

COUNCIL: 30 JANUARY 2020

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS STATEMENT

Cardiff 2030 Launch

On 19th November 2019 at City Hall, 'Cardiff 2030: a ten year vision for a capital city of learning and opportunity' was launched. The vision builds on extensive engagement with partners from across the city between January and July last year. The launch event brought together children and young people, school leaders, governors, teachers and partners from across the city to celebrate success since the prior launch of Cardiff 2020, and to focus aspirations for the future. The formal launch was hosted by young people and addressed by the Leader of the Council. There was also a marketplace of best practice in relation to the themes and goals of the vision, and two seminars delivered by Professor Mick Waters.

School Performance 2018/19

Changes to the accountability and assessment framework for Wales reflect a movement away from narrow, high stakes performance measures from Foundation phase through to Key Stage 4 to allow schools to implement changes to the curriculum in light of Curriculum for Wales 2022 and to encourage a broader, context-based experience to engage all learners. For Key Stage 4, several interim performance measures have been introduced for this academic year; and all measures are calculated on the basis of a pupil's first entry in a qualification rather than their best entry as in the past. This makes comparisons over time more difficult.

The overall performance of Cardiff schools has shown notable improvement over the past five years, as evidenced by Estyn inspection outcomes, national categorisation and attainment across all key stages of education. This is demonstrated as follows:

- Cardiff's performance in each of the new measures at the end of Key Stage 4 is above the Welsh average in 2018/19. This compares positively to 2013/14 when all Key stage 4 measures in Cardiff were lower than national averages.
- The proportion of pupils in Cardiff not achieving a recognised qualification is lower than the Welsh average, and is improved on last year.
- The gap in achievement for pupils eligible for FSM and those not at Key Stage 4 is smaller in Cardiff than across Wales. This is similar for the Primary Phase.
- The number of schools categorised as Green has increased. In January 2019, 70 out of 127 schools were Green schools, compared to 65 in January 2018.

The number of Red schools has reduced to two in 2019. 2020 Categorisation will be available on 31st January.

- Performance at Key Stage 5 is strong and results in the headline measures are higher than the Central South Consortium and Wales. Cardiff is ranked first in Wales for three A*-A and 3 A*-C.
- Performance in the Foundation Phase Indicator, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 measures has decreased slightly compared to last year, but is higher than the Wales average in all phases.

Fitzalan High School

This month, an entire class of 30 pupils at Fitzalan High School all achieved A* grades in their GCSE maths. This was especially pleasing as the class took the exam six months early and, nationally, only 14% of pupils gained a top grade. This result underlines the level of expectation, aspiration and quality teaching at the school and I want to congratulate every member of the class on their achievement.

Estyn Inspections

The profile of Estyn inspections of Cardiff schools is strong. Of all schools inspected in the 2018/19 academic year, 76.2% have been judged to be Good or Excellent for Standards or Current Performance. In December 2019, six schools were in an Estyn improvement category. This compares to eight schools in December 2018. Based on all schools' most recent inspection outcomes under the new inspection framework for Standards, or the previous framework for Current Performance, 74% are judged to be Good or Excellent.

Since the start of the new academic year 2019/20, two schools have been inspected with reports published. St Philip Evans Roman Catholic Primary School achieved 'Excellent' in all five areas inspected by Estyn – the highest rating possible. Estyn found the school to be highly successful and nurturing with pupils developing very strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

The Hollies Special School also achieved 'Good' in all five areas inspected by Estyn. Estyn noted that nearly all pupils at the school make strong progress and are happy to learn. The school was asked to prepare two excellent practice case studies for Estyn – one on its work in relation to the schools development of a pupil profile assessment tool and, secondly, on their approach to managing curriculum innovation.

Central South Consortium

I can confirm that a new Managing Director of the Central South Consortium has been appointed. Clara Seery will be taking up her post on 1st March 2020. She currently works for the London Borough of Enfield as Head of School and Early Years Improvement.

30th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention to the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

On World Children's Day on 20th November 2019, pupils at Ninian Park Primary School held a celebration event to mark the 30th Anniversary of the UNCRC as part of the school's progress to become a Gold Rights Respecting School. This was the culmination of 18 months of work at the school, which raised awareness of the importance of the rights of the child to all stakeholders. This month, I have also visited the school to do a question and answer session with the pupils about my role as Deputy Leader – part of their project on being a Cardiff Citizen.

Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award

Cathays High School has been awarded the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award. Cathays High School joins over 100 schools that are now registered for this Unicef programme, which contributes to our goal of being a Child Friendly City.

Welsh Government Launch of Anti Bullying Guidance

On 6th November 2019, Radyr Primary School welcomed the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams AM, to launch the new Welsh Government Anti Bully Guidance. The anti-bullying guidance, which is aimed at governing bodies for maintained schools, local authorities, parents, carers and children and young people, outlines the Welsh Government's expectations for schools to take a proactive approach to prevent and challenge bullying. The Welsh Government has also produced new resource toolkits to accompany the new guidance available, which can be found at: hwb.gov.wales

Ministerial Visit to Ty Gwyn Special School

The Deputy Minister for Social Services, Julie Morgan AM, visited Ty Gwyn Special School on 16th January 2020 to look at a project, which has received substantial capital and revenue investment from Cardiff Council and Integrated Care Fund to respond to the increasing demand for in-county provision for children with autism and complex needs. The project demonstrates the excellent partnership working that is taking place across a range of education, health and social care services.

UK Space Agency Project

A partnership project involving Cardiff Council (Schools e-learning team & Cardiff Commitment), Cardiff West Community High School, Cardiff University's School of Physics & Astrophysics and Bridgend College Computer Science Department has been awarded £40k to develop educational resources by the UK Space Agency. The partnership project will be creating Science and Computer Science teaching and learning resources linked to the launch of the Rosalind Franklin Mars Rover Mission, which is due to launch in July 2020. The resources will be made freely available to schools across the UK via the UK Space Agency website. The award was made on the basis of Space and Mars related resources that were created earlier this year and which are currently available to Cardiff schools via the Cardiff Commitment website.

School Active Travel Plan Programme

The Council will launch the School Active Travel Plan programme on 28th January 2020 at Howardian Primary School in Penylan as part of a Health and Wellbeing event supported by Sustrans Cymru and Welsh Cycling. The School Active Travel Plan programme provides advice and support to all schools in Cardiff so that they can develop an Active Travel Plan specific to their school. It will be supported by new online resources for schools, which include step-by-step guidance and case studies. This forms part of the Council's commitment to ensure that every school in Cardiff has developed an Active Travel Plan by 2022.

The Council has been working with Howardian Primary School to develop their Active Travel Plan and the school has implemented a number of active travel initiatives such as the provision of increased scooter parking, scooter and bike training, as well as a 'Park and Stride' area where parents park away from the school gates and walk to school to drop-off/collect their children. Sustrans Cymru have also supported the school in developing schemes which promote walking and cycling to pupils through their Active Journeys programme. This work aims to reduce traffic congestion around the school and to make the roads safer and less polluted for everyone. The Headteacher at Howardian Primary School has acknowledged that the children's physical and mental wellbeing has improved and they have become more confident and aware of road safety issues.

Music Service

The Music Service brought Christmas alive with concerts across the city, including a big Christmas Celebration at St David's Hall involving over 400 pupils. There was a massed primary school choir of over 200, with pupils from three Cardiff schools – Willowbrook, Meadowlane and Glan-yr-Afon – as well as from Victoria, Fairfield and Dinas Powys schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. I want to extend my thanks to all staff and pupils for a wonderful series of concerts.

Llanover Hall Spooktacular Kids Workshops

Over 75 children aged 5 and above attended Llanover Hall to celebrate Halloween by enrolling on the 3-day Spooktacular from 30th October to 1st November 2019. Over the three days, children had a choice of around 15 workshops to attend, which included Glow in the Dark Ghosts and Ghouls in Clay, Theatrical makeup with a Halloween theme, Broomstick and Bonfire Clay, Spooky Pottery, Lanterns in Clay and Autumn Kites.

Alongside the art and craft workshops, tutor Jamie Lee delivered a Let's Act drama workshop for children aged 7 plus. They all worked very hard and devised a drama production based on the popular 'Goosebumps' book series. This was titled 'The Haunted House on the Hill' and both parents and carers were invited to the performance on the last day. It was fantastic to see such promising talent. Parents who had come along before commented how wonderful it was to see their child's confidence growing through these workshops.

Community Learning Grant

The Welsh Government has recently announced that the Community Learning Grant, which is used to fund Adult Learning courses, will be redistributed across Wales. This means that Cardiff will see a reduction in funding of 50% to £500,000 a year, phased over two years from September 2020.

These courses are targeted to support the most vulnerable in society. They are delivered in the most deprived areas of the city at many locations, including hubs and schools, as well homeless hostels and youth centres. Officers are currently looking at how the service can be provided with reduced funding to ensure minimum negative impact on those who need it most.

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member Education, Employment & Skills
24 January 2020