*May 2024 – for immediate release*

**Renishaw raises aspirations with Cardiff Rugby Community Foundation**

To encourage young people to explore new opportunities and career paths, global engineering technologies company, [Renishaw](https://www.renishaw.com/en/stem-outreach--34713?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=OP&utm_campaign=Rugby&utm_id=REC744&utm_term=STEMOutreach&utm_content=owned), has continued its partnership with the Cardiff Rugby Community Foundation. By contributing to the foundation’s Raising Aspirations programme, Renishaw aims to provide students in South Wales with access to hands-on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) activities, alongside sporting opportunities.

**Background**

Established in 2018 as a fully registered charity working in strong partnership with Cardiff Rugby, the Cardiff Rugby Community Foundation works with people of all ages throughout the region, many from marginalised and disadvantaged communities. The Foundation provides a variety of new ways to engage with sport in order to build personal well-being and strengthen communities, aiming to making a difference both socially and economically.

As part of the Foundation’s activities, Cardiff Rugby hosts a range of programmes that provide opportunities to people from all backgrounds, who face a variety of challenges on a daily basis. The Raising Aspirations programme, for example, is a nine-week initiative designed for disadvantaged pupils in Years 8 and 9 that helps guide and support them in attaining new goals and building a sense of direction for the near future. During the sessions, activities explore topics such as communication skills, goal setting, leadership and career pathways. The programme develops pupil engagement and bridges the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, raising aspirations for career and education prospects.

**Challenge**

“Recent studies show that global and social issues have had a significant impact in South Wales, so Cardiff Rugby is passionate about improving lives in our region, irrespective of age, ability or gender, to support the community,” explained Nadine Griffiths, Cardiff Rugby Foundation Director.

According to recent reports, aspirations of young people are fairly low in the South Wales region. Research conducted by the Children’s Commissioner for Wales found that around 30 per cent of children in Wales are currently living in poverty. Children from these lower-income families may lack access to essentials, such as educational resources, as well as extracurricular activities like sports and learning opportunities.

Studies also show that students’ aspirations have been negatively impacted by issues, such as cost of living rises. A study from the Co-op and children's charity Barnardo’s, found that students aged between ten and 25 in Wales were almost twice as likely to worry about job opportunities than those in other, more affluent areas. The study suggested that daily priorities, such as covering basic needs, overtook traditional goals such as achieving a dream job role.

“As part of our STEM outreach programme, we aim to support parents and schools by providing resources that support the curriculum, giving students free access to experiences that can broaden their horizons,” explained Simon Biggs, Early Careers Manager at Renishaw. “It’s clear from research, as well as anecdotal experience from both Renishaw and Cardiff Rugby, that we must do more to support students in our local area, and encourage them to pursue what interests them, regardless of background.”

**Solution**

Renishaw has been an official partner of the Cardiff Rugby Community Foundation since 2019. As part of the partnership, Renishaw has developed a programme of activities to support the Raising Aspirations initiative, inviting students to its South Wales facility to learn about career opportunities in engineering.

At the most recent event, hosted at Renishaw’s Miskin facility, 60 students from different schools attended to learn about engineering. Students were given a tour of the company’s product display area, viewing the variety of products to which the Miskin site contributes. The STEM Outreach team then shared the potential pathways into engineering, highlighting early careers opportunities, including work experience, placements, apprenticeships and graduate schemes, and how students can earn while they learn. Finally, the students took part in a hands-on STEM workshop, learning how to make their own LED torches to take home after the event and share their experiences with their families.

“By partnering with Cardiff Rugby Community Foundation on programme’s like Raising Aspirations, we can provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience and develop skills that complement the school curriculum,” explained Biggs. “In areas where resources may be scarce and stereotypes abound, it's crucial to provide encouragement and support, especially in fields such as engineering, that have traditionally been seen as reserved only for those from more affluent upbringings."

“This programme is a great opportunity to level the playing field and ensure that everyone, no matter their background, has equal access to different career and sport options. Engineering and rugby may appear to be an unlikely pairing for the programme, but they share a lot of overlapping skills, such as teamwork, problem solving and adaptability, making it a perfect combination,” continued Biggs.

**Results**

Cardiff Rugby engages with around 60,000 people a year through its various programmes that focus on inclusion, education and employment. Renishaw has supported a range of activities in the past, such as hosting STEM activity workshops and supporting rugby camps for different student groups.

“The generous support from Renishaw enables us to get into the heart of our communities and really help to provide opportunities for local people,” continued Griffiths. “This programme really does make a difference; it enables us to mentor students and showcase future educational and employment avenues for their pathway after secondary education. A lot of the students we work with have low aspirations, many from marginalised backgrounds — this programme gives them the confidence and support to aim high and follow their dreams, helping them make positive life choices in their future career pathway.”

“Since Renishaw purchased the Miskin site in 2011, we have made significant investments in the facility, and we’re currently investing £65 million to double the capacity of the site to increase in-house manufacturing in the area,” explained Chris Pockett, Head of Communications for Renishaw. “As a significant employer in South Wales, with around 700 staff located at Miskin, we believe it’s very important to engage with local communities, especially in education, skills development and encouraging inclusion and diversity. By partnering with other organisations that share similar values, such as Cardiff Rugby, we hope to continue expanding our efforts.”

Renishaw hosts a range of activities as a part of its STEM outreach programme. For further information, visit [www.renishaw.com/en/stem-outreach](https://www.renishaw.com/en/stem-outreach--34713?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=OP&utm_campaign=Rugby&utm_id=REC744&utm_term=STEMOutreach&utm_content=owned).

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**Notes to editors**

**About Renishaw**

Renishaw is a world leading supplier of measuring systems and manufacturing systems. Its products give high accuracy and precision, gathering data to provide customers and end users with traceability and confidence in what they’re making. This technology also helps its customers to innovate their products and processes.

It is a global business, with over 5,000 employees located in the 36 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations. The majority of R&D work takes place in the UK, with the largest manufacturing sites located in the UK, Ireland and India.

For the year ended June 2023 Renishaw recorded sales of £688.6 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, USA, Japan and Germany.

Renishaw is guided by its purpose: Transforming Tomorrow Together. This means working with its customers to make the products, create the materials, and develop the therapies that are going to be needed for the future.

Further information at [www.renishaw.com](http://www.renishaw.com/)