

COUNCIL: 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS STATEMENT

Covid-19 Guidance for Schools (September 2021)

The latest guidance from Welsh Government shows that the country is in a phase of transition from pandemic to endemic. This means that there will continue to be changes in the measures taken to prevent the virus coming into schools and that it is likely that we will continue to see difficult times in terms of case numbers rising. It is also clear that Covid will need to be managed in the context of responding to other respiratory viruses – particularly in the autumn and early spring terms.

The Council needs to continue to adapt and respond accordingly in a proportional way. There will be a continued focus on the use of lateral flow device (LFD) testing for staff and secondary learners during this period as well as the reinforcement of the message to stay at home if an individual presents with symptoms. The continued messaging around hand washing, “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it”, and ventilation is also crucial.

The operational guidance from Welsh Government ceased on 20 September 2021 and has been replaced with the control decision framework so that schools, as directed by local Public Health Wales teams, can tailor interventions to reflect local risks and circumstances

The overall alert level is set at a national level; however, at a local level, Incident Management Teams will meet weekly to agree local risk ratings and the mitigations that need to be in place to manage them. The Council will then work with schools to manage this.

The hierarchy of controls and risk assessments will inform which reasonable mitigations are required and what activities can be undertaken in schools. Additionally, LFD tests will inform infection rates and what proportionate responses may be required (so for example, at a certain rate schools may choose not to hold assemblies).

The Council will continue to communicate changes to both risk levels and local mitigations to schools.

A-Level, AS Level and GCSE Results 2021

Cardiff's schools and students celebrated their success in WJEC A-Levels on 10 August 2021, which saw a rise in the number of students who received A* and A grades. 55.3% of students secured three A* to A grades, 94.3% received three A* to C grades, and 99.9% secured A* to E grades.

Wales-wide figures showed 21.3% of pupils secured A* grades, up 5% on last year; 48.3% secured A* to A, up 6.5% on 2020; with 99.1% getting A* to E grades.

WJEC GCSE learners in Cardiff received their grades on 12 August 2021, with over a third of grades (34.5%) awarded at A* to A, a 2.8 percentage point increase in 2021. 77.7% of grades were A* to C and 98.3% were A* to G.

Congratulations to everyone who has worked so hard to achieve these results.

Summer 2022: Learner Survey Outcomes

On 3 September 2021, the WJEC published the results of the consultation conducted in June on their proposed changes to GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications in 2022. Around 950 learners, parents and carers from across Wales took part in the survey. A copy of the [report](#) is available on the WJEC website.

Qualifications Wales has confirmed that approved GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications will be assessed via exams and non-examination assessments as normal in summer 2022, but reflecting adaptations made during 2020 and 2021. Details of the specific adaptations for each subject have been published on the WJEC website.

School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) – Food and Fun 2021

Thanks to additional Welsh Government funding, Food and Fun was extended this summer and was delivered in 28 schools across the city (two English-medium secondary schools, one Welsh-medium secondary school, one pupil referral unit, one special school, one Welsh-medium primary school and 22 English-medium primary schools).

Over 22,000 healthy breakfasts and lunches were prepared by Education Catering Teams and served to over 1,200 children. 46 school staff were trained in Nutrition Skills for Life to enable delivery of fun nutrition education sessions for children to promote healthy eating. In previous years, families of children attending Food and Fun sessions were invited into school to eat lunch together. This year, more than 5,000 family food bags, including ingredients and step-by-step recipes developed by dietitians from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, were distributed to families across the city, enabling them to prepare meals, cook and eat together.

Each school was also supported with physical activity sessions delivered by Sport Cardiff. Over 30 partner organisations also supported the delivery of fun enrichment activities, including visits by the emergency services, dance, music, football, cricket, launching rockets, drama, gardening, water safety, rail safety, internet safety, science, construction, flying drones and many more. These activities all contributed to #makingmemories ensuring children have had a fun summer.

I was delighted to visit projects at Bryn y Deryn Pupil Referral Unit, Ysgol Glantaf, Tongwynlais Primary School, Bryn Celyn Primary School and Greenhill Special School. I know from the conversations with staff how valuable they found the scheme and, for those running the scheme for the first time, how supported they felt by the team.

Summer of Smiles Festival

During the school summer holiday, officers from the Child Friendly City Team worked with a wide range of council officers and partners across the city to deliver the Summer of Smiles Festival. This exciting work aimed to help children and young people to reconnect, improve wellbeing, build confidence, and have fun.

Over 20,000 children and young people benefitted from the programme with over 5,000 adults also attending activities. The varied activity programme was based on four themes – Science and Technology; Sport and Adventure; Play and Family Fun; and Creative and Arts. Highlights included:

- Turning Churchill Way into a pop-up park
- Hosting a three-week festival site on City Hall Lawn
- Staging a junior triathlon
- Abseiling from the Wales Millennium Centre
- Transforming Flat Holm into a Pirate Island for children in care and young carers

With the support of the Digital Team, the newly formed Young Creators group reported on the Summer of Smiles activities across the city. A number of their films are available to view on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/gPvbqhghswU> / <https://youtu.be/Eem7fF6HbUY> / <https://youtu.be/EWwuBWv1Szc>)

Neighbourhood and specialist youth provisions also supported a large number of young people to attend various activities as part of the festival. This added huge value to the summer programme and enabled young people to gain new experiences and try out new activities. I want to thank Welsh Government for supporting this important work, which contributes to the city's ambition to respect the needs of children and young people and to make Cardiff a great place to grow up.

Cardiff Youth Service Summer Provision 2021

Despite the challenges presented over the last year, summer 2021 has seen young people out and about, enjoying themselves whilst participating in a diverse range of youth provision. Staff have worked extremely hard for the duration of the summer to ensure an exciting and engaging summer programme was delivered across the city. Some of the highlights are detailed below:

Roadshows

Youth Service Teams, along with a variety of supporting partners in each community, delivered ten roadshow events across the city. Venues included Splott Park, Ely Recreational Ground, Pentwyn MUGA/Skate Park, Eastern Leisure Centre, Butetown, Grangetown and Riverside. Neighbourhood Area Teams worked with local partners to ensure each event was targeted, meaningful and engaging for the young people in that area. Each event provided a range of activities and opportunities for further support. The Post-16 Team delivered five bespoke roadshows focused on education, training and employment.

Neighbourhood Area Teams

Neighbourhood youth centres all delivered an engaging and exciting six-week summer programme, which involved some centre-based activities including arts, cooking, life skills and music. Local trips to surrounding areas included bike rides, day walks, Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions, go-karting, and picnics. Young people really enjoyed the adventurous outdoor activities, including mountain biking, gorge walking and stand-up paddle boarding provided by the Urdd and Storey Arms Centre.

The Inclusive Team also provided five weeks of activities for young people who attend groups such as Young Carers, Inclusive Youth Clubs and Girls Groups. 26 young people completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award this year, which is an amazing achievement. Throughout all of this work, young people had the opportunity to relax and meet their friends in a safe space, try new activities, gain new skills and experiences, grow in confidence and overcome barriers such as social anxiety.

Summer Transition to Year 11

The Pre-16 Youth Mentors have made an offer of support to every Year 11 leaver this summer. Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19, Youth Mentors have helped young people to attend appointments and interviews with Careers Wales, the Into Work Advice Service, training providers and colleges. They have also supported young people to overcome personal barriers to engagement and/or progression such as transport difficulties, mental health, financial issues and self-confidence. Neighbourhood Area Teams have also provided weekly drop-in sessions which have been well attended.

Post-16 Provision

Over the summer, the Post-16 Team delivered a range of bespoke projects which targeted young people not in education, training, or employment (NEET) in neighbourhood communities across the city. All young people who attended a project have been linked to a youth mentor for ongoing support. A highlight has been the 'Recipe for Life' project, enabling young people to gain real-life experience of the hospitality industry whilst improving confidence, developing new skills, gaining an accreditation, and securing employment or training at the end of the course.

Street-based & Youth Bus Teams

Throughout July and August, the Street-based Team delivered youth work across the city, supporting neighbourhood programmes and events. Community engagement and partnership work has been very positive resulting in some very exciting projects or developments for ongoing work in areas such as Grangetown, St Mellons, Caerau and Adamsdown. The team is also supporting the City Centre Skaters project, enabling young people to have their voices heard on safe places to skateboard as well as on issues they are passionate about. The Youth Bus Team was also out and about six days a week covering communities across the city and supporting many events. A highlight was the regular weekly support for the 'Fit 'n' Fed' projects with Fairwater and Western Leisure Centres and building good relationships with young people in these areas.

New Pop-Up Provision

Consultation carried out prior to and during the summer highlighted areas in need of youth provision. Additional funding has enabled opportunities to create a number of new pop-up youth provisions with other partners in the community. Two of these are highlighted below:

- The Girls Group in Grange Gardens was formed during the summer providing young females a safe space to meet weekly, to socialise with friends, gain new experiences and feel supported with their personal development and progression routes.
- Caerau was identified as an area needing further support directly after school. A twilight provision has been developed with various partners across the area to provide activities and youth work support to young people in the area, linking up youth support services and providers.

Emotional Health & Homelessness Team

Over the summer, the Emotional Health & Homelessness Team supported roadshow events in Ely, Llanrumney, Pentwyn, Splott and Riverside. Resilience Workers delivered targeted interventions using the iCare Programme with 87 young people. The iCare programme has been developed with young people to help support and build emotional resilience and wellbeing through self-care activities. A journal focuses on building self-care activities, looking at personal strengths, identifying support networks and reframing the young person's outlook on life. Initial feedback from evaluations completed was very positive with 98% of participants finding the activities within the programme interesting and helpful and 100% feeling valued and listened to.

Digital Youth Work

The Digital Team has been working with young people at some of the roadshows and at various projects to record young peoples' experiences; from white water rafting and Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions to interviewing young people. The group has edited the footage and created really interesting films, some of which are available on the Cardiff Youth Services YouTube channel.

The Digital Team also partnered up with Techno Camps to provide a four-day computer science programme for young people aged 11-16 to learn how to code and programme. Cardiff Commitment representatives from Microsoft and Admiral also joined sessions to discuss coding and programming in the workplace. As a result of this project, the team will now be working with a group of young people and Techno Camps to develop a digital space with lots of opportunities for young people.

The team's newly developed website provides a more detailed view of youth support services and provision across the city at: www.cardiffyouthservices.wales

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Cabinet Member for Education, Employment & Skills
23 September 2021