



THE CENTRAL SOUTH WALES CHALLENGE PLAN

SPRING 2016 UPDATE

The Central South Wales (CSW) Challenge vision is about developing a system of school improvement where schools develop and lead their own improvement based on resources developed within and shared across schools in the region.

WHAT IS THE CENTRAL SOUTH WALES CHALLENGE

ALL ABOUT?

- Education systems have untapped potential to improve themselves
- Networking is a means of sharing effective ways of working
- School partnerships are a powerful means of fostering improvements
- Leadership has to come from within schools
- Local authorities (and the Consortium) have important roles in making sure this happens

The CSW plan is led by the CSW Strategy Group, and facilitated by Professor Mel Ainscow and the Central South Consortium (CSC). The CSW plan leads to the operational plan for the Consortium's work in 2014/15.

WHAT IS THE STRATEGY GROUP

All schools were asked to nominate themselves to be on the Strategy Group in December 2013. Schools were asked to make sure they had the capacity for this work, had the support of the governing body and had a strong track record of improvement and collaboration. Directors from each Local Authority (LA) selected the schools on the group.

The Strategy Group comprises:

- Jeremy Thompson (Oldcastle Primary School)
- Steve Jones (Cardiff High School)
- Bethan Hocking (Herbert Thompson Primary School)
- Mark Powell (Y Pant Comprehensive School)
- Rhian Ellis (Ysgol Gyfun Cymer Rhondda)
- Vicky Meadows (Windsor Clive Primary School)
- Kevin Tansley (Tŷ Gwyn Special School)
- Heather Nicholas (Ferndale Community)
- Nick Brain (Bryntirion Comprehensive)
- Hywel Price (Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg)
- Sarah Coombes (Llanishen Fach Primary School)
- Elizabeth Owen (Ysgol Y Graig)
- Rhys Jones (Treorchy Comprehensive School)
- Tegwen Ellis (Ysgol Cynwyd Sant)
- Vanessa McCarthy (Brynnau Primary School)
- Dr Alec Clark (Tai Education Centre)
- Kelvin Law (Romilly Primary School)
- Maureen Harris (Bishop Hedley RC High School)

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW? THE SIX STRANDS TO THE PLAN ARE:

1. Improving Teaching

To develop capacity for use across the region in developing practice in teaching and learning, initially using OTP/ITP and beyond to develop a network of specialist centres

What's happening Now?

Hubs

The hubs model has supported more than 1000 teachers in programmes across the region since it began, a further programme including more than 300 NQTs supported across the hubs programme and in addition has led practice sharing events involving more than another 1000 teachers. Evaluations and quality assurance of hub programmes have been consistently strong and an external evaluation of the OTP programme has shown how participants have improved their teaching practice and go on to support stronger teaching and learning in their schools as a result. After two years we have reviewed the hubs programme to expand it to cover curriculum hubs, to build on the progress so far to deliver the full New Deal offer for professional learning for all school staff, link more closely to need in the region and establish more enquiry led support for schools.

Special School (Hubs)

Heronbridge, The Hollies and the Tai Centre are working together in setting up the specialist hub. All three settings have had impact on around 100 colleagues who are then able to work within their settings more effectively. This has clearly built on already strong collaborative working models but has allowed a more focussed approach through the hub program.

What are the next steps?

Hubs

We would hope to be in a position to confirm both the new hubs model and the offer of support for schools from hubs within the early part of the summer term. This will cover the whole continuum from initial teacher education delivered in schools, to Headship programmes delivered within schools in the region alongside our partnership the Institute of Education. Curriculum Hubs will deliver subject support to allschools targeted at need.

Special School (Hubs)

Special Schools are establishing a regional group with some seconded resources to lead development across the sector including audit of needs and brokerage of support for mainstream will include peer enquiry and hub schools. The next steps will be to secure the cross school and cross sector interventions and support into a sustainable part of the whole school improvement agenda. The hub status will allow us to be more visible and to provide ongoing capacity and support with the consortia acting as an efficient broker. This will allow the huge sustainable and embedded potential of special schools to be truly unleashed.

FP Alliance Schools

FP Alliance schools will be holding an open morning in the Summer term with an opportunity for school leaders and FP Practitioners to tour the setting and engage in professional discussion about a range of FP issues. The FPA will be delivering a series of regional FP network events on a termly

Improving Teaching continued...

FP Alliance Schools

FPAS Head teachers, senior leaders and other members of the team also engage in direct, intensive and supportive partnerships with schools in difficult or challenging circumstances. FPA are working in partnership with other schools to support practice development. If you feel your school would be eligible to receive our support then please contact your CA to discuss this possibility.

Peer Enquiry

During 2015 – 2016 CSC has funded 34 Peer Enquiries, with an additional 9 independent Enquiries taking place using our Phase 2 Model and paperwork. Peer Enquiries have taken place (the majority are scheduled for the Summer Term) and feedback from the host schools and Enquiry teams alike has been extremely positive.

Initial Teacher Education Pilots

CSC has been working closely with three universities; Cardiff Metropolitan, University of South Wales and University of Wales: Trinity and St Davids to develop some exciting ITE pilots in response to Professor John Furlong's recommendations for ITE reform.

Donaldson

The teaching and learning team have been working with Heads, including Pioneer heads in the region to develop a teaching and learning toolkit and pack based on the Donaldson reforms which can be used in every

basis from Sept 2016 with the aim of engaging every FP leader across the region and to maximise joint practice development opportunities.

Peer Enquiry

The progress of phase two will be evaluated in the summer term with a view to rolling out the model to more schools across the region from September.

Initial Teacher Education Pilots

During 2016 – 2017 there will be a PGCE Secondary MFL pilot and a PGCE Secondary D&T pilot in CSC school and a PGCE Welsh Medium pilot with a WM Hub schools plus a school in the ERW region. In addition there will be a Primary Hub schools' carousel of pedagogy days for PGCE students that will run next year and also as a 'taster pre-pilot' during the Summer Term of 2016.

Donaldson

We will continue to draw together the work of the Pioneer schools and our regional work to implement the principles of the Donaldson reforms, through a single teaching and learning strategy and provide updates regularly.

2. Improving collaborative partnerships

To make sure all schools are able to access the resources of a School Improvement Group (SIG) and that SIGs are well supported in their own capacity building work to have an impact

What's happening Now?

The CSW Challenge "Synergy in our System" conference took place on 7th January. We would welcome any further thoughts about the day and models for future best practice sharing days. The SIG case study pack is published and circulated as a resource for all schools to draw upon and enable them to make connections with other SIGs across the region to encourage cross-SIG working and strengthen system leadership. aSecondary SIG convenors have formed a steering group in order to work collectively to meet the needs across the region as well as within their own individual SIGs.

Welsh School Improvement Groups

WM primary schools have established a group which includes every WM primary school in CSC ('Y Ffed'). TEvery headteacher sits on a sub-group working on: leadership, Closing the Gap, curriculum, teaching and learning. These are operating as SIGs.

What are the next steps?

SIG Convenors to further develop their role as system leaders to ensure the impact is evaluated at an individual and whole SIG level for at least one main priority.

Collation of all data on improvements in quality of teaching to be collected by convenors in their role as a system leader. Second period of evidence collection to start by NFER. Further case study work to be undertaken by Cardiff University.

Welsh School Improvement Groups

Primary

The Ffed has decided to focus the identification & development of future leaders/leadership development. A practice sharing event is planned for 23 June. For more information please contact Anna Brychan on Anna.Brychan@cscjes.org.uk.

Six secondary schools (two triads) have decided to participate in a peer enquiry (and will report back on it to wider group).

3. Pathfinders

Carefully brokered partnerships between pairs or trios of schools can help those facing challenging circumstances to strengthen their practices

What's happening Now?

90% of pathfinders who focused on leadership reported improvement. Case studies demonstrate that a number of pathfinders have resulted in stronger distributed leadership, more confident and more skilled senior leaders and stronger governance. Pathfinder Cohort 2 case studies have been published evidencing effective partnership working. For more information please go to <http://case-studies-cscjes.org.uk/en/>

Pathfinder Cohort 3 has now launched which includes pairs and triads.

What are the next steps?

Impact and quality of cohort 3 partnerships/triads evaluated and used to inform cohort 4 ahead of September 2016.

CSC staff have worked closely with CAs who are running partnerships for the first time. As required CSC staff have worked with headteachers to write plans.

Data collated from cohort 2 has been shared across CSC and headlines have been shared more widely to demonstrate what close partnership working can do

4. Families and communities/closing the gap

There is evidence that successful efforts to break the link between poverty and low attainment require a focus on factors beyond the school gate

What's happening Now?

CSC has identified 11 lead Closing the Gap schools who are forming the Central South Closing the Gap Alliance. These schools have a proven track record in closing the achievement gap, and are well placed to support schools across the region.

The Valleys project

Welsh Government have provided funding for 18 schools to undertake action research, with the aim of developing a toolkit that can support all schools in valleys communities.

Pupil Pledge

The 'Student' Pledge sets out the expectation that all children and young people in the region should be entitled to extra curricular activities. These ten key activities will be tailored differently for primary and secondary school children.

Wider Partnerships

Students having access to relevant business in their community has significant impact on aspirations. Pupils who have four or more interactions with employers are five times less likely to become NEET. At Central south we are in phase one of the Business in the Community project, which is linking schools with business.

All schools in Central South will have a link with a strong business under the Business Case.

What are the next steps?

Growing the alliance

The work of the Closing the Gap schools will be showcased in the annual closing the gap conference on the 7th July, and will take place in the University of South Wales, who are a key member of the alliance.

Developing case studies.

Each of the schools in the Valleys project will produce a short case study of what works, and what will have the greatest impact in these valleys communities.

Further Guidance

The Consortium is currently reviewing the PDG guidance. It will be updated, with further information as to what schools need to consider in the future. It is essential that we demonstrate to Government that the grant is having impact or the danger is that this funding will be taken away. This could have a devastating impact on many schools, budgets.

Further Phases

There will be further development of the Business Case programme through phase 2 and 3. It is anticipated that all secondary schools in the region will have a business partner who works with them in meaningful way, on aspects such as teaching and learning, leadership development, curriculum and governance.

5. Improving leadership

Developing leadership capacity across and within schools

What's happening Now?

We have run now a number of cohorts of the IoE leadership programmes and had universally strong feedback on both the content and presentation of the programmes.

What are the next steps?

Next year, we plan to build on this with further consultant leadership programmes, including a National Leader of Welsh Education programme as well as a new future leaders programme for senior leaders capable of leading schools in challenging circumstances. We will also develop further a Senior Leaders in Education programme identifying and supporting a small number of senior leaders across the region to work across schools in the region, and we will continue our direct recruitment and leadership campaign to attract future leaders to Central South schools. We are developing further training for governors as well as with HR teams to ensure we attract, recruit, develop and retain the best leaders across all schools.

6. Improving coordination of the system

New skills and roles for LAs and the Consortium in fostering a school led system

What's happening Now?

Working with challenge advisers and Schools Challenge Cymru advisers to evaluate and develop the role of a challenge adviser to develop further our thinking about the most effective use of the experience and resource in the team. We will review the challenge and support framework in the summer term.

What are the next steps?

The Challenge and Support framework is being reviewed in the summer term with input from a project working with SCCAs and CAs. We will be looking particularly at where Challenge advisers can be more involved in the brokerage of school to school support and in the development of capacity building within schools.

We have also commissioned an evaluation of the whole self improving school model from NFER which will commence in the new year. We are always keen to develop our work across the region. If you are interested or would like to become involved with this work please contact Kim Eley (kim.eley@cscjes.org.uk).

If you want to get involved or learn more about this work, please:

- Look at our website: www.cswchallenge.com/ Contact one of the Strategy Group Headteachers/ Contact Kim Eley at the Consortium on Kim. Eley@cscjes.org.uk / 01443 827557 or Angela Satterly on Angela.Satterly@cscjes.org.uk OR contact your SIG Convenor



A NEW VERSION OF THIS UPDATE WILL BE PROVIDED EVERY TERM OR HALF TERM AS APPROPRIATE