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Report author: Debbie Lewis

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Appendices attached: Four reports outlining the progress against each of the four recommendations.

Issue: Reporting Progress Against Estyn's Recommendations.

Summary

1. The attached reports indicate the degree of progress made since March 2017 against each of the four recommendations, in addition to the extent of the progress anticipated by July 2017.
2. The table below summarises the progress made.

Recommendation	Progress as of 14th March 2017	Progress as of 23rd June 2017
1	Satisfactory	Satisfactory/Strong
2	Strong	Strong
3	Strong	Strong
4	Strong	Strong

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that Members note the progress made in addressing each of the recommendations.

Background

4. Estyn inspected the Central South Consortium in Feb/March 2016. They identify a number of strengths and a number of areas for improvement.
5. The report of the inspection makes four recommendations:
 - R1- Ensure that school improvement services address the variability of performance across schools and local authorities, particularly at KS4.
 - R2-Improve the accuracy of the evaluations of schools by challenge advisers in order to ensure a greater focus on improving teaching and leadership.
 - R3- Strengthen the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of school improvement work
 - R4-Evaluate progress against the regional consortium's operational plans more effectively.
6. The report refers to a number of additional areas that need to be addressed that do not fit directly under any of the four recommendations.
7. The suggested reporting format has been agreed previously and now ensures that the consortium and those that hold it to account monitor regularly the progress made towards meeting the recommendations. The extent of the progress made is judged using the criteria that Estyn use. It is summarised in the following table.

Judgements	Addressing the recommendations	Aspects still requiring attention	Impact on standards and/or quality of provision	Work required on the next monitoring visit
Limited progress	Does not meet the recommendation	All or many important aspects still awaiting attention	No impact on standards and/or quality of provision (e.g. standards have declined since core inspection in key indicators)	Much work still to do and many aspects still to consider
Satisfactory progress	Addresses the recommendation in majority respects	A few important aspect still require significant attention	Limited impact on standards and/or quality of provision	Majority aspects addressed but still significant work to do in important areas
Strong progress	Addresses the recommendation in most respects	Only minor aspects still require attention	Positive impact on standards and/or quality of provision	Most aspects covered already with little significant work left to do
Very good progress	Addresses the recommendation in all respects	No aspects require further attention	Very good impact on quality of provision	School to maintain and build on improve practice

Success measures

8. The consortium and those that hold it to account regularly review the progress made in addressing the developmental need identified by Estyn during its inspection of the consortium.
9. Focussing on what needs to be done and comparing that with what has been achieved to date, will ensure that all developmental need is addressed in a systematic and rigorous way.

Options

10. Members may choose to drill down on aspects of the progress.

Implementation issues – cost, timescale etc.

11. The reports are reviewed at SLT meetings and used to report on progress to Directors, The Joint Committee and others who hold the consortium to account.
12. Improvement work is identified within business planning and so resources have already been allocated to addressing the developmental need identified by Estyn.

Links to CSC Business Plan and Risks

13. The business plan 16/17 and the business plan for 17/18 address the developmental need identified by Estyn. The reports now indicate links between the recommendations and business plans 16/17 and 17/18.

Background papers

14. Previous progress reports from March 2017 so that a direct comparison can be made.

Progress Against the Estyn Recommendations

March 2017

Recommendation 1: Ensure that school improvement services address the variability of performance across schools and local authorities, particularly at key stage 4.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- Since September 2012, only a minority of secondary schools inspected had been judged good or better for their standards.
- Boys' performance across the local authorities was far too variable.
- The Level 1 performance in the region has been the lowest in Wales for the previous two years.
- Performance at 5A*/A or GCSE equivalent was too variable across the local authorities
- Performance in mathematics was the weakest of the core subjects.

This progress report evaluates progress since the inspection.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is considered to be satisfactory.

There has been continued improvement in all phases and less variance in key stage four performance. Outcomes in both categorisation and inspections have improved for secondary schools.

Developmental need remains in some of the aspects noted by Estyn.

Progress

Year on year improvements in nearly all performance indicators in each phase has resulted in the CSC now matching or exceeding the national average.

The key measure of L2+ has improved at a greater rate in this consortium than any other and now exceeds the national average.

The gap in performance between those pupils entitled to free school meals and those that are not entitled is narrowing in each phase, but less slowly at key stage four.

There is evidence of a reduction in variance at KS4 in that:

- There has been a year on year reduction in the number of low attaining schools re L2+
- There has been a year on year reduction in the number of schools below the 3yr weighted L2+ eFSM floor target
- Benchmarking for L2+ performance shows that the percentage of schools in the first or second quarter improved to 64% in 14/15 and 63% in 15/16, with a significant reduction in the percentage of schools in quarter four.

Categorisation outcomes also indicated the improvement in the secondary sector:

Standards Group: For the consortium the increase in the percentage of schools in standards group 1 continues increasing by 21.2pp from 30.3% in 2015 to 51.5% in 2016. 53.0% of primary schools and 42.1% of secondary schools are now in standards group 1.

The percentage of schools in standards group 2, 3 and 4 has decreased. There is now only 1.6% of schools in standards group 4 and 13.5% in standards group 3. The percentage of secondary schools in these two groups is greater than the percentage of primary schools. (Group 3: 10.5% primary/29.8% secondary. Group 4: 1.0% primary/5.3% secondary).

Capacity To Improve: At a consortium level the percentage of school in group A has increased by 4.6pp to 35%. 33.9% of primary schools and 34.5% of secondary schools are now in group A.

The percentage of schools with a capacity to improve of D has decreased overall by 2.5pp. The reduction is larger in secondary schools (-5.3%) than for primary schools (-2.2%). 1.2% of primary school and 3.4% of secondary schools are now in group D.

Support Category: The percentage of schools requiring green level support has increased by 5.6pp to 35%. 34.2% of primary schools and 32.8% of secondary schools are in the support category of green.

There has been a decline in the percentage of schools within the consortium requiring red support (-2.5%) and an increase (0.5%) of schools requiring amber support. 1.2% of primary schools and 6.9% of secondary schools require red support whilst 14.6% of primary schools and 20.7% of secondary schools require amber support.

With regard to the specific measures raised by Estyn:

Inspection outcomes (published) since the inspection:

Of the twelve secondary schools inspected, standards were judged as "Excellent" in one school, "Good" in three schools, "Adequate" in six schools and "Unsatisfactory" in two schools. One additional secondary school in the region was inspected under the "New Inspection Arrangements" since September 2017 and was judged as "Good" in standards.

Outcomes for boys, particularly in language, remain below that of girls in all key stages at the expected and above expected level for all main performance indicators.

For CSC the performance for L1 in 2016 increased by 0.9%, which is the same as the improvement seen nationally. This maintains the CSC performance (95.4%) as 0.1pp above the Welsh average. In addition, the performance of CSC for L1 is the 2nd highest performance when compared to the other regional consortia, which the highest performance region achieving 96.2% for this measure.

A*/A GCSE

The variation across local authorities for this performance indicator is reducing, as performance in the lower performing LAs improves. The variance between highest and lowest performing LA has reduced from 11.2pp in 2014 to 11.0pp in 2015 and 10.0pp in 2016.

Performance in mathematics

Foundation Phase: At the expected level for mathematical development, in four of the five LAs, improvement continued for a third consecutive year. The improvement over four years is greater in the CSC and in four of the five LAs than it is nationally.

At KS2 for the expected level, all LAs have improved performance in mathematics again this year, as they have for the last four years.

At KS3 at L5+, L6+ and L7+ there has been continued improvement in all five LAs for mathematics, placing the CSC performance above the Welsh average.

At KS4, the improvement of 1.3pp in L2 mathematics last academic year is underpinned by variable LA performance. However, performance improved in the remaining four LAs for the third consecutive year.

Early entry mathematics results indicate that performance is lower in numeracy than mathematics. Two secondary schools in particular are showing concerning low attainment and officers have arranged to visit the school to support.

- Headteachers of secondary schools have been engaged in workshop to identify those areas in which more support is required.
- Intervention strategy is being used to provide the required framework for schools causing concern.
- Target setting process is being used to challenge underperformance.

Evidence

All Wales core data sets
StatsWales Website
Outcomes of workshops with secondary headteachers
Intervention strategy and support plans for individual schools.
Target setting data.
Categorisation outcomes

Business Plan Links:

16/17: Priority one
17/18: 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3

Next steps:

Continue to develop the work with secondary schools to ensure that the needs of secondary schools are fully met.

Continue to monitor targets set and in year data returns to look for underperformance.

This report is not yet addressing the variation between LAs. This needs consideration.

Ensure that new business planning has clearly identified action around:

- the performance of eFSM (secondary school floor target) and boys in literacy
- leadership in vulnerable schools
- recruitment in key schools-Teach First
- Support around vulnerable schools
- Deployment of CAs, directing resources where needed and strengthening secondary team.

Recommendation 2: Improve the accuracy of the evaluations of schools by challenge advisers in order to ensure a greater focus on improving teaching and leadership.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- In a few cases, challenge adviser notes of visit to schools did not focus on the most important aspects requiring improvement, such as the quality and consistency of teaching.
- In a few instances, reports provided to Estyn in advance of an inspection did not reflect well enough the findings of the inspection team, especially regarding the evaluation of teaching and leadership.

This progress report evaluates progress since the inspection.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is considered to be strong.

Professional development, alongside guidance and exemplar material, is leading to more secure judgements being made and more accurate reports being written. More direct and focussed action is being taken where challenge adviser performance is less than good.

Progress Since The Inspection

- The consortium's framework for challenge and support continues to be used by challenge advisers, local authority officers and schools as a main point of reference. It has been revised to emphasise the high expectations set with regard to report writing. The changes made include:
 - Service's writing protocol revised to provide more specific guidance
 - Guidance concerning categorisation reports, pre-inspection briefings and inspection follow up progress reports revised and strengthened.
 - Written examples of all types of report provided to promote consistency.
 - Expectations concerning evaluation of teaching and leadership made explicit and included in examples.

- In addition support and professional development has been provided:
 - For senior challenge advisers provided through workshop in July with former HMI to support quality assurance role.
 - For new and existing challenge advisers through workshops and seminars provided in September 16 that focus on expectations about writing, including evaluation of teaching and leadership
 - For challenge advisers through the quality assurance of categorisation reports. All reports were quality assured by senior challenge advisers and a significant sample of 70 quality assured by the head of school improvement. Feedback was provided in all cases and where required intense coaching sessions provided.
 - A development day with a focus on making judgements in teaching and learning is being planned for 27th April 2017.

- In addition to quality assuring written reports, senior challenge advisers have conducted joint visits with all challenge advisers to quality assure the categorisation process. Written and oral feedback was provided in each case. Continue practice where line manager accompanies each challenge adviser at one review, challenge and support meeting.
- Many challenge advisers have participated in a self-evaluation activity through which they considered the clarity with which they recorded judgements for teaching and for leadership in the categorisation reports that they had written. A minority recognised that their performance in this aspect could improve, particularly when making judgements about leadership.

- Performance management objectives relate directly to accurate judgements about teaching, learning and leadership.

Evidence

Framework For Challenge And Support with linked documentation.

Training programme and materials used with challenge advisers in September 16.

Quality assured reports with tracked changes.

Written Feedback from joint visits.

Self- evaluation undertaken by challenge advisers

Business Plan Links:

16/17:, 3.1.5

17/18:

Next steps:

Prepare an analysis comparing the judgements made in CA reports on teaching and leadership with inspection outcomes for the academic years 15/16 and 16/17 for the same areas. Insert in report above.

Deliver the development day focussed on making judgements in teaching and learning that has been planned for 27th April 2017

When reviewing the use and deployment of challenge advisers, consider ways in which best practice can be shared and coaching provided, perhaps for example in teams.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of school improvement work.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- It was too early to judge the impact of a number of aspects of the consortium's key strategy for school improvement, 'Central South Wales Challenge'.
- Procedures for evaluating the impact of peer enquiry were underdeveloped.
- The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of work on standards, teaching and leadership were underdeveloped.

This progress report evaluates progress since the inspection.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is currently considered to be strong.

Nearly all processes are in place but need time to embed and impact on standards/provision

Many of the actions identified in 'Next Steps' have been completed.

Self evaluation systems have been developed and extra capacity and expertise is provided through the research and evaluation board. The first survey has been completed and initial data collected. The SER is a live document that informs planning and practice.

Increasingly comprehensive system ensures that the consortium is able to measure the impact of its work.

Progress Since The Inspection

The self-evaluation report and associated processes have been strengthened.

- The self-evaluation report, SER is a live document that is updated regularly in light of the outcomes of self-evaluation activities. There is clarity with regard to who 'owns' the different aspects and is responsible for updating them.
- A calendar of self-evaluation activities is being systematically developed
- The SER informs practice and business planning.

A Research and Evaluation Board has been established.

- The board provides to the consortium guidance and extra capacity to measure the impact of its work. A project manager and researcher have been employed.
- One aspect from six main areas of the consortium's work (Hubs, SiGs, leadership, peer enquiry, closing the gap, challenge adviser work, has been selected for evaluation. The tools to be used and timescales have been determined. The outcomes will feed into the SER.
- A comprehensive survey has been developed and a sample of 15% of schools engaged to complete the survey on an annual basis. The survey is designed to gather evidence of the impact of the consortium's work. The outcomes will feed into the self-valuation report.
 - The first survey has been completed and an initial report produced.
 - Further analysis of the data collected is currently being undertaken.
 - In addition to determining pupils' views about school and teaching/ learning, the outcomes facilitate evaluation of impact on:
 - Collaboration and professional learning
 - Leading learning and collaborative working
 - School level leadership
 - Collaboration with other schools
 - Effectiveness of professional learning
 - Successful futures

LA performance review meetings are a fundamental part of the self-evaluation process.

- LA performance meetings are held each term in the third week of each term and report on the progress made in the previous term.
- The template for the report continues to be amended to ensure the presentation and analysis of key data and evidence to feed into LA and consortium SERs

Improvement planning is based around the outcomes of self-evaluation and national priorities. (This section links to recommendation 4.)

- Staff are more fully engaged with the improvement plans that they are responsible for delivering. This includes the development of clear success criteria that facilitates the evaluation of progress and impact of the work undertaken.
- Named leads are assigned to each key aspect and fully understand what is to be delivered and how they are to be held to account for their work.

Peer enquiry has been evaluated after each phase and the strategy changed in light of the outcomes.

- A full review of the peer enquiry strategy took place in June 2016 and a report produced.
- The issues raised by the report have been addressed and significant changes made to the phase 3 model.
- The phase 3 model has a number of evaluation systems built in that will facilitate future judgements about the quality of the impact of this strategy.

All SiG activity is monitored and evaluated:

- All SiG plans identify the work to be undertaken and it is then related to standards/provision/leadership.
- Nearly all SiG plans identify how the impact of their work is to be measured
- Half year reports indicate progress
- Termly convenor meetings include training on 'planning for evaluation'
- End of year reports outline progress against initial baseline.
- A summative SiG report is produced that identifies direct and indirect impact of work and feeds into the SER.

All pathfinder activity is monitored and evaluated.

- An SLA is agreed and contains a baseline against which progress is to be measured
- Evaluations are required after two terms and help determine if the collaboration should continue.
- There is a requirement that the collaboration evaluate against standards/provision/leadership/building capacity.
- A summative report is produced that shows impact on pupils/teaching/leadership. The outcomes feed into the SER.

All programmes offered by hub schools are aligned to the analysis of regional needs and follow an enquiry- led approach.

- All hub schools have a service level agreement outlining how capacity will be built;
- All programmes have been created following a detailed analysis of schools improvement plans from all schools;
- All programmes are planned collaboratively with strategic teams
- Strategic advisers visit all hubs each term and meet with the named person of the school to form an overall termly evaluation; (The purpose of the report is to monitor activity and discuss programmes.)
- All hub schools have received training to support red and amber schools.

Evidence

Self-evaluation report

Self evaluation calendar

Research and evaluation board minutes.

Act Evaluation plan and outcomes for six aspects

Survey and results

LA progress review reports and minutes of associated meetings.

Bringing It all Together Report for Directors.

Peer enquiry review report. And documentation regarding the new model

SiG plans and reviews.

Pathfinder SLAs. Evaluations and summative reports.

Business Plan Links:

16/17: 3.1.1, 3.1.2

17/18:5.1

Next steps:

Ensure that the evaluation action plan for each aspect of the consortium's work is completed within time scales and that the outcomes feed into the self-evaluation report and inform practice.

School based peer quality assurance of programmes in the spring term alongside visits from CSC officers.

Recommendation 4: Evaluate progress against the regional consortium's operational plans more effectively.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- Plans did not always identify clearly a lead individual to be held to account for progress.
- Plans lack clarity and specific success criteria, making it difficult for senior leaders to measure progress accurately.
- Senior leaders tended to focus on process rather than outcomes when monitoring progress
- Arrangements to monitor the progress of operational plans are often too complicated and are unclear about what is being measured.

This progress report evaluates progress since the inspection.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is currently considered to be strong. It has the potential to be very good by the time Estyn visit.

Further improvements have been made to both the development of improvement planning and to monitoring progress against that planning. The changes made now need to become embedded to lead to the desired impact.

Progress Since Inspection

Improvement planning processes have been reviewed and changed. They now:

- Include greater engagement with staff so that their expertise contributes to the plan , increasing ownership
- Include engagement with LA officers in key areas such as Inclusion.
- Include associate headteachers
- Have a drive team for each priority facilitating ownership and accountability.

Success criteria and milestones are written by the authors of the plans so that there is clarity regarding how leads are to be held to account. Success criteria increasingly relate to outcomes not process.

Key actions from the business and action plans form the basis of the organisation's operational monitoring spreadsheet. This is updated through half termly meetings between the drive teams and the operations manager. In addition, each drive team meets with assistant director, business manager and operations manager towards the end of each term in 'impact review meetings'.

Following the half termly meeting, the drive team summarises the noteworthy progress/impact, barriers, actions and who will be responsible for their completion and risks. This summary will then be included in the dashboard for discussion at the following SLT performance board. The performance dashboard has been reconfigured as intended and now provides better focus on barriers to progress and action to be taken in response.

Monthly meetings align with the financial processes to facilitate the monitoring of the overall budgets. These meetings are with the senior accountant. The senior accountant provides an update to the Business Manager and Managing Director highlighting any under spends as well as additional pressures within budget headings. A summary of all plans is provided to the SMT at the following meeting who agree the re-profiling of budget areas.

Where appropriate, evidence of progress/impact is collated and often leads to an update of the SER.

At the SLT – Performance meeting each month some of the following aspects of the Dashboard are discussed:

- School Improvement (Monitoring of SIPs / SERs etc Commentary from head of school improvement)
- Termly & Half Termly Progress reports (Commentary from senior challenge advisers)
- Inspection Outcomes (led by Caryl Stokes)
- Inspection Categories (including analysis from Head of D&IU)
- Finance Report on the progress with the action plans (including commentary from business manager highlighting risks and actions agreed at monthly monitoring meeting)
- Finance summary report on core budgets

- Business Plan Milestones (detailing risks as well as reviewing impact of milestones achieved)
- Risk Register (Risks identified within the monthly operational plan meetings / budget meetings will be discussed and decisions taken to their status)
- School to School Support Summaries Performance Management

A timetable ensures that all aspects are covered with a full review taking place at the end of each term.

A new information management system was introduced in September 2016. Aspects have been reviewed and improvements made. Project initiation documents have been produced, assessed and ranked to ensure that the next phase of its development is increasingly underpins school improvement.

Evidence

Business plan and action plans 16/17
 Dashboard.
 SLT- Performance minutes
 Project initiation documents and assessment

Business Plan Links:

16/17: 3.1.3, 3.3.1, 3.2.3

17/18:

Next steps:

The monthly meetings have been planned for next financial year in order to reduce bureaucracy and allow a more in depth evaluation of aspects of performance. These will begin in April.

Progress Against the Estyn Recommendations

June 2017

Recommendation 1: Ensure that school improvement services address the variability of performance across schools and local authorities, particularly at key stage 4.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- Since September 2012, only a minority of secondary schools inspected had been judged good or better for their standards.
- Boys' performance across the local authorities was far too variable.
- The Level 1 performance in the region has been the lowest in Wales for the previous two years.
- Performance at 5A*/A or GCSE equivalent was too variable across the local authorities
- Performance in mathematics was the weakest of the core subjects.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against the recommendation is considered to be satisfactory/strong depending on the 2017 results.

Since the Estyn inspection in February 2016 around half of secondary schools inspected have been judged good or better for their standards.

The variability in boys' performance across the local authorities in the region has reduced in all phases, with the exception of key stage three, where it has increased by 3.7 percentage points. At key stage three the range is 10.9 percentage points across the five local authorities.

Level 1 performance in 2016 in the region improved to 95.4% and the Wales average is 95.3%

There has been continued improvement in all phases and less variance in key stage four performance. Outcomes in both categorisation and inspections have improved for secondary schools.

Despite reducing the number of secondary schools with mathematics as their weakest core subject by 12.5%, mathematics remains the weakest of the core subjects.

Progress

Year on year improvements in nearly all performance indicators in each phase has resulted in the CSC now matching or exceeding the national average.

The key measure of L2+ has improved at a greater rate in this consortium than any other and now exceeds the national average.

The gap in performance between those pupils entitled to free school meals and those that are not entitled is narrowing in each phase, but less slowly at key stage four.

There is evidence of a reduction in variance at key stage four in that:

- there has been a year on year reduction in the number of low attaining schools re: L2+;
- there has been a year on year reduction in the number of schools below the 3yr weighted L2+ eFSM floor target; and
- benchmarking for L2+ performance shows that the percentage of schools in the first or second quarter improved to 64% in 14/15 and 63% in 15/16, with a significant reduction in the percentage of schools in quarter four.

Categorisation outcomes also indicate the improvements in the secondary sector.

There is an increase in the percentage of schools in standards group 1 increasing by 21.2pp from 30.3% in 2015 to 51.5% in 2016. 53.0% of primary schools and 42.1% of secondary schools are now in standards group 1. The percentage of schools in standards group 2, 3 and 4 has decreased. There remain only 1.6% of schools in standards group 4 and 13.5% in standards group 3. The percentage of secondary schools in these two groups is greater than the percentage of primary schools. Standards group 3: 10.5% primary and 29.8% secondary. Standards group 4: 1.0% primary and 5.3% secondary.

Capacity to improve at consortium level and verified nationally shows that the percentage of schools categorised as A has increased by 4.6pp to 35%. 33.9% of primary schools and 34.5% of secondary schools are now categorised as A. The percentage of schools with a capacity to improve of D has decreased overall by 2.5pp. The reduction is larger in secondary schools (-5.3%) than for primary schools (-2.2%). Only 1.2% of primary school and 3.4% of secondary schools are now categorised as D.

Support category shows that the percentage of schools requiring green level support has increased by 5.6pp to 35%. 34.2% of primary schools and 32.8% of secondary schools are in the support category of green. There has been a decline in the percentage of schools within the consortium requiring red support (-2.5%) and a subsequent increase (0.5%) in schools requiring amber support. Only 1.2% of primary schools and 6.9% of secondary schools require red support and 14.6% of primary schools and 20.7% of secondary schools require amber support.

Outcomes for boys, particularly in language, remain below that of girls in all key stages at the expected and above expected level for all main performance indicators.

The variation in A*/A GCSE across local authorities for this performance indicator is reducing, as performance in the lower performing local authorities improves. The variance between highest and lowest performing local authority has reduced from 11.2pp in 2014 to 11.0pp in 2015 and 10.0pp in 2016.

Performance in mathematics at Foundation Phase at the expected level for mathematical development, in four of the five local authorities, shows continued improvement for a third consecutive year. The improvement over four years is greater in the CSC and in four of the five local authorities than it is nationally.

At key stage two for the expected level, all local authorities have improved performance in mathematics in 2016, as they have for the last four years.

At key stage three for L5+, L6+ and L7+ there has been continued improvement in all five local authorities for mathematics, placing the CSC performance above the Welsh average.

At key stage four, the improvement of 1.3pp in L2 mathematics last academic year is underpinned by variable LA performance. However, performance improved in the remaining four local authorities for the third consecutive year.

In mathematics detailed comparison between year on year early entry results is confounded by different entry profiles and additional layers of examinations in this period. However, the early entry results indicate that in nearly all schools, performance is lower in numeracy than mathematics. A regional wide, rapid support plan has been put in place to support all schools in preparation for the summer series; curriculum hubs have delivered 9 twilight development sessions in mathematics and numeracy pedagogy targeted at the schools showing the highest deviation from their currently secure figures; intensive support has been put in place for 5 schools, totalling 270 hours of additional, focused mathematics provision. Analysis shows, that the majority of schools receiving intensive red/amber support during this period, report an increase in outcomes in mathematics and numeracy, narrowing the gap between reported outcomes and currently secure.

With regard to the specific measures raised by Estyn:

- Since September 2012, only a minority of secondary schools inspected had been judged good or better for their standards.

Since the Estyn inspection in February 2017 the around half of secondary schools inspected have been judged good or better for their standards.

Secondary school inspection outcomes (published) since the inspection:

Of the seventeen secondary schools inspected, standards were judged as “Excellent” in three schools, “Good” in five* schools, “Adequate” in seven schools and “Unsatisfactory” in two schools.

*(One of the secondary schools in the region was inspected under the “New Inspection Arrangements” for September 2017 and was judged as “Good” in standards.)

There are a further two secondary schools with inspections this term with reports yet to be published.

- Boys’ performance across the local authorities was far too variable.

The variability in boys’ performance across the local authorities in the region has been reduced in Foundation Phase, key stage 2, key stage 4 L2+ and 5A*/A.

However, in KS3 it has increased by 3.7 percentage points. At KS3 the range is 10.9 percentage points across the five local authorities.

The range in variability of boys’ performance remains the greatest in KS4 L2+ despite successfully reducing the range by 6.2 percentages points. Currently at L2+ the range is 17.6 percentage points across the five local authorities. This range was 23.4 percentage points the previous year. The reduction in the range by 6.2 percentage points reflects the continued focus on improving performance.

- The Level 1 performance in the region has been the lowest in Wales for the previous two years.

Level 1 performance in 2016 in the region improved to 95.4% and the Wales average was 95.3%. For CSC the performance for L1 in 2016 increased by 0.9%, which is the same as the improvement seen nationally. This maintains the CSC performance (95.4%) as 0.1pp above the Welsh average. In addition, the performance of CSC for L1 is the 2nd highest performance when compared to the other Regional consortia, of which the highest performing region achieving 96.2% for this measure.

- Performance at 5A*/A or GCSE equivalent was too variable across the local authorities

Performance improved at 5A*/A or GCSE equivalent in 2016 by a 0.5 percentage point.

The CSC performance of 23.4% is above the national average 22.7%. 33 out of the 57 schools (58%) improved their 5A*/A or GCSE performance indicator. However, over a three year period there has been a decline of -2.7pp for this indicator for the region. Nationally the dip is 0.2 pp.

- Performance in mathematics was the weakest of the core subjects.

Despite improvements in mathematics showing a decrease in the number of secondary schools with mathematics as their weakest core subject (12.5 percent of schools), mathematics remains the weakest of the core subjects.

Evidence

All Wales core data sets
Stats Wales Website
Outcomes of workshops with secondary headteachers
Intervention strategy and support plans for individual schools.
Target setting data.
Categorisation outcomes
Inspection outcomes

Business Plan Links:

16/17: Priority one

17/18: 1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4;1.5; 1.5; 3.1; 3.2; 4.1; 4.3; 5.2; 5.4.

Next steps:

To further reduce the variation in performance between schools and between local authorities by improving the performance of the most vulnerable secondary schools.
Business Plan Priority 4.1

Continue to monitor in year data returns to address underperformance and target support. The target setting process is being used to challenge underperformance.
Business Plan Priority 5.2

Further consideration needs to given to addressing the variation between local authorities. Business Plan Priority 5.4

The business planning for 2017/18 also clearly identifies action around:

- the performance of eFSM (secondary school floor target) and boys performance in literacy (Business Plan Priorities 1.2 and 1.4);
- the leadership in vulnerable schools (Business Plan Priority 4.1);
- the recruitment in key schools - Teach First (Business Plan Priority 3.1);
- the support around vulnerable schools (Business Plan Priority 4.1); and
- the deployment of CAs, directing resources where needed and strengthening secondary team – (Business Plan Priority 4.3).

Recommendation 2: Improve the accuracy of the evaluations of schools by challenge advisers in order to ensure a greater focus on improving teaching and leadership.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- In a few cases, challenge adviser notes of visit to schools did not focus on the most important aspects requiring improvement, such as the quality and consistency of teaching.
- In a few instances, reports provided to Estyn in advance of an inspection did not reflect well enough the findings of the inspection team, especially regarding the evaluation of teaching and leadership.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is considered to be strong.

Professional development, alongside guidance and exemplar material, has led to more secure judgements being made and more accurate reports being written. More direct and focussed action is being taken where challenge adviser performance is less than good.

Progress Since The Inspection

The consortium's framework for challenge and support continues to be used by challenge advisers, local authority officers and schools as a main point of reference. It has been revised to emphasise the high expectations set with regard to report writing. The changes made include:

- service's writing protocol revised to provide more specific guidance;
- guidance concerning categorisation reports, pre-inspection briefings and inspection follow up progress reports revised and strengthened;
- written examples of all types of report provided to promote consistency; and
- expectations concerning evaluation of teaching and leadership made explicit and included in examples.

In addition support and professional development has been provided:

- for senior challenge advisers through workshops in July 2016 with a former HMI to support quality assurance role;
- for new and existing challenge advisers through workshops and seminars provided in September 2016 that focus on expectations about writing, including evaluation of teaching and leadership;
- for challenge advisers through the quality assurance of categorisation reports. All reports were quality assured by senior challenge advisers and a significant sample of 70 quality assured by the head of school improvement. Feedback was provided in all cases and where required intense coaching sessions provided.
- A development day with a focus on making judgements in teaching and learning was undertaken in April 2017. Challenge Advisers now have a common understanding in making judgements on teaching and learning.

In addition to quality assuring written reports, senior challenge advisers have conducted joint visits with all challenge advisers to quality assure the categorisation process. Written and oral feedback was provided in each case. Senior challenge advisers continue the practice where as the line manager they accompany each challenge adviser at one review, challenge and support meeting.

Many challenge advisers have participated in a self-evaluation activity through which they considered the clarity with which they recorded judgements for teaching and for leadership in the categorisation reports that they had written. A minority recognised that their performance in this aspect could improve, particularly when making judgements about leadership. These challenge advisers have received support, training and feedback on their reporting.

Challenge advisers performance management objectives relate directly to making accurate judgements about schools' improvement capacity and support category and providing challenge and support that will help build the capacity of all schools to be self-improving.

With regard to the specific aspects raised by Estyn:

In a few cases, challenge adviser notes of visit to schools did not focus on the most important aspects requiring improvement, such as the quality and consistency of teaching.

The continued focus on developing the quality of teaching and staff development in recording accurate judgements on the quality of teaching has led to improvements in nearly all reports and notes of visit throughout this academic year. A significant sample have been scrutinised across the five local authorities including samples from a cross section of categories. Findings include, reports for amber and red schools tend to have more detail about leadership and teaching than green and yellow schools. This is to be expected. Where schools have Estyn recommendations about teaching or leadership there is considerable detail in reports.

In a few instances, reports provided to Estyn in advance of an inspection did not reflect well enough the findings of the inspection team, especially regarding the evaluation of teaching and leadership.

From September 2016, due to the introduction of and adherence to a CSC template and guidance, local authority pre-inspection reports are much more consistent. However, since Estyn visited CSC in February 2016, there have been a few discrepancies between challenge adviser reports, in relation to the quality of teaching and/or leadership provided for Estyn and the inspection team findings.

Under the new Inspection Framework from September 2017 Estyn will no longer require a pre-inspection briefing report from the local authority.

Evidence
Framework For Challenge And Support with linked documentation.
Training programme and materials used with challenge advisers in September 16 including induction training and ongoing staff development training. Including the April 2017 training.

Quality assured reports with tracked changes Autumn term 2016.

Evidence of senior challenge advisers quality assuring summer 2017 reports for clear judgements on teaching and leadership in all schools.

Sampling of reports and an evaluation of the work undertaken to address this recommendation has been reviewed by the lead for this aspect with the Research and Evaluation Board. See, Final Strand Report on Challenge Advisers.

Written Feedback from joint visits.

Self- evaluation undertaken by challenge advisers.

Inspections outcomes across the region.

Business Plan Links:

16/17:, 3.1.5

17/18:Priority 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 4.3; 5.1

Next steps:

Senior challenge advisers to continue to monitor and quality assure judgements made on the quality of teaching and leadership in all reports completed by the end of the summer term 2017. Strand Report on challenge advisers, through the Research and Evaluation work, to be updated. (Business Plan 5.1)

To complete the final analysis and comparison of challenge adviser reports and Estyn outcomes for all schools since Estyn's last visit.

Develop a framework of effective practice in teaching and learning. (Business Plan 2.1)

When reviewing the use and deployment of challenge advisers, consider ways in which best practice can be shared and coaching provided. For example, in teams through the reset of challenge adviser deployment for September 2017. (Business Plan 4.3)

To continue to build and enhance the capacity for improvement through the school to school joint practice development. (Business Plan 2.2; 2.3)

Recommendation 3: Strengthen the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of school improvement work.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- It was too early to judge the impact of a number of aspects of the consortium's key strategy for school improvement, 'Central South Wales Challenge'.
- Procedures for evaluating the impact of peer enquiry were underdeveloped.
- The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of work on standards, teaching and leadership were underdeveloped.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is strong.

Effective self-evaluation systems have been developed enabling the consortium to measure the impact of its work. Comprehensive monitoring processes are embedded. Extra capacity and expertise is provided through the research and evaluation board to evaluate our strategic aim of creating a more school-led and self-improving system. The first survey has been completed and initial data collected. The key findings are encouraging and provide us with information that will inform our plans going forward. The procedures for evaluating peer enquiry are strong. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of work on standards, teaching and leadership are strong.

Progress Since The Inspection

It was too early to judge the impact of a number of aspects of the consortium's key strategy for school improvement, 'Central South Wales Challenge'.

A **Research And Evaluation Board** has been established. The board provides the consortium with guidance and extra capacity to measure the impact of its work.

A project manager and researchers have been employed which has broadened the consortium's research capacity. Aspects from six main areas of the consortium's work: Hubs; SiGs; leadership; peer enquiry; closing the gap; and challenge adviser work, were selected for evaluation. The outcomes feed into the SER and inform future practice and developments. This evaluative work and outcomes is outlined in the six strand reports produced by each CSC lead for these aspects of work.

Each strand is referred to below.

Peer enquiry has been evaluated after each phase and the strategy changed in light of the outcomes.

- A full review of the peer enquiry strategy took place in June 2016 and a report produced.
- The issues raised by the report have been addressed and significant changes made to the phase 3 model.
- The phase 3 model has a number of evaluation systems built in that will facilitate future judgements about the quality of the impact of this strategy.

All **SIG** activity is monitored and evaluated.

- All SIG plans identify the work to be undertaken and it is then related to standards/provision/leadership.
- Nearly all SIG plans identify how the impact of their work is to be measured
- Half yearly reports indicate progress.
- Termly convenor meetings include training on 'planning for evaluation.'
- End of year reports outline progress against initial baseline.
- A summative SIG report is produced that identifies direct and indirect impact of work and feeds into the SER.

All **pathfinder** activity is monitored and evaluated.

- A service level agreement is produced and contains a baseline against which progress is to be measured
- Evaluations are required after two terms and help determine if the collaboration should continue.
- There is a requirement that the collaboration evaluates against standards/provision/leadership/building capacity.

- A summative report is produced that shows impact on pupils/teaching/leadership. The outcomes feed into the SERs of the schools.

All programmes offered by **hub** schools are aligned to the analysis of regional needs and follow an enquiry - led approach.

- All hub schools have a service level agreement outlining how capacity will be built.
- All programmes have been created following a detailed analysis of schools improvement plans from all schools.
- All programmes are planned collaboratively with strategic teams.
- Strategic advisers visit all hubs each term and meet with the named person of the school to form an overall termly evaluation. (The purpose of the report is to monitor activity and discuss programmes.)
- All hub schools have received training to support red and amber schools.

The **strategic headteachers' leadership programme** is externally accredited and is delivered by a trained facilitator.

The strategic headteachers' programme is just one of the leadership programmes and is designed for headteachers that have been in post for a number of years and may not have accessed sufficient training initially as a newly appointed headteacher. The headteachers current school is working towards achieving rapid improvement and challenge advisers are likely to have nominated these headteachers to attend the programme in order to meet their professional development needs. The programme was designed to build leadership capacity.

- Evaluations are undertaken of the impact on leadership, in the headteachers' schools, for the first two cohorts of participants.
- Evaluation of the impact on standards following attendance on the programme.
- Consideration has been given to how the strategic headteachers' programme has supported heads to engage with the CSC system of school-to-school working.

The outcomes for the first cohort show that the more than half the participants' schools moved support category with a reduction in the level of support required. The remaining participants maintained their yellow level of support and did not require additional support (amber).

All but one of the headteachers remain in post and that headteacher took early retirement. Of the remaining headteachers all have increased their levels of engagement in SIG, hub, pathfinder or peer enquiry.

Closing the gap alliance has been evaluated and has led to a revised plan for moving forward. In the work undertaken to date:

- A closing the gap strategy has been produced;

- practitioner training delivered with evaluative feedback;
- case studies produced and practice shared; and
- schools participating reported a culture change and improved leadership for specific groups of learners which has also resulted in improved outcomes where there is best practice.

Challenge adviser work has been evaluated in light of the role needing to evolve to reflect the school led improvement system and in response to the Estyn recommendations. To date the challenge advisers and strategic team have received professional development training sessions to address:

- the evaluation of the quality of teaching and report writing; and
- clear guidance on brokerage and evaluating impact of support.

Evaluations have been undertaken comparing national categorisation judgements with Estyn judgements for current performance, prospects for improvement, teaching and leadership over the period before the CSC Estyn inspection and since. Senior challenge advisers to quality assure all challenge adviser reports in relation to judgements on quality of teaching and leadership. Evidence to date is strong.

CSC Annual Staff Survey. A comprehensive survey has been developed and a sample of 15% of schools engaged to complete the survey on an annual basis. This targeted sample minimises the potential for bias and by repeating the process over three years this will develop a trend. The survey is designed to gather evidence of the impact of the consortium's work in developing a more school led and self-improving system. The outcomes feed into the self-valuation report and inform future planning and improvements.

The first survey has been completed and a report produced. A full analysis of the data collected has been undertaken and gives us a baseline.

In addition to determining pupils' views about school and teaching and learning, the survey outcomes facilitate evaluation of impact on:

- collaboration and professional learning;
- leading learning and collaborative working;
- school level leadership;
- collaboration with other schools;
- effectiveness of professional learning; and
- successful futures.

The current survey shows a brief snapshot and as it is repeated in the future, as planned, it will provide a much greater range of evaluative insights.

Outcomes show that CSC have a maturing self improving school system with more than half the class teachers surveyed reporting that they are willing to increase their involvement in leading professional learning and a growing capacity for teacher leadership.

Engagement in cross-schools working is now relatively widespread across the region with 43% of primary staff and 35% of secondary staff involved in this at least termly. About a third of these are involved in relatively complex practices such as joint practice development and inquiry. Over half of primary staff viewed working across schools as having improved pupil learning and attainment compared to just over 40% of secondary staff.

The move towards creating a supportive learning culture, engage staff in effective professionalism and organisational learning processes is evidenced. Generating sufficient leaders of learning to meet the improvement needs of school and the system is continuing to develop.

Estyn judged that the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the impact of work on standards, teaching and leadership were underdeveloped.

To address this the self-evaluation report and associated processes have been strengthened.

- The self-evaluation report (SER) is a live document that is updated regularly in light of the outcomes of self-evaluation activities. There is clarity with regard to who 'owns' the different aspects and is responsible for updating them.
- A calendar of self-evaluation activities is being systematically developed.
- The SER informs practice and business planning. Staff are fully engaged with the improvement plans that they are responsible for delivering. This includes the development of clear success criteria that facilitates the evaluation of progress and impact of the work undertaken.
- Named leads are assigned to each key aspect and fully understand what is to be delivered and how they are to be held to account for their work.

LA performance review meetings are a fundamental part of the self-evaluation process.

- LA performance meetings are held each term and report on the progress made in the previous term.
- The template for the LA performance report has been amended to ensure the presentation and analysis of key data and evidence to feed into LA and consortium SERs.

Systems for monitoring standards, teaching and leadership have been fully established. Effective monitoring has led to challenge adviser reports being much improved with

nearly all able to evaluate effectively the quality of teaching and make accurate judgements about leadership. This is reflected in their report writing.

Increased layers of accountability have been built into the system. Any progress made against actions in Business Plan have been regularly monitored and termly impact review meetings are held with the MD for each area of development. Progress is noted in the SER and any risks arising from these impact meetings are noted, actioned or become areas for further development.

Procedures for evaluating the impact of peer enquiry were underdeveloped.

Procedures for evaluating peer enquiry are strong. Peer enquiry takes place as part of the consortium's vision of a self-improving school system. They are led and owned by schools and evaluated by a serving head teacher.

The evaluation process recognises that school self-evaluation reports and school improvement plans reflect evidence from the peer enquiry and include their recommendations. 77% of primary schools hosting a peer review improved their categorisation with 81% of those schools improving their CSI. 83% of secondary schools hosting peer enquires improved their categorisation with 70% of those schools improving their key stage 4 level 2+ outcomes.

Evidence

Self-evaluation report.
Self evaluation calendar.
Resesarch and evaluation final reports (July 2017) on the six strands: Hubs, SIGs ;CAs;
Peer reviews; Closing the Gap; Leadership.
Central South Consortium Annual Staff Survey.
LA progress review reports.
Reports for Directors.
Business Plan monitoring
Risk Register
Senior leadership team performance and strategy meetings.
Business Plan Links:
16/17: 3.1.1, 3.1.2
17/18: 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1

Next steps:

Monitoring of all challenge adviser summer term reports for final evaluation on judgement for quality of teaching and leadership.
Ensure that the evaluation [awork of the R&E Board](#) for each aspect of the consortium's work is completed by July 2017 and that the outcomes feed into the self-evaluation report and inform practice. [Evidence documents in report strands are completed by leads.](#) ~~(Business Plan Priority 5.1) Business Plan 5.1 relates to value for money. Not sure what we were implying here. Is it still relavant?~~
Closing the Gap evaluations have led to the proposal for developing Closing the Gap Hubs. (Business Plan Priority 1.4)
Continue to build the capacity of the school self improvement system and redeploy challenge advisers from September 2017 (Business plan 4.3)
Collate all self-evaluation monitoring calendars from individual leads as evidence of the whole process.

Collation of evidence for the positive link between peer enquiry and school improvement in participating schools.

Evaluate the strategic leadership programme cohort 2 and collate evidence. (Business Plan 3.2)

Recommendation 4: Evaluate progress against the regional consortium's operational plans more effectively.

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- Plans did not always identify clearly a lead individual to be held to account for progress.
- Plans lack clarity and specific success criteria, making it difficult for senior leaders to measure progress accurately.
- Senior leaders tended to focus on process rather than outcomes when monitoring progress
- Arrangements to monitor the progress of operational plans are often too complicated and are unclear about what is being measured.

Overview of progress since the inspection

Progress against this recommendation is strong.

Further improvements have been made to both the development of improvement planning and the monitoring of progress against success criteria. These processes are beginning to embed with very little significant work left to do.

Progress Since Inspection

Improvement planning processes have been reviewed and changed. This has included greater engagement with staff so that their expertise contributes to the plan and increases ownership. The authors of the plans write success criteria and milestones so that there is clarity regarding how leads are to be held to account. There is a drive team for each priority facilitating ownership and accountability. The involvement of LA officers and associate headteachers has extended the engagement of stakeholders.

Key actions from the business plan and associated operational plans form the basis of the organisation's operational monitoring spreadsheet. This is updated through half termly meetings between the drive teams and the operations manager. In addition, each drive team meets with the managing director, business manager and operations manager towards the end of each term for 'impact review meetings'.

Following the half termly meeting, the drive team summarises the noteworthy progress/impact, barriers, actions and who will be responsible for their completion and any risks. This summary is then included in the dashboard for discussion at the following senior leadership team (SLT) performance board. The performance dashboard has been reconfigured and now provides better focus on barriers to progress and action to be taken in response.

Monthly meetings align with the financial processes to facilitate the monitoring of the overall budgets. These meetings are with the senior accountant. The senior accountant provides an update to the Business Manager and Managing Director highlighting any under spends as well as additional pressures within budget headings. A summary of all the operational plans is provided to the senior management team (SMT) at their next meeting and they agree the re-profiling of budget areas.

There are timetables for all aspects, which facilitates the termly monitoring of progress against the agreed success criteria and milestones.

SLT meetings are timetabled to link smoothly with the financial reporting and the regular dashboard analysis of compliance reporting, to effectively monitor progress.

Where appropriate, evidence of progress/impact is collated and the SER is updated. Areas for concern are noted on the risk register for action to be taken.

At the monthly SLT performance board meetings aspects of the dashboard are monitored and used to inform stakeholders of progress and impact through the LA performance meetings and the SER. The aspects include:

- School improvement monitoring;
- Termly and half termly progress reports including commentary from senior challenge advisers);

- Inspection outcomes;
- Inspection categories (including analysis from head of D&IU);
- Finance report on the progress with the action plans including commentary from the business manager highlighting risks and actions agreed at monthly monitoring meeting;
- Finance summary report on core budgets;
- Business plan milestones detailing risks as well as reviewing impact of milestones achieved;
- Risk Register - Risks identified within the monthly operational plan meetings / budget meetings will be discussed and decisions taken to their status;
- School-to-school support summaries; and
- Performance management.

The current monitoring procedures are streamlined, clearly focusing on outcomes and impact.

A new information management system was introduced in September 2016. Aspects have been reviewed and improvements made to ensure it increasingly underpins school improvement. Project initiation documents have been prioritised and work has been undertaken to develop these further.

Evidence

Business plan and action plans 16/17
 Dashboard
 SLT- Performance minutes
 Risk register
 Project initiation documents for the information management system.

Business Plan Links:
16/17: 3.1.3, 3.3.1, 3.2.3
17/18: 5.1

Next steps:

To collate the evidence that underpins the progress noted on the operational plans and ensure the risk register is updated and action taken to address barriers and concerns.

Other areas for development identified in the inspection report

Progress Report

Background

During the February/March 2016 inspection of the consortium, Estyn found that:

- The impact of the consortium's work on pupils' standards in mathematics was more limited
- Schools relied too heavily on interventions in literacy and numeracy to improve outcomes rather than on the development of teaching and leadership in these areas.
- The work of the Foundation Phase Alliance was at an early stage of development
- Not all school governors and elected members understand well enough the role of the consortium in raising pupils' standards and the outcomes it had achieved.
- Scrutiny chairs remained unclear about which aspects of the consortium's work they could and could not scrutinise more directly.
- Performance management agreed objectives and identified success criteria are not always precise enough to enable senior leaders to judge accurately the quality of the work of their teams.
- The work of regional co-ordinators for HR, governance, attendance and looked after children was at an early stage of development.
- The collation and analysis of data about vulnerable pupils were at an early stage of development.
- It was too early to evaluate the impact of collaboration with other consortia.
- There was still further work to do to develop value for money assessment
- It was too early to judge if the changes made in relation to the Foundation Phase Support had delivered better value for money.

Overview of progress since the inspection

All areas for further development outlined in the Estyn report have been addressed since the inspection.

The progress with the majority of these aspects is strong.

In a very few of these aspects further work is required to collate and present the relevant evidence.

Progress

With regard to the specific areas for development from the Estyn report:

There was still further work to do to develop value for money assessment.

The annual Value for Money report has been produced and discussed with Directors and the Joint Committee. There are a range of aspects contributing to the judgement including economy, added value collaborative advantage, effectiveness, sustainability and quality.

In order to comment on the effectiveness of the consortium, analyses have been undertaken in the following:

- Key performance indicators across all phases.
- Elements of the Central South Wales Challenge.
- Funding of CSC and comparison of financial outputs.
- Grant funding delegation rates.

Business Plan priority 5.1

It was too early to evaluate the impact of collaboration with other consortia.

Meetings with other consortia now take place regularly with a number of working groups e.g. business managers, assistant directors established. There are action plans for each group and progress against those plans is monitored. Impact to date includes:

- comparing and contrasting challenging support framework in each consortia leading to a refinement of practice;
- comparing and contrasting of business support structures and job descriptions;
- comparisons of core budget to determine amount per pupil for school

improvement (in two of the four Consortia);

- establishment of a joint training programme for Elected members across the regions;
- on-going work with joint procurement for a consistent management information database across both CSC and EAS;
- joint work planned to look at CSC and EAS data reports to identify examples of good practice in presenting information;
- attendance at moderation meetings, leading to planned improvement in the process at the CSC;
- the development of a risk register tool;
- four Consortia meetings of Successful Futures leads have taken place with an agreed plan; and
- four Consortia meetings of the Foundation Phase leads have taken place with Welsh Government to further the development of the Foundation Phase and profile across Wales.

Business Plan Priority 5

Performance management agreed objectives and identified success criteria are not always precise enough to enable senior leaders to judge accurately the quality of the work of their teams.

Further guidance has been provided to all staff to ensure objectives are precise to enable senior leaders to judge accurately the performance of staff. Progress to date includes:

- regular review of the compliance of performance management processes as part of the SLT performance dash board;
- summary of judgements reviewed with SMT to identify future training needs; and
- evaluation of the process for the 2016/17 cycle.

The work of regional co-ordinators for HR, governance, attendance and looked after children was at an early stage of development.

Children that are looked after

A Director has been nominated to work with the group to produce the regional plan for Looked After Children. The Director is working with a senior member of staff from the consortium who attends all the regional meetings and provides both grant

administration as well as project management where required.

Governance

Good work has been done in terms of supporting governor understanding of the self-improving school system. Three courses have been run so far with good attendance and the evaluations indicate the provided is of a good quality and supports governor development and thinking. Business Plan priority 5 .3

The collation and analysis of data about vulnerable pupils were at an early stage of development.

CSC data reports showing the performance of vulnerable groups of learners were sent to all schools during the Summer Term 2016, using the 2014/15 data as an example analysis being provided. Following work with the Regional Inclusion group over the Summer Term 2016 it was agreed that the performance reports of vulnerable groups would be included in an Inclusion Data Pack, This pack would contain additional contextual information across the five local authorities within the Region alongside the data analyses of the vulnerable groups' data. These packs were distributed during the Autumn term 2016 for the 2015/16 data analyses and further meetings with the Regional Inclusion group will arranged for the Summer Term 2017 to develop the packs further taking into account feedback from this group.

The CSC data commentary documents have been developed this year to include performance measures for different groups of vulnerable learners.

The target setting system for the Autumn Term 2016 was revised to a pupil level data collection. This change has allowed us to produce targets for the different groups of vulnerable learners and to monitor their likely attainment over the three years , as part of the statutory target setting collection requirements.

The 2017/18 Business Plan includes a focus on the performance of vulnerable learners as part of Priority 1 & 5.2

It was too early to judge if the changes made in relation to the Foundation Phase Support had delivered better value for money.

The work of the Foundation Phase Alliance has been developed systematically since the last inspection. The strategic lead for the Foundation Phase Alliance plans half termly meetings with the alliance schools that focus directly on issues related to Foundation Phase practice, pedagogy and achievements for pupils. The Foundation Phase Alliance now runs all Foundation Phase based training for the region. Outcomes from evaluations show that all pedagogy related programmes have good or excellent outcomes and case studies demonstrate improved practitioner knowledge has had a direct impact on raising attainment in the schools supported. The Foundation Phase

Alliance schools have supported profile training.

Most schools agree that this training was good or better and will impact on their practice in the classroom. The training programme for 2017/18 meets the needs of schools and has been created from an analysis of targets and school improvement plans.

Foundation Phase Alliance practitioners provide high quality challenge and support to red and amber schools. Partnerships are systematically matched to ensure that support is effective and has the maximum impact.

Cost benefit analysis indicates that across the region Foundation Phase outcomes have further improved this year. At Foundation Phase the percentage of pupils aged between 5 and 7 years old who achieved the expected outcome level (Outcome 5 or above) has increased by 1 percentage point from 87.6% to 88.6% up from 79.3% in 2012. This compares to an increase of 0.2 percentage points nationally and takes the region above the national average of 87%. Outcomes are rising faster in red and amber schools being supported since the introduction of the Foundation Phase Alliance.

Not all school governors and elected members understand well enough the role of the consortium in raising pupils' standards and the outcomes it had achieved.

Good work has been done in terms of supporting governor understanding of the self-improving school system. Three courses have been run so far with good attendance and the evaluations indicate the provided is of a good quality and supports governor development and thinking. Business Plan Priority 3.4

Schools relied too heavily on interventions in literacy and numeracy to improve outcomes rather than on the development of teaching and leadership in these areas.

Further work required to collate evidence of improvement

Scrutiny chairs remained unclear about which aspects of the consortium's work they could and could not scrutinise more directly.

Further work required to collate evidence of improvement

Evidence

SER

Peer enquiry value for money report 2015/16

Annual value for money report 2015/16

Annual value for money summary report.

Joint consortia plans and minutes of meetings.

Senior leaders team dash board (providing evidence of performance management compliance)

Joint consortia action plan

Performance management self-evaluation report

Training needs analysis

Vulnerable groups of learners data packs summer term

Inclusion data packs autumn term 2016

CSC data commentary reports

Foundation Phase case studies

Foundation Phase evaluations

Foundation Phase practitioner voice evaluations 16/17

Estyn reports on schools supported by the Foundation Phase Alliance

Pathfinder case studies e.g. Brynna and Goetre.

Regional HR policies agreed

Business plan links: 1.1; 1.6; 2.1; 5.1; 5.3

Next steps:

Embed joint working to develop a common approach to evidencing value for money.
(Business Plan Priority 5)

Collate evidence of the joint working and policies agreed with the regional HR group.

Collate evidence of the impact of the work undertaken in mathematics across the region.

Collate evidence on the current understanding of scrutiny chairs regarding the work of the consortium.

Review the regional work for children that are looked after to collate evidence

Collate evidence on interventions in literacy and numeracy to improve outcomes rather than on the development of teaching and leadership in these areas