

COUNCIL: 27 OCTOBER 2022

DEPUTY LEADER & EDUCATION STATEMENT

UNICEF Child Friendly City

I am pleased to confirm that all the required evaluation reports and supporting evidence for Cardiff's submission to UNICEF's Child Friendly City Team are now in place. This includes key findings from a session hosted by a committee of young people that took place on 15 October 2022, which was attended by Cabinet Members and senior officers who answered questions relating to Cardiff's work to embed child rights over the last four years. UNICEF will now convene a panel of experts in January 2023 to scrutinise Cardiff's submission, which will include interviews, focus groups and field visits with an outcome expected shortly afterwards. I would like to thank all of the elected members, council officers and wider public service partners who have worked so hard to make child rights a reality for children and young people in Cardiff over the last four years.

Black History Month

Black History Month takes place in October each year in the UK. This national celebration aims to promote and celebrate the contributions of those with African and Caribbean heritage to British society and to foster an understanding of Black history in general. In our schools Black History Month has traditionally been the month where schools deviate from their curriculum to explore certain areas of Black history. This has previously involved a week or two of assemblies devoted to the area, as well as classroom activities looking at key historical figures such as Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. Whilst these activities are still going ahead, schools are increasingly incorporating Black history into the new curriculum areas and spreading the learning across the academic year. For example, in Grangetown Primary, all staff have been working to embed diversity and inclusion within all curriculum topics and Windsor Clive Primary has worked on a term-long topic, exploring identity and diversity within the school and the local community. To support schools to incorporate Black history and themes of diversity within curriculum areas, the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) has recently developed a comprehensive and informative PADLET where a wealth of resources are located: <https://padlet.com/cardiffemtas/mfisam10izp6otu5>

Seren Network

The SEREN Network was launched at an event on 10 October at City Hall which was attended by over 500 pupils and their families. Mike Tate, Assistant Director Education, and Ken Poole, Head of Economic Development, opened the event and demonstrated to pupils the wealth of opportunities available to some of our brightest students in Cardiff. I would like to thank all the Cardiff Commitment employers who

supported the event by providing industry insights and information about career opportunities.

Free School Meals for Primary School Children

All the works to school kitchens to enable each primary school in Cardiff to be able to provide a free school meal for every Reception aged pupil were completed by the start of the current Autumn term and each school is now able to offer a hot meal to all Reception aged pupils. Officers continue to work with contractors to identify and commission the necessary works required to school kitchens to support the next step in the roll-out of this universal free school meal offer to all pupils in Years 1 and 2. With the continuing cost-of-living crisis having an impact on most families, it is concerning that the actual take-up of free school meals from those pupils eligible for a meal remains below 75% in a large number of schools. Council officers and schools continue to promote the availability of free school meals to ensure those pupils eligible do not go hungry during the school day.

Ysgol Gymraeg Groeswen Primary School

I was pleased to attend the ground-breaking ceremony for the new £9million Ysgol Gymraeg Groeswen Primary School on the Plasdŵr development earlier this month. The Leader of the Council and Headteacher Designate spoke about the ambitious plans for this innovative project being at the centre of the community, once established. It was great to see the groundworks almost complete ahead of the steel frame being installed this month. When completed, the new school will have two forms of entry and offer 420 places in total, as well as 96 part-time nursery places. The school will also be the first of its kind in Cardiff to provide a dual language education stream – i.e. one form of entry for Welsh-medium education and one form of entry for English and Welsh dual-language education. The new school is expected to admit its first pupils in September 2023.

National Plan for Music Education

Officers from the Cardiff County and Vale of Glamorgan Music Service (CCVGMS) are currently engaging with schools to promote how they will be taking the lead in delivering the National Plan for Music Education across schools in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This will include:

- The development of Music in Schools and Music Outside Schools programmes;
- The development of the CCVGMS element of the National Musical Instrument Library, which will enable pupils and schools to request to loan a musical instrument;
- The development of professional learning opportunities for schools and settings;
- The development of a recording and production base to offer a range of packages for schools and settings; and
- The continued development of local and regional partnerships to complement the National Music Service and to build on the strong community links already developed by schools and settings.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Education
21 October 2022