

**SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM
REPORT FOR JOINT COMMITTEE
17TH DECEMBER 2013**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper presents an overview of national developments and focuses on the practical steps taken in CSC to respond to the need to build leadership capacity in schools in the region. It concludes by considering the actions required to secure outstanding school leadership in Central South Consortium.
- 1.2 Effective school leadership is one of the keys to improving standards in the schools in CSC and second only to teaching as having the greatest impact on improving outcomes for children and young people.

.....there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership.

McKinsey and Company (2007) How the world's best-performing school systems come out on top.

- 1.3 Estyn reports show that schools with good and outstanding leaders are nearly all good and outstanding schools. Schools needed significant improvement or special measures are nearly all those that have shortcomings in leadership.

2. National Context

- 2.1 The Welsh Government is committed to building leadership capacity in Wales and has introduced a number of important initiatives in the last two years that, although in the early stages, are likely to have an impact on improving leadership capacity. These include:
- 2.2 The **Practice Review and Development** process which aims to encourage a progressive, career long development of leadership skills. Practitioners can review their practice against standards and core attributes consider where they can demonstrate evidence, indicate the strength of that evidence and provide examples of the nature of evidence available. The individual review activity can support performance management reviews and support practitioners who are required to provide specific evidence for assessment purposes, such as the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH).
- 2.3 The development of a **Leadership Continuum** which clarifies the stages of leadership from Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) to Headteacher and System Leader.

- 2.4 This is accompanied by **Professional Standards** which are statements of practitioners’:
- Professional values and attributes
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - Skills

The professional standards:

- Set clear expectations about effective practice at each stage of a practitioner’s career;
- Give practitioners the opportunity to compare their practice against a nationally agreed standard of effective practice and affirm and celebrate their successes;
- Enable practitioners to identify areas for professional development in a consistent and systematic way;
- Form a backdrop to the performance management process.

Experienced and Newly Qualified Teachers will use the **Practising Teacher Standards (PTS)**.

Headteachers are required to meet the **Leadership Standards** (together with the PTS if they continue to have significant teaching responsibilities).

Developing leaders; teachers and support staff with leadership responsibilities and/or those who wish to further develop their leadership skills will use the Leadership Standards as a tool to support Leadership Development.

- 2.5 From September 2012, NQTs have had the opportunity to follow a **Masters in Educational Practice** (MEP) alongside their induction and Early Professional Development (EPD).
- 2.6 The first cohort of **Teach First** Participants has been placed in schools in Wales (in CSC and EAS) for the first time from September 2013. There are approximately 15 Teach First participants located in schools in the region. Following successful completion of their NQT year they will progress to a leadership development programme, provided by Teach First, intended to provide a fast track through the leadership continuum.
- 2.7 As part of his recent review on the future delivery of education services in Wales, Robert Hill was asked to look at leadership across the system and provided a number of options which can be used to strengthen and enhance the priorities set out in Improving Schools. One option was to establish a **Leadership Development Board** at a national level to help lead a step change in the development of school leadership capacity. Following an open recruitment process the Board was established in November 2013

and is currently contributing to a WG evaluation of leadership programmes provided by a range of organisations in Wales.

3. Regional Developments

3.1 Leadership Development in CSC is focused on being aligned with the national context and provide leadership development which is able to respond to the emerging national agenda as well as embody the ambition in CSC to build a self improving school system where school to school working is at the core.

3.2 The CSC School Improvement Strategy has three key priorities:

- Excellence in teaching
- Excellence in leadership; and
- Excellence in challenge and support.

To achieve excellence in leadership the consortium will:

- I. commission leadership development programmes that will promote school to school learning and strengthen the capacity of senior and middle leaders to improve the achievement and attendance of all learners in schools.
- II. create opportunities to develop the next generation of schools' leaders through the implementation of a leadership succession strategy.
- III. implement a rigorous and consistent approach to recruitment and to dealing with underperformance in the region.
- IV. build the capacity of schools' governors to challenge and support school improvement effectively.

i. CSC Leadership Development Programmes

3.3 *“There is good evidence that leaders who engage in formal programmes are more effective, particularly when the training they receive is of a high quality.”*

McKinsey and Company (2010), Capturing the leadership premium: How the world's top school systems are building leadership capacity for the future.

3.4 Since September 2012 the consortium has commissioned a suite of leadership programmes from serving and former headteachers that reflect the continuum of leadership development as established by WG. These are;

- Emerging Leaders (Secondary)
- Aspiring Leaders (Primary)
- Aspiring Leaders (Special)
- Aspiring Leaders (Secondary)

- Serving Senior Leaders (All phases 2012/13 only)
- Steps to Headship
- New and Acting Headteachers

- 3.5 The programmes have been co-constructed with heads and CSC staff. Each cohort is led by serving or recent headteachers and located in schools across the consortium. The sessions are delivered by members of the host school leadership team and focus on key areas of school improvement and leadership. They reflect the ambition to develop strong school to school working in CSC, allowing participants to learn from experienced headteachers and senior leadership teams.
- 3.6 All programmes have the option of accreditation at Masters Level (in partnership with University of South Wales). Every participant on a leadership programme must complete a piece of action research resulting in a written report; those who opt for Masters accreditation undertake further tasks.
- 3.7 Since September 2012 203 participants have engaged with the programmes and a significant number have gone on to be successful in gaining promotion, often crediting their involvement in the programmes as a contributory factor. Evaluations have been outstanding with a number of participants citing the programmes as being the best professional development they have engaged with. WG have shown an interest in the model and participants are involved in evaluating the programmes as part of the national evaluation exercise.
- 3.8 Initial discussions have been undertaken with Portal Training to commission a middle leadership programme which has Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) accreditation. As with the existing suite of leadership programmes, this provision would be delivered in schools with the engagement of successful headteachers as providers.
- 3.9 Individual local authorities also provide leadership development programmes such as the RCT Insight programme. This is provided through the local authority following identification of appropriate candidates and supports the succession planning in the LA. Additional programmes are run in the LA to support middle leaders in primary and secondary schools.

ii. Leadership Succession Strategy

- 3.10 This is in its early stages and requires greater coherence across the region in terms of gathering intelligence about where potential gaps in leadership capacity exist and how knowledge about the talent pool in the region is shared. As the shape and content of the national model for school improvement becomes clearer, including the respective roles of the consortium and the local authorities, the region will benefit from a sharper, more

collaborative focus on succession planning for school leadership including a greater alignment with the leadership development programmes available to practitioners in CSC. A crucial step in achieving this will be to work closely with the five local authorities to share knowledge and intelligence about potential future leaders and ensure that this helps inform the recruitment process for new headteachers

- 3.11 The process is currently underway to select candidates for the National Professional Qualification in Headship (NPQH) in the region. 73 aspiring headteachers applied for NPQH with 36 being approved to progress to the assessment centre.

iii. Recruitment and underperformance

- 3.12.1 Initial discussion has taken place over the potential for bringing together the five authorities' policies and procedures relating to recruitment and dealing with underperformance to promote greater consistency. Any further steps will now need to take account of the Welsh Government's proposal in respect of the national model for school improvement and any expectations concerning the location of particular HR responsibilities.
- 3.12.2 System leaders and/ or senior system leaders are involved in procedures for appointing senior leaders (headteacher and deputy) in the vast majority of cases in schools.
- 3.12.3 A common approach across the five authorities has been taken to the implementation of new pay policy for teachers and schools' leaders.

iv. Building the capacity of school governors to challenge and support schools

- 3.12.4 System leaders have presented throughout the term their annual report on performance (APR) that gives an external perspective of performance, leadership including governance and capacity to improve.
- 3.12.5 Action has yet to be taken to identify leaders of governance or governor champions who could provide support to other governing bodies where there is a need to improve.
- 3.12.6 Headteacher performance management continues to be implemented in line with national requirements. All headteachers will have reviewed last year's progress against objectives and will have set objectives by January 2014. Governors continue to have full involvement in the process.

3.12.7 A training programme concerning the use of data is currently underway across the region. This is led by the system leader with the strategic lead role for data and he is supported by a small team of system leaders.

3.12.8 A meeting with representatives from all five governor services on the 16th December will consider how a more common and systematic approach can be taken to governor training from April 2014.

4. Future Actions

- (i) To establish a regional leadership development board that aligns with other regional developments such as the establishment of School Improvement Groups (SIGs) of schools and reflects national leadership developments.
- (ii) Continue to build a cadre of Regional Leaders of Education and Specialist Leaders of Education, identified within the cross consortium SIGs who will contribute to building the core leadership capacity within the region.
- (iii) Continue to work with Teaching Schools in England to identify and recruit outstanding headteachers with an experience of 'turnaround activity' to work within our most challenging schools.
- (iv) Building on existing successful programmes, ensure that there is a strong leadership development pathway in CSC which is seen as the core route for building leadership capacity at all levels and is provided by successful school leaders in schools across the region.
- (v) Establish a network of teaching schools in the region and support them to deliver leadership development programmes and contribute to building outstanding leadership capacity in the region.
- (vi) Working with local authorities, develop a regional leadership succession strategy to ensure that excellent leaders at all levels can be recruited, particularly in contexts where it is currently more difficult to recruit. This should include working with LAs to facilitate greater sharing, across the region, of intelligence about potential future leaders and to consider how this capacity can be matched to school need.

Action required from Joint Committee

To give a steer on whether the areas detailed above are broadly correct for further development by Directors.