



1. About this submission

1.1 This response to the committee's call for evidence focuses on the impact Schools Challenge

Cymru had during its operation, as Teach First Cymru was one of many interventions implemented under the scheme.

1.2 The National Assembly for Wales recently (November 2017) published a research briefing on Key Stage 4 attainment data<sup>1</sup>. It focuses on the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals. Using the attainment data for these schools combined with internal Teach First data, as well anecdotal evidence and feedback from partner schools and professionals, we have summarised the effects of having a Teach First participant in a school on raising pupil attainment.

1.3 In addition, in November 2015 Teach First Cymru commissioned external research to evaluate our work in Wales and the impact it has had. This private research can be supplied to the committee in confidence upon request.

2. About Teach First Cymru

2.1 Teach First Cymru started operating in Wales in 2013. We are part of the Teach for All global network operating in 40 countries.

2.2 Our mission to end educational inequality drives everything we do - all our work involves partnerships with universities, schools, charities, businesses and individuals who share our vision that no child's success should be limited by their background.

2.3 Teach First Cymru trains and supports committed individuals to become inspirational classroom leaders in low-income communities across Wales in partnership with the Central South Consortium which operates in Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan.

2.4 These teachers work with, and learn from, existing staff to increase the attainment of pupils, improve their access to higher education and employment and unlock their potential.

2.5 We also work in collaboration and partnership with other organisations across our education system and beyond who have a shared interest in tackling inequality in educational outcomes to achieve the maximum collective impact.

3. Teach First Cymru and Schools Challenge Cymru

3.1 For cohorts of teachers commencing the programme in the years 2013 to 2016 Teach First Cymru operated across Wales, following a contractual agreement with the Welsh Government to recruit and train teachers to work in some of the most disadvantaged communities.

3.2 In September 2013, Teach First placed 30 participants for the first time in Wales teaching English, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and Science in secondary schools. A further 38 participants were placed in September 2014. 60 participants started at their placement schools

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<sup>1</sup> Dauncey (November 2017) Research Briefing: Key Stage 4 attainment data;  
<http://www.assembly.wales/Research%20Documents/13-030/17-030-Web-English.pdf>

in September 2015. The evidence below demonstrates how quickly the programme generated and increased momentum over a very short period of time.

- 3.3 The Arad research found there were clear strategic links between Teach First and the Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) programme. Evidence suggests that there are complementarities therefore between the programmes at strategic and operational levels.
- 3.4 20 of the 40 of the schools that were involved in the Teach First programme were also part of Schools Challenge Cymru and schools had been able to access a proportion of Schools Challenge Cymru funding to contribute to the salary costs of Teach First participants, as one of the interventions under the scheme.
- 3.5 In some of the schools that took part in Schools Challenge Cymru, the additional staff funded by the programme took on mentoring roles for new teachers.
4. Impact of Teach First Cymru on schools and teachers
  - 4.1 The motivation and fresh approaches that participants have, according to senior school managers, helped reinvigorate some departments. Many Teach First Cymru participants were described as excellent role models for learners, displaying positive attitudes and instilling confidence and aspiration among learners.
  - 4.2 Some schools noted that the qualities and positive attitudes that Teach First Cymru participants had brought to departments had raised morale in departments and, in some cases, the whole school.
  - 4.3 School leaders reported that Teach First Cymru participants' dynamic and enthusiastic attitudes ensured the exchange of good practice and introduced innovative approaches into departments and schools. The Arad research found Teach First Cymru teachers are effectively supporting and contributing to schools' drive for improvement and forcing other teachers to 'raise their game'.
  - 4.4 Schools report that the Teach First Leadership Development Programme supported ongoing school improvement strategies. Wider impacts within schools included increased pupil-teacher contact. Teach First participants introduced innovative approaches and became integral to ethos and progress of participating schools, delivering quality teaching and leading on a range of extra curricula activities. Participants shared information about teaching practices and resources, and encouraged the wider exchange of good practice between teachers more generally in some schools.
  - 4.5 Teach First partner schools that were part of Challenge Cymru achieved an increase in the percentage of pupils reaching the level 2 threshold: on average Teach First partner schools increased by 13.4 percentage points. Teach First Cymru participants, alongside and in partnership with other interventions under Schools Challenge Cymru, had a positive impact on schools.
5. Impact of Teach First Cymru on students
  - 5.1 Senior school managers and heads of department reported that Teach First participants made positive impacts on their schools in several ways, including improving student attainment, supporting learner attainment and softer outcomes such as learner motivation, attitudes, engagement and quality of work.
  - 5.2 The majority of challenge schools have increased the percentage of their pupils achieving level two threshold from 2014 to 2016 for all pupils and for free school meal pupils. (Appendix 1)

- 5.3 On average in Teach First Cymru partner schools, the percentage of free school meal pupils achieving level 2 attainment increased by 12.72 percentage points, vs 9.65 percentage points for those in non- Teach First Cymru partner schools. (Appendix 2) <sup>2</sup>
- 5.4 Senior school managers and participants emphasised that, in addition to raising attainment, Teach First teachers also had a positive impact on the pupils' wider personal development. According to senior school management Teach First teachers supported improved behaviour, particularly as their own behaviour management skills developed during the first year. These opinions were based on observations undertaken by senior management, underlined by the private research, as well as the increased confidence of participants in managing difficult classes without additional support.
- 5.5 Improved behaviour was also evidenced by improved detention records in classes taught by participants. Although behaviour management was a challenge for many participants, school mentors and senior staff were generally positive about the way in which participants had recognised weaknesses, listened to advice and adapted their strategies accordingly.
- 5.6 Teach First Cymru teachers were also reported to have improved learner motivation, attitudes and engagement in many cases. Heads of department and other senior staff partly attributed this to the often innovative and 'dynamic' teaching style of participants. For instance, senior teachers noted participants' willingness to take risks in developing new approaches to planning activities and their capacity to use innovative practices in classroom. One school reported that a science participant was very effective in motivating learners by using engaging stories and links to media, while the MFL participants used practical examples of their year abroad in Spain and France.
- 5.7 However, we cannot attribute this rise in attainment solely to a school's partnership status with Teach First Cymru, but rather the range of interventions and investment.
- 5.8 Examples of the impact of Teach First Cymru on pupil attainment

#### Case Study 1

Background: Teach First Cymru participant was allocated Year 10 set 4 of 5 for English Literature. At the beginning of Year 10 the group of 12 pupils were predicted to achieve 10 D and two E grades at GCSE. The Teach First Cymru participant had sole responsibility for the group during their English Literature course throughout years 10 and 11.

Impact: The group of 12 achieved nine C grades, two Ds and one E for their final GCSE results in English Literature, equivalent to 73% A-C grades.

#### 5.7 Case Study 2

Background: In an English Literature group of 23 pupils, one pupil was predicted a B grade, 4 pupils were predicted C grades, and the rest predicted D or below.

Impact: All pupils met or exceeded their target grade. Twelve out of 23 exceeded expected target grade, with 11 achieving B grades and five exceeding their minimum target by two grades.

#### 5.8 Case Study 3

Background: A Teach First Cymru participant taught a Year 9 Science group of 32, the number of pupils at each level at the beginning of the academic year were;

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<sup>2</sup>Analysis undertaken by Teach First of data compiled by the National Assembly for Wales Research Service

Level 3 - 10 pupils  
Level 4 - 19 pupils  
Level 5 - 3 pupils

Impact: By the end of the academic year no pupils were at Level 3, with;

Level 4 - 4 pupils  
Level 5 - 21 pupils  
Level 6 - 5 pupils  
Level 7 - 2 pupils

5.9 Dr Rebecca Allen (UCL) found<sup>3</sup> that Teach First teachers were seven times more likely to be in senior leadership positions three years after starting teaching, and three times more likely to teach in schools serving low income communities compared to teachers from other routes. This target of developing leaders is mirrored across the partners of the global Teach For All network.

5.10 We have seen a number of participants in Wales progress to leadership positions. For example, A 2015 participants has become Head of Year 10 in a school in Cardiff and a 2016 participant has been appointed second in the Science department in a school in Wrexham. A 2015 participant at a Welsh medium school has become Literacy, Reading and Communications Co-ordinator - a vital role for the development of the new curriculum within the school.

5.11 We have supported graduates who have completed the Teach First programme elsewhere to move into Leadership positions in Wales. For example, a returning teacher has become a Deputy Head at a school in Cardiff, whilst another is an Assistant Head at a partner school in Caerphilly.

## 6 Progress as part of the collaboration with Central South Consortium

6.1 Teach First Cymru has been working in partnership with schools in the CSC region since 2013, including a number of Pathways to Success schools. Since June 2017, Teach First Cymru has worked in partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University and two base schools (Hawthorn High School and Fitzalan High School) to deliver a new employment-based initial teacher education within the CSC region, funded and supported by the consortium.

6.2 Pupil impact data collected by our participants in Wales in 2016 demonstrated that:

6.2.1 On average pupils made 3.36 sub-levels of progress per year with Teach First participants who were on the second year of the programme (based on the 38 sets of class data analysed).

6.2.2 Pupils taught by participants in their first year of teaching made 2.2 sub-levels of progress per year on average (21 data sets analysed).

6.2.3 The national expected rate of 2 sub-levels of progress per year, placing both cohorts above average in the progress achieved by their pupils.

## 7 Conclusion

7.1 The Arad research concluded that Teach First Cymru, when supported by funding from Schools Challenge Cymru, strove to improve standards and tackle the links between poverty and education success.

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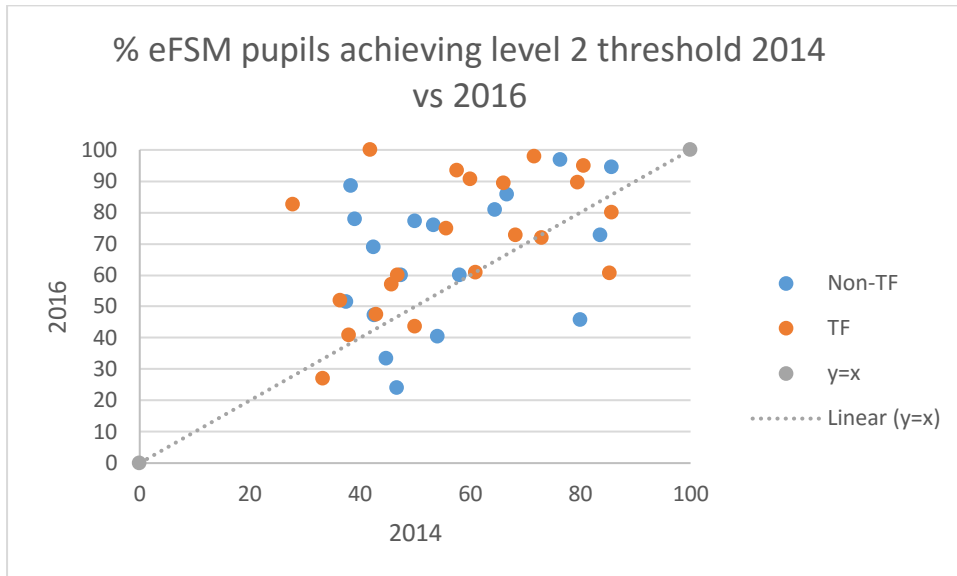
<sup>3</sup> Allen & Allnutt (2013) Matched panel data estimates of the impact of Teach First on school and departmental performance, <http://repec.ioe.ac.uk/REPEc/pdf/qsswp1311.pdf>

- 7.2 The research and analysis conducted by both Arad and Teach First Cymru indicates the scope by which Teach First Cymru measures impact and success of its work, on students, fellow teachers and the wider school. Whilst other organisations may focus solely on educational outcomes or attainment, Teach First Cymru looks at those measures, as well as taking a more holistic approach to how the entire school is affected by Teach First Cymru teachers.
- 7.3 Data available is summarised at a school, not a teacher level so we are unable to identify the impact of a specific Teach First Cymru teacher on pupil attainment.
- 7.4 It is clear from both empirical and anecdotal evidence that those schools that employed Teach First Cymru teachers, supported by funding from Schools Challenge Cymru, witnessed a positive impact on fellow teachers, the school, and students. It is impossible to say with certainty that those positive outcomes are solely down to the impact of Teach First Cymru and Schools Challenge Cymru, and not due to a variety of other external factors.
- 7.5 Teach First Cymru places great emphasis on working in partnership with other organisations and bodies, including schools, universities or businesses. The collaboration with Schools Challenge Cymru fitted with our approach and ethos to solving educational inequality in Wales.
- 7.6 This author believes that to meet the Welsh Government's ambitious targets for improving education standards in Wales, as well as improving social mobility across Wales, productivity and the skills base, it is vitally important that the targeted funding of the Pupil Development Grant is sustained. Challenge advisors should work with former Pathways to Success schools to identify how the Pupil Development Grant is being utilised to sustain progress made during the time-limited Schools Challenge Cymru programme.
- 7.7 Teach First Cymru continues to work directly with 15 former Pathways to Success schools, and members of our alumni community are teaching in a further four such schools. This demonstrates the sustained impact of Teach First Cymru's partnerships with these schools.
- 7.8 Teach First Cymru would be happy, if appropriate, to give further oral evidence to the committee on the above submission and our wider work.

8. For further information please contact

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## Appendix 1



## Appendix 2

