

News story: Research partner announced for children's social care project

Cardiff University has been named as the research partner for a new What Works Centre for Children's Social Care.

Working closely with social innovation charity Nesta, which was awarded the contract to deliver the What Works Centre last month, researchers at Cardiff will develop a strong evidence base around effective interventions and practice systems.

This will include using the findings from projects in Round One of the government's Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, published in the [Final Programme Evaluation Report](#) today.

The independent report found that in many cases, projects funded through the Innovation Programme led to fewer children in care and more children being reunited with their birth families.

Minister for Children and Families, Robert Goodwill, said:

All children deserve the best possible care and support and that's why we are investing £200 million in the Innovation Programme to help organisations to drive improvements in children's social care.

It's encouraging to see the positive findings from the projects so far, many of which have already started to improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

The What Works Centre will play an important role in building evidence to both help improve outcomes for children and deliver cost effective innovation, and I am delighted that Cardiff University has been awarded the research partnership. I look forward to hearing more about the centre's work to improve outcomes for children.

Professor Donald Forrester, from the Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre at Cardiff University, and new Director of Research for the What Works Centre said:

We are delighted to be involved in this important initiative. The What Works Centre aims to provide useful evidence of the highest standard for workers and leaders across children's social care, and we look forward to delivering an ambitious programme of work aimed at making a tangible difference to services for children and their families.

The learning from the Innovation Programme is being collated as a bank of good practice and tools the sector can use to improve services for children and deliver better value for money.

These are available on the new Children's Social Care Innovation Programme's [website](#), launched this week and run by the delivery partner, the Spring Consortium.

This new website will make the evaluations of projects more accessible for social workers, children's services and others involved in caring for children, to use the evidence to improve their own practice and services.

To complement this, a new national learning conference will be held on February 27 2018, which will share the evidence and best practice from the evaluations of Innovation Programme projects.

Press release: PM meeting with Nicola Sturgeon: 14 November 2017

The Prime Minister met the First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon in Downing Street today.

Both discussed domestic issues, including the recent allegations of improper behaviour and sexual assault in politics and agreed this behaviour was completely unacceptable. They agreed to work collaboratively to ensure that the right systems are in place to protect and support those working across the UK's parliamentary institutions.

They spoke about the UK's EU exit – the Prime Minister said that it remains her priority to provide certainty to businesses and people both in Scotland and across the country, as well as protecting our UK internal market.

They spoke about progress in agreeing principles on common frameworks at the recent Joint Ministerial Committee and the Prime Minister reiterated that as powers are repatriated from Brussels back to Britain there will be a significant increase in the decision-making powers for the Scottish Government and other devolved administrations.

The Prime Minister encouraged the Scottish Government to continue to work with counterparts to secure the best outcome for the people of Scotland and the whole of the UK.

The First Minister spoke about BiFab who has filed a notice of intention to appoint administrators with the Scottish Courts. The Prime Minister said this is a worrying time for the workers of BiFab and their families and the UK Government is ready to provide whatever support we can.

News story: Plans to further boost teacher recruitment and development

Staff at the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and the Department for Education will combine into one team to help better align efforts to attract the best and brightest into the profession, and support teachers at every stage of their career.

The department will take on teacher recruitment functions and the move will mean even closer coordination between the work already underway to improve schools and strengthen the profession, and the delivery of support to teachers in classrooms.

Regulation of the teaching profession, including misconduct hearings, will continue to be handled by an executive agency of the Department for Education. Led by existing teams at the NCTL, the executive agency known in future as the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Today's announcement is part of the ongoing work to support teachers to deliver a world-class education that will broaden horizons for young people.

Schools Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

There are now a record number of teachers in our schools – 15,500 more than in 2010 – and overall the number of new teachers entering our classrooms outnumbers those who retire or leave. We need to continue to attract the best and brightest into the profession, and to support their development throughout their careers.

Bringing these teams together within the Department will enable us to build on the work already underway to invest in the profession and better support teachers in the classroom.

The Teaching Regulation Agency will continue to be an executive agency of the Department for Education and will begin to operate from April 2018.

Chair of the National College of Teaching and Leadership Roger Pope said:

Having worked with the NCTL since October 2015, I have seen first-hand the benefits of the fantastic work by hard working staff across the organisation. It is right that as the education sector changes we adapt. This new approach will help ensure that all teachers get the support and recognition they deserve.

The department will work closely with staff, unions and stakeholders in the education sector to deliver these plans.

Today's announcement follows the recent confirmation of a number of measures to recruit and retain more great teachers, including:

- naming the 25 areas across England selected to run a pilot programme to reimburse student loan repayments for modern foreign languages and science teachers in the early years of their careers. For a teacher on £29,000, the new student loan repayments pilot and the increased student loan repayment threshold of £25,000 will mean £720 cash in pocket per year. This is the equivalent of an approximate £1,000 increase in salary
- naming the projects that will receive a share of the £75 million Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund. These projects will help provide tailored training opportunities for teachers on both managing challenging pupil behaviour and developing leadership, so they can make the most of their talent in the classroom
- the opening of the Institute for Teaching, a new specialist graduate school for teachers to support their continued training and development

News story: Appointment of Mike Parsons as Director General of the Government Property Unit

John Manzoni, Chief Executive of the Civil Service, has announced the appointment of Mike Parsons as Director General of the Government Property Unit.

Mike Parsons will start at the Cabinet Office on 27 November.

Mike joins from the Home Office where, as Director General, Capabilities and Resources, he is responsible for the department's corporate functions. Previously Mike worked in local government, in Hertfordshire County Council as Director of Resources and Performance where he led the Council's ambitious transformation programme, and as Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources at Cambridgeshire County Council.

John Manzoni said:

Mike brings a wealth of delivery and cross Whitehall experience, most recently as Director General, Capabilities and Resources at Home Office. The GPU plays a vital role in helping to optimise and reduce the cost of the government estate working with colleagues

across Whitehall and the wider public sector.

Mike Parsons said:

I am delighted to be joining Cabinet Office to lead the government's estates strategy, supporting the team of estates professionals at GPU, and sponsoring the Shadow Government Property Agency as it moves towards its launch in 2018.

Press release: Queen approves new members of the Privy Council: 14 November 2017

The Queen has approved new members of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

The Queen has been pleased to approve that Mark Lancaster TD, MP, Eleanor Laing MP, Nick Hurd MP and Sammy Wilson MP be sworn of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.