

COVID-19 Update: 2nd April

Here is the latest COVID-19 round-up of the day from Cardiff Council, covering: an urgent appeal for social care staff and Social Workers, an update of school arrangements over Easter, and a cheer of thanks planned for our refuse collectors.

Urgent appeal for social care and social workers in Cardiff

Cardiff Council has issued an urgent appeal for social care and social workers to join the authority and play a vital role in helping communities through the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The Council is seeking to recruit new and former social care workers as soon as possible to help ensure the delivery of care and support for Cardiff's vulnerable people during a time of intense demand.

The authority is also looking for more social workers to join the Social Work Cardiff team and is keen to hear from practitioners at all levels, from newly qualified to experienced social workers as well as those whose social work registration has lapsed, but who are interested in returning to the profession at this time.

The recruitment drive also includes the need for more support workers, home carers and residential childcare officers to join the team and provide essential services across the city.

Leader of Cardiff Council, Cllr Huw Thomas, said: "Social workers and care workers have a crucial role to play in the work we are doing to ensure that the vulnerable people in our communities are cared for during this difficult time.

"We urgently need to build up our workforce in this sector to ensure people get the right support now and over coming months, so we're keen to hear from anyone who is interested in playing their part in delivering these essential services."

Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Cllr Susan Elsmore, said: "More than ever, we have a particular need for care workers, support workers, residential childcare officers and social workers at all levels to join our ranks.

"We're interested in hearing from anyone whose employment position may have changed recently, those who might be considering working in care and former social workers who are interested in returning to the profession. If this is you and you think you can offer your services to help us at this time, please do get in touch. Cardiff needs you."

To find out more about current opportunities, and to register your interest please email recruitme@cardiff.gov.uk or telephone 07725 741193.

Update to school arrangements during Easter

Free School Meals

The Free School Meal provision will be changing to a voucher scheme from Monday 10, April and will be extended to cover what would have been the two week school Easter holiday period.

The new voucher scheme will replace the grab bag packed lunches which have been delivered to schools since Monday 23rd March.

Parents and carers of children currently receiving Free School Meals will be sent a downloadable voucher to the value of £40 for the benefit of their eligible child/children which can be spent in one of the following supermarkets;

- Tesco
- Asda
- Sainsbury's
- Morrisons
- Marks & Spencer
- Waitrose.

Arrangements for Free School Meals following the Easter break will be communicated in due course.

The Council has successfully delivered 45,000 grab bags children to collect and takeaway to eat off site however the new scheme will assist measures in reducing social contact, as announced by UK Government.

Families who are eligible will receive a letter with details of the voucher directly from the Council. If you need any further help please contact 029 20537250 or email Freeschoolmeals@cardiff.gov.uk

Childcare for Key Workers

Childcare hub provision will now continue throughout the Easter school holiday period, covering all weekdays including include Good Friday and Easter Monday.

It is hoped this will assist with the pressure on the health service and other key worker groups in the coming weeks.

Since childcare provision for Cardiff's key workers changed to a hub-based system, 734 children have been registered.

In addition, 228 pre-school aged children are being cared for by registered private, voluntary and independent childcare providers across the city.

Although provision is still being prioritised for health and social care workers (including those working in homeless hostels and Outreach) and in the emergency services, the new hub and pre-school arrangements also aim to accommodate wider categories of keyworkers, where possible.

To accommodate the additional numbers and to maintain social distancing measures the number of hubs has now been expanded to 19. This includes English and Welsh medium primary, secondary and special provision.

In order to ensure the transmission of COVID-19 is slowed or halted, key workers and the families of vulnerable learners are reminded that school and pre-school provision is only to be used once all other forms of childcare support have been exhausted and where possible, children should be cared for at home.

Keyworkers in any other of the Welsh Government's Keyworker categories, may be asked to confirm with their employer that their specific role is 'critical' to business continuity in the provision of their essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to be eligible for hub based provision.

To register please visit:

<https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/Your-Council/Strategies-plans-and-policies/Emergency-Planning-and-Resilience/coronavirus-information/key-worker-childcare/Pages/default.aspx>

The hubs open from 8am - 5pm and provide children with breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Pre-school childcare arrangements are subject to individual registered providers operating agreements.

E-learning

The Council has established a dedicated team including ICT Co-ordinators to support schools in providing a host of digital materials and innovative online schemes so that curriculum can continue to be delivered during school closures.

During the period from March 1– 29 2020, the total number of logins to the online learning platform hwb across Cardiff schools is 213,273 including 161,802 student logins. This is in addition to schools who are using their own platforms.

Support will continue through Easter to help schools prepare for the summer term, with the aim of providing high quality education, through a host of digital channels.

'Cheer for our fabulous refuse collectors to give them a big thank you'

Cardiff's waste collectors will be applauded by residents on Friday for the vital services they are providing during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

A social media campaign set up by the residents of Rhiwbina is urging the community to show its appreciation tomorrow with calls to cheer and clap the waste collection staff as they pick up waste from residents' homes.

The message behind the campaign is simple – 'Cheer for our fabulous refuse collectors to give them a big thank you'.

This campaign follows morale-boosting messages that have been received from residents across the city this week, which has seen personal notes, chocolate and sweets left for the waste crews, as they remove waste from the city's streets.

Cllr Michael Michael, Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling and the Environment at Cardiff Council said: "It is times like this when Cardiff pulls together

and that famous warmth and sense of community the city is known for comes to the fore, and it's just fantastic to see.

“Our waste collection staff are doing an excellent job in very challenging circumstances. The response from residents has been outstanding and I would like to thank everyone for their kind words and gifts. It's a real lift to the crews.

“As this crisis continues it's important that the public work with us. People are wondering why garden waste collections have stopped and why they are being asked to recycle if all the waste is going to the energy from waste plant.

“Well, garden waste can't be accepted at the plant and we need people to carry on recycling because we don't want the city to break the habit which has made it one of the best recycling cities in the world. And that's all down to you - our residents. When this is all over normal services will resume and we can all get on with our plan of becoming the world's best recycling city.

“The steps that we have taken during the crisis are necessary to ensure kerbside collections can continue and we have published answers to many of the questions that have been asked by the public.

[You can read them here: <https://www.cardiffnewsroom.co.uk/releases/c25/23516.html>]

“Although waste collections days haven't changed in each city area we are now picking up early in the morning, so we are asking residents to present their waste for collection no earlier than 4.30pm the day before collection and no later than 6am on the day of collection.

“By working together we can remove the waste from the city's streets as quickly as possible during this on-going crisis.”