

Denbighshire Flying Start celebrates new transport funding

The funds will play an important role in providing transport for those living in the rural county, where families can have limited access to public transport. The money will be used towards purchasing an eight seater MPV.

The MPV will help support:

- Families living in rural areas who are entitled to Outreach assistance in accessing group sessions.
- Support families with children who have additional learning needs, where public transport may not be accessible.
- Midwifery staff will be able to take groups of mums-to-be on a tour of the local maternity unit.

Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan, said:

“The additional funding will make a positive difference to families in Denbighshire and those delivering Flying Start services. The Flying Start programme remains an integral part in tackling poverty and we want to ensure that there are no barriers for communities in accessing these vital services.”

Cllr Huw Hilditch-Roberts, lead member for Education, Children and Young People, said:

“I welcome this funding which will help increase accessibility to the Flying Start Programme.

“Flying Start is part of the Welsh Government’s Early Years Programme for families living within disadvantaged areas of Wales, specifically with children under 4 years of age.

“This will allow us to support families within the Flying Start areas in Denbighshire and those eligible to access our outreach provision to access groups and activities.

“This is part of our work to make our communities more resilient and provide parents with the right support so their children get the best start in life.”

Latest school categorisation results published

The National School Categorisation System, introduced in 2014, places schools into one of four colour-coded support categories to demonstrate the level of support they need – green, yellow, amber and red.

There are now more schools in the green and yellow categories when compared to last year. Green schools require just four days of support and yellow schools receive up to 10 days of support.

Last year a change was made to the factors that decide a school's category. There is now a much broader assessment that considers a wider variety of information including wellbeing and the quality of teaching and learning, rather than just looking at areas such as performance, including GCSE results.

The purpose of including a broader and more sophisticated range of factors is to understand the kind of support needed by a school and to give parents a better picture of how a school is performing.

In summary:

- 88.4 per cent of primary schools and 69.4 per cent of secondary schools are now in the green and yellow categories. This increase from last year continues the upward trend since 2015.
- There has been a rise in the number of schools in the green category – those schools requiring least support – by 6.2 percentage points to 41.6 per cent.
- The proportion of red schools – those identified as needing most support – is around the same as last year (a small decrease on 0.1 per cent) in the primary sector. In the secondary sector, this has decreased by 1.8 percentage points.
- 52.5 per cent of special schools have been categorised as green, and needing less support, with no schools categorised as red and in need of most support.

Cabinet Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams said:

“I’m pleased to see that even more of our schools are now in the green and yellow categories, continuing on with the upward trend we have seen over the past few years.

“These schools have a key role to play in supporting other schools to improve by sharing their expertise, skills and good practice.

“The system has become more sophisticated over time and now allows for a much broader range of factors about a school’s ability to improve to be taken into account – leading to a tailored programme

of support and intervention which meets the needs of all pupils.”

Health Minister announces £40m funding for new North Denbighshire community hospital

The scheme will provide a healthcare and wellbeing campus at the Grade II listed Royal Alexandra Hospital and a new building offering a range of community services.

The Royal Alexandra Hospital site will be used for counselling and interview rooms, alongside office accommodation. The new building will focus on clinical services, treatment areas, community beds and a same-day minor injuries service, which is linked to the changing model of care in the community.

The plans also include an IV therapies suite, a 28-bed ward and community dental services.

Health Minister Vaughan Gething said:

“The North Denbighshire Community Hospital will be a key development for healthcare in the area. The new hospital will provide a range of services closer to the local community in Rhyl, while also reducing the pressure on services at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd.

“The development will also bring major benefits to the area linked with the wider regeneration plans for Rhyl.

“I know how important the Royal Alexandra Hospital is to the community so I’m pleased we have retained this historic and important building alongside a new purpose built centre.”

Gary Doherty, chief executive of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, said:

“This development will transform the way we deliver care to people living in North Denbighshire.

“We’re very excited about the potential this project has to help us transform the way healthcare is provided in the Rhyl area, and how it can support the way services are provided at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd.”

Work on the new development is set to begin in autumn 2020. The new clinical build will be commissioned by Spring 2022 and the refurbishment of the Royal Alexandra Hospital is due to be completed by the end of 2022.

[New drive to support women entrepreneurs](#)

The Welsh Government's new Supporting Entrepreneurial Women programme was informed by the work of a panel of experts, convened in 2017 to consider how best to encourage, develop and support female entrepreneurship in Wales.

The panel, chaired by Helen Walbey, considered an array of academic evidence and literature on women in entrepreneurship, spoke to a range of business women, representative groups and partner bodies, and aligned its work with the principles of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme which is championed by Be The Spark in Wales.

The result is a new Framework for Supporting Entrepreneurial Women in Wales and a Good Practice Guide to inform how the Welsh Government and business community works to drive the number of women entrepreneurs in Wales.

The Welsh Government have also responded by publishing the Business Wales Action Plan which identifies 10 specific ways in which the Welsh Government and business community can improve. From providing more gender focussed business support and confidence building, increasing the number of female business advisors and mentors in Wales and promoting the career successes of prominent female entrepreneurs including through business awards, the action plan aims to create the right environment in which female entrepreneurs can prosper.

There is also renewed focus on engagement with women entrepreneurs to understand the barriers they face, improved availability of finance options with no restrictions that unfairly affect women, and a Good Practice Guide that encourages business support organisations to adopt ways of working that support female Entrepreneurship.

The Economy Minister will launch the Framework, Good Practice Guide and the Action Plan at a celebratory event in Capital Law. This will be followed by regional events, jointly organised by the Welsh Government and Lloyds Bank, to ensure that business groups right across Wales are aware of the new resources and their role in supporting female entrepreneurship.

The Economy Minister said:

“The underrepresentation of women both as business owners and at a senior executive level is well evidenced and there is no doubt the gender gap is hindering women from achieving their full economic and personal potential.

“Our Economic Action Plan focuses on creating the right environment to enable entrepreneurs to prosper and grow and obviously this must apply to women, just as much as men.

“The work undertaken by the panel of experts recognised the progress that we as the Welsh Government and business representative groups have made in recent years in supporting female entrepreneurship – but the message is clear. We must do more, and with Brexit presenting challenges of an unprecedented scale, now more than ever we need our best talent around the table.

“I call on the business community and financial institutions to work with us to adopt a more gender focussed approach to their work. I hope they will use our new Framework and Good Practice Guide to ensure they play their part in building an environment where women entrepreneurs are encouraged and properly supported to reach their full potential.”

Jane Hutt, Deputy Minister and Chief Whip said:

“All women should be given equal opportunities and representation at the most senior level. Helping to understand and remove barriers that women face in entrepreneurial opportunities will support the potential growth of women in business. Through this support, we hope women will be more fairly represented and can flourish in the business sector.

“Although, there is still so much more we can do to achieve better gender equality, this initiative will help women to achieve their full potential and to move away from the underrepresentation of women at senior roles.”

[Concrete jobs set for Pontyclun](#)

The funding will allow Concrete Canvas, whose flexible concrete impregnated fabric can be laid ten times faster than conventional concrete, to develop a cutting edge Research and Development laboratory and testing facility at its Pontyclun site. It will create 25 new well paid jobs and help facilitate the further growth of the company.

Concrete Canvas are themselves investing over £1m into the expansion.

Economy Minister Ken Skates said:

“Concrete Canvas is a company that is well known to us, having been recent recipients of a St Davids Awards for Innovation. Its product is truly world leading and I am delighted to support the company during this next stage of growth.

“Our funding will help contribute towards a project cost of over £1.2m to redevelop the Pontyclun site, introducing state of the art testing equipment and the necessary space and facilities to allow the business to continue to compete on a global stage.

“We are fortunate, in Wales, to have some truly innovative, ambitious businesses and I’m determined to continue to support Concrete Canvas and others to help them reach their potential. This is an innovative product delivered by an excellent company, delivering excellent jobs locally – it’s exactly the sort of investment which fits with my Economic Action Plan.”

Will Crawford, Director of Concrete Canvas said:

“We are delighted to receive this EFF grant funding support from the Welsh Government which will enable us to complete the redevelopment of a cutting-edge Research & Development laboratory and testing facilities at our new site in Pontyclun, which is due to open alongside the new production facility in the third quarter of 2019. The grant will enable the company to realise growth of our Concrete Canvas products across the UK and export markets securing an additional 25 jobs over the next 2 years.”