

COUNCIL: 18 JULY 2019

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS STATEMENT

Education Buildings Wales Conference and Awards 2019

The Council's School Organisation, Access and Planning team attended this year's Education Buildings Wales Conference on 19th-20th June 2019, which held at Cardiff University. The conference saw the launch of Band B of the 21st Century Schools programme by the Welsh Government and provided an opportunity to reflect back on the success of Band A projects across Wales.

As part of this year's Education Buildings Wales Awards, Cardiff Council was nominated for the Client of the Year Award for both the new Cardiff West Community High School, along with contractors Willmot Dixon, as well as the three new primary schools (Howardian Primary, Ysgol Glan Morfa, and Ysgol Hamadryad), along with contractors Morgan Sindall.

I am very pleased to say that Cardiff won the Client of the Year Award for the new Cardiff West Community High School project. The judges noted, in particular, the commitment by Cardiff Council to not only deliver new school buildings, but also to consider the wider impact of the school on the community. I want to congratulate all those involved in the management of all the projects that were nominated, which highlights the talented, committed and professional people that we have in Cardiff.

Ysgol Hamadryad

I was delighted to attend the official opening of Ysgol Hamadryad on 24th June 2019, which was also attended by the Welsh Government Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams AM. The Welsh medium primary school opened in September 2016 in a temporary home within the grounds of Ninian Park Primary School. The Council secured a permanent site for Ysgol Hamadryad in Butetown and the school moved into the new building in January 2019. The new build school was designed and built by Morgan Sindall and offers a 21st Century learning environment for a capacity of 420 primary age children and 96 nursery children. Ysgol Hamadryad is a truly active travel school and has set up a walking bus for pupils to access the school. As a result, the vast majority of children either walk or cycle to school.

Along with primary education, the school also offers a range of community uses. Ysgol Hamadryad looks forward to welcoming Cylch Meithrin Grangetown a'r Bae to use the community room facilities from September 2019 and will mean that Welsh Medium education from ages 2 to 11 will be offered on site. The school is also looking forward to being a base for a local community football team, which will be able to access the community changing rooms provided within the school.

Oakfield Primary School

On 10th July 2019, I joined again with the Welsh Government Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams AM, at the official opening the new-build extension at Oakfield Primary School in St Mellons.

Along with two other primary schools in Cardiff (St Fagan's Church in Wales Primary School and St Francis Primary School in Ely), Oakfield Primary School received a Welsh Government grant of £1m to build new classrooms in order to reduce infant class sizes. The new extension provides four new classrooms and additional group rooms for teaching and learning, which enables every class to have their own dedicated space within the school. It also includes an area to provide 30 hour childcare provision for nursery children, which is likely to start next year, that will be of significant value to the local community. In addition, the Welsh Government grant helped fund the furniture and IT infrastructure for the new building, as well as making good the external play areas.

The new-build extension was constructed by the Wernick Group using modular build classrooms, which enabled it to be constructed off-site and, therefore, drastically reduced the disruption to the pupils and staff at the school.

Cardiff West Community High School

I am pleased to announce that the new Cardiff West Community High School in Caerau will be officially opened on Monday 15th July 2019. The new school building was funded jointly by the Council and Welsh Government as part of our £164m Band A investment as part of the 21st Century Schools programme.

The newly established school opened in September 2017 on the site of the former Michaelston Community College site in Ely. The successful contractor, Willmott Dixon, also commenced work on the £36m project at the new site at the beginning of September 2017, which was completed at the end of February this year. The school then transitioned to the new building at the end of March 2019 before opening to pupils on 2nd April 2019.

The new school building is split into three separate blocks and provide facilities for up to 1200 pupils with 8 Form Entry at the school (with expansion to 10 Form Entry), as well as up to 320 pupils in post-16 education. New sporting facilities, including two additional pitches, internal sports hall and activity studio and a refurbished mixed use games area (MUGA) have also been provided.

Cardiff 2030

Work is continuing to refresh the vision for education and learning in Cardiff to set out our shared ambitions for Cardiff in 2030. Extensive stakeholder engagement has taken place over the last six months to capture the voices of children and young people, schools, governors and many partners in the city. We are aiming to launch the new Cardiff 2030 vision in November 2019.

Diverse Dance Mix

On 29th June 2019, Strictly Come Dancing judge and accomplished ballerina, Dame Darcey Bussell DBE, visited Cardiff West Community High School to judge the Diverse Dance Mix competition, which is a UK-wide initiative that aims to engage children in creativity, culture, fitness and dance. Pupils aged between 7 and 12 from 13 Cardiff schools (Ysgol Gynradd Creigiau, Meadowbank Special School, Ysgol Bro Eirwg, Christ the King Primary, Howardian Primary, Trelai Primary, Coed Glas Primary, Grangetown Primary, Bryn Hafod Primary, Meadowlane Primary, Holy Family RC Primary, Cardiff High School and Cardiff West Community High School) were chosen to take part in the regional final and performed in front of Dame Darcey Bussell, the Lord Mayor of Cardiff and a live audience.

After the performances, the pupils from Holy Family RC Primary School were announced as the winners. Four of the 24 pupils from Holy Family RC Primary School were then chosen to dance a routine with Dame Darcey Bussell, which was an amazing opportunity for them. The children were presented with a trophy and given t-shirts to commemorate the event.

International School Linking

The Erasmus+ project focused on Challenging Extremism in schools for Key Stage 2 pupils has been a huge success. Thanks to the efforts of the participating schools in Cardiff (Kitchener Primary, Roath Park Primary and Severn Primary), Barrie Phillips from The GOT (Getting On Together) Project and the Council's International School Linking team, schools across Wales have participated in training on the six lessons that have been developed and are using these educational materials in Years 5 & 6.

Llanover Hall – Celebrating 50 Years as a Community Arts Centre

This year marks 50 years since Llanover Hall Arts Centre in Cardiff was established as an arts activities centre for young people and it continues to provide an important gateway to the arts, offering a wide range of classes and courses to people of all ages and abilities. A family Fun Day was held at Llanover Hall on 15th June 2019 and attracted over 250 visitors. The event included activities and events for all the family, including pottery, circus skills, willow weaving, origami, jewellery making, yoga, 'Drop In and Draw' and musical entertainment. An exhibition marking 50 years of community arts provision at Llanover Hall was also opened by the Leader of the Council.

Adult Learning Cardiff Annual Fun Day

On 22nd June 2019, Adult Learning Cardiff hosted its annual Fun Day at Severn Road Adult Learning Centre. The event focused on learning with others and sharing skills within the community and was funded by the Learning and Work Institute as part of 'Adult Learners Week'. The Fun Day was a great success with over 200 students attending and taking part in a wide range of activities from African Hand Drumming, MineCraft battles, Microbit Robotics and Lego Mindstorms.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills
12 July 2019