

New online safety zone for Welsh learners launched

Safer Internet Day is a global awareness day to promote good practice in online safety and gives advice and guidance on the risks posed by new technologies such as social media and how to stay safe while using them.

Kirsty Williams, who today hosted an event with schools from across Wales in the Senedd celebrating Safer Internet Day, also said countries around the world were now looking at Wales with envy for our work on digital learning and online safety.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“Modern technologies, like social media, are now more prevalent than ever in our lives and can play an important role in informing and educating our young people. It is vital that we continue to promote the safe and positive use of these technologies to our children and Safer Internet Day offers an excellent opportunity to raise awareness to do this.

“I have been hugely encouraged to learn about the large numbers of teachers and pupils across Wales downloading the online safety resources we have made available on Hwb, our national digital learning platform.

“There they can access a range of classroom resources, create and share lesson plans, start discussion forums and access their own school’s virtual learning platform.

“Today we are launching another new exciting initiative on Hwb; the Online Safety Zone. This dedicated area, which has been developed for, and with the sector, will host news, articles and a range of resources on various safety issues to help keep learners safe online. It will also help direct those dealing with the effects of online bullying or any online safety issues towards appropriate support services.

“The success of Hwb is drawing attention from organisations around the world. At the recent BETT education technology show in London, our stand welcomed more than 400 visitors to hear about our distinctive national approach to digital learning”

We recently held a competition to design a logo for the new Online Safety Zone and received over 125 entries from all over Wales. Finalists were invited to attend the Safer Internet Day Keeping Learners Safe Online event in the Senedd today, where all the entries will be exhibited.

✖ The Cabinet Secretary announced the winning entry was by Isabel Bate, a year seven pupil, from Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, Rhondda Cynon Taff .

Skills Minister outlines plans for aligning Apprenticeships to the needs of the Welsh Economy

That is the message from Skills and Science Minister, Julie James, as she launches the Welsh Government's new Apprenticeship policy today (7 February).

Aligning the Apprenticeship model to the needs of the Welsh Economy sets out the Welsh Government's vision for addressing the needs of Welsh businesses and the wider economy and has been designed to increase skills levels in priority areas, including where shortages have been reported.

Developed in consultation with businesses, the policy and its five year action plan sets out how the Welsh Government will support the delivery of its manifesto and Taking Wales Forward commitment to create a minimum of 100,000 high quality apprentices in Wales over this Assembly term by focussing on four priority areas:

- Increasing the number of apprentices aged 16-19 by increasing the take-up of quality apprenticeships amongst school leavers.
- Addressing skills shortages by developing apprenticeships particularly in growth and emerging sectors such as the ICT, Engineering, Construction and Financial and Professional Services.
- Developing higher level skills by focussing on apprenticeships at level 4 and above where returns tend to be higher.
- Developing skills pathways by integrating apprenticeships into the wider education system and making it easier for someone to enter into an apprenticeship from another learning route.

Skills and Science Minister, Julie James said:

"This policy highlights our intention to prepare for the jobs of tomorrow, which will require higher levels of competence than in the past.

"It also contains a stronger focus on both technical and professional skills needed for high quality employment opportunities within our communities. This will send a strong message about the value of apprenticeships and technical education in supporting people into sustainable employment and self-

employment.”

The policy and supporting information also outlines how the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy – a UK Government employment tax due to come into effect on 6 April 2017 – will be managed in Wales.

The Minister added:

“We have said all along that this levy directly conflicts with areas of devolved responsibility, completely overlooks and undermines our very distinctive approach to supporting apprenticeships in Wales and its introduction means that no new significant money is coming to Wales.”

“To help minimise the impact of the levy in Wales the Welsh Government is taking a different approach to its counterparts in England, one which is better aligned to and supports the growing needs of Wales, its people and economy.”

Support for businesses to recruit new apprentices is already available in Wales and will continue to be available to both levy and non-levy paying employers provided the funding supports apprentices in the identified priority areas.

To deliver these priorities the Welsh Government will be increasing its investment in apprenticeships from £96m to £111.5m for 2017-18. This brings our total investment in apprenticeships and traineeships next year to over £126m.

Of the additional funding, £15.5m will be invested this year to ensure that both public and private sector employers are not disadvantaged as a result of the Apprenticeship Levy.

Julie James added:

“Our public services are essential to maintain functions related to education, fire services, waste management, social services and healthcare. We are committed to working with public sector organisations to help them achieve greater consistency and meet future challenges. This will include the publication of specific apprenticeship plans for Local Authorities, the NHS and the ‘blue light’ services.”

The announcement is being made during the Welsh Government’s Jobs Week.

The policy: Aligning the Apprenticeship model to the needs of the Welsh Economy, its five year [action plan and additional supporting information](#) (external link) is available on the Welsh Government website.

Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Plan will save lives – Vaughan Gething

The plan will be published this Spring and will ensure that more people have an increased chance of survival and recovery following an out of hospital cardiac arrest.

The Health Secretary said:

“Around 8,000 people in Wales suffer a sudden cardiac arrest every year. We can save many more lives by raising awareness of resuscitation and ensuring cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and early defibrillation are undertaken more often.

“We are also striving to improve the care patients receive from successful resuscitation to rehabilitation. Cardiac care and survival rates continue to improve and I want to thank NHS staff and other stakeholders who have contributed to these improvements.”

[The Heart Conditions Delivery Plan](#), published in January 2017 seeks to deliver fully integrated primary, community, secondary and specialist pathways of care, designed around the needs of the patient. It also gives patients a shared responsibility in managing their condition, including making the right lifestyle choices.

The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Plan will include actions to improve early recognition of cardiac arrest, immediate and high quality CPR, early defibrillation and effective post resuscitation care. Plans include ensuring that cardiac rehabilitation teams have the right training and to provide consistency of care across Wales.

Cardiac care in Wales is steadily improving with fewer people dying from cardiovascular disease. The British Heart Foundation has described Wales as a world leader in cardiac rehabilitation, as the numbers receiving this following a heart attack have increased.

Review of Community Safety announced

Addressing Assembly Members in the Senedd, the Cabinet Secretary said he intends to establish an Oversight Group to review current community safety

arrangements and to develop a shared vision for safer communities in Wales.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The safety and security of our communities has always been a priority. That is why we are supporting our emergency services and other agencies in building and strengthening their capability to protect us from these risks.

“But the agenda is, by nature, complex. Legislation and policies straddle devolved and non-devolved responsibilities. Seventeen years of devolution have necessarily resulted in differences between our policy approach and that of the UK Government. These changes have brought new opportunities but have not all simplified the context in which we work.

“Late last year, the Auditor General for Wales published a report on Community Safety in Wales. The report reflected the complexities of the agenda, highlighted some of the positive work within Wales but also raised a number of matters. I believe the report provides a valuable opportunity for us all to take stock.

“With the agreement of, and alongside, those key partners who hold the levers for change, I am establishing an Oversight Group to review the current arrangements. It will help to develop a shared vision for safer communities in Wales that builds on the excellent work already done or underway. This review will also take account of the recommendations from the Auditor General for Wales. I want the review to be ambitious in its thinking and develop a clear vision for community safety that is robust, relevant and responsive. A vision for the long term.”

Cabinet Secretary announces support to help Welsh fishermen access millions of pounds of European funding

The [European Maritime and Fisheries Fund \(EMFF\)](#) is the European fund established to provide support for adapting to the Common Fisheries Policy, including control and enforcement and data collection obligations. EMFF supports sustainable development within the fishing and aquaculture sectors and the conservation of the marine environment, alongside supporting growth and jobs in coastal communities.

In order to support small fisheries businesses through the application process the Cabinet Secretary has made additional funds available. Each small business who is interested in applying for EMFF funding will be able to access up to a maximum of £3,000 to pay an advisor of their choice to help them develop their ideas into fundable projects.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund is worth between £14m – £16m to fishing and aquaculture industries in Wales. It goes a long way in helping us achieve our objective to develop a vibrant, competitive and sustainable fishing sector.

“The outcome of the EU referendum last year and the subsequent guarantee by the Treasury to honour commitments made until the UK leaves the EU, means it is important Wales maximises the take up of this fund.

“I have, therefore, decided to make funds available from my budget to provide support to small fisheries businesses considering making an application for EMFF funding.

“There are many good ideas for projects, however we do not have the luxury of taking a year to turn those ideas into fundable projects. This support will be focused on doing just that. Ensuring the project applications which come forward are ready to hit the ground running and do not remain just great ideas”.