

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018-2019

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: 23RD JANUARY 2019

**REPORT OF:
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND
INCLUSION SERVICES**

Agenda Item No. 4

Impact of the work in the Central South Consortium's business plan on the region and Rhondda, Cynon Taf

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the contribution of the Central South Consortium (CSC) to raising standards in schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Receive the content of this report.
- 2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.
- 2.3 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The CSC provides a School Improvement Service to 400 schools across five local authorities: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, RCT and Vale of Glamorgan.
- 3.2 Attached is the report of Senior Challenge Officers from Central South Consortium who will be in attendance at the meeting to answer any queries.



Title: *Impact of work in the Central South Consortium's business plan on the region and Rhondda, Cynon, Taf County Borough Council*

Date Written: *Friday 12th December 2018*

Authors: *Andrew Williams (Acting Assistant Director), Tim Britton Senior Challenge Adviser (Primary Schools) and Sarah Corcoran, Senior Challenge Adviser (Secondary Schools) Central South Consortium*

Background

1. Since 2012, Central South Consortium has delivered aspects of school improvement services on behalf of the five authorities: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. This covers 391 schools, 30% of Wales' children. It is a growing region with rapidly changing demographic encompassing increasingly diverse communities across the economic sub region. It remains the region with the highest number of children living in poverty, with just under 1 in 5 children claiming free school meals.
2. The service delivers challenge and support on behalf of the five local authorities, governed through a Joint Committee of Cabinet Members from each authority. The Joint Committee meets regularly and formally approves the annual business plan and budget for the service, holding the service to account in terms of performance and budgetary control.
3. Scrutiny Committees in each of the five authorities invite the Senior Challenge Adviser for the authority to report on the performance of the schools in their authority and the contribution of the consortium at any stage during the year. An annual report from the consortium relating to progress in the previous academic year and priorities for the year ahead is also provided.

Central South Consortium Business Plans

4. The consortium business plan for April 2017 to March 2018 can be found [here](#)
It has five priorities:
 - Improving outcomes for vulnerable learners through partnership working.
 - Developing school-to-school working to deliver curriculum reform.
 - Developing leadership, governance and workforce reform.
 - Rapid and sustainable intervention.
 - Developing effectiveness and efficiency in Central South Consortium.

Local Authority performance

5. The tables below show outcomes against targets and previous outcomes for Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT). Targets met or exceeded are highlighted in green. Outcomes that have improved from the previous academic year are highlighted in yellow. However, it should be noted that Welsh Government have introduced key changes to the key stage 4 performance measures in 2016-2017 which affects any possible comparisons that may be made against previous data. Annex B details the changes to KS4 performance measures going forward. Therefore, caution should be used with comparing 2017-2018 outcomes with previous years.

6. Teacher Assessment can be used for information purposes only e.g. to develop school improvement policies etc., but not for school accountability purposes below national level. All Wales Core Data Sets (Performance) will no longer be provided by WG for foundation phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. There will be no change to the collection process and schools still have to report data to Welsh Government. Data will be shared with Local Authorities and Consortia who have systems in place to analyse data, but comparison with other LAs / Consortia will not be possible.

Key Measure	2015/16 Actuals	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2016/17 Actuals	2017/18 Actuals
Foundation Phase - FPOI	87.18%	87.88%	83.95%	74.76%	86.94%	81.28%
Key Stage 2 - CSI	88.49%	90.89%	89.32%	85.00%	90.03%	89.27%
Key Stage 3 - CSI	83.99%	91.83%	87.42%	88.17%	87.40%	87.87%
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics	56.57%	63.87%	63.27%	67.49%	49.83%	53.11%
Level 1 Threshold	96.74%	97.80%	97.15%	97.57%	94.71%	94.71%

Performance in English, Welsh First Language and Mathematics at the Expected Level

Key Measure	2015/16 Actuals	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2016/17 Actuals	2017/18 Actuals
FPOI - LCE	87.71%	88.57%	-	-	87.71%	82.36%
FPOI - LCW	94.80%	89.35%	-	-	92.16%	86.67%
FPOI - Mathematical Development	89.96%	90.58%	-	-	90.25%	85.56%
KS2 - English	90.04%	92.02%	90.69%	86.93%	91.36%	90.90%
KS2 - Cymraeg	93.87%	92.96%	93.18%	91.28%	93.02%	92.18%
KS2 - Mathematics	91.27%	92.74%	88.57%	84.68%	92.21%	91.42%
KS3 - English	87.15%	93.45%	91.10%	90.86%	90.39%	91.39%
KS3 - Cymraeg	91.40%	93.16%	91.62%	89.68%	94.14%	93.21%
KS3 - Mathematics	88.91%	94.48%	84.59%	84.89%	90.71%	91.50%
KS4 Level 2 English	69.03%	70.10%	-	-	56.44%	60.01%
KS4 Level 2 Cymraeg	74.27%	72.84%	-	-	74.69%	70.89%
KS4 Level 2 Mathematics	61.61%	69.66%	-	-	59.32%	61.54%

Performance in English, Welsh First Language and Mathematics at the Expected Level +1

Key Measure	2015/16 Actuals	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2016/17 Actuals	2017/18 Actuals
FPOI - LCE	32.02%	34.90%	-	-	34.54%	31.21%
FPOI - LCW	39.22%	35.13%	-	-	37.28%	25.93%
FPOI - Mathematical Development	34.15%	35.35%	-	-	37.01%	31.06%
KS2 - English	40.97%	40.51%	42.38%	37.71%	44.23%	44.62%
KS2 - Cymraeg	41.50%	41.61%	41.12%	40.12%	44.35%	42.80%
KS2 - Mathematics	42.34%	41.72%	43.91%	38.65%	45.61%	46.13%
KS3 - English	52.96%	64.90%	62.57%	63.02%	57.36%	61.84%
KS3 - Cymraeg	63.12%	63.52%	56.74%	47.84%	59.39%	62.08%
KS3 - Mathematics	60.73%	70.03%	58.86%	63.30%	63.45%	64.83%

Performance in English, Welsh First Language and Mathematics at the Expected Level +2

Key Measure	2015/16 Actuals	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2016/17 Actuals	2017/18 Actuals
KS3 - English	15.01%	23.10%	26.07%	21.59%	19.09%	22.32%
KS3 - Cymraeg	12.90%	19.06%	13.02%	13.32%	17.37%	18.76%
KS3 - Mathematics	24.42%	28.10%	23.89%	25.50%	28.34%	30.04%

The poverty-related attainment gap

Key Measure	2015/16 Actuals	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target	2016/17 Actuals	2017/18 Actuals
FSM Gap FP FPOI	-14.5pp	-14.2pp	-15.8pp	-20.8pp	-11.8pp	-20.8pp
FSM Gap KS2 CSI	-12.8pp	-14.2pp	-11.7pp	-17.2pp	-14.6pp	-15.9pp
FSM Gap KS3 CSI	-22.9pp	-14.4pp	-14.5pp	-15.1pp	-20.3pp	-23.3pp
FSM Gap KS4 L2 inc EWM	-30.7pp	-26.4pp	-32.9pp	-28.0pp	-32.7pp	-32.6pp
FSM Gap KS4 L1 Threshold	-3.5pp	-3.8pp	-5.6pp	-5.4pp	-7.7pp	-9.7pp

7. The consortium business plan for April 2018 to March 2019 can be found [here](#).

It has four priorities:

- To develop a high-quality education profession.
- To develop inspirational leaders and to facilitate them working collaboratively to raise standards.
- To develop strong and inclusive schools that are committed to excellence and wellbeing.
- To develop robust assessment, evaluation and accountability processes that support a self-improving system

8. The business plan sets out how we aim to deliver these priorities through effective school self-evaluation and improvement planning, underpinned by building capacity in schools to support other schools through the continued development of the 'Central South Wales Challenge'. This is led by schools

and has involved the continued development of evidence based strategies (school improvement groups (SIGs), school improvement hubs and peer enquiry models in which schools can be resourced to work together to share practice across the region.

9. 'Drive Teams' made up from senior leaders from across the consortium ensure that the operational plans for each priority are implemented and that impact is measured. Half termly reviews including an impact review with the Managing Director at the end of each term ensures that monitoring is robust. Outcomes of this process are reported to Joint Committee.

10. Categorisation headlines for the region will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee following the national publication on the 31st January. Draft step 2 statements were written in the summer term. Challenge advisers have visited schools to work with Governors and headteachers to complete this year's categorisation.

Performance in RCT Council Schools

11. Headline data is provided below and in Annex A

- a. Provisional results show that performance in the Foundation Phase Indicator is 81.28%, which is below the national average of 82.58%. Performance is slightly below that of the national averages in three areas of learning - Language, literacy and communication in English (LCE), mathematical development (MDT) and personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity (PSD), but above in Language, literacy and communication in Welsh (LCW). The 2017/18 reception cohort were the first children to be formally assessed against the revised statutory foundation phase framework. Comparisons of foundation phase outcomes with previous years should, therefore, be avoided as they are not measured on a comparable basis.
- b. At key stage 2, in RCT, the proportion of pupils aged between 7 and 11 years old, achieving at least the expected level (Level 4 or above) for the Core Subject Indicator has decreased by 0.76 percentage points from 90.03% to 89.27% and is slightly below the National average.
- c. At key stage 3, in RCT, the proportion of pupils aged between 11 and 14 years olds achieving at least the expected level (Level 5 or above) for the Core Subject Indicator has increased by 0.47 percentage points from 87.4% to 87.87% and is slightly below the national average.
- d. At key stage 4 the changes to the courses and exam specifications in 2016/17 means the outcomes from this year's GCSEs can only be compared to those last year, particularly in mathematics and Welsh/English. Provisional results show that performance in the Level 2+ (5 GCSEs A*-C, including Mathematics and English or Welsh) and Level 2 thresholds (5 GCSEs A*-C) are higher than 2016-17 and are closer to the national averages. Performance in the Level 1

threshold (5 GCSEs A*-G) is equivalent to 2016-17 performance and above the national averages.

Challenge and support provided by the Consortium on behalf of the RCT Council

12. In 2017-2018 Rhondda Cynon Taff Local Authority contributed £1,087,779 towards the core functions of the consortium. In addition to the core costs of the consortium this has provided funding for sixteen challenge advisers (7.14 FTE) plus support from Accelerated Progress Leads (0.3 FTE effective from September 2017) and senior Challenge Advisers (2.0 FTE).
13. Twenty four schools were inspected during 2017-2018.
 - Of the twenty four schools, four were asked to write excellent practice case studies. Four schools (Penrhys Primary, Trealaw Primary, Cefn Primary and Craig Yr Hesg Primary) were judged as adequate and in need of improvement and placed in a follow up category (Estyn Review). Two schools (Aberdare Community School and Hirwaun Primary) were judged as having important weaknesses that outweigh the strengths and are now placed in the statutory category of Significant Improvement. One school (St Michael's RC Primary) has been in Special Measures.
 - Of the schools inspected in previous years Cwmbach CiW Primary remains in an Estyn follow up of Special Measures. Park Lane Special School was removed from Estyn Review.
 - At the time of writing this report, Penywaun Primary has been removed from Estyn Review.
14. Elected Members will be aware that we use a categorisation process to identify the schools in need of support using both data and judgement of leadership and capacity to improve. During 2017-2018, the consortium continued to work closely on behalf of the Local Authority to monitor the progress of the schools in need. Of the 126 schools in RCT, 3 schools required red level of support and 9 schools required amber level of support. There were 40 schools requiring green support and 74 requiring yellow support.
15. Challenge advisers continue to have a relevant educational background and level of experience and provide good quality support and challenge to schools. They have continued to work well and in partnership with the local authority to provide effective monitoring, challenge, support and intervention where needed. Challenge advisers have continued to commission bespoke support and intervention from the wider support teams within the Central South Consortium.
16. Provisional categorisation outcomes for 2018-2019 identify that improvement has been sustained and continues across the authority within both the primary and secondary sector. The final categorisation outcomes will become public on the 31st January and therefore we will be presenting verbally on outcomes at the Scrutiny Committee on the 23rd January 2019.

17 Other support provided by the consortium to schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf has included:

- a. 97 schools, comprising of the primary and secondary sectors within Rhondda Cynon Taf have accessed professional development programmes provided by Hub schools across the region.
- b. Rhondda Cynon Taf schools involved in providing support as part of the Hub programme in 2017-2018 were:
 - Professional Learning – Cardinal Newman High School, Cwmclydach Primary School, Fern Federation, Ferndale Community School, RCT West, Tai Federation, Treorchy Comprehensive, y Pant Comprehensive,
 - Foundation Phase Alliance – Brynnau Primary School Ysgol Llanhari, Dolau Primary School
 - Welsh 2nd language – Pontyclun Primary School, Treorchy Comprehensive
 - Mathematics – Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School, Fern Federation
 - Science – Pontypridd High School
 - Modern Foreign Languages – Treorchy Comprehensive, Y Pant Comprehensive,
 - Digital Competence – Darran Park Primary School,
 - Lead Practitioners – Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School (Welsh Baccalaureate)

The following schools were identified as Welsh Government Pioneer Schools:

- Abercynon Community Primary School, Darran Park Primary School, Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg, Ysgol Llanhari, Cardinal Newman RC School, Fern Federation, Tai Fed, Treorchy Comprehensive, Y Pant Comprehensive, Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun
- b. Nearly all RCT schools have been involved in SIG working, and during 2017-2018 SIGs including RCT schools have focused on the new curriculum, Welsh Bacc, five A*/A, Foundation Phase, self-evaluation, literacy, numeracy, teaching and pedagogy, pupil voice, leadership, ICT and digital curriculum framework (DCF) assessment, science, wellbeing and closing the gap. SIGs are reviewed annually and have to provide an impact report against their priorities twice a year in order to be funded;
 - c. The consortium has invested heavily in leadership provision in the 2017-2018 year. For RCT schools this has included opportunities to support another school with leadership capacity, leadership of school to school provision and direct leadership programmes. Of these, 11 headteachers have undertaken the New to Headship programme; 2 headteachers have completed the Experienced Headship pilot programme; 2 headteachers have completed the Executive Headteacher programme; 6 senior leaders have completed the Aspiring Headteacher pilot programme; 2 deputy headteachers have completed the Improved Leadership Skills for Deputy Headteachers programme and there were 17 successful NPQH candidates.
 - d. Support for schools is prioritised following a strategic analysis of regional needs. This is reviewed on a termly basis as information and priorities emerge. Schools receive intensive support for core subjects as agreed with the school's challenge adviser and progress is fed back to school through a

strategic evaluation for improvement statement and to the local authority director in the termly performance report. Foundation subject qualifications are supported through Lead Practitioner networks, which provide opportunities for schools to collaborate on joint practice development and share effective strategies and resources. Hub school programmes are aligned to support regional needs and the consortium brokers professional learning opportunities for schools requiring improvement across the regional professional learning offer. Intensive school-to-school support is facilitated through requests for additional capacity funding from Hub schools and lead practitioners to support targeted improvement activities in more vulnerable schools.

- e. All red and amber support schools have a bespoke packages which is recorded within a support plan. Key improvement objectives are identified and regular school improvement forums held to judge the impact of the support in enabling the school to meet its objectives. A judgement is made on the extent of the progress the schools have made in meeting each objective. This information is provided to directors in termly progress reports.
- f. Each term CSC prepares a detailed report for directors and then meets with them to discuss the aspects of the report that they select. The report contains a detailed breakdown of the support provided within the previous term.

17. The consortium continues to take a lead role in the development of the Curriculum for Wales; working with Pioneer schools, Welsh Government and in partnership with the other regional consortia across Wales. The work has included:

- a. Supporting the regional Pioneer network to share approaches through regular meetings and events to facilitate broader knowledge of the reform programme
- b. Visiting all Pioneer schools to monitor compliance with their core brief and overall value for money against the grant
- c. Facilitating regional dissemination from Pioneer school practitioners to all partner (non-pioneer) schools, 'Creating the climate for change'
- d. Funding release time for Curriculum for Wales leads in all partner schools to engage
- e. Supporting innovation in networks of schools to work collaboratively in support of curriculum reform. Over 150 schools have benefited from additional bespoke project funding
- f. Providing and collating key information and resources for all schools to begin to consider the implications of reform
- g. Supporting the identification and appointment of additional contributing schools to support the development of AoLE frameworks
- h. Integrating Curriculum for Wales priorities into nearly all Hub programmes
- i. Prioritising the development of digital learning and the integration of the DCF across the curriculum through Curriculum Hub programmes, Lead practitioner sessions, network meetings and teach meets
- j. Coordinating the work of the Professional Learning Pioneers to undertake professional inquiry to test the emerging AoLE frameworks in association with HEI partners

- k. Designing an online readiness tool which supports school self-evaluation of actions and activities to support reform
- l. Analysing regional support priorities emerging from the completion of the readiness tool
- m. Supporting challenge adviser understanding of reform through routine updates and providing a summary of key features of 'readiness' to support their school visits
- n. Refining the professional learning offer to support all schools' readiness
- o. Facilitated 'change management' masterclass sessions for headteachers. 150 senior leaders across the region have benefited from professional input from Agile Change Management Ltd.
- p. Sharing a series of training presentations for use within all schools to disseminate key messages to all staff and providing bespoke support for school Curriculum for Wales leads
- q. Sharing a 'menu of support' to raise awareness of professional learning opportunities for practitioners across the region
- r. Facilitating opportunities for key message updates to headteachers at regional briefing sessions
- s. Supporting middle leader engagement in curriculum reform through termly subject level network meetings
- t. Producing a summary to update school governing bodies, including an overview of suggested questions for governors
- u. Supporting a cross-regional working group to shape consistent priorities across Wales aligning to the National Approach for Professional Learning

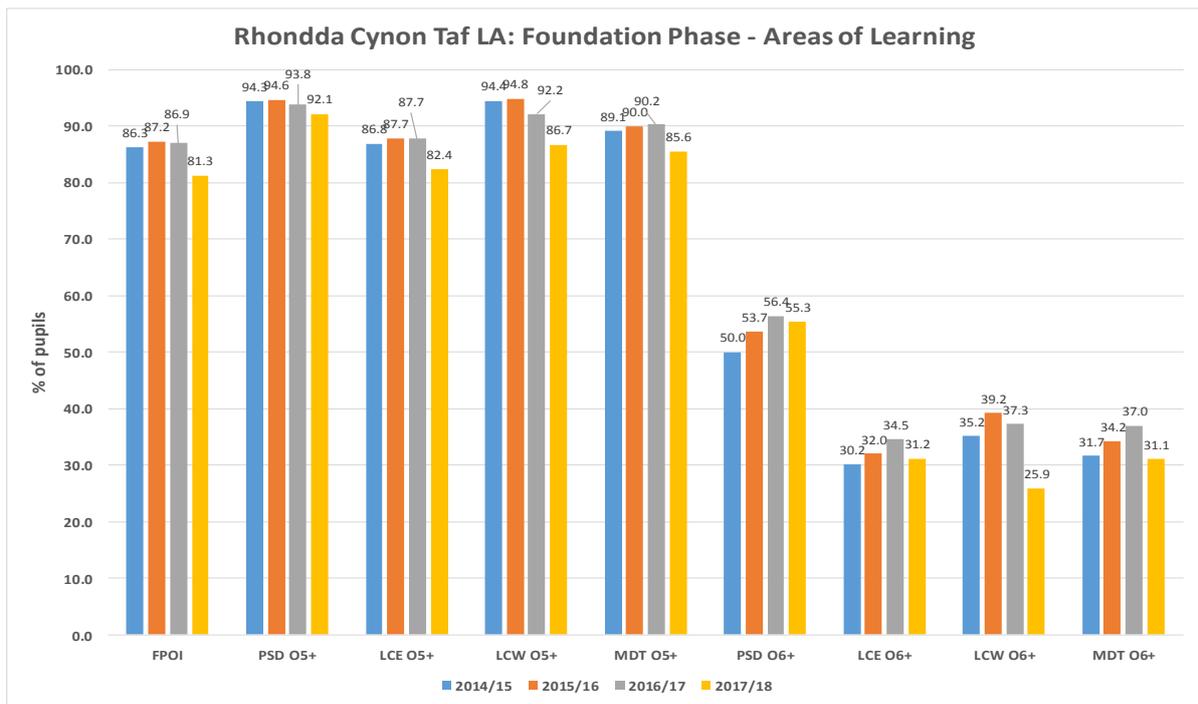
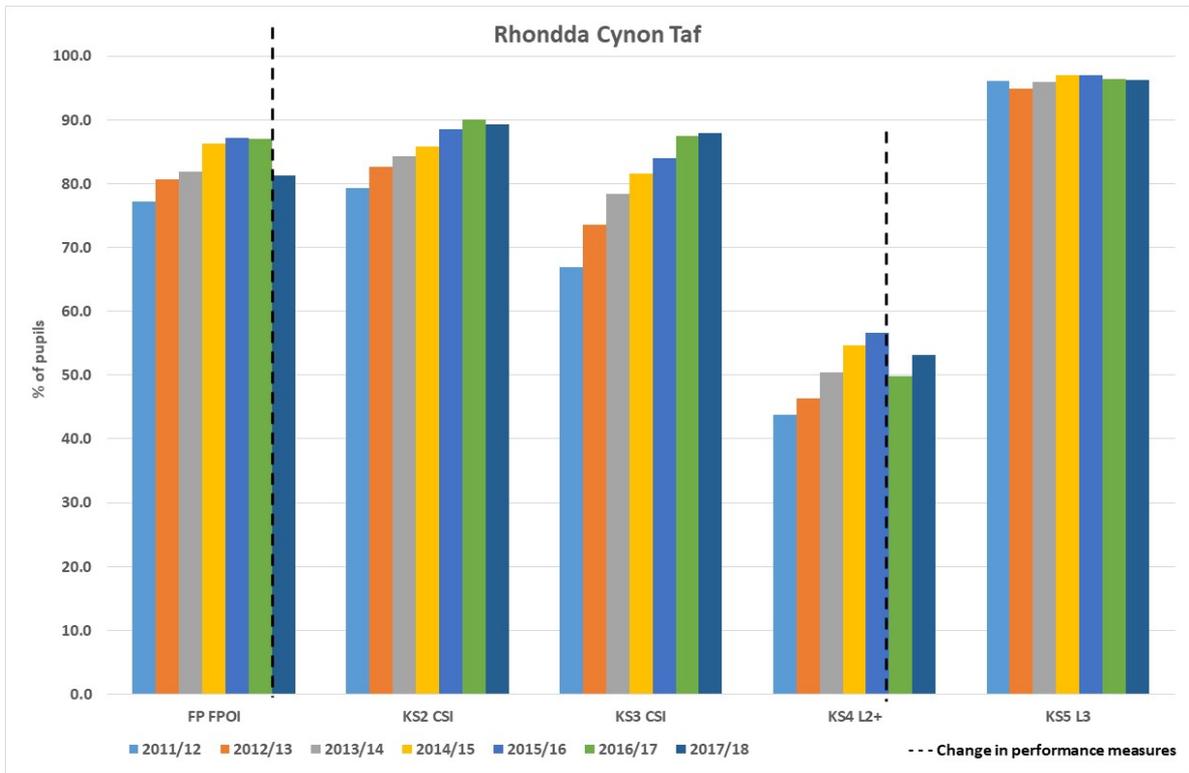
Additional support requested through the Local Authority Annex

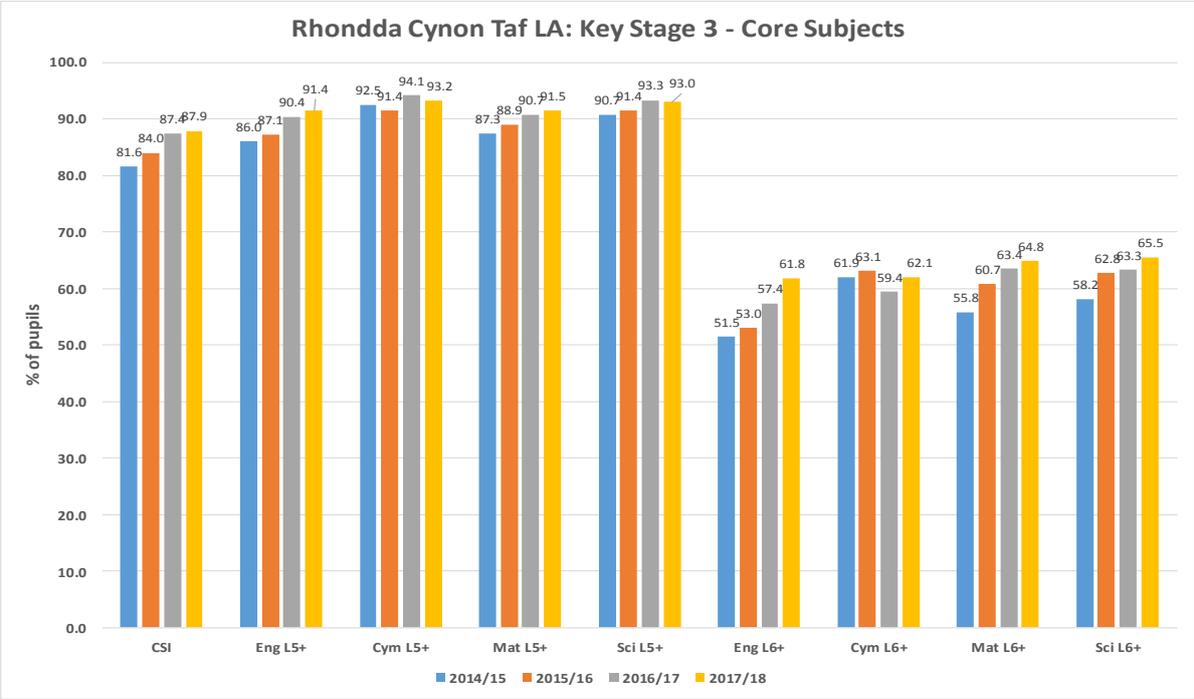
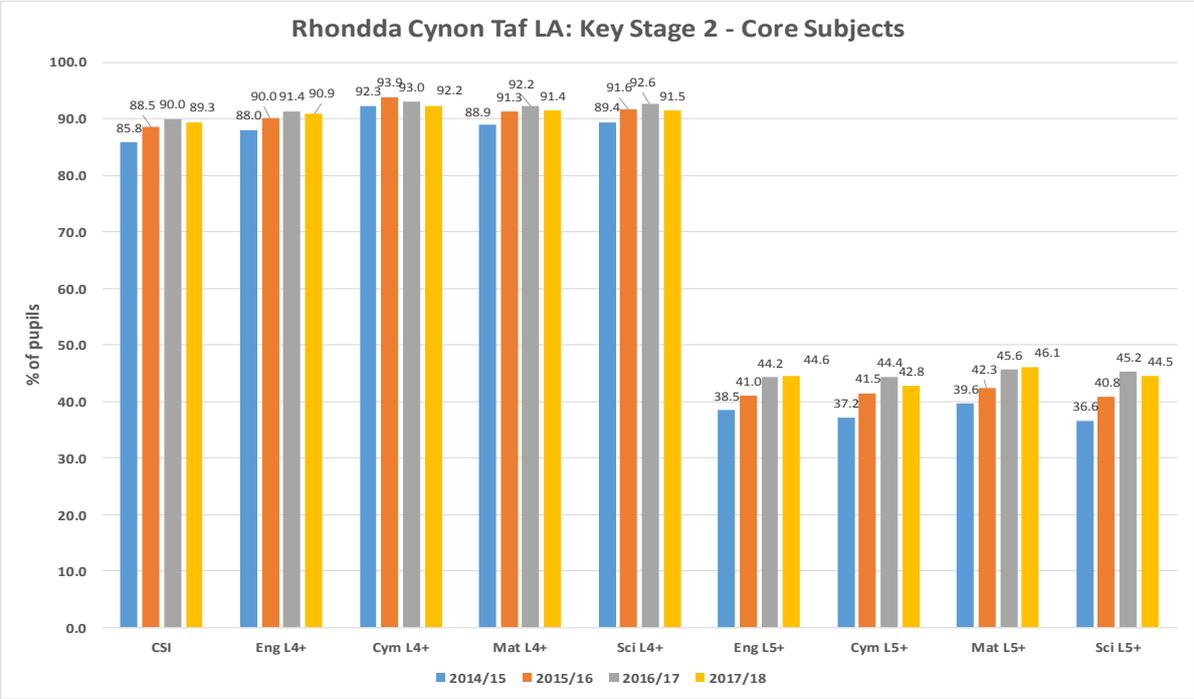
18. In 2017-2018, additional funding was provided to support RCT specific priorities via the Local Authority Annex:

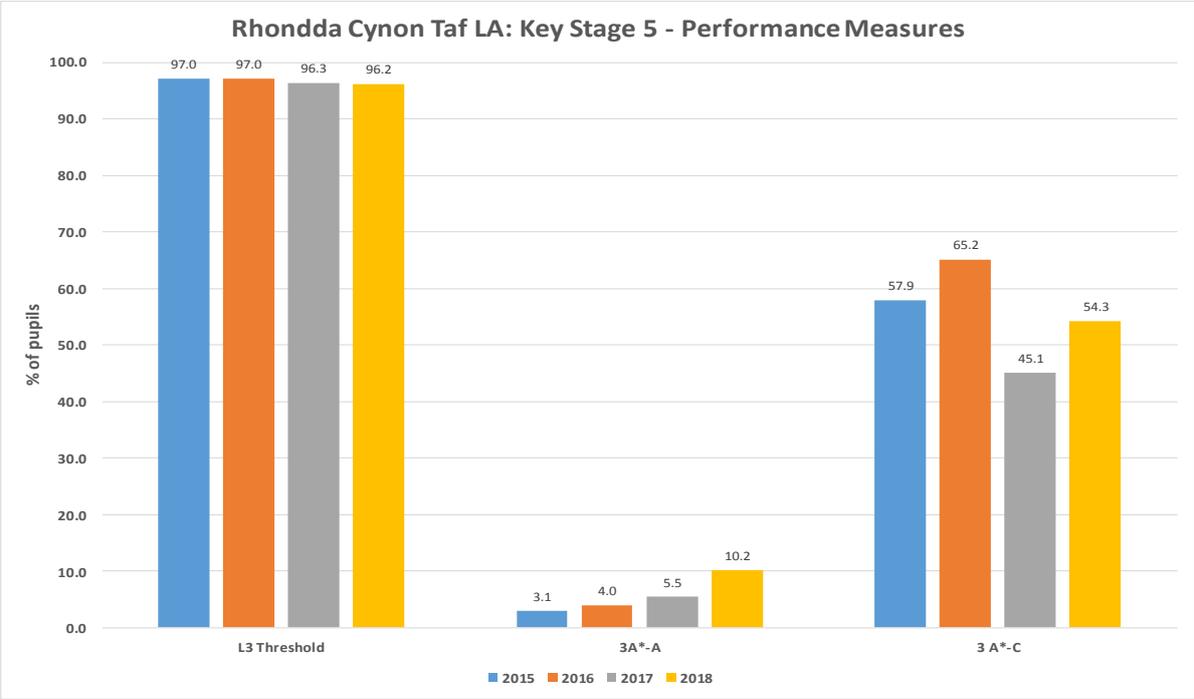
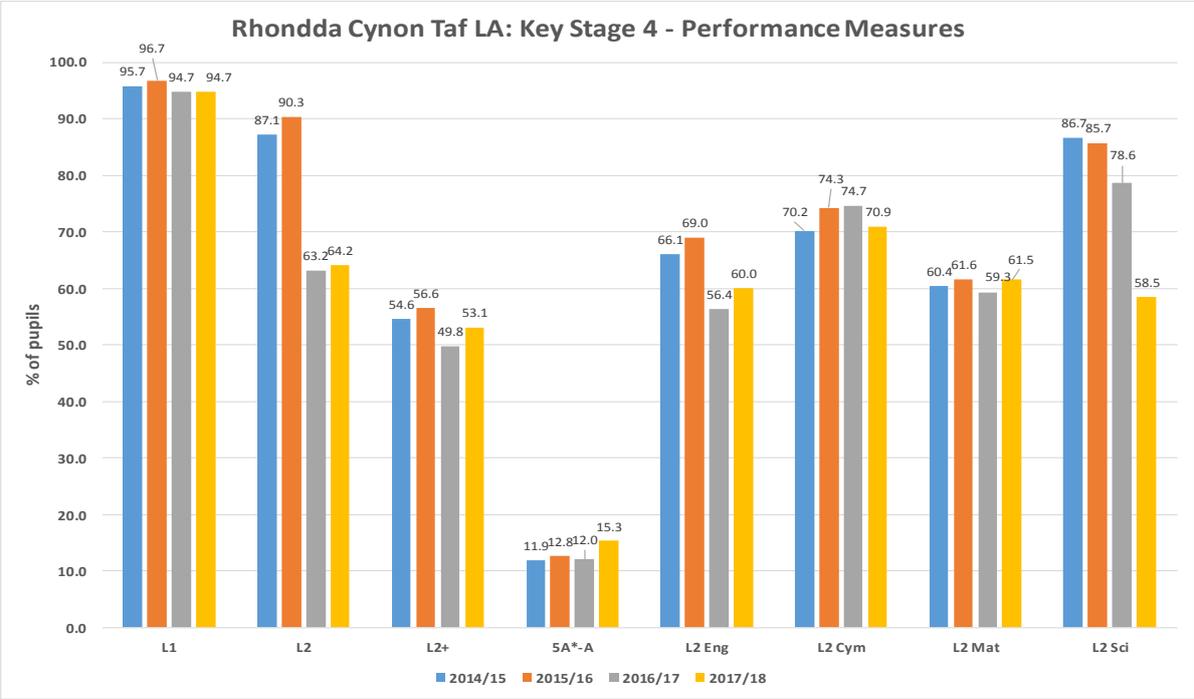
- Priority 1: The development of new approaches to pupil transition across Years 4 – 8 through collaboration.
This initiative would support the aims of 'Successful Futures' through new approaches to curriculum design and assessment, that together with the unique opportunity provided through the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme will aim to support highly effective transition arrangements in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail and beyond: developing future leaders through innovation and creativity.
The key focus areas for the development of transition arrangements would include:
 - Emotional wellbeing of the children
 - Literacy development
 - Numeracy development
 - Digital competence
- Priority 2: To ensure all MAT working across the LA, for all age groups, is consistent and enables the LA to track pupils through the key stages.
- Priority 3: a) To support the LA develop better practices in wellbeing
b) to develop strategy working in schools leading to improving attendance across all age groups

Annex A: Headline results across the Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) LA 2017-2018

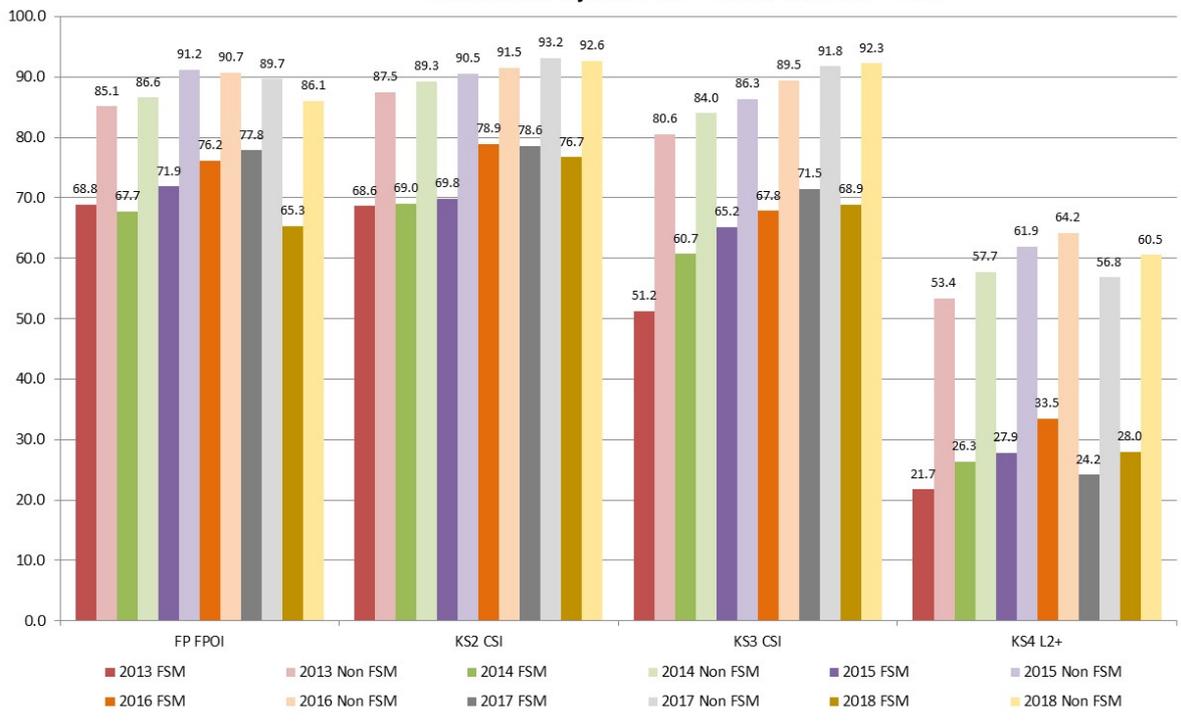
Outcomes in foundation phase reflect the changes to the FP framework which inhibit direct comparisons with previous years. Outcomes in the all other key stages have risen across the local authority. The change in performance measures at Key Stage 4 in 2016-17 make direct comparisons to previous years' data problematic.



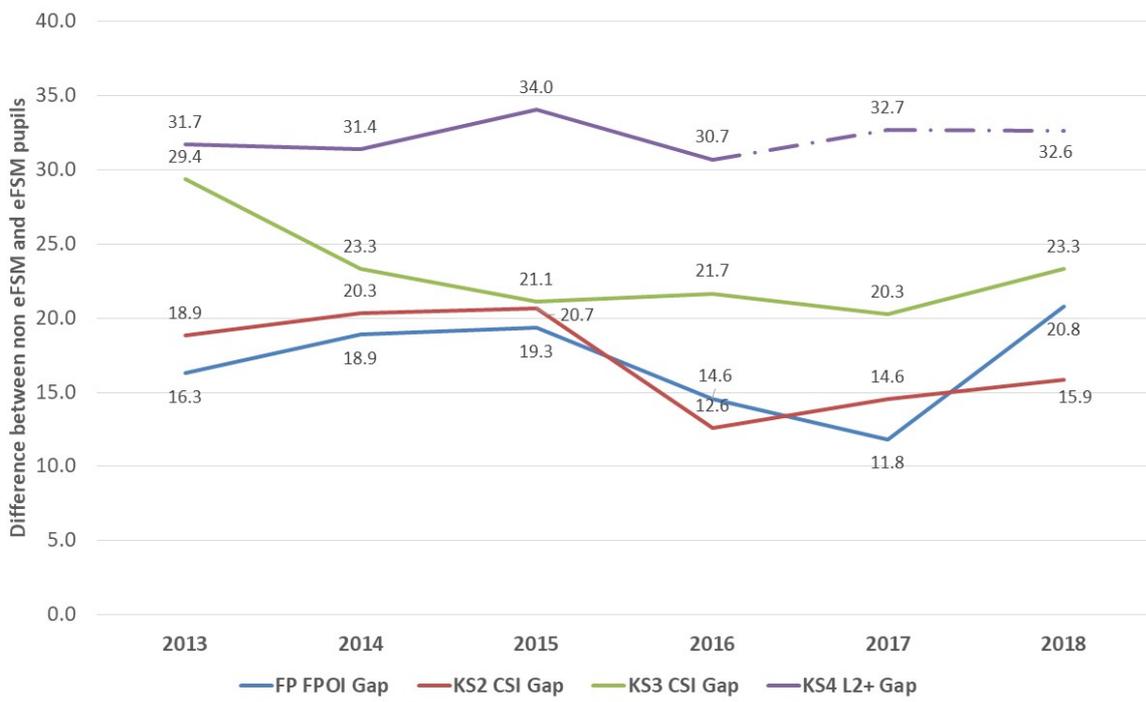


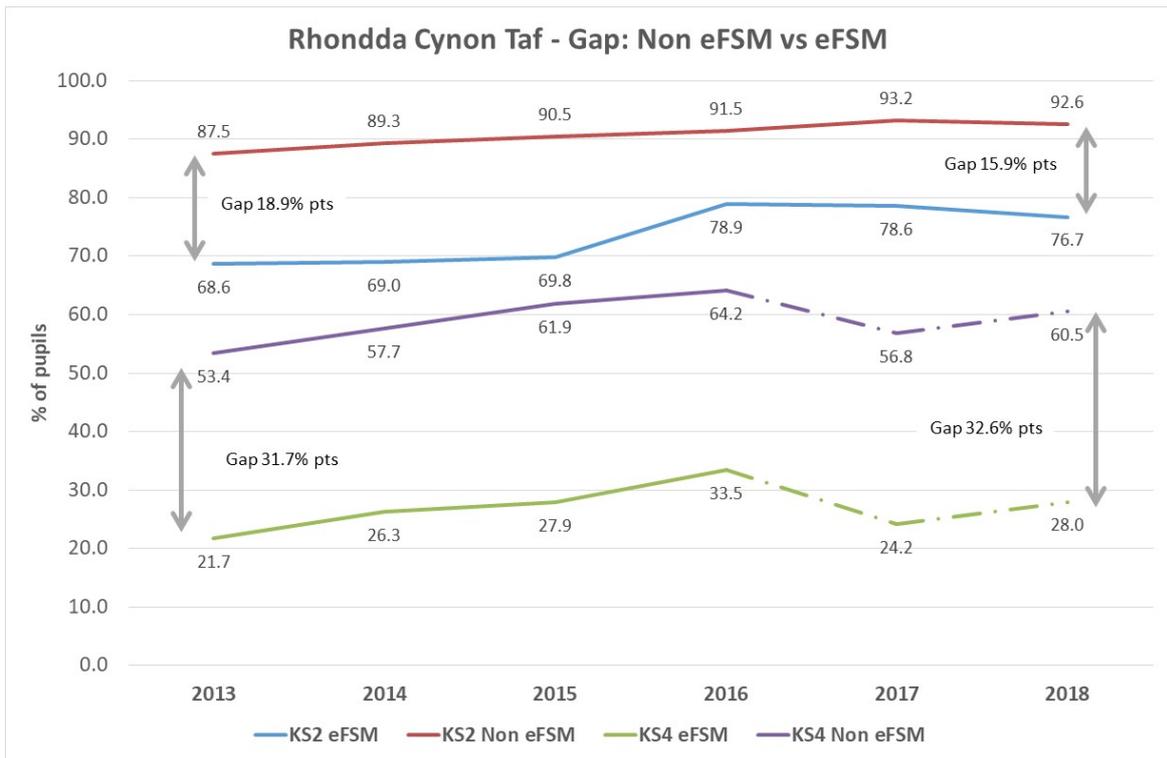
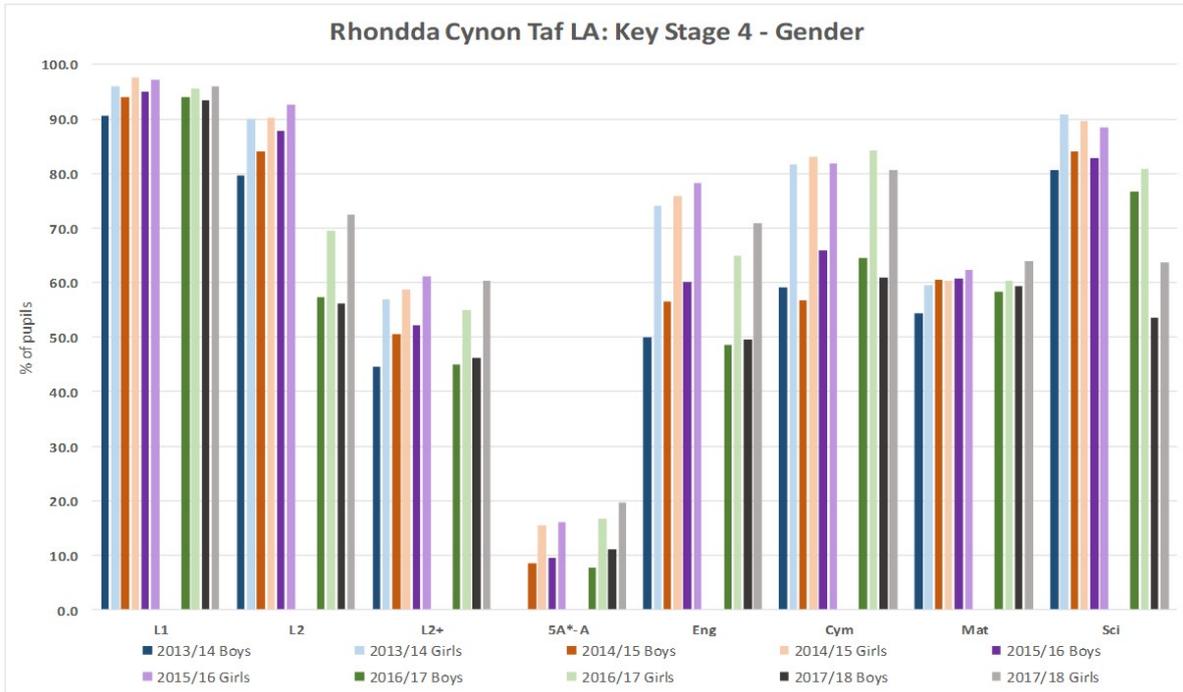


Rhondda Cynon Taf - FSM vs Non-FSM

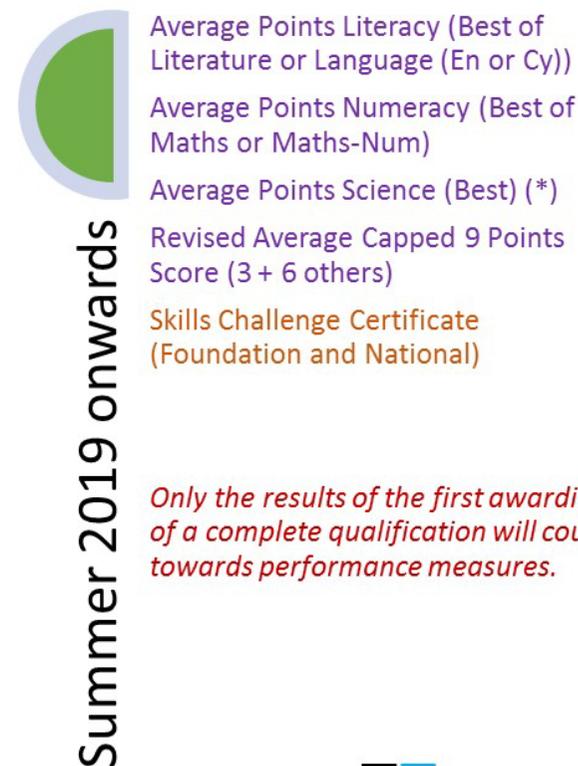


Rhondda Cynon Taf - Gap: Non eFSM vs eFSM





Annex B: Changes to KS4 Performance Measures



(*) – 'GCSE only' requirements for science indicators and components of the Capped 9 points score