have been successful at the AoC Beacon Awards 2017, winning the Skills Education Group Award for Transition into Post 16 Education and Training for our Junior Apprenticeship Programme.

The AoC Beacon Awards capture and celebrate the best and most innovative practice among UK further education colleges. They are designed to "promote the interdependence of further education colleges, business, professional and voluntary organisations to their mutual advantage, through highlighting excellence and sharing best practice". We look forward to continuing our work with CAVC on this, and other, exciting and innovative projects.

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week was held on 13-17 November 2017 and this year's theme was "all different, all equal". Schools across Cardiff took part in various activities, including assemblies about equality and wearing odd socks and colourful clothing to celebrate uniqueness.

Inspire Awards 2017

On 15 November 2017, our dedicated anti-bullying team, Cardiff Against Bullying, hosted the Inspire Awards 2017. These awards recognised the contribution that children, young people and adults have made to enhance the lives of those around them through acts of kindness. As part of the day, pupils from Christ the King and Thornhill Primary Schools gave presentations about the clubs and activities they have participated in with the Cardiff Against Bullying team, including playground buddies training and the "I can do it" program. The event celebrated the commitment of groups and individuals to promoting wellbeing, resilience and happiness in our schools and communities.

Sam's Story

On 7 November 2017, the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Sally Holland, launched the 'Sam's Story' exhibition at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay. Sam's Story is a consultation project launched to help better understand bullying in Wales today. Over 2,000 children and young people took part in the creative consultation by producing drawings and sharing contemporary experiences of bullying. The project includes contributions from pupils at Roath Park, Radnor, Millbank and Bishop Child's Primary Schools. The exhibition features some of the images and words, created and authored by children and young people. It shows the real impact that bullying and social unkindness is having on children's lives. There are some great examples of empathy and compassion shown in these stories, highlighting that there is lots of positive work going on in schools to tackle and prevent bullying.

Modern Foreign Language Scheme – Cardiff University

Cardiff University has been recognised with the Threlford Cup by the Chartered Institute of Linguists for a mentoring project, which has doubled the uptake of modern languages at GCSE in some areas. The Threlford Cup is awarded annually to an individual, organisation or project that has encouraged language learning in others.

Cardiff University led the modern foreign language (MFL) scheme, which trains students from Welsh universities to talk to pupils about the benefits of studying languages. The scheme is run by the Welsh Government and works with more than a quarter of all secondary schools in Wales. Language students from Cardiff, Swansea, Bangor and Aberystwyth, are, trained as mentors and coaches and paired with schools in their areas to do weekly sessions with groups of young people.

Parliament Week

Students from St Teilo's and Cathays High Schools were welcomed into the Council Chamber at County Hall for an event organised as part of this year's Parliament Week. They had the chance to question Anna McMorrin MP (Cardiff North) and Jo Stevens MP (Cardiff Central) and the quality of the questions asked was very high. My Cabinet colleague, Cllr Chris Weaver, who has portfolio responsibility for democratic engagement, also spoke at the event, which was chaired by Cllr Derbyshire as Lord Mayor. I would like to thank everyone who took part and Cllr Lister for organising the event.

Tremorfa Nursery School

I am delighted to announce that Tremorfa Nursery School has been recognised, both nationally and internationally, for its inclusive practice in the early years. Tremorfa Nursery was the only school in the UK to be selected (one of 8 in Europe) to participate in a 3-year project in 2015-2017. The project aimed at identifying, analysing and subsequently promoting the main characteristics of inclusive early childhood education.

Last year, 12 professionals (researchers and early years experts) from 8 different countries visited Tremorfa Nursery School, observed practice and interviewed staff, parents and governors as part of the study. Welsh Government officials were also involved in the visit.

The Headteacher has recently returned from Portugal where she presented the recognised inclusive practice and the links with the Welsh Foundation Phase curriculum, which has been developed at Tremorfa Nursery School. In attendance at the international conference were the Directors of the European Agency, the Portuguese Minister of Education, researchers, policy makers and leaders of many excellent early childhood education establishments from across Europe.

A self-reflection tool has been created as one of the outcomes of the project. More information can be found at:

<https://www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/Inclusive-early-childhood-education/casestudy%20visits>

Folli Fest

Folli Fest is a creative festival for young people by young people. It aims to celebrate the creative potential of young people in Cardiff while celebrating the positives of being an active citizen. Folli Fest is a collaboration between a broad range of partners brought together by young people. Partners include the Wales Millennium Centre's Radio Platform project, Grassroots, Ministry of Life, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Chapter Arts and Cardiff MADE.

Folli Fest took place on 10 November 2017 at Castell Coch in collaboration with CADW's Public Programmes scheme. It was organised by Cardiff Youth Council and youth arts collective, Are You Lost Yet?, with support from the Council's Youth Service. This new event featured five stages of live music and performance from young people aged 14-25 from across Cardiff. In total, over 70 young people performed at the castle and 45 young people volunteered at the event that was attended by over 200 people.

Adult Community Learning

Overall, enrolments for Adult Community Learning (ACL) in 2017/18 when compared with 2016/17 are up from 3519 to 3746. This includes 41% of learners being brand new to our programmes having never enrolled on a course previously.

As a partnership (Cardiff & Vale Community Learning Partnership) we have also launched an Open Badge initiative. Open Badges are a means of recognising and commending achievements made on courses that do not offer formal accreditation. They take the form of a digital "badge" which contains embedded information evidencing the learners' work completed in order to achieve the badge, such as completing their first typed letter or having full attendance at a particular course. These badges can then be shared with potential employers or placed on digital CVs to help demonstrate the learners' experience.

We have been working on bringing Open Badges to Adult Learning in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and agreed to pilot the scheme at the HTML/CSS course that began at the end of October 2017, with a particular view to monitoring how awarding the badges could positively impact the number of learners enrolled who achieve full attendance. To do so, we agreed that a learner would receive a badge per lesson describing their achievements at that specific session, and then they would receive an overall perfect attendance badge so long as they did not miss a session of the course.

These badges have been issued to learners upon completion of each session. The end result has been very positive, with all learners being incredibly enthusiastic about the badges reflected in significantly higher attendance rates than previous courses. Of the 11 learners who began the course, 8 achieved the full attendance badge compared to only 4 people out of 12 attending all sessions at the previous course that did not involve the awarding of Open Badges. Whilst this is only the first course to feature the badges, the evidence of their success and positive impact on attendance indicates that they will be a useful tool for other courses in the future.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills
29 November 2017