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Appendices attached: Four reports outlining the progress against each of the four recommendations and a fifth report addressing other developmental need highlighted within the inspection report.

Issue: Reporting Progress Against Estyn’s Recommendations

Summary

1. The attached reports indicate the degree of progress made against each of the four recommendations, in addition to the extent of the progress in addressing other areas for development in the report that did not fall under the recommendations.
2. The table below summarises the progress made.

Recommendation	Previous Progress	Current Progress
1	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 fifth 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

8. Estyn’s monitoring visit will take place between 18th and 21st September. The inspection team will consist of Huw Davies, Sarah Lewis and Ged Kerslake.
9. The inspection team will feedback at 12.30pm on Thursday 21st to Cllr Sarah Merry, Chair of Scrutiny, Paula Ham, Lead Director, Chris Bradshaw, Lead Chief Executive, Mike Glavin, Managing Director.

Success measures

10. 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.
11. 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.

12. The consortium will evaluate its progress accurately and identify evidence to support its judgement.

Options

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

Implementation issues – cost, timescale etc.

14. The reports are reviewed at SLT meetings and used to report on progress to The Joint Committee, Directors and others who hold the consortium to account.
15. 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

16. 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

17. A report on the quality of the school improvement services provided by the Central South Consortium, Feb 2016. Estyn.

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 equivalent was too variable across the local authorities.
- performance in mathematics was the weakest of the core subjects.

Summary of impact

Judgement

Strong

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

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;
- 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;
- improved national categorisation outcomes (2017) indicate that 5.3% of secondary schools remain in standards group 4 and only 3.4% are judged to have an improvement capacity of D; and
- inspection outcomes for secondary schools have improved since the inspection of the consortium during February/March 2016.

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 2016 over half of secondary schools inspected have been judged good or better for their standards.

- Standards were good or better in 63.6% of secondary schools inspected in 2016/17 compared to 20% in the previous year.
- Current performance was good or better in 55.6 % of secondary schools inspected in 2016/17 compared to 20% in 2015/16.
- Prospects for improvement judged good or better in secondary schools in 2016/17 improved to 66.7% from just 40% in 2015/16.

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.

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

The variation across local authorities for this performance measure is reducing as performance in the lower performing local authorities improves. The variability between local authorities has reduced to 2.4% points in 2015/16.

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

Performance improved at 5A*/A or equivalent in 2016 by a 0.4 percentage point.

The variation in 5 A*/A or equivalent across local authorities for this performance indicator is also reducing, as performance in the lower performing local authorities improves.

Performance in mathematics was the weakest of the core subjects.

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

Progress

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

There was an improvement in 2015/16 in all main key performance indicators. The improvement made in a number of indicators was smaller than in previous years but has sustained the year on year improvement. The greatest improvement was in level 2 mathematics (2.9pp). The key measure of L2+ improved at a greater rate in this consortium than any other and exceeded the national average.

The L2 threshold increased in three of the five LAs, dipping by 1.6pp in The Vale and by 0.9pp in Merthyr. The improvement for the CSC was 2.1pp. Bridgend and RCT had the best performance last year for this indicator. Since 2013 there has been continued improvement for this measure. With the exception of the Vale, where progress is 5.2%, the other four LAs have improved by between 11.3pp (Cardiff) and 15.7pp (Bridgend). The improvement nationally is 6.3pp which compares against the consortium improvement of 11.3pp.

The proportion of schools with a positive residual against the WG model for L2+ has increased by 9pp from 2013/14 to 2015/16. This is against the national trend.

In key stage 4 CSI there was a further increase of 2.5pp in 2015/16, building on previous improvements to deliver a total improvement of 12.4pp since 2013. All five local authorities have improved every year for this measure since 2013. However, the improvements for this consortium are slightly lower than the national improvement of 2.8pp.

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. In 2016 the improvement in the eFSM pupils at level 2+ threshold has seen the gap narrow for this measure to its lowest since 2013. However, the gap continues to be too wide across the region and remains a high priority.

There is further 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 for their improvement capacity.

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.

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 2016 over half of secondary schools inspected have been judged good or better for their standards.

Secondary school inspection outcomes published since the inspection:
Of the fifteen secondary schools inspected, standards were judged as “Excellent” in three* schools, “Good” in six* schools, “Adequate” in four schools and “Unsatisfactory” in two schools.¹

Standards were good or better in 63.6% of secondary schools inspected in 2016/17 compared to 20% in the previous year.

Prospects for improvement judged good or better in secondary schools in 2016/17 improved to 66.7% from just 40% in 2015/16.

Current performance was good or better in 55.6% of secondary schools inspected in 2016/17 compared to 20% in 2015/16.

- **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.

At key stage 2 CSI, boys in CSC have made the most progress across the four regional consortia.

In KS3 it has increased by 3.7pp. At KS3 the range is 10.9pp across the five local authorities. Regional comparisons of 2016 data place CSC (-10.9) just below GWE (-10.2), which have the least variability of the four regions.

The range in variability of boys’ performance remains the greatest in KS4 L2+ despite successfully reducing the range by 6.2pp. Currently at L2+ the range is 17.6pp across the five local authorities. This range was 23.4pp the previous year. The reduction in the range by 6.2pp

¹ *Two of the secondary schools in the region were inspected under the “New Inspection Arrangements” for September 2017 and were judged as “Good” and “Excellent” in standards.

reflects the continued focus on improving performance but there is further improvement required.

Boys' performance at L2+ has made an improvement of 10.4pp between 2012 and 2016 and variability has been reduced. This shows the greatest improvement of the four regional consortia, however girls continue to outperform boys against all measures. The gap is 3pp at level 1, 8pp at level 2+ and the CSI. The gap is widest at level 2 in English at 16pp and Welsh at 14pp but is only just over 1pp in mathematics. Therefore, outcomes for boys in literacy skills, English and Welsh remain a high priority.

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

- **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 slightly above the improvement seen nationally (0.8pp). This maintains the CSC performance (95.4%) as 0.1pp above the Welsh average. In addition, the performance of CSC for L1 is the second highest performance when compared to the other regional consortia, of which the highest performing region achieving 96.2% for this measure.

The variation across local authorities for this performance measure is reducing as performance in the lower performing local authorities improves. The variability between local authorities has reduced to 2.4pp in 2015/16.

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

Performance improved at 5A*/A or equivalent in 2016 by a 0.4pp. The CSC performance of 17.2% is above the national average 15.9%. 32 out of the 56 schools (58%) improved their 5A*/A or equivalent performance indicator. In addition, over a three-year period there has been an increase of 1.8pp for this indicator for the region, which is against a national dip of -0.8 pp.

The variation in 5 A*/A or equivalent across local authorities for this performance indicator is also 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 was the weakest of the core subjects**

Despite a decrease of 12.5% in the number of secondary schools with mathematics as their weakest core subject in 2016, mathematics remains the weakest of the core subjects.

Performance in mathematics at Foundation Phase at the expected level for mathematical development, in four of the five local authorities, shows continued improvement for three consecutive years. 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.

Performance in mathematics improved in four of the five local authorities for the third consecutive year. From 2012 to 2016 mathematics at L2 in CSC has improved by 11.9pp. However, the improvement of 1.3pp in L2 mathematics during 2015/16 is still underpinned by variable LA performance.

The ability to produce a detailed comparison between year-on-year early entry results for mathematics is confounded by different entry profiles and additional layers of examinations in this period. However, the early entry results indicated that in nearly all schools, performance was lower in numeracy than mathematics. To address this a regional wide rapid support plan was put in place to support all schools in preparation for the summer series, curriculum hubs have delivered nine twilight development sessions in mathematics and numeracy pedagogy targeted at the schools showing the highest deviation from their currently secure figures, and intensive support was put in place for five 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.

Improving the outcomes in mathematics for groups of learners: eFSM, MAT, EAL, LAC is a high priority. This is linked to a clear focus on improving the teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics across the region. Additional capacity through the school-to-school work of the hubs is part of the development plan.

Evidence
All Wales core data sets Stats Wales Website Categorisation outcomes Inspection outcomes Local authority performance reports Performance trends Regression analysis L2+
Business Plan Links: 16/17: Priority 1.1; 1.2 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.

Way forward:
To further reduce the variation in performance between schools and between local authorities by improving the performance of the most vulnerable secondary schools.
Recruitment of accelerated progress leads (APLs) to provide additional high quality support for vulnerable secondary schools and build the capacity of existing challenge advisers to facilitate rapid improvement through joint working and professional development. (Business Plan Priority 4.1)

In 2016 the improvement in the eFSM pupils at level 2+ threshold has seen the gap narrow for this measure to its lowest since 2013. However, the gap continues to be too wide across the region and remains a high priority. (Business Plan Priority 1.4)

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 be 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 the secondary team. (Business Plan Priority 4.3)

Mathematics is an area for improvement and is linked to a clear focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment across the region. Additional capacity to support this work is brokered through the work of the hubs. (Business Plan Priority 1 and 2)

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.

Summary of impact

Judgment	Strong
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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.

Scrutiny of a significant sample demonstrates that the focus on developing the quality of challenge adviser reports to reflect key aspects of improvement and in particular the quality of teaching, has led to improvements in nearly all challenge advisers reports.

In addition, all the summer term 2017 challenge adviser reports on the schools' capacity to improve have been quality assured by the senior challenge advisers and this reinforces the continued improvement. Nearly all reports focus on important aspects including clear judgements on quality of teaching and leadership.

The introduction of and adherence to a CSC template and guidance, has resulted in local authority pre-inspection reports being much more consistent.

Most pre-inspection reports match the Estyn judgements. In the very few cases where there is not a match, the difference is challenged.

Progress Since The Inspection

A clear focus on developing the quality of challenge adviser reports to reflect the key aspects of improvement and in particular the quality of teaching has led to improvements in nearly all challenge adviser reports. A significant sample has been scrutinised across the five local authorities from a cross section of schools.

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:

- consortium's writing protocol revised to provide more specific guidance;
- guidance on the writing of categorisation reports, pre-inspection briefings and inspection follow up progress reports have been revised and strengthened;
- written examples of all types of reports have been 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 their quality assurance role;
- for new and existing challenge advisers through workshops and seminars provided in September 2016 that focused 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.

Scrutiny of reports for the red and amber 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 addition to quality assuring written reports, senior challenge advisers have conducted joint visits with all challenge advisers to quality assure the categorisation process and judgments made. Written and oral feedback was provided in each case. In nearly all cases the SCAs agreed with the judgement.

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.

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. Since Estyn visited CSC in February 2016 most pre-inspection reports match the Estyn judgements. In the very few cases where there is not a match, the difference is analysed thoroughly.

Evaluation of 'evaluation for improvement templates' (EFIs) indicates some variation with regard to the use of the templates which hinders the quality of reports. This form of reporting using EFIs has been used with green and yellow schools to date.

Some secondary school challenge advisers rely too heavily on pupil outcomes alone to make judgements on the quality of teaching and learning.

Evidence

Framework for challenge and support with linked documentation for guidance on report writing.

Training programme and materials used with challenge advisers in September 2016 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' work.

Senior challenge advisers' written reports from joint visits with challenge advisers.

Self- evaluation undertaken by challenge advisers.

Inspections outcomes across the region compared to reports received by Estyn.

Business Plan Links:

2016-2017: 3.1.5

2017-2018: Business Plan 4.3; 5.1.

Way forward:

Continue to work with the Research and Evaluation Board to provide value for money judgements in relation to improving effectiveness and efficiencies in school improvement work (challenge advisers) (Business Plan 5.1)

Continue to develop the challenge adviser team. This includes a reset of challenge adviser deployment to develop cluster working and a team approach that facilitates monitoring, coaching and the sharing of expertise. (Business Plan 4.3)

Review the evaluation for improvement template to create greater clarity. Extend to red/amber schools so reducing the number of templates used. Ensure that senior challenge advisers monitor each challenge advisers' first reports to ensure that the template is being used effectively.

Strengthen the secondary challenge adviser team: Established posts and processes for Accelerated Progress Leads (APLs) in vulnerable secondary schools. Integrate with existing secondary challenge adviser team to develop a high functioning and coordinated secondary team to further impact on pupil outcomes. (Business Plan 4.1)

Develop a framework of effective practice in teaching and learning (Business Plan 2.1), and ensure that it is used to underpin challenge adviser judgments about teaching and learning.

Senior challenge advisers to continue to monitor and quality assure judgements made on the quality of teaching and leadership in all reports.

Ensure new challenge advisers receive comprehensive induction and that their reports are quality assured, with feedback.

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’ (CSWC).
- 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.

Summary of impact

Judgement

Strong

- Strengthened self-evaluation processes measure the impact of action taken and directly inform the self-evaluation report.
- There has been a significant shift in culture in that impact and value for money discussions have become routine.
- The Research and Evaluation Board has been established and has effectively increased the consortium’s capacity to evaluate the impact of its work. This has included:
 - Evaluation of six specific aspects that are key strategies, four of which make up the CSWC
 - Launching a longitudinal survey of 20% of the region’s schools
- The consortium increasingly knows what has worked well and what needs to be changed
- Local authority performance reports and meetings have become an integral part of the self-evaluation process and facilitate focused discussions about impact.
- All these processes systematically inform the self-evaluation report and the organisation’s business planning processes.

Progress since the inspection

Self-evaluation And Business Planning

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. (Linked to Recommendation 4)
- Named leads are assigned to each key aspect within the business plan and fully understand what is to be delivered and how they are to be held to account for their work.
- The 'Drive team' approach within business planning (where colleagues from different parts of the organisation are jointly accountable for a workstream) has facilitated more purposeful conversations about how we know the impact and value for money. Drive team colleagues who bring expertise from different parts of the organisation now routinely challenge each other to test processes and evidence impact prior to business plan monitoring meetings with the MD and finance teams. This has sharpened the organisational focus on self-evaluation, assessing impact and VfM considerations.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the business plan is reported to SLT, directors, the advisory board and joint committee. Progress is noted in the SER and any risks recorded on the risk register, actioned or become areas for further development.

Termly Progress Reports

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

- LA/Diocesan performance meetings are held each term and report on the progress made in the previous term.
- Where a school is identified as requiring red or amber level of support, the impact of brokered support and subsequent challenge for all red and amber schools is evaluated for each school and next steps for the coming term agreed between CSC and the LA.
- The template for the LA/Diocesan performance report has been amended to ensure the presentation and analysis of key data and evidence to feed into LA and consortium SERs.

Research And Evaluation Board

A Research and Evaluation Board has been established. The board provides the consortium with guidance on the most effective way to evaluate the impact of its work. This includes evaluating the four aspects of CSWC. As part of this work, a project manager and researchers have been employed. This has broadened the consortium's internal capacity to evaluate its work. Aspects from six main areas (strands) 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 was interrogated to test:

- the strategic rationale for the strand in light of the region's three year business plan and wider vision for a school-led system.
- specific inquiry questions for each strand. The questions were devised to test the impact and value of each strand against the region's vision and business plan.
- the impact to date (examined against e.g. schools' performance data, focus group findings, evidence of joint practice development, progress against individual strand aims) and next steps.

These findings were then presented to the wider Research and Evaluation Board and interrogated by the wider group.

A comprehensive survey has been developed and a sample of 20% of schools engaged to complete the survey on an annual basis. This targeted sample minimises the potential for bias and by repeating the process annually, identification of emerging trends is facilitated. 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 provides 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.

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 capacity for greater 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 school-to-school working at least termly. About a third of these are involved in relatively complex practices such as a 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, engaging staff in effective professionalism and organisational learning processes is evidenced. Generating sufficient leaders of learning to meet the improvement needs of schools and the system as a whole is continuing to develop.

Evaluation Of The Central South Wales Challenge

1. Peer enquiry

How we know

- Evaluation completed after each phase and the strategy changed in light of the outcomes.
- An external review of the peer enquiry strategy took place in June 2016 and a report produced.
- 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 peer enquiries are quality assured to a high standard that guarantees rigour and consistency.
- Evaluation is undertaken of the nature of further lines of enquiry so that intelligence regarding the needs of the region is gathered more comprehensively.

What we know about impact

- 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.
- The majority participating schools are committed to a two-year peer enquiry cycle.
- Reports are shared with challenge advisers so that communication and dialogue about school improvement is more streamlined.
- Quality assurance builds consistent approaches, procedures and outcomes. This will make it possible to measure the efficacy of peer enquiry as a means to improve headteachers' strategic approaches to school improvement.
- Documentation promotes consistency (Phase 3 Toolkit).
- All senior leaders involved in peer enquiry report that they experience high quality professional development.
- The experiences of senior school leaders who are part of peer enquiry teams are linked to succession planning and preparation/aspiration for headship. The lead

and supporting headteachers working alongside the associate members see part of their role as coaching / mentoring them.

- The experience is effective professional development for participating headteachers themselves

2. SIGs

How we know

- 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.
- Attendance at all secondary headteacher meetings engaged headteachers in evaluating the impact of SIGs and identifying how to move forward

What we know about impact

- Teacher involvement in SIG work has increased by 30%.
- There is a 60% increase in the proportion of SIGs who are facilitating teacher working groups.
- 2 SIGs are using the expertise of CSC schools outside of their SIG.
- 50% of SIGs are aiming to include joint practice development in their work.
- 91% of SIGs are seeking to alter practice for pupils.
- 31% of SIGs are involving pupils directly in SIG work with pupils working across schools.
- The number of pupil events and workshops has quadrupled.
- Professional learning and the development of middle leaders have been highlighted as strengths of SIG working.

3. Hubs

How we know

- Individual interviews with all hubs (January, 2017)
- Consultation with a range of key stakeholders including Strategy Group, Regional Stakeholders Group, strategic teams, hub leaders and facilitators
- Hub reports
- Practitioner evaluations
- Strategic team notes from hub visits
- Engagement data
- Case studies

- 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.
- Many programmes are planned collaboratively with strategic teams.
- Strategic advisers visit hubs and meet with the named person of the school to form an overall 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.

What we know about impact

- Progress has been made during 2016-2017 against the first five strategic aims. It is recognised that further refinements and improvements are required during 2017-2018 to increase the effectiveness of hubs.
- All school based support sources have a common set of expectations and have contributed to a professional learning offer that comprises of over 100 programmes following a multiple session enquiry led approach. Mechanisms are in place for schools to assess the impact of their programmes.
- The impact of the reset has been that the model has increased hub engagement with joint practice development, increased the facilitation of joint practice development and improved hub joint practice development. Joint practice development remains variable, however is at a higher point than previously.
- The reset has been successful in moving away from one off delivery models to a multiple session enquiry model with expectations of attending practitioners. The hub model has also supported well the move away from having 'one expert' in the room. A large body of research supports the effectiveness of this approach on practitioners over time. While most hubs follow the enquiry format set out in the hub guidance, there is variation in the depth of the enquiry process that practitioners undertake. Further development sessions for hubs focusing on this aspect need to draw on both the effective practice evident within the hub model and also research expertise.
- The 2016-2017 professional learning offer was well matched to regional needs identified from an analysis of school improvement plan priorities, strategic area priorities and national priorities. The 2017-2018 offer was similarly informed and all programmes map to a priority within the organisation's business plan.
- At least one practitioner from 69% of schools in the region have engaged with a professional learning programme facilitated by a hub so far in 2017-2018
- There is a need to further develop the quality of reporting from hubs to better capture the impact that practitioner engagement has had both during the course of the programme but also over the longer term.

4. Pathfinder partnerships

How we know

- 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 standards, teaching and leadership. The outcomes feed into the SERs of the schools.

What we know about impact

- challenge advisers have effectively brokered partnerships between schools to address identified priorities.
- 56 pathfinder partnerships have been brokered in cohorts 3 and 4.
- depending on the chosen priorities, pathfinder schools are able to show a positive impact on either pupil outcomes, teaching practice, pedagogy or leadership.

Judging Standards, Teaching And Learning

A series of structured professional development sessions and subsequent quality assurance has been undertaken to ensure that challenge advisers are well placed to make and record accurate judgements about teaching and leadership. (Please refer to the report of progress made on recommendation 2).

Data commentaries are now created for the consortium and for each of the five local authorities. These commentaries are structured to facilitate analysis of performance so facilitating judgements with regard to impact on standards.

Evidence

Self-evaluation report.
 Research and evaluation Final reports (June 2017) on the six strands: Hubs, SIGs; CAs; Peer Enquiry; Closing the Gap; Strategic Leadership Programme.
 Central South Consortium Annual Staff Survey.
 Local authority termly performance reports.
 Business Plan monitoring
 Risk Register
 Senior leadership team performance and strategy meetings.
 Data commentaries
Business Plan Links:
2016/2017: 3.1.1, 3.1.5
2017/2018: 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1

Way forward:

Complete evaluation and impact assessment of all leadership development programmes and deployment models. Refresh in light of evaluations and refine to reflect the new leadership standards. Link to work of leadership academy and joint working with the other consortia. Develop a region wide approach and understanding of succession planning. Business Plan 3.2

Support curriculum reform across all schools through school-to-school networks. Business Plan 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. This will include a review of aspects of the Central South Wales Challenge to consider their role in delivering Successful Futures.

Peer Enquiry – Encourage greater uptake by secondary schools. (Link to development of secondary team.)

Hubs – evaluation indicates that there is a need to ensure that strength of schools are matched to need and that not all hubs are well placed to do all of what is currently expected. Specific SLAs to be considered. This is a focus of work for the strategy group for 2018-2019. Furthering the role of hubs and pioneers needs to be explored, with the potential of releasing funding for partner (non pioneer) schools.

Closing the Gap evaluations have led to the proposal for developing Closing the Gap Hubs as a way forward. (Business Plan Priority 1.4)

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.

Summary of impact

Judgement

Strong

- All plans clearly identify a drive team and lead individuals for each aspect.
- All plans are clear with specific success criteria.
- Those responsible know what needs to be done and how the impact of their action is to be measured.
- Progress is monitored through a simplified process that includes termly impact meetings with the managing director.
- Senior leaders regularly monitor progress through a well-structured monitoring programme.
- Senior leaders and drive teams are clear about the outcomes to be measured and where accountability lies.

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. This has included a whole staff planning day to which directors, headteachers and wider partners were invited, as well as the redrafting of plans by aspect leads and drive teams.

The authors of the plans have written success criteria and milestones so that there is clarity regarding how progress is measured and 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 success criteria and actions from the business plan and associated operational plans form the basis of the organisation's operational monitoring approach. Operational plans are updated by aspect leads through half termly meetings between the drive teams and the operations manager. In addition, each drive team meets with the managing director, senior lead for business and operations and the operations manager towards the end of each term for 'impact review meetings'.

However, recent impact review meetings indicated that a few members of SLT need to develop further their understanding of matrix leadership, particularly where this relates to work outside of their immediate experience.

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 grants officers who provide feedback to the senior accountant. The senior accountant provides an update to the senior lead for business and operations and the 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, the aspects include:

- School improvement monitoring;
- Termly and half termly progress reports (including commentary from senior challenge advisers);
- Inspection outcomes;
- Inspection judgements;
- 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 monitoring procedures have been streamlined to ensure the organisation is clearly focusing on outcomes and impact. The outcome of monitoring the Business Plan is reported to the Advisory Board and Joint Committee.

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 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Monitoring plans Dashboard SLT- Performance minutes Risk register Project initiation documents for the information management system. Business Plan Links: Business Plan 2016-2017: Priority 3.1.3, 3.3.1, 3.2.3 Business Plan 2017-2018: Priority 5.1

Way forward:

- To support senior leaders with matrix working where necessary.
- To continue to collate the evidence that underpins the progress noted when monitoring the operational plans and ensure the risk register is updated and action taken to address barriers and concerns.
- To continue to embed the self evaluation processes that feed into the self evaluation report.
- To further develop effectiveness and efficiency in the consortium.
- To evaluate approach in advance of next business planning cycle.

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

Summary of impact

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.

Progress since the inspection

The impact of the consortium's work on pupils' standards in mathematics was more limited

Data up to July 2017.

Foundation Phase Mathematical Development (MD).

At the expected level for MD, in four out of the five local authorities (LAs) improvement continued for a third consecutive year. In these four LAs the percentage of pupils working at the expected level or above is above the national average of 89.9%.

The improvement over four years is greater in the CSC and in four of the five LAs than it is nationally (2.5pp).

At the above-expected level in MD, all five LAs made further improvement for the third consecutive year. There was a variation in the extent of the improvement ranging from 0.7pp in Bridgend to 5.2pp in Merthyr. In three of the five LAs the percentage of pupils working at the above expected level is greater than the national average (36.4%).

Over the four-year period, all five LAs have improved more than the Welsh average of 8.2pp. The range of improvement is from 9.2pp in Cardiff to 14.1pp in Merthyr.

Key stage 2

At the above expected level in mathematics, all LAs improved performance again in 16/17, as they have done for the last three-years. The greatest improvement over the last academic year was seen in Merthyr and the smallest in The Vale (0.4pp).

When considering the improvement since 2013, all five LAs have improved at a faster rate than the Welsh average, with the improvement in performance ranging from 8.6pp (RCT) to 9.5pp (Cardiff).

Key stage 3

At L5+, L6+ and L7+, there has been continued improved performance in all five LAs with CSC performing above the national average for EL, EL+1 and EL+2.

Despite the improved performance at least two LAs are below the national average at L5+, L6+ and L7+. Over the four-year period the extent of the improvement at L5+, L6+

and L7+ is greater in the CSC region than it is nationally.

Level 2

The overall CSC improvement of 2.9pp in L2 mathematics in 16/17 is underpinned by variable LA performance – three of the LAs improved by around 4.0pp whilst the remaining two LAs improved by 1.4pp (Bridgend) and 1.2pp (RCT). Performance improved in all five LAs for the third consecutive year.

Despite these improvements in mathematics and the decrease in the number of secondary schools with mathematics as their weakest core subject, developmental need remains. The focus on mathematics is maintained through training and brokered school to school support to share good practice and improve learner outcomes.

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.

Teaching and learning

A draft regional strategy for learning and teaching has been developed following an analysis of regional needs based on a range of data sources. This strategy focuses on the key characteristics of effective learning and teaching needed to raise standards within schools and across the system. The strategy has been developed in partnership with a range of regional stakeholders, ensuring consistency of message in what makes effective learning and teaching. The strategy, underpinned by the Central South Wales Challenge model aims to deliver the professional learning offer to meet regional needs, in particular to support the move towards the new curriculum.

A wide range of provision is made to support teacher's professional development in; improving pupil outcomes, teaching and learning and subject leadership through the professional learning programmes delivered by the curriculum hubs, intensive support and network meetings. Details for both Mathematics/Numeracy, English/Literacy and Welsh/Literacy can be found in section 2.1.2 of our SER.

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 (FPA) has been developed systematically since the last inspection. The strategic lead for the Foundation Phase Alliance plans regular 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 further improved in the academic year 15/16. 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. However, it is difficult to draw a direct correlation between schools that have undertaken the training provided that are in other categories and the Foundation Phase Alliance work is only one aspect of their school improvement work. The FPA is well established and the work to embed this wider hub model needs to continue.

There is no room for complacency and further avenues need to be explored to demonstrate quantifiable impact. There is a need to strengthen systems for brokerage and ensure challenge advisers collate evidence on the impact of the FPA in their allocated schools' as this is not yet systematic enough.

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 undertaken 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. This work needs to continue to ensure governance across the region is strengthened.

Challenge advisers involve governors in the categorisation process and governors understand that they are part of the leadership judgement and the capacity to improve within their schools. In vulnerable schools challenge advisers attend governing body meetings to coach, mentor and challenge when necessary to build capacity. The red and amber schools, chairs of governors are expected to attend the termly or half termly review meetings and present, along with the headteacher, on the progress the school is making against their priorities. Where governing bodies require further support consultant governors are deployed. This has worked successfully in many schools and the programme needs to be expanded. The Business Plan (Priority 3) reflects the need

to increase the number of Governing Bodies engaging in Governor Improvement Groups (GIGs). This work has commenced.

Where schools are considering collaboration or federation governors have been well supported by the consortium and local authorities.

There is a growing understanding amongst governors about the consortiums role but the level of support, training and challenge needs to be maintained to continue to build capacity and extend their understanding across the region.

Business Plan Priority 3.4

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

There has been good engagement with scrutiny committees.

A more recent development is a termly meeting of Scrutiny Chairs who undertake common areas of scrutiny against an annual work plan. Plans are in place for training for local members. Despite improvements in how scrutiny committees hold the consortium to account for performance, there are still discrepancies in scrutiny committees' knowledge and skills in challenging progress and discerning impact. There have been recent changes to the committees following the May 2017 local government elections and this has resulted in the work needing to start over again. Therefore the consortium has further work that needs to be undertaken in this area.

Business Plan 5.3

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.

Agreed objectives and success criteria are now more precise and clear judgements are made on progress made against those objectives. Underperformance is effectively addressed.

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

One of the local authority directors 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. A regional PDG coordinator has been appointed. A PDG regional plan has been discussed with SLT and agreed. A PDG LAC support plan has been agreed with Welsh Government and the newly appointed coordinator is tasked with delivering this plan. Further work is required to share good practice, develop pupil voice and improve the outcomes of learners looked after in the region. Business Plan 1.6

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 was arranged for the Summer Term 2017 to further develop the packs taking into account feedback from the 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.

This aspect is not yet fully developed and further work is being undertaken through the 2017/18 Business Plan including a focus on the performance of vulnerable learners as part of Priority 1 & 5.2

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

The four consortia have constructed a joint working plan focused on common areas for

improvement based on Estyn's recommendations for the consortia and national priorities. Regular meetings are held and work is beginning to develop at a good pace. A managing director has been identified as a lead for each of the four work strands and this ensures the work is shared more equitably. The four work strands are Business Planning, Leadership, Communication and Curriculum. A project manager has been appointed to support the joint working. The work streams are discussed at managing directors meetings and reported to the National Change Board. These meetings are minuted and this facilitated by CSC.

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;
- 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)

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; and
- grant funding delegation rates.

There is increasing evidence of effective deployment of resources to secure improvements. Value for money reports are presented annually to the Joint Committee and local authority scrutiny meetings, which address the aspects of economy, effectiveness and efficiency as well as wider aspects. This framework is now used for all value for money reports and being incorporated into the Research and Evaluation reports within the financial year. (Business Plan priority 5.1)

Evidence

SER

Annual value for money report 2015/16

Annual value for money summary report.

Joint consortia plans and minutes of meetings.

SLT dash board (providing evidence of performance management compliance)

Joint consortia action plan

Challenge Advisers Performance management self-evaluation report

Vulnerable groups of learners data packs summer term

Inclusion data packs autumn term 2016

CSC data commentary reports

Foundation Phase case studies and

Foundation Phase evaluations all in the FPA file.

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)

To embed the work of the FPA and collate evidence to effectively measure value for money and involve the challenge advisers. (Business Plan 5.1)

Review the regional work for children that are looked after to collate evidence. (Business Plan 1.6)

Continue the focused work in developing high quality teaching and learning in mathematics. (Business Plan 1)

To improve teaching, learning and assessment across the region. (Business Plan 2.1)

To continue to build the capacity of governors to effectively undertake their role. (Business Plan 3.4)

To further improve the engagement with scrutiny. (Business Plan 5.3)

To continue to develop regional working with local authorities in key areas. (Business Plan 3.1)

To improve the outcomes of vulnerable learners across the region and effectively track their progress. (Business Plan 1.1)

Continue to embed the work started with the other consortia to improve effectiveness and efficiency. (Business Plan 5.1)

Use research and evaluation effectively to provide evidence for value for money judgements. (Business Plan 5.1)

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