



Words Talk-Numbers Count
Geiriau'n Galw-Rhifau'n Cyfri

Sgiliau Sylfaenol Basic Skills Cymru



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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Over £7.5m to improve basic skills for early years, schools and adults

A grant package of over £7.5m for early years and schools in Wales to improve basic skills levels was announced on 4 July by Deputy Minister for Skills, John Griffiths. As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's 'Words Talk – Numbers Count National Basic Skills Strategy', the grants will provide additional funding for schools so they are better able to identify and support children falling behind in their learning.

The largest of these grants, the Strategic Intervention Grants programme, will provide a total of £2.57m each year over the next two to deliver catch-up support for children who have difficulties reading.

The catch-up initiative has already proven to be a big success across Wales with children who need extra learning support making average gains of 18.9 months within an academic year. A further £175,000 will be made available to encourage schools to develop follow-up support to the catch-up scheme.

*Pictured above:
Deputy Minister for Skills
John Griffiths with pupils
from Jenner Park Primary
School in Barry.*

over £7.5m to improve basic skills for early years and schools (continued)

Five other major grant-funded programmes will continue to receive support as part of the National Basic Skills Strategy for Wales:

- Language and Play, aimed at improving the development of the language and number skills of children in the early years – £1.35m.
- Family Programmes, targeted at parents and children in order to break the intergenerational cycle of poor basic skills – £1.67m.
- Training Grants, to improve the skills of teachers in school and the adult sector so that they are better able to support basic skills – £1.2m.
- The Quality Mark Grants, to encourage all schools, colleges and other adult providers to develop a strategic framework for identifying and supporting learners who have poor basic skills – £626,000.



The Deputy Minister for Skills visited Jenner Park Primary School in Barry to see first hand the initiatives underway at the school to improve basic skill levels. John Griffiths said: “Our all-age National Basic Skills Strategy sets ambitious and aspirational targets to improve basic skills levels across Wales – this substantial investment is a clear message of the importance we attach to achieving our aims in this important area.

“We want to see a country where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Right across the board we are trying to make sure that children and adults who have slipped through the net and need further chances to improve their basic skills are getting the help they need.

“This grants package targeting the early years and schools will mean that we are able to tackle the problem at the source, ensuring that children have the very best start in life and are able to go on to play full and active part in society.”

The grants to early years and schools are part of a wider package of grants and financial support as part of the all age National Basic Skills Strategy. Other initiatives include support for adult learners to improve basic skills and literacy in their own time or through the ‘Employers Pledge’ in the workplace as well as a financial literacy initiative for young people and other similar support programmes.



Academi's Reader in Residence Project taking creative writing into prisons in South West Wales

Academi is the Welsh National Literature Promotion Agency and Society for Authors, and its Reader in Residence project has been taking creative writing into Prisons in South Wales

Initially funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, with further funding to continue the project provided by Basic Skills Cymru, the project's aim is to target readers with basic skills needs and increase their engagement in creative reading and writing activities.

Academi Chief Executive, Peter Finch, said: 'Within the five prisons across Wales, the Heads of Learning and Skills have noticed increased confidence and self-esteem amongst the prisoners. The creative sessions have given them the chance to express themselves, as well as improving their creative writing and literacy abilities.'

For further information contact Academi Chief Executive Peter Finch: 029 2047 2266 or post@academi.org.



"Many prisoners say they have been inspired to carry on writing, both in prison, and after they have been released. We hope that this project inspires them to become life-long readers, consumers of literature and writers themselves."

Financial Literacy and OCN Wales

The Basic Skills Cymru Financial Literacy project has produced a suite of Financial Literacy units accredited with OCN Wales.

The suite of 25 single credit units target literacy and numeracy basic skills through the context of financial literacy. There are 5 units for each level; one unit is primarily literacy focussed, one unit primarily numeracy focussed, and the remaining three having varying combinations of both literacy and numeracy.

The units are available bilingually through OCN Wales. www.ocnwales.org.uk

Twf 'Your Welsh is Great' project

Developing the Welsh language skills of parents to encourage them to raise bilingual children

Twf promotes the far-reaching advantages to families of raising their children bilingually, from birth, in the home. These advantages range from ease of learning at a young age, to the economic advantages of a wider choice of jobs later on in life.

In the second phase of the pilot project, Basic Skills Cymru joined forces with Twf and provided Welsh language books for participants to use.

Linda Evans, Twf Co-ordinator for South West Wales, said: "The Basic Skills Cymru books were brilliant because they were easy and pleasurable reading – I'd personally be able to read them in a night – they were just right for the group."

For further information telephone Twf on 01745 585120 or contact Linda Evans, Twf Co-ordinator for South West Wales lindatwf@btinternet.com



Language and Play at Gilfach Goch

The Language and Play team in Rhondda Cynon Taf provided Flying Start Health Visitors in Gilfach Goch with invitations to the families on their case load.

A menu of services has been planned for the group of seven parents and carers and their children, including Baby Massage, Language and Play, Number and Play and Breastfeeding.

Session six of the Language and Play element is mark making and messy play. Materials used include custard, chocolate powder, coloured spaghetti and dry oats, and as you can see, the children and parents thoroughly enjoyed exploring and mark making with it.

Contact us

To find out more, please visit www.basic-skills-wales.org