

Drive to improve maths in schools launched

The Education Secretary Kirsty Williams will unveil the National Network for Excellence in Mathematics at a school in Cardiff alongside renowned maths expert Dr Hannah Fry who will talk about how to make the subject more compelling and interesting for pupils.

The Welsh Government is investing over £3.2 million in the network this Assembly term which will play a key role in the Education Secretary Kirsty Williams' national mission to raise standards in Welsh schools.

It involves schools, colleges, universities and the four regional education consortia – working together to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics and numeracy in Wales, in support of new curriculum developments.

Its role will include:

- Extra support to develop leadership in maths and help schools work together in support of higher standards.
- Supporting teachers, teaching assistants, further education lecturers and others to develop improved classroom practice.
- Schools and colleges will receive guidance, access to conferences and events on effective teaching practice, alongside a new dedicated online maths zone on the Hwb learning website.
- New accredited evidence-based professional development programmes for teaching staff to improve their mathematics knowledge, and the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Kirsty Williams said:

“We are on a national mission to improve education standards to make sure all our pupils have an equal opportunity to reach the highest standards. This is particularly important in such a critical subject such as maths.

“Our new National Network for Excellence in Maths uses Wales' ability to come together, to share understanding of what works best, and to support each other in raising standards and our ambitions for excellence.

“The network will capture the best knowledge, expertise and experience from our universities, schools, Consortia and others for the benefit of our young people.”

The Education Secretary will visit Cardiff High School to meet Hannah Fry and the expert board of the network as they begin their work.

[A Woman's Place: Cabinet Secretary calls for increased visibility of women in agriculture](#)

Lesley Griffiths has challenged Wales's agriculture industry to increase efforts to promote farming as a rewarding and sustainable career for women by developing their skills, experience and confidence.

The Cabinet Secretary recently met with members of three regional Women in Agriculture groups, set up by the Welsh Government shortly after the UK voted to leave the EU. The groups, supported by Farming Connect's Agrisgôp programme, presented a paper to the Cabinet Secretary setting out their vision of the future of farming in Wales.

Many of the women first got together at a Farming Connect 'women in agriculture' forum last year, when the Cabinet Secretary invited delegates to set up their own regional forums and provide their perspective on key issues facing the industry.

Since 2011, the Welsh Government has, through [Farming Connect](#), supported 35 women only groups through Agrisgôp and 60 events have been held specifically for women in agriculture.

The Cabinet Secretary also stressed the importance of improving women's confidence to apply for senior positions within national farming organisations.

Earlier this year, the Cabinet Secretary appointed [ten new members](#) to the Board of Hybu Cig Cymru. The advertisement was worded carefully to encourage applications from women and five were subsequently successful in achieving positions on the board. Further, two are past members of Farming Connect's Agri Academy Rural Leadership programme, which last year boasted a 2:1 female-to-male ratio.

Lesley Griffiths said:

"Women play a critical role in the development and sustainability of agricultural businesses. Many though have additional responsibilities such as looking after children or caring for elderly relatives. Few, therefore, take a salary and their contribution often goes unrecognised. They truly are the industry's unsung heroes.

"This needs to change. As a government, we have a role to ensure the relevant support services are in place to give women the

confidence to apply for leadership roles. We must also word adverts for senior positions in a way that encourage more women to apply, indeed this applies right across the board – not just in agriculture. This was an approach we adopted when recruiting for members to the board of Hybu Cig Cymru and I was pleased to subsequently appoint a gender neutral board.

“In addition we have established a number of forums for women to inspire, motivate and support each other and it is encouraging to see an increasing number of women within young people’s groups set up by industry bodies like FUW and NFU Cymru. My challenge now to the wider industry is to build on these positive developments and do more to raise the profile of women in agriculture.

“That is because diversity is a strength. As we face a future outside the EU we must pull together and utilise as wide a pool of talent as possible. This is how we can best achieve our shared vision of a prosperous, resilient agriculture industry promoting Wales’ present and future well-being.”

Agrisgôp leader, trained coach, mediator and farmer Alice Lampard, emphasised the importance of empowering and encouraging women to ensure their voices and opinions are heard and valued:

“Women are recognised as having a hugely influential role in many farm businesses. Often expected to manage farm and work commitments alongside family duties, there has never been a more important time for us to get together and speak out.”

[New academy to train the next generation of radiologists in Wales](#)

The new National Imaging Academy for Wales, which is being established with £3.4m funding from the Welsh Government, will be based in Pencoed, Bridgend.

The new purpose-designed state-of-the-art facility will allow for an increase in the capacity to train clinical radiologists in Wales. The Academy is expected to be operational by mid-2018.

The new academy will provide a modern, innovative, specialist training environment to enhance the learning experience of trainees in partnership with current training provision at hospital sites throughout South Wales.

It will help deliver the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) curriculum in a

dedicated environment through workstation suites, simulation training and a lecture theatre. Consultant radiologists from across South Wales will provide seminars and supervision for trainees on imaging studies, including the interpretation of X-rays, CT and MR scans.

Initially, the academy will focus on training radiologists but will extend to include radiographers, sonographers and other imaging professionals who are critical to ensuring a sustainable imaging workforce for the future.

Its establishment will allow for an increase in the clinical imaging workforce and the number of trained clinical radiologists in Wales, which in turn, will improve services to patients across Wales.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“I’m pleased to approve a £3.4m funding package to establish the new National Imaging Academy for Wales.

“Radiologists and those in the imaging workforce play a crucial role in supporting medical and clinical staff with high quality imaging investigations and timely reports, which allows doctors to deliver the very best care to patients.

“The new academy will play an important role in allowing us to increase in the number of trained radiologists in the Welsh NHS to ensure a sustainable, high quality workforce for the future.”

Dr Phillip Wardle, Consultant Radiologist at Cwm Taf UHB and Clinical Lead for the National Imaging Academy for Wales, said:

“We are delighted that the Welsh Government and Health Boards are supporting the establishment of the National Imaging Academy for Wales. The academy will help address the challenges facing imaging and clinical radiology, providing Wales with a high quality and sustainable radiologist workforce for the future.

“The academy will enable a significant increase in the capacity of radiology training, emulating successful academy models in other parts of the UK.

“We are hugely excited to move to an academy model of training that will help address the imaging workforce situation and achieve NHS Wales’ service aims and ambitions for diagnostics and improved management outcomes for patients.”

It is intended that the academy will continue to develop, to become a hub for innovation and research and to play a role in the education and training of the wider imaging workforce in NHS Wales, such as radiographers and sonographers.

First Minister meets with Barnier to make the case for Wales

The meeting is an opportunity to build a direct relationship between the Welsh Government and the EU Brexit team, based on goodwill and respect, and set out the Welsh position on the negotiations.

The First Minister will present Mr Barnier with the Welsh Government's white paper, *Securing Wales' Future*, which offers a pragmatic starting point for negotiations that balances concerns over immigration with the economic reality that makes participation in the single market central to the UK's future prosperity.

The meeting is also an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the EU's negotiating position and make clear that Wales wants to maintain close ties with its European neighbours after the UK leaves the EU.

The First Minister will also stress the need for smooth transitional arrangements to give space for the negotiations to deliver a long-term relationship that works for the whole of Europe.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

"I look forward to a mature, sensible discussion with Mr Barnier about the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. The Welsh Government already has warm relations and an excellent reputation with the European Commission and I am keen to demonstrate that there are parts of the UK that are prepared to engage constructively with the EU-27, rather than indulge in playing to the gallery.

"Our white paper sets out positions on key issues, which differ from those that have been taken by the UK government to date, but which may well command wider support across the UK. This is an important opportunity to explain this perspective to Mr Barnier.

"My primary responsibility as First Minister of Wales will always be to get the best deal for Welsh jobs and the Welsh economy. With 67% of Welsh exports going to Europe, it is absolutely vital that we retain full and unfettered access to the Single Market. It would be irresponsible to turn our back on this.

"Our friends and neighbours in Europe will continue to be our friends and neighbours after we leave the EU, and we need to find a way forward together to address our common challenges. It is in no-one's interest, least of all of those of us who passionately want

to maintain the closest economic ties with our European neighbours, for there to be no deal or a hugely painful rupture between the UK and the EU. We will do all we can to prevent this.”

[Health Secretary continues Q&A with NHS Wales staff in West Wales](#)

Frontline health employees in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire had an opportunity to ask Mr Gething questions about the health service at a Cabinet Connect event.

The staff Q&A session was held at Halliwell Conference Centre, University of Wales Trinity St David in Carmarthenshire and invitations were sent to Hywel Dda Health Board, Public Health Wales and Wales Ambulance Service staff in the area.

Mr Gething said:

“I have had the great pleasure to meet many frontline health employees during visits across Wales and following a successful first event with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board in March, I wanted to build on those discussions through further Cabinet Connect events.

“I want to give frontline staff the opportunity to meet me, ask me questions and discuss the issues in the health service that are important to them.”

Cabinet Connect builds on the success of the Carwyn Connect events, which the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones has used to meet and get the views of people across Wales.