

COUNCIL: 30 MARCH 2023

DEPUTY LEADER & EDUCATION STATEMENT

Fairwater Community Campus Update

I am pleased to confirm that the enabling works for the new Fairwater Community Campus, which includes Cantonian High School, Woodlands School and Riverbank School, have started on the existing Cantonian High School site. Temporary works will include the temporary relocation of Cantonian High School to the south of the site, demolition of a large proportion of the existing buildings, sport provision and sustainable drainage works. Cantonian High School will occupy the temporary accommodation from September 2023.

Cardiff Virtual School for Looked After Children

I am pleased to confirm that, earlier this month, Debra Williams was appointed as the first virtual headteacher of the new Cardiff Virtual School for Looked After Children, with responsibility for the day-to-day management of the education of Looked After Children in Cardiff. She will take up the post on 17th April 2023. The role will focus on working with schools to raise the achievement and attainment of Looked after Children in Cardiff and ensure that their wellbeing needs are supported. Close working with Children's Services and other agencies will be a key part of the role. The post is being grant funded for one year initially until March 2024.

Passport to the City

Cardiff Council and Cardiff University signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2022 to support the delivery of the Passport to the City programme in Cardiff. This will extend the range of learning opportunities available in the city and invite pupils to experience the world of higher education through visits and experiences at the University campus. It also supports our 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' policy commitments, together with the University's civic mission.

To date, 28 Cardiff schools have signed up to the Passport to the City, over 5,000 pupils have registered and over 505 activity options are available on the Children's University in Cardiff. Youth support services are also engaged and supporting targeted groups of young people to benefit from the initiative. This month, the Passport to the City programme gathered further momentum when 30 city-wide partners came together on 9th March 2023 at Llanover Hall to learn more about the initiative and how their organisations can sign up and take part.

The Passport to the City programme is built upon the premise that together we can open up opportunities that may otherwise be missed by many children and young people in Cardiff. Our city is a learning resource and all pupils should be able to explore it, experience it, and benefit from all it has to offer. We have arts, history, culture, sports, leisure, recreation, parks, retail, thriving colleges and universities, and a whole range of small and international businesses in the city.

The Passport to the City aims to 'unlock' fun, engaging and aspirational activities and experiences for children and young people, in particular our most vulnerable. We want children and young people to develop a sense of pride and belonging in their city centre and their individual communities, by understanding, seeing, and experiencing the whole variety of resources. It could be as simple as a trip to St David's shopping centre, a boat trip in the Bay, a football match, a visit to a museum, or experiencing a show in one of our theatres. We can't and shouldn't assume that all children and young people can do these things. This simple 'engagement' method is helping to enhance pupil self-esteem, confidence, and well-being, and could provide pathways into new hobbies and learning opportunities.

Cardiff Commitment

The Cardiff Commitment Forward Plan for 2022-2024 was shared with partners at the recent Strategic Leadership Group, setting the direction for the programme's work for the year ahead. The plan identifies six priority areas, which have been developed and designed through research data and consultation with stakeholders. The priorities will focus activity on:

- Providing enhanced training and support to our partner network (over 375 partners), to ensure that all interactions with children and young people are positive and impactful.
- Advancing 'Experiences of Work' by embedding Business Forums at targeted Secondary Schools and extending the exciting range of Careers and Work-Related Experiences on offer.
- Continuing to raise awareness of all the Learning Pathways available into the Economic Growth Sectors in the Cardiff Capital Region, using the 'What's Next' platform as a key point of information.
- Supporting Cardiff Council Contract Managers to develop and deliver social value opportunities to help children and young people develop valuable skills for work.
- Developing initiatives to support the children & young people that need it the most, including children with Additional Learning Needs and care experienced children.

We will be building on the highly successful Project Search initiative, to create more supported employment pathways and we are launching a ground-breaking placement model with our Schools Catering Service. We will also be extending the Cardiff Commitment to EOTAS (Education Other Than At School) learners with the direct support of Youth Services. We are also continuing to support schools to enhance the range of authentic learning experiences available to children and young people, by creating meaningful join up between the Curriculum for Wales and practical areas of learning related to the Council's priorities and economic growth sectors – for example, providing insights into the Green Economy through join up with the Council's One Planet Cardiff strategy.

Period Poverty

The Child Friendly Cardiff and Healthy Schools Teams are continuing to tackle the issue of pupils being unable to afford menstrual products through regular contact with the 'Love Your Period' campaign, founded by Molly Fenton, a former pupil of Llanishen High School.

A Period Dignity page on the Child Friendly Cardiff website is being developed with young people and will be launched next month. It will host resources for young people on the range of products available including environmental and health information as well as a map of venues supplying free products outside of school premises such as Community Hubs and Youth Services. For example, in the last quarter, the Council's Hubs have provided 447 period products free of charge to those who need them as part of the Period Poverty Campaign. Quality assurance has taken place to ensure venues outside of school premises have products and how to get them. Guidance for the venues will also be available through the Period Dignity page to ensure a consistent experience for every service user.

The Child Friendly Cardiff Team is also developing communications material to be placed in cubicles, which will provide information on where to access free period products within each school, together with a reminder that period products should not be flushed down the toilet and a QR code linked to the website.

Both the Child Friendly Cardiff and the Healthy Schools Teams are also working with the 'Love Your Period' campaign to develop a draft accreditation system for schools, which seeks to celebrate good practice around period dignity with supporting guidance to enhance activity within schools. A young person friendly version will also be produced to support pupil voice. The Healthy Schools Team is working to identify two schools that could pilot this during the summer term, with a view to potentially rolling it out in the 2023/24 academic year.

International Women's Day

On International Women's Day on 8th March, the Cardiff Commitment and Microsoft held an event at Tramshed Tech in the city to help inspire the next generation of women in technology. The UN theme for International Women's Day 2023 was "DigitalALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". If women are unable to develop digital skills and engage in digital spaces, it diminishes their opportunities to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM). The event was attended in person by 30 female pupils from Cantonian High School, Willows High School and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf who listened to a range of inspirational women from Microsoft talk about their Journey into Tech. This was followed by a speed networking activity with Microsoft, Stable and TPXimpact, as well as a question-and-answer panel session.

The Cardiff Commitment is looking to shine a spotlight on the disparity between the number of male and female learners taking up STEM subjects and seeks to promote and develop gender equality in technology. The team want to embrace equity and celebrate women trailblazing in the science and technology industries, with the hope that female pupils will feel inspired and empowered to imagine themselves progressing in these careers, following education.

Following the event's success, the Cardiff Commitment Team will implement a legacy plan which will see technology partners working actively with schools to be a city that inspires its young females to pursue careers in technology, and ensure that our pupils are informed, enthusiastic and excited to work in this sector.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education
24 March 2023