

Press release: New funding to boost schools facilities and healthy lifestyles

Schools are to receive £415 million to help pupils benefit from healthier, more active lifestyles, Education Secretary Justine Greening announced today (28 February 2017).

Primary, secondary and sixth-form colleges will be able to use the funding to pay for facilities to support physical education (PE), after-school activities and healthy eating.

Schools will also be able to use the new healthy pupils capital programme to improve facilities for children with physical conditions or support young people struggling with mental health issues.

Alongside the funding for the PE and sport premium, breakfast clubs and universal infant free school meals, it represents over £1.3 billion investment in the 2018 to 2019 academic year to help young people live healthier lifestyles. This builds on wider government work such as the recent sports strategy.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

Schools can really help our children get a healthy start in life from exercise and sport, and also from knowing what a healthy diet means. It's not only good for them while they're in education, but the health and wellbeing benefits can last a lifetime.

That's why we're investing £415 million in facilities to support sports, after-school activities and promoting healthy eating, so we can secure the future health of our young people.

Local authorities and larger multi-academy trusts will receive an allocation for schools and will make decisions locally on how this money is invested. Smaller multi-academy trusts (MATs), individual academies and sixth-form centres will be able to bid for grants for specific one-off projects.

The money – from the [Soft Drinks Industry Levy](#) – will be available to schools in the 2018 to 2019 financial year and more details on how the fund will be distributed will be published later this year. Government has also pledged to ensure that the amount schools receive will not fall below £415 million regardless of the funds generated by the levy.

The healthy pupils capital programme will build on the government's plans for schools to provide a longer school day by changing the focus of the scheme to provide new facilities or improve existing ones to make it easier for a range

of extra-curricular activities to be provided.

The new healthy pupils capital programme funding will be available in 2018 to 2019. All state-funded primary, secondary and sixth-form schools in England will be eligible to receive funding through one of two mechanisms, as follows:

- all local authority community, foundation and voluntary-controlled schools will receive an allocation to their responsible body through a central formula which will account for pupil numbers. Voluntary-aided schools will also be funded in this instance as part of the local authority allocation. Also eligible will be MATs that currently qualify for a direct school condition capital allocation. Responsible bodies will then make spending decisions based on local context
- smaller MATs, single-academy trusts and sixth-form centres will be eligible to bid for funding through a new healthy pupils capital fund.

Information on the allocation formula, spending guidance and bidding criteria will follow in the summer.

[Speech: Liam Fox's speech at the Civil Nuclear Showcase 2017](#)

Thank you very much, Tom, for that kind introduction, and for facilitating today's nuclear showcase.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the [Civil Nuclear Showcase 2017](#).

This is the sixth time the event has been run by the UK government, but the first year under the auspices of the newly created Department for International Trade.

I'm delighted to see attendees from our trading partners across the world. Over 20 nuclear markets are represented here today – a reflection of the truly global nature of the nuclear sector.

To every delegation here today, the showcase will offer a busy programme of industry speakers, market access briefings from local experts, and roundtable sessions.

I would also like to thank our event partners – URENCO, Lloyds Register and the National Nuclear Laboratory, as well as our event supporters – Amec Foster Wheeler, Atkins and the Nuclear Industry Association, for their unwavering support of this showcase, and of Britain's nuclear industry.

This showcase is, fundamentally, about building those commercial ties and

business relationships that will empower the global nuclear industry far into the future.

Tomorrow, you will hear about the successes of the UK's domestic nuclear industry, but this morning I thought I would open the showcase to reflect upon what is undoubtedly an important time for the global nuclear industry, and illustrate the key role that the United Kingdom has to play in its future.

Nuclear power is an industry with a truly global reach.

As we speak, there are 447 commercial reactors operating in 31 countries across the world, meeting around 11% of global electricity demand.

Yet this is only the beginning – there are currently another 60 reactors under construction, and plans for many more.

Over the next 20 years, it is estimated that over £930 billion will be spent expanding global nuclear capacity.

I am here today because the United Kingdom has a pivotal role to play in the future of nuclear power.

We are a nation with a strong nuclear heritage. As the first country on earth to develop and safely operate commercial nuclear power stations, our industry draws upon over 60 years of accumulated knowledge and expertise.

Underpinning this historic capability is a world-leading regulatory regime and a highly skilled and qualified workforce of over 65,000 people.

With no domestic reactor vendor of our own, UK companies are uniquely placed to offer impartial support, advice and assistance to our international partners.

Already, nuclear industries across the world, from China to the Czech Republic, are seeing the benefits of our industry-leading support.

As well as supporting new build programmes and through-life support, British companies also export their waste management and decommissioning expertise around the world. I would like to highlight the excellent work of James Fisher Nuclear and Cavendish, 2 firms who have been involved in the clean-up of Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

It is not only exports, though, that Britain has to offer.

Our domestic market is flourishing, marked by last September's approval of Hinkley Point C – the first new nuclear power station in this country for a generation.

And as we will hear later this morning, plans are also coming together for subsequent new domestic projects involving Horizon, NuGen and EDF and CGN.

Each of these projects will provide inward investment opportunities, and will

see the UK's nuclear workforce continue to grow, particularly in the North West and the South West as the new build programme creates at least 40,000 jobs.

Looking beyond nuclear new build, the UK is also home to a large active decommissioning programme, worth over £3.2 billion annually, as well as cutting-edge R&D centres.

Both of these present a vast range of opportunities for international partnerships and collaboration.

I'm delighted to announce that CNNP UK, which was set up last April to support CNC's investment in the proposed China-UK Joint Research and Innovation Centre and further business development in the UK, is planning to expand its staff numbers in the UK and move to larger offices in London.

The UK welcomes their expansion, which is a strong vote of confidence in the UK, and highlights the global interest we have in our nuclear market.

Finally, given the concentration of nuclear assets and activity in the north of the UK, it is also my pleasure today to launch 'Nuclear in the Northern Powerhouse', which sets out areas of interest in this region to international investors.

Before we formally begin the showcase, I must touch on the European Union.

Some have suggested that the referendum result was a vote for insularity, or that the UK will somehow be abandoning our international commitments.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

We may have voted to leave the EU, but we are not withdrawing from the world.

International trade has long been the lifeblood of the British economy, and the driver of our prosperity. Commerce is part of our national DNA.

Britain will always remain open to international investment and commercial partnership, and a champion of free and open trade.

It is true that, in leaving the European Union, Britain will also be leaving Euratom.

Though our exact relationship with Euratom will be subject to negotiations with EU partners, I want to reassure you – our withdrawal from the Euratom Treaty will in no way diminish our nuclear ambitions.

This government is firmly committed to delivering a world-leading nuclear programme in close collaboration with our international counterparts.

There will be challenges ahead, but my department will support the nuclear industry every step of the way, as you continue to deploy your skill and expertise to strengthen our trading relationships with the global nuclear sector.

The Department for International Trade has a dedicated nuclear team based here in London, and they stand ready to work with our commercial officers in Embassies and High Commissions around the world to attract investment and support British companies operating overseas.

My final message today is that my department is listening. The nuclear industry is a key wealth creator in the UK, supporting tens of thousands of jobs and raising our international profile.

If we work together, we can ensure that your industry goes from strength to strength, and delivers for Britain.

Thank you, and welcome to the showcase.

Ofcom's proposal to cut landline prices by at least £5 is a step in the right direction – Watson

Tom Watson, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, commenting on Ofcom's review of standalone landline costs, said

"It's a scandal that service providers have increased landline prices year on year despite benefiting from significant decreases in wholesale costs so Ofcom's proposal to cut landline prices by at least £5 is a step in the right direction.

"Landlines are important to households across the country, and the elderly and vulnerable in particular. We need to see a fairer deal for consumers and the Government must act to put safeguards in place to prevent future increases above inflation.

"This landline rip-off can't go on any longer."

Green Party: Budget cuts and Brexit combined could bring UK to its knees



28 February 2017

The Green Party has responded to news Government departments will face yet more cuts [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“The Government is already asking its departments to do the impossible, with demands they do more with less, which is stretching the country to breaking point. By forcing through yet more cuts the Government is creating an ever increasing downward spiral, exacerbating need but removing the means to deal with it.

“The Conservatives are already punishing local authorities for its Government’s own failure, with the crisis facing social care just one example of the damaging impact its budget slashing is having on people who need help and support the most.

“Add into this mix the demands of Brexit and it is almost impossible to see how the country will not be brought to its knees.”

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[Minister welcomes latest tranche of international Sêr Cymru scientists to Wales](#)

This is the message from Wales’ Skills and Science Minister, Julie James as she welcomed the latest tranche of international research Fellows and Chairs to Wales at a special reception in Cardiff last night to celebrate Sêr Cymru investments and the start of the second phase of the programme.

Sêr Cymru II aims to build on the success of the original Sêr Cymru programme, which supported the establishment of four Sêr Cymru Chairs and three research networks in Wales across STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine) subject areas.

This latest phase of the programme involves more than £45m investment – £29m from European funding streams – and it will fund more research chairs, ‘Rising Stars’ and research fellowships and include special support for those returning to work following a career break.

Led by the Welsh Government, Sêr Cymru delivers funding from the European Union (both COFUND via Horizon 2020 and European Regional Development fund

via WEF0), the Welsh Higher Education sector and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW).

The funding deployed through the programme aims to attract and develop some of the world's best scientific research talent in Wales, to deliver economic growth and high quality jobs.

The overall investment in the programme since its launch in 2013 now stands at nearly £100m.

Welcoming the latest tranche of Sêr Cymru II talent, Skills and Science Minister, Julie James said:

“Increasing our already impressive research capabilities by attracting brilliant new talent to Wales helps to drive up our economic prosperity by creating well paid and stimulating jobs.

“Sêr Cymru really is a partnership approach, bringing together Welsh Government, European and academic resources to deliver a programme that places Wales at the cutting edge of research developments aimed at tackling real issues such as human disease, new energy sources and innovative manufacturing and materials technologies.

“Building our research capacity also makes Wales more attractive for further investment and helps to raise our profile on an international stage. Our research discoveries can also be commercialised, creating more and better jobs for Wales which we aim to develop and keep here.”

Wales' Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Julie Williams, added:

“This programme will produce a step change in research capacity and put Wales firmly on the map as a centre of scientific discovery. These young people will be the leaders of tomorrow.”

One of the latest Sêr Cymru II intakes to benefit from the programme is Dr. Catrin Williams; a multidisciplinary researcher attached to Cardiff University whose Fellowship spans the STEM subjects. One of the key areas her research aims to address is how electromagnetic fields interact with biological systems.

Explaining what this means and why she was keen to get involved with Sêr Cymru II, Catrin said:

“My area of work – examining how electromagnetic fields interact with biological systems – put simply is about looking at the impact microwaves (found in common devices such as mobile phones, Wi-Fi

and microwave ovens to more advanced equipment such as those used in hospitals for treating cancers and heart diseases) have on living things.

“Some of the current impacts these appliances have on us are quite obvious, for example improved communications, faster cooking times and more effective medical treatments. What are less obvious are the hidden or longer term impacts these microwaves might be having on us, such as potential molecular changes in our cellular make-up.”

Dr. Williams continued:

“These potential changes may be positive or negative, leading to therapeutic or destructive outcomes. Even destructive changes may lead to positive results, for example a better understanding of the risks associated with microwaves and how these can be minimised or avoided. Additionally, we can also look at how potential destructive outcomes can be used to our advantage, such as in the development of new technologies and treatments that lead to the more efficient and effective removal or avoidance of cancers and some cardiac diseases.

“At this point we simply don't know what opportunities and challenges microwaves present and this is why this area of research is so exciting and important.”