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Consortiwm Canolbarth y De  
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd  
Joint Education Service



**Submission to The National Assembly  
for Wales: Children, Young People  
and Education Committee / School  
Improvement and Raising Standards**

December 2019

## **Central South Consortium submission to The National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee: School improvement and raising standards**

This report has been compiled jointly by Central South Consortium and the five local authority Directors of Education from within the region.

### **1.0 A brief summary of:**

#### **1.1 Your approach to school improvement in your region, including how this is informed by the school categorisation process.**

The Central South Consortium (CSC) remains committed to its original mission of providing a school improvement service to the five local authorities within its region. The delivery model is based on the sound principles underlying other successful school systems where schools are supported and given greater ownership for their own improvement through developing a self-improving system.

The Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC) developed with school leaders was first launched in January 2014 and has been further developed following robust evaluation of impact, value for money and the need to ensure that schools are well prepared for the new curriculum. In 2019 a refined model of the CSWC strategy has enabled the organisation to include the delivery of the Welsh Government's transformation agenda within its model.

CSC is an ambitious region with the aim that every school in every local authority becomes as good as the best, and that in school variation is eliminated. The aim is also to reduce the impact of disadvantage on learners.

The strategy was based upon six underlying principles commonly found in successful school systems:

- Schools are communities where collaborative enquiry is used to foster improvements in practice;
- Groupings of schools engage in joint practice development;
- Where necessary, more intensive partnerships are organised to provide support for schools facing difficulties;
- Families and community organisations support the work of schools;
- Coordination of the system is provided by school leaders: and
- Local authorities work together as the conscience of the system

CSC publishes a professional learning offer to all schools. 92% (see 2.2) of the Education Improvement Grant element is delegated to schools. This enables schools to identify areas of need and determine which areas of the professional learning offer they wish to access.

The focus over the past few years has been to embed the following key approaches to the school-led improvement model:

- **Leadership programmes** developing existing and future senior & middle leaders in our schools;
- **Cluster** working focusing on areas of responsibility best met through local approaches
- **School Hubs** - offering professional learning aligned to regional and national need and follow enquiry –led approaches
- **School Improvement Groups (SIGs)** – partnerships which may be new, or well established where Convenors act as the professional learning lead and facilitate enquiry led improvement. Governor Improvement Groups (GIGs) have also been developed.
- **School-to-School partnerships** where high performing schools are partnered with schools requiring improvement to support and accelerate progress focused on specific development areas, brokered and agreed by challenge advisers and monitored in LA performance meetings
- **Peer Enquiry** Developing capacity for effective self-evaluation through peer models to bring about sustained school improvement

Recruiting and retaining high calibre school improvement (SI) advisers both challenge advisers and strategic advisers is key to developing and maintaining a successful self-improving system. The role of SIs in identifying, signposting and brokering good practice is paramount.

Challenge advisers continue to work within a time allocation model with the number of days support provided to each school distributed in proportion to need. The number of days are linked to categorisation, Estyn inspection outcomes or local intelligence but there is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances.

## **1.2 How you work with your member local authorities to ensure synergy and no duplication in your school improvement work.**

The Central South Consortium is commissioned by, and acts on behalf of, the five local authorities to develop a school improvement service that challenges, monitors and supports schools to raise standards for all learners in the region. In order to achieve the best outcomes for all learners across the region, a collaborative approach between schools, local authorities and the consortium is essential.

The CSC Business Plan is developed with all stakeholders and analyses evidence, requirements of the National Mission and wider consultation captures the improvement priorities of the region. The Business Plan directly addresses the priorities of the local authorities across the region, whilst supporting the local authorities in delivering their statutory function, with the strategic priorities of each local authority published within the plan.

Regular meetings with each Local Authority take place at many levels including Directors, Heads of Service etc to ensure intelligence on all schools, especially those causing concern, is shared. Joint action plans are agreed and often jointly funded.

A holistic approach to school improvement demands that CSC works in synergy with other services within the local authority to provide effective support to schools and all learners. A partnership approach with those school improvement services that remain within the remit of the local authorities, especially around vulnerable learners, ensures that duplication is minimised. The senior challenge adviser aligned to each local authority liaises closely with services within local authorities such as attendance and wellbeing, youth services, inclusion services, HR, etc. to identify and inform future strategies.

On an annual basis, an effectiveness & efficiency report is presented to Joint Committee for scrutiny by Members.

## 2.0 Details of funding you are responsible for spending in 2019-2020, to include:

CSC is subject to a robust governance model which is determined by the Legal Agreement signed by the five local authorities. Rhondda Cynon Taf is the host authority for the consortium and ensures CSC abides by all relevant policies and procedural rules. The business plan includes a detailed spending plan which ensures compliance with the terms and conditions of the specific lines within the grant funding streams.

Each local authority is represented within the CSC budget forum which includes head teachers and finance officers from across the region. Financial information is available to each school budget forum as required.

## 2.1 How much funding you are receiving in 2019-20 from each local authority for your school improvement services.

Financial Contribution from each of the local Authorities (£s)

Local Authority	2019 – 2020 £
Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	1,014,176
Bridgend CBC	570,729
Merthyr CBC	234,897
Vale of Glamorgan CBC	547,722
Cardiff Council	1,343,329
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,710,853</b>

## 2.2 How much in Welsh Government grants you are responsible for distributing in 2019-20, including a breakdown between the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant and the Pupil Development Grant, as well as details of how much is delegated to schools and how much is administered / spent on a regional basis.

There is a legal agreement in place between the Local Authorities and CSC that details the process that must be followed for the agreement and distribution of all regional grants. Directors and Members of the Joint Committee consider and approve the apportionment proposals put forward by CSC. The Education Improvement Grant element of the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant is distributed on an agreed common regional formula across each Local Authority.

### Commissioned Regional Delivery of Grants from the 5 Local Authorities of CSC

Grant Name	Funding Allocation	Amount delegated to Schools	Amount delegated to LAs	Retained for future delegation to Schools/LAs	Retained in Consortia	Delegation Rate*
	£	£	£	£	£	%
Regional School Improvement Grant (RCSIG)	44,743,941 <sup>1</sup>	37,074,054	878,231	3,211,026	3,580,630	92%
Pupil Development Grant (PDG)	31,734,150	30,937,360	467,520	0	329,270	99%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,478,091</b>	<b>68,011,414</b>	<b>1,345,751</b>	<b>3,211,026</b>	<b>3,909,900</b>	

\* Delegation: This refers to funding which is allocated to schools. However, it must be spent in accordance with, and in the spirit of, the core purpose of the grant and the individual school development plan priorities. This figure also includes funding for specific circumstances so that schools can respond positively to the Central South Wales Challenge model.

## 3.0 A summary of Key Stage 4 and A/AS Level examination data for 2019 and previous years in your region, plus any analysis you wish to provide.

The Welsh Government alongside several partners and experts has undertaken a fundamental review of the accountability system for schools in Wales. Findings highlighted that the existing system and its use of performance measures has many negative unintended consequences, such as:

- narrowing curriculum choice;
- disproportionate focus on particular groups of learners;
- the way in which benchmarking is used driving competition between schools rather than encouraging collaboration;
- an increased and unnecessary workload for teachers and others in the system, without the necessary impact or benefit for learners; and
- an aggregation of data for *accountability* purposes where it was designed for *improvement* purposes.

<sup>1</sup> Includes c£2.9m Local Authority match funding

As a result, schools have heard conflicting messages from the various parts of the system about what matters. This has often diverted effort from learning and teaching and moved us towards a culture of compliance and bureaucracy. A joint communication from Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, and Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, published on 16 July 2019 stated that:

*“It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.*

*Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”*

Consortia reporting on performance will adhere to this guidance.

### 3.1 Reporting on KS4 results

New interim KS4 measures have been introduced for 2019 as part of the significant education reform programme in Wales. National data capture for individual schools will be based on first entry results. The data provided regionally for individual school and LAs will also be based on first entry results. JCQ/WJEC have published their data and press release based on the ‘best outcome’ obtained by 16 year olds across both the November and summer series. There will be differences between first entry and best outcome data. As a result, across several indicators, it will not be possible to compare 2019 figures with previous performance. The table below shows the new interim measures and the methodology used for calculating. It also demonstrates the key differences with previous years.

Interim Measure	How it is calculated	Differences from previous years, and why comparisons cannot be made
Capped 9	<p>The Capped 9 Points Score is a performance measure calculating the average of the scores for the best awards for all individual pupils in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Three of the nine slots require the awards of specific subjects and qualifications in order to contribute any points towards the measure.</p>	Only a pupil’s first entry will count WJEC Science GCSE only

	<p>These slots are each one GCSE in size, specifying requirements in literacy, numeracy and science GCSEs only.</p> <p>The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs can contribute towards the literacy slot.</p> <p>The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs can contribute towards the numeracy slot.</p> <p>The best grade from a science GCSE can contribute towards the science slot (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications currently available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award).</p> <p>The remaining six qualifications will include the pupil's best performance in either GCSE and/or vocational equivalent.</p>	
Literacy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs awarded to a pupil.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count, with Literature also accepted within this measure
Numeracy measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs awarded to a pupil	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
Science measure	Calculating the average of the scores for all individual pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from a science GCSE awarded to a learner (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award) - these are identified as being able to contribute towards science measures.	New 2019 measure, first entry only will count
The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge	Calculates the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all individual learners in	Reported separately as a main indicator for

Certificate measure	the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award.	the first time in 2019
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In this context, the data should be analysed on a local level and as a starting point to question local priorities. Although 2019 data is currently available on historical performance measures (L1, L2, L2+ and 5A\*-A), comparison with previous years is not valid because of the first entry counting rather than best outcome.

Links have been included below to analysis produced by Welsh Government, which provides a commentary on the performance of the region:

<https://gov.wales/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019>  
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-12/examination-results-september-2018-august-2019-080.pdf>

### 3.2 Reporting on A / AS Level

CSC commission Alps – a company who measure A level progress from GCSE to A level across over 2,000 providers in England and Wales through the use of a data analysis tool with the philosophy to support teachers to unlock the potential of every pupil. Alps analyse the data for all schools and local authorities and provide a detailed report on performance across the region. The progress grade for the region ('T' score) has been 4 for each of the four previous academic years, placing regional performance as a whole in the top 40% of learners.

The Level 3 Threshold for the region has increased for the second consecutive academic year, and in 2019 has reached its' highest ever position. Over the latest three-year period, the region has improved by 0.6pp, with three of the four LAs in the Region also increasing for this performance measure over this same period. The improvement in the Region compares against a no-change in performance for this performance measure nationally over the same period. The Average Wider Points score has fallen by 4.6 points in the most recent year, but this is still above the score seen in 2017. The region continues to exceed the national score for this performance measure. Only Bridgend and The Vale of Glamorgan LAs have seen improvements for this measure in the most recent year. Since 2016, this performance measure has fallen by 80.0 points in the region and 81.9 points nationally, with all 4LAs in the region decreasing over this period.

2019 results show a no-change in performance for the proportion of pupils achieving 3A\*-A grades regionally, but a 0.2pp increase nationally, with the region continuing to exceed the national proportion for this measure. Both Bridgend and Cardiff LAs saw increases for this performance measure in the most recent year and their highest ever performance for this indicator. Over the latest three-year period the region has seen an improvement of 7.6 pp for this performance measure, which compares favourably against a national improvement of 6.9pp. All LAs in the region improved for this performance measures over the same period. The proportion of pupils achieving 3A\*-C grades has decreased regionally and for all LAs within the region but has increased nationally. Despite this fall in performance, the region continues to exceed the national average for this performance measure. There has been a fall in performance for this

measure over the latest three-year period for the region, Wales and all LAs in the region, with only Cardiff LA seeing a smaller decrease than seen nationally.

Girls out-perform boys for all four performance measures at Key Stage 5. The gap in performance between boys and girls has remained constant for Level 3 Threshold but has widened for all other measures.

#### **4.0 A summary of PISA 2018 results in your region (if available), plus any analysis you wish to provide.**

Regional data is not available at the time of writing the report. However, Wales has seen its performance improve in international tests in reading, maths and science. The biggest improvement was in maths, while science is also now close to the international average. The number of high-performing students in Wales rose from 4% to 7%. There was also no significant gender gap for the first time.

#### **5.0 An update on progress to tackle the attainment gap in your region:**

##### **5.1 Between eligible for free school meals (eFSM) pupils and other pupils;**

Supporting schools to provide for the needs of all vulnerable groups of learners is at the heart of the CSC business plan and features prominently throughout all areas of the organisation's work in partnership with the Local Authority services as highlighted in 1.2. Measuring the impact of activities is however challenging as quite often teaching and learning strategies targeted at identified vulnerable groups will benefit other learners. The use of wellbeing profile tools such as PERMA and SELFIE are being rolled out to support schools to self-evaluate how learners are making progress, and to become more inclusive.

A summary of some of the aspects within the regional strategy include:

- Closer challenge and monitoring schools' use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG). Two hundred schools across the region submitted an evaluation of the PDG in the summer term of 2019. Currently schools are submitting their PDG plans electronically. An evaluation of all secondary schools and a sample of primary PDG plans to be conducted in January 2020
- A pilot in collaboration with the "Inclusion Expert" led by Daniel Sobell (as part of the school-led hub programme) is underway with a good level of engagement by twenty schools across the region. The pilot which has seen impressive gains in schools in England involves identifying successful practice in supporting vulnerable learners as well as gathering information about the wellbeing support schools are offering. The pilot includes looking at the effectiveness of how vulnerable pupils are tracked as well as initiatives or other interventions that are being undertaken. Effective wellbeing assessment tools are being identified as part of the Inclusion Expert pilot. Evaluating this information in conjunction with an evaluation of all of the schools PDG plans and wellbeing tools will identify how CSC can support schools in improving outcomes for vulnerable learners. This will then determine the professional learning offer being delivered by CSC

- The professional learning offer to all schools will be structured around the results of the pilots that are taking place this year. The evaluations of the PDG plans as well as evaluating effective equity and wellbeing support taking place in the pilot schools will result in co-constructing an ongoing professional learning offer based on sound research
- CSC will work with schools in refining systems of monitoring, evaluating and reviewing. This will involve providing guidance in how these systems can effectively determine the progress of vulnerable learners. It will look at listening to learners, book looks as well as learning walks and will work in collaboration with the work that is going on with the work of the Learning Collaborative, led by Dr Lyn Sharratt.
- A revised teaching and learning strategy is being developed to include wellbeing and equity
- The provision for groups of vulnerable learners is at the heart of the ALN transformation work and will look to identify what is effective teaching and learning for vulnerable learners.
- In some areas within this region many children start school with deficit speaking skills. We are working with Voice 21 to raise the state of oracy in schools across Wales. In 2018-19 116 schools in CSC were invited to take part. All secondary schools and one primary from each cluster. Also 6 special schools. In 2019-20 a further 124 schools invited to take part.
- As part of the PDG LAC and MAT work clusters have been established to ensure that true reciprocity exists, and schools are effectively sharing strong practice. This will allow for projects to be developed, cluster training to be shared and improved outcomes for more able and children looked after
- Effective research is at the heart of all project evaluations. CSC are working in collaboration with Cardiff Metropolitan University to ensure that robust evaluation of the impact of all school improvement work that is taking place is effectively documented allowing the identification and sharing of successful practice
- Partnership working with other local authority services is on-going for example working with the attendance and exclusion leads across the 5 authorities. Projects involve identifying and sharing effective practice in schools, sharing effective protocols and working with improving outcomes for free school meal pupils

## **5.2 Between ethnic minority groups at risk of underachieving and other pupils & between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, and other pupils;**

As at PLASC in January 2019 approximately 17% of the school population across the region are from backgrounds other than White British, this includes 0.2% pupils classed as Traveller or Gypsy.

Of the pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) 1.7% are at acquisition levels A-C % 6.7% at levels D-E. The region includes Cardiff which has the highest EAL population across Wales. Both Vale of Glamorgan and Merthyr Tydfil

have comparatively high percentages of EAL/Gypsy, Roma & Traveller pupils. Each local authority has managed support for these pupils in similar ways but driven by local needs. The attainment of these pupils is discussed through the regular CA meetings with schools although direct support is managed through Local Authority services. Support includes direct allocation to schools to allow the employment of additional staff, the use of inclusion classes (Merthyr Tydfil) for both EAL and Gypsy, Roma & Traveller pupils, a central team for specific support (Cardiff) and support towards Traveller Education Services.

### **5.3 Between Looked After Children and other pupils (and any work to identify and improve the attainment of adopted children compared to other pupils).**

- In line with the recommendations within the terms and conditions of the grant, funding is distributed on a cluster basis. The cluster approach to delegating funding was first introduced in 2018-19. Schools identify a cluster lead for each cluster and most clusters submitted robust business plans that included good self-reflection based on the region's self-evaluation toolkit. All 61 clusters across the region submitted group plans with only one cluster choosing to present individual school plans.
- Roadshows were held in each local authority to fully explain the funding model and terms and conditions of the grant. Schools reported that the roadshows provided much needed clarity that the funding available needs to build capacity within schools. The events also helped to generate interest and promote this year's training programme.
- The LAC Education Coordinators (LACES) are very active in ensuring that the cluster plans within their local authority are robust and delivered in line with the grant. A steering group which comprises of staff from CSC, LACES and Headteachers from each local authority approve the quality of the cluster plans before funding is released.
- Clear guidance is provided to clusters with a self-evaluation toolkit to help structure their planning. These indicators are taken from the CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark which has been piloted in RCT and Merthyr Tydfil and is now being introduced in Bridgend. Eight pilot schools across Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil completed this award during 2018-19, a celebration event was held with invitations for all local authorities so that the Quality Mark is made available to schools throughout the region. A further 14 schools in RCT achieved this Quality Mark by the end of 2018-2019.
- Feedback following regional training reported that Permanent and Fixed Term Exclusions have been reduced for Looked After Children.
- The CLA Friendly school's initiative that has been co-created between Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff University has been recognised as good practice by Welsh Government and was launched nationally as a toolkit for designated teachers in April 2019. There is a whole school approach to creating the CLA Friendly School.

- Over the past year, a project to promote good practice for CLA within schools and educational settings has been put into place. This project is composed of three elements:
  - Children Looked After Friendly Schools Handbook – a resource that supports the practice of schools and settings in this area.
  - CLA Friendly Schools Training – a three tier training programme for those who work in educational settings that reinforces and develops the practice set out in the Handbook. All schools are encouraged to have this training.
  - CLA Friendly Schools Quality Mark – A quality mark for schools achieved by evidencing a high standard of practice for CLA pupils. The Mark is based on a set of indicators that have been derived from the CLA Friendly Schools Handbook. This ensures clarity about the key elements needed to help pupils to feel safe, included and engaged in school life from the Foundation Phase until the end of KS4.
- Level 3 “CLA Friendly Schools” training was successfully piloted and evaluated during 2018-19. As a result, two courses were offered during the Summer Term and 50 school representatives attended. Evaluations show that this training was well received and have reported that school staff will implement these strategies in their classrooms.
- Training was well attended during 2018-2019. 900 school staff attended the courses which included expert guidance from Educational Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists and Specialist CLA teachers who are developing guidance on attachment, trauma, mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences. Much of this training is based on developing robust relationships with very vulnerable pupils and help school staff to be “trusted adults”.
- There are regular meetings with the LACES from each local authority to ensure that consistent practice exists across the region. For example, all Designated Teachers are trained by the LACES to deliver the CLA Friendly Schools Level 1 to all staff members, including governors in each school. By the end of 2018-19, 85% of school Designated teachers received this training across the five local authorities.
- The PDG LAC Lead was invited to present at the Adoption UK masterclass during 2018-19. Adoption UK support the work in Central South Consortium by delivering training during the Autumn and Spring term which is well received. There is specific information about Adopted pupils in the CLA Friendly Schools about the impact of adoption on these children. During the conference that was organised last year, schools were asked to present on their work with pupils who have been adopted. With agreement from all Directors within CSC, a lump sum is given to each cluster for training needs for adopted children.

**6.0 An update on how you are challenging and supporting schools that participated in schools challenge Cymru. We would be particularly grateful to know how you have ensured that, where schools' performance improved during the programme, this positive momentum has continued.**

**6.1** Sixteen schools in CSC were part of the Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) programme and the region has further developed the most effective aspects of the programme and integrated these into regional ways of working. In order to build upon the good practice, the following strategies have been developed:

- To support schools in the transition from SCC, Accelerated Progress Leads (APLs) were introduced in September 2017. APLs provide support and challenge to the most vulnerable secondary schools in the region with a focus to specifically improve key stage 4 (KS4) results, especially for pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM). Their work should impact over the short and medium terms and develop and sustain whole school improvement over the longer term. APLs were recruited from SCC advisers in order to provide continuity for schools and to build the capacity of challenge advisers. The APL function includes playing a key role in determining and brokering the appropriate support package for each school, working alongside the existing challenge adviser, sharing expertise and coaching to develop challenge adviser capacity to help schools make accelerated progress.
- School Improvement Forums continued in the schools where APLs worked and followed the format introduced by SCC.
- The CSC Intervention Strategy for schools causing concern was reviewed and rewritten to reflect the outcomes from SCC.

## **6.2 Summary of Impact of School Challenge Cymru**

Of the sixteen school in the Central South Consortium region engaged in the SCC programme, two schools closed during the academic year 2017/18. As a result of changes in performance measures and specification across several indicators at key stage 4, it will not be possible to compare 2019 figures with previous years performance (as noted in 3.1). It is however possible to make a number of other statements about the progress the schools have made over time:

- Of the 16 schools in the programme (which remain open) who had previously been in receipt of the highest support levels, 10 are now in receipt of the lowest levels of support (Green or Yellow).
- Only one school is deemed to require Red Support and one further school is receiving Amber support.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 5 schools were placed in statutory categories (special measures), all of which have now been removed from these categories.
- Of those schools inspected during or immediately after the SCC programme 5 schools were placed in the category of Estyn monitoring, all 5 have since been removed from this category.

## **7.0 Any comments you have on current and future school accountability arrangements and the impact of these on school improvement.**

Following an independent review of the Central South Consortium, there is a renewed commitment for the regional model of school improvement supported by each of the five local authorities.

As a region we welcome the changes to the accountability framework (and the removal of the unintended consequences) of the previous high stakes performance measures. The focus on a broader range of performance measures and a focus on self-evaluation for improvement is an essential element of reform. Workshops have been held in local authorities with scrutiny committees to support their understanding and role in the scrutiny of performance data as part of the changes in the accountability system. Welsh Government, WLGA and Estyn will also host further training in January 2020.

The current model of school categorisation can have a negative impact on the community's perception of its school.

## **8.0 Any other comments you wish to make on the school improvement and raising standards agenda.**

It is important that the roles and responsibilities of organisation in the Middle Tier are clearly defined and articulated to schools. This will ensure clarity of responsibility as well as ensuring reduced duplication and efficiency.