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AGENDA

Committee CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2015, 2.30 PM

Venue COMMITTEE ROOM 4 - COUNTY HALL

Membership Councillor Richard Cook (Chairperson)
Councillors Boyle, Chaundy, Gordon, Joyce, Morgan, Murphy,
Dianne Rees and Lynda Thorne

Mrs P Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative), Carol Cobert (Church in Wales representative), Ms Catrin Lewis (Parent Governor Representative) and Mrs Hayley Smith (Parent Governor Representative)

1 Apologies for Absence *Time approx.*
2.30 pm

To receive apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

3 Minutes (*Pages 1 - 4*)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015

4 School Performance Monitoring - School Inspections and Literacy and Numeracy Report (*Pages 5 - 36*) 2.35 pm

This report provides the Committee with an update on recent Estyn School Inspections and the performance of schools in the recent National Literacy and Numeracy tests.

(a) Councillor Sarah Merry (Cabinet Member for Education) will be in attendance and may wish to make a statement;

(b) Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and

Angela Kent (Head of Achievement and Inclusion) will present the report and be available to any questions Members may have;

(c) Questions from Committee Members.

5 Draft Corporate Parenting Strategy Report (Pages 37 - 60) 3.15 pm

This report provides the Committee with the opportunity to undertake the pre-decision scrutiny of the Strategy prior to its consideration at Cabinet on 12 November.

(a) Councillor Sue Lent, Cabinet Member, Early Years, Children & Families and Deputy Leader, will be in attendance and may wish to make a statement;

(b) Tony Young, Director of Social Services and Irfan Alam, Assistant Director, will introduce the report and be available to answer questions;

(c) Questions from Committee Members

6 Central South Consortium Correspondence (Pages 61 - 72) 4.00 pm

This report provides the Committee with the opportunity to review and respond to the Consortium's Joint Committee's proposals for the future scrutiny of the Consortium.

(a) Scrutiny Officer to briefly introduce the report;

(b) Questions from Committee Members.

7 Correspondence Report (Pages 73 - 132) 4.30 pm

To provide the Committee copies of the correspondence sent and responses received since July 2015.

(a) Scrutiny Officer to briefly introduce the report;

(b) Questions from Committee Members.

8 Way Forward 5.00 pm

9 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is on 8 December 2015 @ 4.30 pm in Committee Room 4.

Marie Rosenthal

Director Governance and Legal Services

Date: Wednesday, 4 November 2015

Contact: Mandy Farnham Tel: 029 2087 24128 Email: Mandy.Farnham@cardiff.gov.uk

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 OCTOBER 2015

Present: Councillor Richard Cook (Chairperson), Councillors Boyle, Chaundy, Gordon, Murphy, Dianne Rees and Lynda Thorne

: Co-opted Members: Carol Cobert (Church in Wales representative) and Mrs Hayley Smith (Parent Governor Representative)

33 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Morgan, Mrs P. Arlotte (Roman Catholic Representative) and Catrin Lewis (Parent Governor Representative)

34 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson reminded Members of their responsibility under Part III of the Members' Code of Conduct to declare any interest in general terms and to complete personal interest forms at the start of the meeting and then, prior to the commencement of the discussion of the item in question, specify whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest. If the interest is prejudicial Members would be asked to leave the meeting and if the interest is personal, Members would be invited to stay, speak and vote. There were no declarations of interest.

35 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee meeting of 15 September 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

36 : BUDGET MONITORING PANEL - MONTH 4 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Martyn Hutchings, Principal Scrutiny Officer, presented this report.

The purpose of this report was to provide Members with an update on the outcome of the first meeting of the Budget Monitoring Panel that was recently established by the Committee. The meeting was held on 16 October 2015 and focused on a review of the month four budget monitoring Cabinet report.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer briefed the Committee on the key points of the meeting. During discussion the following points were made:

- In respect of the Education saving 'staff realignment and re-structuring', Education was aware that Estyn would be visiting and this should have been factored into their proposals, rather than used as a reason for not achieving some of the proposed savings.
- In respect of the Business Support review, Children's Services appear to have submitted proposals but had not prioritised them. In relation to these proposals it would be useful to know what actions, if any, had been taken and when.

- It might sometimes be useful to invite officers to the meetings so that they could elaborate on written answers that had been provided.

AGREED: That the report be noted and a letter sent to the relevant Cabinet Members.

37 : CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Martyn Hutchings, Principal Scrutiny Officer, presented this report.

Following most Committee meetings, the Chair writes a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member or Officer, summing up the Committee's comments and recommendations regarding the issues considered during that meeting. The key points raised in the Committee's letter are taken from the way forward discussion at the end of each meeting and captured in the minutes of the meetings. Responses are evidenced in future reports or copied to Members if specifically requested.

The Committee received a summary of all letters sent and responses received, together with an indication of whether the consideration of the issues resulted in any further action being required. The Committee also received a copy of all correspondence sent and all responses received since the Committee's meeting in July 2015.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

38 : NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE FOR WALES AND THE VALE, VALLEYS AND CARDIFF (VVC) REGIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sue Lent (Cabinet Member, Early Years, Children & Families and Deputy Leader), Tony Young (Director of Children's Services), Rachel Evans (Head of Children's Services for the Vale of Glamorgan), Suzanne Griffiths (Director of Operations, National Adoption Service) and Angela Harris (Regional Adoption Manager – Vale, Valleys & Cardiff Adoption Service).

The purpose of this report was to provide the Committee with an update on the National Adoption Service for Wales (NAS) which is hosted by the City of Cardiff Council and an opportunity to review and comment on the implementation and operations of the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (VVC) Regional Adoption Collaborative for which the Vale of Glamorgan Council is the lead local authority. The briefing report set out key information about the National Adoption Service and the Regional service- together with some performance information for the period 2011 – 2014 and specific performance information for 2014 – 15.

Officers gave presentations on the National and Regional elements of the service, following which the Chairperson invited questions from the Committee.

The Committee asked where independent adoption agencies fit in to the new arrangements. The Committee was advised that the nationally the service works closely with them. Three of the four independent agencies are on the Advisory Group for NAS and one represents them on the Governance Board. The aim is to develop the involvement of the agencies across the services as a whole including

with the regional collaboratives. There are only two agencies in Wales that recruit and approve adopters, St David's and Barnardo's.

The Committee asked what proportion of children that are put up for adoption are from minority ethnic groups and what percentage of adopters are from those groups. The Committee was advised that there are only a small number of children from minority ethnic groups. There has been some success in recruiting adopters from ethnic groups but on occasion they are from outside the area.

The Committee asked why there has to be a national as well as a regional adoption service and noted that both have the same performance indicators (PIs). The Committee was advised that the decision to have a National Adoption Service was made by the Welsh Government. The National Adoption Service is a three tier service comprising of the national elements, regional collaborative groups and some local services. It is one performance system and that is why the PIs are the same. The collaboratives are responsible for delivering a regional service for the local authorities in their area within the context of a partnership agreement. The National Adoption Service is a network of independent organisations, including the regional collaboratives, Health and partners from the voluntary sector. Legally there is a link with all twenty-two local authorities and the five regional collaboratives .

The Committee enquired about the possible impact that the migration of large numbers of people into Cardiff might have on adoption services, and whether there will be difficulties in recruiting adopters for children who are asylum seekers. The Committee was advised that there is no current evidence that asylum seekers will need adoption services more than any other part of the community does. Migration into Cardiff will bring significant and complex pressures. The Director offered to return to the Committee at a later date with a report on asylum seekers and adoption.

The Committee asked whether the Welsh Government has given any assurances that the funding arrangements for the National Adoption Service will continue for some years. The Committee was advised that local government is now responsible for the ongoing funding of the National Service. Initially the service had been given a fixed budget but it is working with the Welsh Local Government Association to try and secure a funding arrangement that will cover core costs into the future, something which is needed in times of austerity.

The Committee asked if there are any risks that the introduction of the National Adoption Service will cause Cardiff Council to overspend on its budget for adoption services. The Committee was advised that there is no risk of that. The Council will hold the regional service to account; the scrutiny of the National Adoption Service as a whole is done through other means, ultimately by Welsh Ministers. If it is a success then a lot of money will be saved because children who are up for adoption will be placed more quickly and so move out of local authority care, which is costly.

The Committee asked officers to comment on the fact that Wales has a larger number of children in care than other parts of the UK. The Committee was advised that there are many complex reasons for this but the main thing to be borne in mind is that there is no right number when it comes to children placed for adoption. It is always about making the right decision for each individual child.

The Committee asked how long it takes to assess and approve prospective adopters and whether children are ever placed with adopters outside Wales. The Committee was advised that placements are made outside Wales where there is a need and where an appropriate placement in Wales cannot be made. Where an adoption agency or regional collaboration cannot make a placement within its own resources an interagency fee is paid which is based on a national formula reflecting the costs of assessing the adopters. With regard to the duration of assessments, Members were advised that the requirement is that Welsh Government guidance indicates that the assessment process should, optimally, take about eight months but the aim is to complete it in a shorter time than that. Performance for 2014/15 was an average of just over nine months. Recruitment is less of a problem than matching. There are various ways of matching children with approved adopters and these include things like child profiles and activity days where children and adopters can meet.

The Committee noted that between different areas of Wales there are large discrepancies in performance and suggested that these gaps have to be closed. The Committee also suggested that there are clearly issues when it comes to the adoption of older children and commented that the report does not provide much data on the numbers of older children coming into the system. The Committee was advised that just a year ago Members would not have had access to any of the data that is provided in the report because the systems were not in place to bring it all together. The process of understanding and responding to the data gathered by the NAS performance Measurement System has now commenced and will develop from now onwards.

The Committee asked officers how they saw scrutiny following through on the whole process for the whole of the region. The Committee was advised that all of the collaboratives have a seat on the Governance Board and ministers from the Welsh Government will also scrutinise the national arrangements.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for attending the meeting, for their presentations and for answering questions from Members.

AGREED: That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the Cabinet Member highlighting the issues raised during the Way Forward discussion.

39 : WAY FORWARD

During the Way Forward discussion the Committee agreed the content of the letter that the Chairperson would send to the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Committee, highlighting the issues raised and comments made in relation to the agenda items that had been discussed during the meeting.

40 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 10 November 2015 at 2.30pm in Committee Room 4, County Hall.

The meeting terminated at 6.55 pm

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 November 2015

**SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE MONITORING – ESTYN INSPECTION
OUTCOMES and LITERACY and NUMERACY**

Background

1. When considering its work programme for the year, the Committee agreed to receive a series of performance monitoring reports which would focus mainly on the implementation of the Estyn Inspection Action Plan but which would also include the Annual Performance of Schools report for the last academic year.
2. The Annual Performance of Cardiff Schools report provides an overview of the progress made by Cardiff schools in raising the standards attained by pupils, and thereby achieving the objectives and targets set by the Council for the educational attainment of children and young people in Cardiff. It is normally considered by this Committee in January and considered by the Council's Cabinet at a later meeting.
3. The Director of Education and Lifelong learning has, however, identified certain performance areas within the overall report which are already available to be scrutinised, ahead of the main report. The earlier consideration of these areas will enable the Committee to focus on the issues raised in the following areas:
 - Outcomes of inspections for schools inspected in the period September 2010 to July 2015 (**Appendix A**).
 - Performance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Tests (**Appendix B**).

Outcomes from Inspections

4. The report on the outcomes of inspections for schools inspected in the period September 2010 to July 2015 (copy attached at **Appendix A**) shows that of the 76 primary schools inspected in Cardiff whose reports have been published, thirty eight (50%) have required a follow-up activity; fourteen (18%) have required Estyn follow-up monitoring; two schools required special measures; and six required significant improvements. Nine schools received a judgment of Excellent in one or both of the overall indicators, and sixteen (21%) schools required local authority monitoring.
5. Of the five special schools inspected, one received a judgement of Excellent on both overall indicators, three received judgements of Good and the other required Estyn monitoring.
6. Of the 18 secondary schools inspected, 13 have required follow-up monitoring. Three of these required special measures (Cardiff proposed that one of these schools should close) and three significant improvement. Four schools required Estyn monitoring and three schools required local authority monitoring. Two schools received a judgement of Excellent on one or both of the overall indicators.

Performance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Tests

7. This report provides information following the introduction of the National Literacy programme and National Numeracy programme in 2012. The resultant National Reading and Numeracy tests (where outcomes are given as standardised scores) were introduced in 2013, and this is the third year on year progress report (copy attached at **Appendix B**).
8. Results are presented in this release in three bands of standardised scores. "Less than 85" represents pupils with standardised scores more than one

standard deviation less than the mean. “Between 85 and 115” represents pupils with standardised scores within one standard deviation either side of the mean. “More than 115” represents pupils with standardised scores more than one standard deviation above the mean.

9. The key issues highlighted in the report, attached at **Appendix B**, are:

- The outcomes from test scores and teacher assessments are improving in nearly all areas and at the end of every key stage.
- At each key stage, and in both literacy and numeracy, the proportion of pupils whose test results are in the average band or above is lower than the proportion of pupils assessed by teacher to be at the expected level or above.
- The performance of girls is higher than boys in nearly all indicators in the average band, and in reading at the above average band.

Scope of Scrutiny

10. This report will provide the Committee with an opportunity to review performance in the two areas. It will also enable Members to enquire as to:

- i. How have Cardiff schools performed in achieving their responsibilities to all learners?
- ii. Have any lessons been learnt from the analysis of the results and what actions have been taken to address any issues?
- iii. What actions have been implemented to ensure improvements in provision in areas achieving below the Consortium average and the All Wales average?

Way Forward

11. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a copy of “The outcome of Estyn Inspections and Performance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Tests” (copies attached at **Appendix A** and **B**). Councillor Sarah Merry

(Cabinet Member for Education) may wish to make a statement. Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and Angela Kent, Head of Achievement and Inclusion, will introduce the report, and are available to answer any questions Members may have.

12. Members may wish to review the information in the attached report, together with the officers' presentations and answers to Members' questions, and to consider highlighting any issues for further investigation or more detailed monitoring over the next year.

Legal Implications

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial

implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to:

- ❖ Review and evaluate the information contained in this report and provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education or to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning; and
- ❖ Identify any issues for further consideration or investigation.

MARIE ROSENTHAL

Director Governance and Legal Services

NICK BATCHELAR

**Director of Education and
Lifelong Learning**

4 November 2015

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Report to Scrutiny – November 2015

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on the outcomes of school inspections and the actions being taken by the local authority to improve the performance of schools.

The Outcomes of School Inspections

2. At the time of writing this report, 3 nursery schools, 76 primary schools, 5 special schools, 18 secondary schools and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) have been inspected since September 2010 when Estyn introduced a revised framework for inspections. The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2013-2014 cited that 65% (approximately two thirds) of primary schools and 69% of secondary schools are in some form of follow-up monitoring.
3. The table below shows the comparison of outcomes of school inspections requiring follow up activity over the last five years in Cardiff with Wales 2014-2015, by phase.

	Primary	Secondary
Cardiff	50%	72%
Wales	65%	69%

In 2014-2015 six special schools were inspected by Estyn. Three were judged to have excellent standards and three to have good standards. In Cardiff, in the last five years, one special school has been judged as excellent, three as good and one special school and the PRU have been placed in Estyn monitoring.

4. Of the 76 primary schools inspected in Cardiff, whose reports have been published, thirty eight (50%) have required a follow-up activity; fourteen (18%) have required Estyn follow-up monitoring; two schools required special measures and six significant improvements. Nine schools received a judgment of excellent in one or both of the overall indicators, sixteen (21%) schools required local authority monitoring.
5. Of the 18 secondary schools inspected 13 (72%) have required follow-up monitoring. Three of these required special measures (Cardiff proposed that one of these schools should close) and three significant improvement. Four schools required Estyn monitoring and three schools required local authority monitoring. Two schools received a judgement of excellent on one or both of the overall indicators.

6. Of the five special schools inspected one received a judgement of excellent on both overall indicators, three received judgements of good and the other required Estyn monitoring.

Key Issues

7. The Estyn inspection outcomes of Cardiff's primary schools are stronger than across the secondary sector when compared to inspections across Wales. The quality of provision is improving and becoming more consistent in the primary sector at a faster rate than in the secondary sector. This is reflected in the national categorisation of schools where a smaller proportion of the city's primary schools require the most intensive (red) level of support than is the case in Cardiff secondary schools.
8. The profile of examination, test results and teacher assessments, taken together with inspection judgements and the benchmark comparison of Cardiff schools with similar schools across Wales suggests that the quality of provision in Cardiff schools is improving. However, inspection grades and benchmark comparisons show that there are currently not enough schools with the highest quality of provision, judged to be excellent. There remain a small, but significant, number of schools where standards are too low and quality of provision is inadequate.
9. Actions to address weaknesses in poorly performing schools, through the work of challenge advisers, the systematic review of progress where standards are low, and where appropriate by the use of formal warnings from the local authority, are now being delivered at an earlier stage but there is a need for continued rigour in identifying causal factors in underperformance and acting promptly to ensure that these are addressed.
10. During the 2014-2015 academic year:
 - Five schools were judged as requiring significant improvement: Fairwater Primary, St. Cuthbert's RC Primary, Adamsdown Primary, Christ the King RC Primary and Cantonian High;
 - Two schools were judged as requiring special measures: Eastern High and Trelai Primary.
11. In the two secondary schools the local authority has taken intervention action:
 - Cantonian High, the proportion of pupils achieving the level 2+ threshold improved in 2015. The school is receiving support for leadership, learning and teaching from a high performing school and the school is also involved in the Schools Challenge Cymru programme.
 - Eastern High, the school has made progress over the last year in some areas such as improving behaviour and leadership. Improving the quality of teaching is now the main focus in order to improve outcomes for pupils in 2016.
12. In the primary schools, poor performance at the end of each key stage and shortcomings in leadership were the main contributory factors. All these schools have clear improvement plans, regular reviews of progress involving headteacher, chair of governors, challenge adviser and local authority officer. Estyn carry out monitoring visits on a planned cycle.

13. Over the same period:
 - Two schools were removed from requiring significant improvement, namely Holy Family RC Primary and Allensbank Primary; and
 - St. Illtyds was removed from special measures.
14. A more robust working relationship between the local authority and the consortium is ensuring that schools receive an appropriate degree of challenge. There is closer alignment of the local authority, Schools Challenge Cymru and the consortium ensuring that the school improvement strategies currently being implemented are impacting positively on the rate of improvement. An increased focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning has accelerated the progress made by learners.
15. Where practice in schools is strong the structures to enable effective practice to be transferred between schools are beginning to have positive impact. A number of Cardiff schools are functioning as 'hubs' with a formal role in fostering the dissemination of good practice through providing training and networking. In addition a number of strong schools are now formally commissioned as improvement partners to work with schools in need of rapid improvement.

Main Themes in Inspection Reports

16. Estyn's Annual Report 2013-2014 highlights that in primary schools where standards are excellent, pupils make very good progress in their learning, often from low starting points. They apply their literacy, numeracy, thinking and problem-solving skills well across the curriculum. Pupils eligible for free school meals generally perform as well as their peers and there tends to be little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
17. Where inspections judge standards to be only adequate, their report notes that there is no trend of improvement, numeracy skills are weaker than literacy skills and girls tend to perform better than boys, particularly at the higher-than-expected levels and in literacy. The quality and consistency of feedback pupils receive and how effective this is in helping pupils to improve their work are weak. Leaders do not hold senior and middle leaders to account for the standards pupils achieve and do not place an appropriate focus on improving standards. These comments apply equally to Cardiff schools.
18. In relation to secondary schools, Estyn's annual report 2013-2014 identifies that in the very few schools where standards are excellent, examination results are very good and consistently compare well with those of similar schools. Nearly all pupils display high levels of achievement and progress in their learning.
19. The report also documents that where standards are only adequate, there are weaknesses in mathematics, at the level 2+ indicator, and in the provision for more able and talented pupils. Leaders at all levels do not have enough impact on standards and the quality of teaching. Governors do not hold leaders to account well enough for their responsibilities or challenge the school enough on

areas for improvement. Recommendations highlighting the need to take action to improve in these areas have also been made in reports on Cardiff schools.

20. Where schools in Cardiff are judged to be unsatisfactory, there are low standards and/or weaknesses in leadership. Self-evaluation and planning for improvement are not robust enough and have not had enough impact on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. Governors do not challenge the school's leaders rigorously enough or hold them to account fully for the standards that pupils achieve.

Actions being taken to improve inspection outcomes

Challenge and Support

21. Cardiff Local Authority, working in partnership with the Central South Consortium, challenges and supports schools in their work to raise standards. The introduction of the national categorisation has supported improvements in the accuracy of challenge advisers' judgements on schools current performance and also on schools' capacity to improve. This has led to earlier intervention in schools causing concern.
22. Performance management and quality assurance of challenge advisers' work is now more systematic. Challenge advisers' written reports are quality assured by senior challenge advisers and challenge advisers are accompanied on identified visits to schools to provide a first-hand view of the quality of their work. As a result of these changes there is now stronger oversight of challenge advisers' work and improvements in practice. This has resulted in a closer alignment between the judgements of consortium challenge advisers and Estyn inspections.
23. In schools where challenge advisers have concerns that insufficient or incomplete first hand evidence is collected in a systematic way across the year, the consortium carries out a whole school review on behalf of the local authority. The findings from such reviews are used to inform the categorisation process and the level and detail of support that is required to increase the rate of improvement.
24. In September 2014 the local authority revised its "Schools Causing Concern" process and refined it further in September 2015 in order to identify underperformance early, in a systematic way. Where schools give rise to concern there is now a more systematic approach to holding headteachers and chairs of governors to account for the progress of their school. A programme of half termly (red) or termly (amber) meetings to evaluate progress against the priorities and, where necessary, to alter the challenge and support with these schools is implemented. In many cases, there is evidence of greater pace in the improvement.

25. Where progress is insufficient in scale or pace the local authority formally communicates its concerns to the chair of governors and takes swifter action, when necessary, in respect of statutory powers. In the 2014-2015 academic year the local authority issued five warning notices in accordance with the School Standards And Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and nine schools received letters of concern which clearly outline expectations for improvement within clear timescales. In five schools, four secondary and one primary, the local authority has used powers of intervention under the act.
26. These improved arrangements to identify and intervene in underperforming schools are impacting on leadership capacity, standards of attainment and the quality of provision in schools. This has improved the relative performance of schools.

Develop Leadership Capacity

27. In 2015 in schools where the capacity to improve is judged to be good or better a system of "Peer Review" has started. Eligible schools are grouped into threes and the headteachers work together to carry out a school review with a previously agreed focus. This allows good practice to be shared but also builds the expertise of the Headteachers involved in peer evaluation.
28. In order to build leadership capacity within schools the local authority commissions a range of leadership development programmes that are arranged by the consortium and delivered by experienced leaders and practitioners.
These include:
 - Aspiring middle leaders
 - Aspiring senior leaders
 - Aspiring headteachers
 - New to headship
 - Strategic headship (refresher course for heads in post 5 or more years and for those that need to make rapid improvement)
 - Consultant Leaders-for experienced high achievers who have the commitment and capacity to support other schools
 - Executive headship-for headteachers running more than one school.
29. Governance is being strengthened through the provision of both generic mandatory training and bespoke training particularly in red and amber schools. There has been a concerted effort by the local authority and schools to reduce the number of governor vacancies and to appoint governors which have a broader range of background and experience to bring to governing bodies.
30. The consortium has recruited a number of experienced governors to act as consultant governors in schools where there is a need to further develop the role of the governing body in challenging underperformance and holding the school leadership to account.

Appendix 1 – Summary of Inspection Outcomes

Primary Schools	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
At least good	8	10	9	6	5
LA or ESTYN monitoring	8	5	8	4	5
Significant Improvement or Special Measures	-	2		2	4 (+1)*
Total Schools Inspected	16	17	17	12	14

*Fairwater Primary was moved into requiring significant improvement from Estyn monitoring

Secondary Schools	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
At least good	2		2		1
LA or ESTYN monitoring	1	3		1	2
Significant Improvement or Special Measures		1	3		2
Total Schools Inspected	3	4	5	1	5

Special Schools	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
At least good		1	2	1	
LA or ESTYN monitoring	1 PRU			1	
Significant Improvement or Special Measures					
Total Schools Inspected	1	1	2	2	0

Appendix 2 – Outcomes of inspections by school between September 2010 and August 2015

Primary Schools

School	Date	Current Performance	Prospects for Improvement	Inspection follow-up	Outcome
Pentyrch Primary	Sep-10	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Baden Powell Primary	Oct-10	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
St Cadoc's RC Primary	Nov-10	Good	Good		
Ysgol Bro Eirwg	Nov-10	Good	Good		
Ysgol Coed-y-Gof	Nov-10	Good	Good		
Trelai Primary	Dec-10	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Roath Park Primary	Feb-11	Good	Good		
Lansdowne Primary	Feb-11	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
Pen y Bryn Primary	Feb-11	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Pentrebane Primary	Mar-11	Good	Good		
Peter Lea Primary	Mar-11	Good	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
All Saints CW Primary	May-11	Good	Excellent	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch	May-11	Good	Good		
Meadowlane Primary School	Jun-11	Good	Good	LA Monitoring	Removed
Radyr Primary School	Jun -11	Good	Adequate	ESTYN Monitoring	Removed
Ysgol y Berllan Deg	Jul -11	Good	Good		
Rhydypenau Primary	Oct-11	Good	Good	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Bryn Celyn Primary	Nov-11	Adequate	Adequate	Significant Improvement	Removed
St Alban's RC Primary	Nov-11	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures	Removed
St John Lloyd RC Primary	Nov-11	Good	Good		
Ysgol Treganna	Jan-12	Good	Good	Excellent Practice	

				Case Study	
Stacey Primary	Jan-12	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn Monitoring	Removed
Trowbridge Primary	Feb-12	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Pencaerau Primary	Feb-12	Good	Good		
St Monica's CW Primary	Mar-12	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
Tongwynlais Primary	Mar-12	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent Practice Case Study	
St Paul's CW Primary	Mar-12	Good	Good		
Ysgol Tan yr Eos	May-12	Good	Good	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Ysgol Nant Caerau	May-12	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
Oakfield Primary	May-12	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Ysgol Pen Y Pil	May-12	Good	Good		
Grangetown Primary	Jun-12	Good	Good		
Bishop Childs CW Primary	Jul-12	Good	Good		
Springwood Primary	Sep-12	Good	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Moorland	Sep-12	Good	Good		
St Francis RC	Nov-12	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
St Mary the Virgin CIW	Nov-12	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Albany	Nov-12	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
Ysgol Pen y Groes	Nov-12	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Millbank	Dec-12	Good	Good		
Ysgol Gwaelod y Garth	Jan-13	Good	Good		
St Philip Evans RC	Jan-13	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Marlborough	Jan-13	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
St Patrick's RC	Mar-13	Good	Good		
Glyn Coed	May-13	Good	Good		
St Peter's RC	Jun-13	Good	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Llanedeyrn	Jun-13	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed

Mount Stuart	Jun-13	Excellent	Excellent		
Bryn Deri	Jun-13	Good	Good		
Fairwater	July-13	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Now in significant improvement
Holy Family	Oct-13	Adequate	Adequate	Significant improvement	Removed
Willowbrook	Nov-13	Good	Good	LA monitoring (attendance)	Removed
St Bernadette's	Nov-13	Good	Good	None	
Allensbank	Dec-13	Adequate	Adequate	Significant improvement	Removed
St David's	Dec-13	Good	Good	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Ysgol Glan Ceubal	Dec-13	Good	Good		
Tremorfa Nursery	Dec-13	Good	Good	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Thornhill Primary School	Jan-14	Good	Adequate	ESTYN Monitoring	Removed
Coryton Primary School	Feb-14	Good	Good	LA Monitoring	
Gladstone Primary	Feb-14	Adequate	Good	ESTYN Monitoring	
Llandaff City C.I.W. Primary School	Mar-14	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent practice case study	
Herbert Thompson	Mar-14	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent practice case study	
Llanishen Fach Primary School	Mar-14	Good	Excellent	Excellent practice case study	
Grangetown Nursery School	Oct-14	Good	Good		
Coed Glas Primary School	Oct-14	Adequate	Good	LA monitoring	
Christ the King RC Primary School	Nov-14	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Significant Improvement	
Lakeside Primary School	Nov-14	Good	Good	LA monitoring	
Radnor Primary School	Dec-14	Adequate	Adequate	LA monitoring	
Ely Caerau Children's Centre	Dec-14	Good	Good		
Whitchurch Primary School	Jan-15	Good	Good		
Glan yr Afon	Jan-15	Adequate	Good	LA monitoring	

Gabalfa	Feb-15	Good	Good	LA monitoring	
Pentrebane	Mar-15	Good	Good		
St. Cuthberts	Mar-15	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Significant Improvement	
Adamsdown	Mar-15	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Significant Improvement	
Rhiwbina	May-15	Excellent	Good		
Trelai	May-15	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures	
Pencaerau	Jun-15	Good	Good	Excellent Practice Case Study	
Ysgol Melin Gruffydd	Jun-15	Good	Good		
St. Mary's RC	Sept-15				Report Due 24/11/15
St. Paul's RC	Sept-15				Report Due 1/12/15
Hywel Dda	Nov-15				Report Due 8/1/16
Bryn Hafod	Nov-15				Report Due 8/1/16

Special Schools

School	Date	Current Performance	Prospects for Improvement	Inspection follow-up	Outcome
Bryn Y Deryn PRU	Mar-11	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Ty Gwyn Special	May-12	Excellent	Excellent	None	
Greenhill	Mar-13	Good	Good	None	
The Hollies	May-13	Good	Good	None	
Meadowbank	Nov-13	Good	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
The Court	Jun-14	Good	Good	None	
Riverbank	Nov-15				Report Due 15/1/16

Secondary Schools

School	Date	Current Performance	Prospects for Improvement	Inspection follow-up	Outcome
Fitzalan High	Sep-10	Good	Good	None	
Cantonian High	Feb-11	Good	Good	LA monitoring	Removed
Ysgol Glantaf	May-11	Good	Good	None	

Bishop of Llandaff	Oct-11	Good	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Glyn Derw	Nov -11	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Significant improvement	Removed
Michaelston Community College	Nov-11	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Llanedeyrn High	May-12	Adequate	Good	Estyn monitoring	Removed
Llanrumney High	Oct-12	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures	Closed
St Illtyd's RC	Nov-12	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Special measures	Removed
Willows High	Dec-12	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Significant improvement	Removed
Cathays High	Feb-13	Good	Good	Excellent practice case study	
Cardiff High	Mar-13	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent practice case study	
St Teilo's C.I.W. High School	Feb-14	Good	Good	LA monitoring	
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr	Sep-14	Adequate	Adequate	Estyn monitoring	
Eastern High School	Dec-14	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Special Measures	
Cantonian High	Feb-15	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	Significant Improvement	
Corpus Christi	Feb-15	Good	Good	LA monitoring	
Mary Immaculate RC High	May 15	Good	Excellent		

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy 2015

Background

- The national literacy and numeracy framework (LNF) was introduced in Wales as a statutory requirement in 2012 to help schools to identify and provide opportunities for learners to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, in order that:
 - learners will leave primary schools with improved literacy and numeracy skills so that they benefit fully from their learning in secondary school; and
 - learners leaving compulsory education will have the oracy, reading, writing and numeracy skills necessary for further education or employment.
- National reading and numeracy tests were implemented on a statutory basis in May 2013 for all pupils in years 2 to 9. Previously many schools had used commercially produced reading and numeracy tests as well as cognitive ability tests.
- The national tests complement the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and aim to track pupils' progress in reading and numeracy skills from year 2 (the end of the Foundation Phase) through to year 9 (the end of key stage 3).
- Pupils' performance in the national tests is given as a standardised score (SS). These enable pupils to be compared with a large, nationally representative sample that has taken the test prior to publication. The tests are standardised so that the average standardised score is 100, irrespective of the difficulty of the test. The average band is defined to be from SS85 to SS114.
- Teacher assessments are given as outcomes in the Foundation Phase and levels at Key Stages 2 and 3. The "expected" performance is outcome 5 in the Foundation Phase, level 4 at Key Stage 2 and level 5 at Key Stage 3.

National Test Data Analysis Summary

Literacy – English/Welsh

- The trend in combined performance of pupils in the national reading tests in years 2 to 9 is shown in the table below. In the English reading tests it can be seen that there is an upward trend in Cardiff's performance over the last three years. This improvement has been achieved against a background of increasing numbers of English as an additional language (EAL) learners.
- However, the overall figures are slightly lower than regional and national performance. In the Welsh reading tests, performance has improved slightly since 2013 and is higher than both regional and national performance.

	Reading: English SS85+			Reading: Welsh SS85+		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
Cardiff	82.8%	83.1%	83.2%	88.3%	88.2%	90.3%
CSC	83.1%	83.2%	83.6%	85.5%	84.7%	87.1%
Wales	83.3%	83.2%	83.6%	84.1%	88.2%	84.6%

8. In the English reading test, Cardiff compares most favourably with other Welsh authorities at above the average band. In 2015, for standardised scores above the average band (SS115+), Cardiff is above the Welsh average and ranked 5th. with 18.4% compared to the Welsh average of 16.6%. At the average band, Cardiff is 13th in Wales with 83.2% of all pupils (years 2-9) reaching the average band i.e. a standardised score of 85 or above (SS85+). This is slightly below the Wales average of 83.6%.
9. In the Welsh reading test Cardiff is ranked 2nd for SS 85+ with 90.3% and 2nd for SS 115+ with 25.8%.

Numeracy

10. The trend in overall performance of pupils in the national numeracy tests is shown in the table below. In the numeracy procedural tests it can be seen that Cardiff's performance has been broadly unchanged over the last three years and slightly lower than regional and national performance. In the numeracy reasoning tests, Cardiff's performance improved in 2015 compared to the previous year but is still below both regional and national performance.

	Numeracy: Procedural SS85+			Numeracy: Reasoning SS85+		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
Cardiff	83.4%	82.0%	83.5%		80.9%	84.3%
CSC	83.7%	82.0%	83.9%		80.9%	85.0%
Wales	84.0%	82.8%	84.2%		82.2%	85.6%

11. Cardiff is ranked 13th in Wales with 83.5% of all pupils (years 2-9) reaching the average band i.e. a standardised score (SS) of 85 or above in the Numeracy Procedural test. This is just below the Wales average of 84.2%.
12. Cardiff is above the Welsh average for pupils with SS 115+ (above average band), 18.1% compared with Welsh average of 16.0% and ranked 7th.
13. In the Numeracy Reasoning test 84.2% of pupils reached the average band compared to 85.6% of pupils across Wales. For SS 115+ the figures were 16.7% and 16.8% respectively. Cardiff is ranked 16th for SS 85+ and 12th for SS 115+.

Key Issues

Test Outcomes Compared to Teacher Assessments

14. The data in Appendix 1 shows the test scores at the end of each key stage and compares the proportion of pupils in the average band SS85+ with the proportion of pupils teacher assessed to be at the expected level.

15. The outcomes from test scores and teacher assessments are improving in nearly all areas and at the end of every key stage. The rate of increase is greatest in the national numeracy reasoning test at the end of year 9, increasing the proportion of pupils in at least the average band by 8.1 percentage points. This is significantly larger than any increases in teacher assessments in 2015.
16. At each key stage and in all areas the proportion of pupils in the average band is lower than the proportion of pupils at the expected level. The differences are greatest in mathematics and smallest in Welsh.
17. The tests assess a narrower range of skills than those assessed through teacher assessment. For example, in Welsh and English, the tests only assess pupils' reading skills whereas teacher assessments also take into account pupils' oracy and writing skills. This is one possible cause for the difference seen in the figures.
18. The large proportion of pupils, particularly in the Foundation Phase, with English as an additional language also has an impact on the overall reading test results. These pupils develop their oracy skills ahead of their reading and writing skills.
19. The difference in the performance of girls and boys in the national numeracy tests is very similar to the difference in performance in teacher assessments in mathematics. However in the reading tests there is some discrepancy between the difference in girls and boys performance in the tests and in the teacher assessment of English/Welsh.

Performance of Boys Compared to Girls

20. Data on the performance of boys compared to girls in the national tests is shown in Appendix 2. Overall the performance of girls is higher than boys in nearly all indicators in the average band and in reading at the above average band. In all the tests, a greater proportion of girls and boys achieve standardised scores of at least 115 than across Wales as a whole.
21. There are a greater proportion of girls than boys with standardised scores of at least 85, in all year groups of nearly all the national tests (Appendix 2). The differences are greater in reading than in either of the numeracy tests. The differences in the tests follow a similar pattern to those nationally.
22. Within the average band, in the reading tests in both English and Welsh, girls' performance is above that of boys by up to 9 percentage points. In the numeracy tests the greatest difference is 5.5 percentage points in the procedural test in year 2. In years 4, 8 and 9 the performance of boys exceeds that of girls.
23. Above the average band, the performance of girls is greater than boys in reading in both English and Welsh. However, in both the numeracy tests girls do not perform as highly as boys. This pattern is replicated in the national performance figures.

Factors Affecting Progress

Some common themes emerge from the overall pattern of test results.

Literacy

24. In schools where pupils make good progress in reading:

- pupils are taught to use a variety of reading strategies and comprehension skills;
- opportunities are planned for pupils to apply their reading skills for a variety of purposes, which gives pupils confidence when tackling unseen texts; and
- teachers consider the styles of questions that are used in reading tests and incorporate them into everyday teaching and learning.

25. Where performance is relatively weak:

- data is not scrutinised and used effectively to target individuals and groups of pupils;
- reading sessions are often not skills focused and there is limited coverage of text types which does not allow pupils to be flexible readers; and
- schools have not responded adequately to the raised year on year expectation of the literacy framework and adapted pedagogy to meet the new demands.

Numeracy

26. In schools where pupils make good progress in numeracy:

- there is a planned focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills both in mathematics and across the curriculum;
- pupils' performance in the numeracy tests is thoroughly analysed. Identified shortcomings are used to inform teachers' planning; and
- key objectives relating to questions in the tests are explicitly taught and frequently practised.

27. Where performance is relatively weak:

- targeted interventions are not tailored sufficiently to meet individual needs;
- the requirements of the national numeracy framework are not clearly understood by teachers and sufficiently embedded; and
- teachers lack the knowledge and/or skills necessary to develop pupils' reasoning skills.

Pupil Progress

The tests are standardised so that the average standardised score is 100, irrespective of the difficulty of the test. As a result a pupil will be deemed to have made expected progress if their standardised score remains the same each year. Any increase in standardised scores reflects a measure of accelerated progress.

Literacy

28. In the English reading tests pupil progress from 2014 to 2015 is inconsistent. Overall, pupils in years 3, 4 and 8 made better than expected progress from 2014 to 2015, but progress in the other year groups was below expectations.

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 85 in English Reading Tests

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015	83.3%	83.4%	83.0%	83.9%	83.6%	83.5%	83.3%	81.4%
2014	81.6%	82.6%	84.5%	84.3%	83.7%	82.9%	81.7%	83.4%

29. The improvements in performance in the national Welsh reading tests and in teacher assessments in Welsh first language at the end of each key stage can also be seen in the progress that year 2 to 9 cohorts have made from 2014 to 2015 which are shown in the table below. With the exception of year 8 (2014), every year group had a greater proportion of pupils in the average band in 2015.

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 85 in Welsh Reading Tests

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015	89.3%	90.7%	86.6%	94.4%	89.5%	91.1%	91.4%	90.5%
2014	85.3%	84.7%	88.9%	89.2%	88.8%	89.1%	90.9%	91.3%

Numeracy

30. The improvements in performance in the national numeracy tests and in teacher assessments in mathematics at the end of each key stage can also be seen in the progress that year 2 to 9 cohorts have made from 2014 to 2015 which are shown in the table below. In the numeracy procedural tests pupil progress from 2014 to 2015 was better than expected in nearly all year groups, the exception being year 8 where progress was below expectations.

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 85 in the Numeracy Procedural Tests

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015	82.7%	83.0%	83.2%	83.6%	84.3%	85.0%	83.8%	82.7%
2014	80.2%	80.5%	82.9%	83.0%	83.7%	84.2%	80.1%	81.6%

31. This progress is replicated in all year groups in the national reasoning tests, particularly in year 3 in primary schools and years 7 to 9 in secondary schools as shown in the table below.

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 85 in the Numeracy Reasoning Tests

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015	81.7%	82.9%	81.7%	83.1%	83.4%	86.8%	87.6%	88.4%
2014	78.1%	80.0%	82.1%	82.5%	82.1%	82.1%	80.7%	80.3%

Actions Taken to Secure Improvements

32. To support teachers in improving pupils' performance in the tests, the local authority has commissioned the consortium's literacy and numeracy teams to:

- develop alternative diagnostic tools which link questions used in the tests back to the skills in the LNF. This allows teachers to ascertain whether skills are being taught effectively or whether planning needs to focus on developing certain skills.
- deliver whole school training, in targeted schools, on effective teaching of literacy and numeracy and provide coaching, following training, for individual teachers to improve the planning and delivery of literacy and numeracy lessons
- provide network opportunities for practitioners to reflect on ways to successfully develop pupils' ability to apply their skills across the curriculum; and
- establish specialist centres to offer training to further support literacy and numeracy development in schools. A number of Hubs and Foundation Phase alliance schools also offer training for teachers.

33. In addition the local authority's Learning Intervention Team, part of the traded specialist teacher service, also provides training for schools to build capacity in supporting SEN pupils and other learners who experience barriers to their acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. This work includes:

- training to enable schools to implement the SAIL/ SAIL Cymraeg programme, an intervention for Year 1 pupils at School Action and STARS/ STARS Cymreig programme, an intervention for Year 2 pupils at School Action Plus;
- support for the implementation of Rainbow Readers, a commercial reading programme aimed at Years 4, 5 and 6 to raise reading and comprehension standards and to develop confidence and independence;
- programmes delivered in collaboration with Woodlands High School to support provision for the <80 pupils at key stage 3;
- training for schools to implement Maths Factor, a numeracy programme designed in line with the Numeracy Framework and new Programme of Study. This can be used to raise standards in numeracy for pupils experiencing specific or general learning difficulties; and
- specific individualised programmes written for pupils referred by schools at stage 3.

Appendix 1

Outcomes in Reading Tests compared to outcomes from Teacher Assessments

Performance Measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving outcome 5 or better at the end of Foundation Phase in LLC-E*. (Teacher Assessment)	83.4%	85.2%	87.9%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of Foundation Phase (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Reading Test - English.	87.7%	81.6%	83.3%
The percentage of pupils achieving outcome 5 or better at the end of Foundation Phase in LLC-W*. (Teacher Assessment)	86.9%	90.5%	92.8%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of Foundation Phase (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Reading Test - Welsh.	88.3%	85.3%	89.3%

*LLC-E Language and Communication English

*LLC-W Language and Communication Welsh

Performance Measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or better at the end of Key Stage 2 in English. (Teacher Assessment)	86.0%	87.3%	89.9%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of key stage 2 (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Reading Test - English.	88.1%	83.8%	83.6%
The percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or better at the end of Key Stage 2 in Welsh. (Teacher Assessment)	89.5%	90.1%	93.7%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of key stage 2 (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Reading Test - Welsh.	92.3%	88.8%	89.5%

Performance Measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or better at Key Stage 3 in English.	84.0%	86.0%	86.7%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of key stage 3 (standardised score (SS) 85+ in the National Reading Test.	80.6%	83.4%	81.4%
The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or better at Key Stage 3 in Welsh.	88.5%	94.0%	92.8%
The percentage achieving average level at the end of key stage 3 (standardised score (SS) 85+ in the National Reading Test - Welsh.	89.8%	91.3%	90.5%

Outcomes in Numeracy Tests compared to outcomes from Teacher Assessments

Performance measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving outcome 5 or better at the end of Foundation Phase in Mathematical Development.	85.3%	87.4%	89.4%
The percentage achieving average numeracy level at the end of Foundation Phase (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Numeracy Procedural Test.	81.8%	80.3%	82.7%

Performance Measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or better at Key Stage 2 in mathematics.	86.2%	87.7%	89.9%
The percentage achieving average numeracy level at the end of key stage 2 (standardised score (SS) 85+) in the National Numeracy Procedural Test.	83.6%	83.7%	84.3%

Performance Measures	Outcomes 2013	Outcomes 2014	Outcomes 2015
The percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or better at Key Stage 3 in mathematics.	84.3%	87.6%	89.3%
The percentage achieving average numeracy level at the end of key stage 3 (standardised score (SS) 85+ in the National Numeracy Procedural Test.	83.1%	81.6%	82.7%

Appendix 2 - Performance of Boys and Girls in the National Tests

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 85

Reading: English

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	79.4%	79.6%	80.4%	79.8%	81.5%	81.4%	80.9%	80.8%
2015 - Girls	87.4%	87.4%	85.7%	88.1%	85.8%	85.7%	86.0%	82.0%
Difference	-8.0%	-7.8%	-5.3%	-8.3%	-4.3%	-4.3%	-5.1%	-1.2%
2014 - Boys	78.2%	80.1%	81.8%	81.6%	81.8%	80.1%	80.5%	82.2%
2014 - Girls	85.2%	85.2%	87.2%	87.2%	85.7%	86.0%	83.1%	84.8%
Difference	-7.0%	-5.1%	-5.4%	-5.5%	-4.0%	-5.9%	-2.7%	-2.6%

Reading: Cymraeg

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	84.7%	89.1%	85.3%	93.2%	89.2%	90.5%	89.3%	88.9%
2015 - Girls	93.6%	92.2%	88.0%	95.7%	89.8%	91.8%	93.9%	92.4%
Difference	-8.8%	-3.2%	-2.8%	-2.6%	-0.6%	-1.3%	-4.6%	-3.5%
2014 - Boys	83.9%	83.2%	87.4%	86.8%	86.5%	87.1%	88.5%	88.0%
2014 - Girls	86.6%	86.4%	90.5%	91.4%	90.9%	91.4%	93.5%	94.3%
Difference	-2.6%	-3.2%	-3.1%	-4.7%	-4.4%	-4.3%	-5.0%	-6.3%

Numeracy: Procedural

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	80.0%	81.1%	83.3%	81.6%	83.6%	84.1%	84.0%	83.7%
2015 - Girls	85.5%	85.0%	83.1%	85.5%	85.1%	85.9%	83.5%	81.6%
Difference	-5.5%	-3.9%	0.2%	-3.9%	-1.5%	-1.8%	0.5%	2.1%
2014 - Boys	78.4%	80.4%	82.6%	82.4%	83.4%	84.2%	81.6%	81.8%
2014 - Girls	82.1%	80.5%	83.2%	83.5%	84.0%	84.1%	78.6%	81.4%
Difference	-3.7%	-0.1%	-0.6%	-1.1%	-0.6%	0.1%	3.0%	0.4%

Numeracy: Reasoning

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	80.0%	82.4%	81.6%	82.7%	82.1%	85.3%	87.3%	87.8%
2015 - Girls	83.4%	83.4%	81.9%	83.6%	84.7%	88.4%	88.0%	89.0%
Difference	-3.4%	-0.9%	-0.3%	-1.0%	-2.6%	-3.1%	-0.7%	-1.2%
2014 - Boys	76.0%	79.5%	82.3%	82.7%	82.8%	80.6%	80.1%	79.9%
2014 - Girls	80.2%	80.5%	82.0%	82.3%	81.3%	83.9%	81.4%	80.8%
Difference	-4.2%	-1.0%	0.4%	0.4%	1.5%	-3.3%	-1.2%	-0.8%

Percentage of Cardiff pupils achieving a standardised score ≥ 115

Reading: English

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	13.7%	17.6%	16.5%	16.0%	17.2%	15.7%	16.4%	15.6%
2015 - Girls	20.1%	23.0%	21.4%	20.6%	21.4%	19.9%	19.8%	19.6%
Difference	-6.3%	-5.4%	-4.9%	-4.6%	-4.2%	-4.2%	-3.4%	-4.1%
2014 - Boys	12.46%	16.53%	15.00%	16.62%	16.59%	16.74%	17.57%	19.42%
2014 - Girls	18.71%	22.17%	21.47%	22.40%	21.08%	19.11%	19.46%	19.23%
Difference	-6.2%	-5.6%	-6.5%	-5.8%	-4.5%	-2.4%	-1.9%	0.2%

Reading: Cymraeg

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	19.0%	17.4%	19.9%	23.1%	25.8%	21.4%	24.6%	24.6%
2015 - Girls	26.9%	31.4%	29.6%	34.1%	25.1%	29.6%	31.5%	32.6%
Difference	-7.9%	-14.0%	-9.7%	-11.0%	0.7%	-8.3%	-6.9%	-8.0%
2014 - Boys	15.72%	17.18%	24.54%	28.51%	22.97%	28.44%	24.40%	20.57%
2014 - Girls	27.50%	27.97%	27.10%	29.57%	29.37%	25.76%	31.89%	24.74%
Difference	-11.8%	-10.8%	-2.6%	-1.1%	-6.4%	2.7%	-7.5%	-4.2%

Numeracy: Procedural

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	16.5%	20.9%	19.8%	21.9%	20.6%	21.3%	21.0%	20.9%
2015 - Girls	14.0%	14.4%	15.3%	17.0%	16.9%	16.7%	15.0%	17.6%
Difference	2.5%	6.5%	4.5%	4.8%	3.6%	4.6%	6.1%	3.3%
2014 - Boys	15.3%	16.5%	22.4%	21.5%	20.1%	20.2%	18.4%	20.1%
2014 - Girls	11.5%	12.2%	13.6%	17.4%	15.7%	13.9%	14.5%	12.6%
Difference	3.9%	4.4%	8.9%	4.1%	4.4%	6.2%	3.9%	7.4%

Numeracy: Reasoning

	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
2015 - Boys	15.2%	20.3%	17.8%	19.1%	17.9%	18.5%	18.5%	17.2%
2015 - Girls	14.8%	14.0%	17.0%	13.1%	14.7%	16.8%	15.9%	17.1%
Difference	0.4%	6.3%	0.8%	5.9%	3.2%	1.7%	2.6%	0.0%
2014 - Boys	13.9%	16.3%	18.5%	17.3%	16.9%	18.0%	16.5%	18.7%
2014 - Girls	12.3%	13.9%	11.2%	14.2%	15.9%	13.3%	14.1%	13.1%
Difference	1.7%	2.4%	7.2%	3.1%	1.0%	4.7%	2.3%	5.6%

Appendix 3 – Outcomes at the End of each Key Stage

Year 2 Pupils 2015

English Reading Test

An analysis of year 2 data shows that Cardiff's performance of 83.3% achieving SS85+ in the English reading test was below the consortium average (84.2%) and below the Welsh average (83.8%). Girls' performance (87.4%) was significantly above boys' (79.4%) which reflects the difference in the performance of girls (87.4%) and boys (80.3%) nationally.

16.8% of Cardiff's pupils achieved SS115+ in the year 2 English reading test. This was also below the average for the CSC region (17.0%), but above Wales (16.7%). At above average scores, girls also outperform boys with scores of 20.1% and 13.7% respectively. The national figures are girls (19.7%) and boys (13.8%).

Welsh Reading Test

In the Welsh reading test 89.3% of pupils achieved a SS85+ which was above the consortium average (85.4%) and above the Welsh average (84.3%). Girls' performance (93.6%) was above boys (84.7%) the difference was larger than the difference nationally with girls (87.9%) and boys (80.6%).

Cardiff pupils achieved 23.1% SS115+ in the year 2 Welsh reading test. This was also above the average for the CSC region (16.7%), and was significantly above the all Wales average (16.8%) for year 2 pupils. At above average scores, girls also outperform boys with scores of 26.9% and 23.1% respectively. The equivalent national figures are girls (20.6%) and boys (12.9%).

Numeracy Tests

Cardiff's performance in the Numeracy Procedural test needs to improve when compared with neighbouring local authorities within the region. 82.7% achieved a SS85+ which was below the consortium average (83.8%) and below the Welsh average (84.0%). Girls' performance (85.5%) was significantly above boys' (80.0%) but both groups' performances were below the performance of girls (85.9%) and boys (82.1%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 15.3% SS115+ in the year 2 Numeracy Procedural test. This was also below the average for the CSC region (15.4%), and Wales (16.1%) for year 2 pupils. At above average scores, boys outperform girls with scores of 16.5% and 14.0% respectively. The national figures are boys (16.9%) and girls (15.3%).

In the Numeracy Reasoning test 81.7% of pupils achieved SS85+ which was below both the consortium average (83.2%) and the Welsh average (84.3%). Girls' performance (83.4%) was above boys (80.0%) which reflect the difference in the performance of girls (85.4%) and boys (83.2%) nationally. Cardiff pupils achieved 15.0% SS115+ in the year 2 Numeracy Reasoning test. This was similar to the average for the CSC region (15.3%), but below the all Wales average (17.5%) for year 2 pupils. At above average scores, boys outperform girls with scores of 15.2% and 14.8% respectively. The national figures are boys (17.6%) and girls (17.3%).

Year 6 Pupils 2015

English Reading Test

Cardiff's performance in the English reading test was in line with neighbouring local authorities within the region. 83.6% achieved a SS85+ which was the same as the consortium average (83.6%) but below the Welsh average (84.2%). Girls' performance (85.8%) was significantly above boys' (81.5%) which reflects the difference in the performance of girls (87.0%) and boys (81.5%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 19.3% SS115+ in the year 6 English reading test. This was above the average for the CSC region (17.1%), and was significantly above the all Wales average (16.9%) for year 6 pupils. At above average scores, girls also outperform boys with scores of 21.4% and 17.2% respectively. The equivalent national figures are girls (18.8%) and boys (15.0%).

Welsh Reading Test

In the Welsh reading test 89.5% of pupils achieved a SS85+ which was above the consortium average (87.1%) and above the Welsh average (84.8%). Girls' performance (89.8%) was slightly higher than boys (89.2%). The difference in the performance of girls (88.0%) and boys (81.7%) nationally was much greater.

Cardiff pupils achieved 25.5% SS115+ in the year 6 Welsh reading test. This was also above the average for the CSC region (19.2%), and was significantly above the all Wales average (17.2%) for year 6 pupils. At above average scores, the performance of boys and girls is similar with scores of 25.8% and 25.1% respectively. The equivalent national figures are girls (19.5%) and boys (15.0%).

Numeracy Tests

Cardiff performed in line with neighbouring local authorities within the region in the Numeracy Procedural test. 84.3% achieved a SS85+ which was in line with the consortium average (84.4%) and the Welsh average (84.1%). Girls' performance (85.1%) was above boys' (83.6%) which reflects the difference in the performance of girls (85.4%) and boys (83.1%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 18.8% SS115+ in the year 6 Numeracy Procedural test. This was above the average for the CSC region (17.9%), and was significantly above the all Wales average (16.5%) for year 6 pupils. At above average scores, boys outperform girls with scores of 20.6% and 16.9% respectively. The equivalent national figures are boys (17.8%) and girls (15.2%).

In the Numeracy Reasoning test 83.4% of pupils achieved SS85+ which was in line with the consortium average (83.3%) but below the Welsh average (84.2%). Girls' performance (84.7%) was above boys (82.1%). Both girls' and boys' performance is slightly below the national performance of girls (85.6%) and boys (82.9%). Cardiff pupils achieved 16.3% SS115+ in the year 6 Numeracy Reasoning test. This was also in line with the average for the CSC region (16.5%), but was slightly below the all Wales average (16.8%) for year 6 pupils. At above average scores, boys also outperform girls with scores of 17.9% and 14.7% respectively. The equivalent national figures are boys (17.6%) and girls (16.0%).

Year 9 Pupils 2015

English Reading Test

Cardiff performed below neighbouring local authorities within the region in the English reading test. 81.4% achieved a SS 85+ which was slightly below the consortium average (81.7%) and also below the Welsh average (82.4%). The difference in girls' performance (82.0%) and that of boys' (80.8%) is smaller than the difference in the performance of girls (83.3%) and boys (80.6%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 17.5% SS115+ in the year 9 English reading test. This was well above the average for the CSC region (15.9%), and was above the all Wales average (16.2%) for year 9 pupils. At above average scores, girls outperform boys with scores of 19.6% and 15.6% respectively. The equivalent national figures are girls (18.6%) and boys (14.1%).

Welsh Reading Test

In the Welsh reading test 90.5% of pupils achieved SS85+ which was above the consortium average (87.7%) and above the Welsh average (84.4%). Girls' performance (92.4%) was significantly above boys (88.9%), which reflects the difference in the performance of girls (88.1%) and boys (80.7%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 28.4% SS115+ in the year 9 Welsh reading test. This was also above the average for the CSC region (18.0%), and was significantly above the all Wales average (17.7%) for year 6 pupils. At above average scores, girls also outperform boys with scores of 32.6% and 24.6% respectively. The equivalent national figures are girls (22.1%) and boys (13.1%).

Numeracy Tests

Cardiff performed well in the Numeracy Procedural test compared with neighbouring local authorities within the region. 82.7% achieved SS85+ which was slightly above the consortium average (82.4%) but below the Welsh average (83.8%). Girls' performance (81.6%) was slightly below the national figure for girls (83.7%), and the performance of boys' (83.7%) was slightly below boys (84.0%) nationally.

Cardiff pupils achieved 19.3% SS115+ in the year 9 Numeracy Procedural test. This was well above the average for the CSC region (16.3%), and was above the all Wales average (15.6%) for year 9 pupils. At above average scores, boys outperform girls with scores of 20.9% and 17.6% respectively. The equivalent national figures are boys (17.4%) and girls (13.8%).

In the Numeracy Reasoning test 88.4% of pupils achieved a SS85+ which was below the consortium average (88.7%) and below the Welsh average (89.3%). Girls' performance (89.0%) was above boys (87.8%), which reflects the difference in the performance of girls (90.2%) and boys (88.4%) nationally, 17.1% of Cardiff pupils achieved SS115+ in the year 9 Numeracy Reasoning test. This was above the average for the CSC region (15.7%), and was above the all Wales average (16.5%) for year 9 pupils. At above average scores, boys outperform girls with scores of 17.2% and 17.1% respectively. The equivalent national figures are boys (17.7%) and girls (15.8%).

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 November 2015

**DRAFT CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY Sept 2015 – Sept 2017 –
DRAFT CABINET REPORT**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an opportunity to undertake the pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Cabinet report on the Corporate Parenting Strategy Sept 2015 – Sept 2017, which is due to be considered by Cabinet on 12 November 2015 (copy attached at **Appendix A**).

Background

2. The Children's Services Directorate Delivery Plan 2015-2017 identifies a number of "Core Business Priority Commitments" for this year. In particular the Plan states that the Directorate will *"Prepare a Looked After Children Strategy that aims to make the experience of being looked after or leaving care the best that it can be within resources; promotes stability; enables children to form secure and permanent attachments; and in collaboration with Education and others, improves, their life chances and outcomes"*.
3. The Delivery Plan indicates that the development and implementation of the strategy would be undertaken during the year, and a review report assessing the impact of the strategy would be reviewed and evaluated by the end of March 2016.

Key Issues

4. The Cabinet report sets out for the first time that Cardiff Children's Social Services has departed from a narrow focus on statutory functions and joined with its statutory and third sector partners to develop a coherently aligned strategy that is focused upon improving outcomes for looked after children (copy attached at **Appendix A**). This strategy aims to combine the skills, resources and commitment of all professionals in a unified way to deliver two key Outcomes. It reflects a genuine partnership in which no one agency has primacy but in which all are committed to:
 - 'Narrowing the gap' so that looked after children achieve their potential.
 - Improving services so that fewer children need enter the looked after system.

5. With this in mind, what was initially a 'Looked After Children's strategy' has now evolved to become a 'Corporate Parenting Strategy' which has been developed working in partnership with colleagues from the University Health Board and the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate to reflect that the corporate responsibility for looked after children is embraced by all partner agencies and not just social services.

6. The key issues summarised in the Cabinet Report are:
 - Collaboration between early intervention, prevention and the looked after children service.
 - Reducing the number of looked after children.
 - Admitting the right children in to care at the right time.
 - Promoting permanency through special guardianship and / or adoption.
 - Continuing the promotion of long term placements with connected carers.

- Continuing to improve the choice of high quality in-house placements.
- Effectively managing the use of external residential and independent fostering agency placements.
- Continuing to improve services for children with disabilities including short break care.
- Improve the education attainment and achievement for all looked after Children.
- Improving and supporting the emotional well-being of looked after children.
- Arrangements for the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.

Scope of Scrutiny

7. At this meeting Members may wish to consider the draft Corporate Parenting Strategy Sept 2015 – Sept 2017 and to pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to Cabinet prior to their consideration of the draft report attached at **Appendix A**.
8. Councillor Sue Lent (Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families and Deputy Leader) has been invited and may make a statement. Tony Young (Director of Social Services) and Irfan Alam (Assistant Director, Children's Services) will make a presentation and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.

Way Forward

9. Members may wish to comment on the draft Cabinet report attached at **Appendix A**, submit any comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services, and consider any issues for further investigation.

Legal Implications

10. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. These financial implications will need to be considered before any changes are implemented. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members review the information contained in **Appendix A**, and submit any comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services prior to the Cabinet's consideration of the report.

Marie Rosenthal
Director of Governance and Legal Services

4 November 2015

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Corporate Parenting Strategy

Sept. 2015 - Sept.2017



Corporate Parenting Strategy

FOREWORD – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ARE OUR PRIORITY

This strategy marks the start of a new and exciting chapter in the development of services for looked after children in Cardiff. This is true on a number of levels.

Common Purpose - Outcome Focused

This is the first time that Cardiff Children's Social Services has departed from a narrow focus on statutory functions and joined with its statutory and third sector partners to develop a coherently aligned strategy that is focused upon improving outcomes for looked after children. This strategy aims to combine the skills, resources and commitment of all professionals in a unified way to deliver two key Outcomes.

It reflects a genuine partnership in which no one agency has primacy but in which all are committed to:

- 'Narrowing the gap' so that looked after children achieve their potential
- Improving services so that fewer children need enter the looked after system.

Evidence of 'What Works'

The Implementation Plan which flows from this strategy is obviously key and sets out a wide range of initiatives to enhance the provision of services in order to better support children living with their families where possible and improving services for those children whose protection requires them to become looked after by the local authority. Many are services that already exist in Cardiff but which, as a result of this strategy, will now be able to enhance their impact because the strategy links their offer and resources with others, into a coherent whole. For example, services such as Families First, Youth Services and Team around Family will now make it their priority to contribute towards supporting children and families in order to reduce the number of children becoming looked after.

Fewer Looked after Children

Delivering this commitment will have major implications for thousands of children over the next 5 years because it will mean fewer children's needs being met through the court arena, in the Looked After system or in the criminal justice system. More children will be able to enjoy family life in their own homes.

Sustainable Futures - Cost Effective Services

It will have major implications for agencies who will be better able not only to sustain services in the face of considerable financial pressure, but to deploy a greater proportion of those resources to much greater effect for the benefit of a greater number of children. Less of spending large sums on a few children with poor overall outcomes; more of spending lower cost effective sums on a wider population of children whilst securing better outcomes.

Tony Young
Director of Children's Services
Chair - Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board

VALUES

Cardiff Council is committed to *Making the Difference* to the lives of children and promotes the principle that the City of Cardiff Council cares about its children. It is important that any activity initiated by this strategy is consistent with the City of Cardiff Council's core values. The three overarching corporate values are: to be 'open', 'fair' and 'together'.

THE AIM

We want children and young people in our care to have the best possible life experiences, to be safe, happy and healthy, and achieve their full potential at school and in the future. We want to do this in collaboration with our partner agencies and where possible with families. And where it is safe to do so, we want children to remain at home with their parents or extended families with effective support services.

Corporate Parenting mission statement

"Working together to ensure the best possible outcomes for children who are looked after or who have left care, so that they can be happy and lead a fulfilling life"

CONTEXT

At the end of 2014, Cardiff had 1576 Children in Need, 297 children subject to a child protection plan and 651 looked after children. Historically, Cardiff's Looked After Children rate has remained relatively consistent over time. The trend suggests that in the future the rate of Looked After Children will continue to be relatively static.

In order to achieve good outcomes for looked after children and control costs it is essential that a long term strategic approach is maintained rather than making short term decisions which will create increasing budgetary pressures in future years.

An effective strategy for looked after children must include the development of more integrated and effective preventative services to ensure that children do not become looked after unnecessarily and, when they do become looked after, to reunite them with their families successfully wherever possible.

Preventative services must take a whole family approach and assess health, education, housing and social care needs in order for outcomes to improve and to avoid escalating costs.

BRING CARDIFF CHILDREN BACK HOME TO CARDIFF

We accept that too many looked after children are living away from Cardiff and we recognise that there have been missed opportunities of support to prevent some children entering the care system. We are keen to put this right and where appropriate bring back those children placed outside of Cardiff and enhance our edge of care services to better support those children who are at the 'edge of care'.

Background

In December 2013, the 4 month report of the then new Director of Children's Services stated that:

"[there is an] absence of any effective analysis of Cardiff's LAC population which I believe is symptomatic of a real and significant strategic deficit in terms of the capacity of the service to understand the challenges and pressures it faces in any clearly formulated or organised way. It is very difficult to understand how the council/service can formulate any coherent commissioning intentions without fundamentally understanding the needs of its LAC population".

During 2014, Cardiff Council commissioned a consultancy firm to undertake an independent review of the number of children being looked after children within the Cardiff area.

The consultancy firm was Cordis Bright. A firm which has previously undertaken research on the numbers of looked after children on behalf of the All Wales Heads of Children's Services, the Welsh Local Government Association and the Directors of Children's Services.

The review examined the three **main aspirations** for services for vulnerable children. Those aspirations are:

1. Preventing children from needing to be looked after
2. Improving outcomes for children who are looked after
3. Rehabilitating children out of care.

The review also considered five main levers to achieving this:

1. Strategy and leadership
2. Prevention and early intervention
3. Approach to practice
4. Partnership working
5. Information and intelligence about performance.

Cardiff has a dedicated Looked After Children's service which promotes an ethos in which all staff consider it their responsibility to ensure that 'our children' get the best services and the best outcomes possible. The service adopts an approach in which

every single member of staff and management strive to settle for nothing but the best for our looked after children. It is however recognised that the ongoing increasing demand will inevitably have an adverse impact upon the service unless concerted efforts are made by the whole council to divert children away from care where it is safe to do so.

Key outcomes

Children and young people are heard by:

- Strengthening the role and effectiveness of the corporate parenting advisory committee
- Ensuring lessons are learnt from the complaints process
- Ensuring provision of effective advocacy
- Extending opportunities for looked after children to directly influence policies and strategies.

Supporting children in the community more effectively by:

- Closer working between Looked After Children service and Early Intervention and Prevention service to enable more children to remain home
- Safely reducing the number of Looked After Children
- Admitting the right children to care at the right time
- Liaising with other agencies and partners at an early stage to provide support to families.

Improving the experience of looked after children by:

- Promoting permanency through Adoption and Special Guardianship
- Continuing the promotion of long term placements with Connected Carers
- Continue to improve the choice of high quality in-house placements
- Effectively manage the use of external residential and Independent Fostering Agency placements
- Working closely with partners agencies to provide an integrated approach to support in all areas of the children's lives
- Improving services for Children with Disabilities, including short break care
- Tailoring services to meet the specific needs of children seeking asylum
- Ensuring that children's health needs are regularly assessed and acted upon to allow them to lead healthy lives.

Improving the experience of care leavers by:

- Better preparation for independent living
- Extending the choice and quality of accommodation
- Enhance the opportunities for education, employment and training
- Strengthening the role of the Personal Advisors and making them more accessible.

In order to meet the key outcomes, this strategy will be underpinned by the following principles:

1. Collaboration between early intervention, prevention, and the looked after children service
2. Reducing the number of looked after children where it is safe to do so
3. Admitting the right children in care at the right time
4. Promoting permanency through special guardianships and or adoption
5. Continuing the promotion of long term placements with connected carers
6. Continuing to improve the choice of high quality in house placements
7. Effectively manage the use of external residential fostering agency placements
8. Continue to improve services for children with disabilities including short break care
9. Improve the education attainment and achievement for all looked after children
10. Improve and support the emotional well-being of looked after children
11. Strengthening the role of the corporate parenting advisory committee.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN EARLY INTERVENTION, PREVENTION AND THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SERVICE

Children's Services has a strong ethos of family support, based on effective interventions to enable children to remain at home within their family or wider family safely. There are unique advantages for children experiencing family life in their own birth family and in most circumstances children's needs are best met by being cared for within their immediate or extended families. Children should be supported within their own family, with the assistance of family support services when necessary, unless there are clear reasons why this might not be consistent with their safety and wellbeing. There will always be some children and young people for whom being in local authority care offers the best and safest arrangements for their wellbeing and development. It is recognised both locally and nationally that some of the outcomes for children who are brought up in the care system have not been good and must be improved.

There is a dynamic relationship between the quality of preventive services, the efficiency of gatekeeping at the front door and the size and demographic make-up of the Looked after Children population.

It is critical that there is a strong multi-agency dimension in prevention, early intervention, diversion from care and rapid rehabilitation services. Preventive services will focus on timely and proportionate interventions to prevent breakdown in families, ensuring there are tight gatekeeping processes and delivering rapid support to rehabilitation plans to enable children to return home quickly when they do become looked after, unless the care plan is for alternative permanence. This will need to be delivered adopting a whole family approach across early intervention and prevention services.

The authority will work with other partners and invest in a range of ‘edge of care’ initiatives such as:

- Commitment to same day crisis family support at the point of a young person being identified as at risk of becoming looked after due to family breakdown and or family dysfunction
- Commitment to initiating on day one a signs of safety meeting where vulnerability risks are prevalent together with protective factors
- Commitment to facilitating a family group conference when it is felt that a child may not be able to remain at home
- Agreed outcomes based performance management framework achieving reduction in looked after children with clear performance targets in relation to Families First, Youth Service and Flying Start services.

DRAFT

REDUCING THE NUMBER OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The aim of reducing the number of looked after children is simple but is not easy. If it was easy, lots of local authorities would be doing it as looking after children is expensive. There is a very difficult balance to strike between ensuring that children are safeguarded, with their needs being met by their families and the need to intervene effectively when children are in need of protection.

The environment nationally in terms of safeguarding has, since the death of Baby Peter, become one in which there is an understandable aversion to risk. This is evidenced nationally in the increase in numbers of children subject to child protection registration and a corresponding increase in numbers of children who are looked after.

There is a simple equation which governs the size of the looked after population. In order for the looked after population to decrease, the number of children entering the looked after population has to be less than the number of children leaving the looked after population. Consequently effective control over the number of children entering the looked after system has to be operated alongside a planning framework for individual children which is focused on legal permanence and a safe and efficient exit from the looked after system.

Children can become looked after through a relatively limited number of routes:

- As the subject of Police Protection
- As the subject of an Emergency Protection Order
- As the subject of a Remand to Care
- As the subject of Remand to Custody (LASPO Act)
- Through being accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act
- Southwark ruling (16 and 17 year olds assessed as children in need due to being homeless)
- As the subject of an Interim Care Order
- Through being accommodated under section 20 of the children act at the request of a person with parental responsibility
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children.

The first three of these routes into care are relatively rare. The next two routes are largely in relation to older adolescents. The vast majority of children become looked after as a result of a legal intervention by the local authority under the Public Law Outline.

The current make-up of the looked after population is 662, as of 30 June 2015. In terms of legal status 69 % (459) are the subject of a legal order (interim care order, full care order or placement order), whilst 30 % (200) are voluntarily accommodated under section 20. Of the 459, 55 are currently the subject of an interim care order.

Children can exit the looked after system in a number of ways:

- By reaching the age of 18 years
- By discharging themselves from voluntary accommodation if they are over 16 years of age
- By being discharged from voluntary accommodation by their parents
- By the revocation of a care order
- By being made the subject of a residence order
- By being made the subject of a special guardianship order
- By being made the subject of an adoption order.

ADMITTING THE RIGHT CHILDREN IN TO CARE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Our focus must continue to be on keeping children safely supported at home with their parents, but also on effectively assessing the quality of care children are experiencing and, where parenting is not good enough, assessing parental capacity and motivation to change.

Where there is considerable evidence that parents have not responded to support and are not demonstrating the capacity or motivation to change, it is critical that our assessments are child focused. We will use risk assessments, parenting assessments, and the core assessment to make effective decisions at an early stage of a child's life. We will make it a priority to initiate the pre-proceedings process at every opportunity when it is considered that a child cannot remain at home and prior to any application being made before the court.

There is considerable evidence that repeated applications of family support with parents who don't have the capacity or motivation to change do not produce a sustained improvement in the quality of life that children experience. Delaying taking tough decisions at an early stage in a child's life can mean that their entry to the care system is delayed to a point where their prospects of alternative legal permanence are diminished because of their age or impact of the parenting they have received.

Alongside bringing the right children into care at the right time we need to operate in a way that keeps older children out of care. Research shows that older entrants to the care system do not have their life chances enhanced by coming into care.

There are many examples across the country which provides specialist services for older children (11+) in order to prevent their admission in to care, examples such as Adolescent Resources Centres and Enhanced fostering schemes are just two. These types of services would be targeted 'edge of care services' with an aim to support older children with emotional; and behavioural difficulties, children from dysfunctional families and children experiencing a relationship breakdown with their main carer(s).

In Cardiff, in the 12 months to 31st March 2015, 163 children aged 11+ were admitted to care, of these 132 children were accommodated via section 20. Thirteen of these were as a result of socially unacceptable behaviour, 20 due to the family being in acute stress and 21 as a result of family dysfunction. It is estimated that of these 54 children, the majority will return home at the age of 16 and therefore being Looked After has not offered the children any real benefits. If **all directorates and providers** make a concerted effort to enhance the provision of support to prevent this cohort of children

becoming looked after, the authority will be better able to target its resources to those children who have no alternative but to be in care.

PROMOTING PERMANENCY THROUGH SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP AND OR ADOPTION

We will ensure that alternative legal permanence is prioritised for children whom it has not proved possible to raise the quality of the parenting provided by their parents to safe levels.

Cardiff has entered into a regional collaborative arrangement with neighbouring authorities which has seen the implementation of the national adoption service. There is now a specific team tasked with the recruitment and assessment of adopters, the matching process and the preparation and placement of children continues to be effectively managed by the regional arrangements.

Research shows that there are four outcome predictor factors which contribute independently to a higher risk of disruption in adoption placements:

- older age at placement
- a longer time in care
- a high level of behavioural problems
- having been singled out from siblings and rejected by birth parents.

Consequently it is extremely important that decisions for a child to be placed for adoption are taken very early in the care planning process and that there is a clear focus on timescales.

We will ensure that all looked after children have permanence plans in place at the three month review and will make use of effective parallel planning in order to minimise delay. It needs to be borne in mind however, that the impact of adoption in terms of securing a permanent future for children on the overall size of the looked after population will be limited without a parallel drive to reduce the numbers entering care.

CONTINUING THE PROMOTION OF LONG TERM PLACEMENTS WITH CONNECTED CARERS

Where a child cannot live with their parents, the first option will always be to arrange for a child to be cared for by a member of his/her extended family. Where the carer is a close family member, this can be through a private arrangement between the parents and the carers, and where the child's needs are being met and parental responsibility is being effectively discharged, there may be no need for involvement from Cardiff Children's Services. If the carer selected by the parents is not an immediate family member, Private Fostering Regulations will apply and the placement will be assessed in accordance with Private Fostering Policies & Procedures.

Where a child who is voluntarily accommodated under Section 20 Children Act 1989 and is placed by Cardiff Children's Services with a member of their extended family or a friend, if parental responsibility is being effectively discharged, then the placement will be ratified under the Fostering Service Regulations and the carers will be assessed

in accordance with Fostering Service Policies & Procedures. When a child is the subject of Care Proceedings, the priority will always be to try to identify a member of their extended family or a friend with whom they will be able to live in the long term if rehabilitation to their parents proves not to be possible. Carers will be assessed in accordance with Fostering Service Policies & Procedures and will be supported by dedicated fostering Social Workers from the Fostering Service. Wherever possible carers in these circumstances will be encouraged to consider Special Guardianship because of the added security that legal permanence would give to the placement.

CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE CHOICE OF HIGH QUALITY IN-HOUSE PLACEMENTS

Cardiff's Fostering Service was inspected by the Care & Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW) in February 2015. The inspection report noted the following improvements since the last annual inspection:

- The management team had strengthened
- Children had been consulted during foster carer support visits.

It also identified the following areas that the service does well in:

- Retained an experienced group of foster carers
- Benefitted from a motivated and experienced staff group.

Work continues on the Fostering recruitment campaign and the branding was strengthened this year by using stories of real foster carers and how they make a positive difference to the lives of the looked after children they cared for. The fostering service will continue to develop its pool of foster carers in order to ensure that Cardiff children remain in Cardiff. The Looked After Children's service will play a key role in supporting the fostering service in order to attract new foster carers.

EFFECTIVELY MANAGE THE USE OF EXTERNAL RESIDENTIAL AND INDEPENDENT FOSTERING AGENCY PLACEMENTS

Our priority is to place children with Cardiff carers in Cardiff and where possible, bring back those children who are placed a considerable distance away from Cardiff. Cardiff became the first Local Authority in Wales to commission a Payment by Results enhanced fostering service for Looked After Children who are placed in high cost, external residential provision outside of Cardiff. This has been an innovative approach to commissioning involving a confident panel of professionals and service users as part of the evaluation process. The new initiative takes the form of an Enhanced Fostering Scheme with wrap around therapeutic support and it will be operational in the first quarter of 2015/16.

Clearly there are some children who have to be placed outside of Cardiff for reasons of safety or because of particular needs which cannot be met locally. The current cohort placed in external residential units comprises a mixture of children who have moved to an external placement because of particular needs and children who initially went to an external placement because an in-house placement was unable to meet

their immediate need. A number of children in each of these cohorts have been in their external placement for a number of years, are very settled and are making good progress. It would clearly be inappropriate to move them on purely financial grounds.

The operational manager responsible for the Looked After Children's services tracks all external placements via the external placements panel, however this needs to be stepped up to ensure that there is no unavoidable delays in moving young people back into in-house placements when appropriate via the enhanced fostering scheme.

CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING SHORT BREAK CARE

Short breaks can give families a rest from caring and give children and young people the chance to meet other people and have fun in a safe, friendly environment. It is our vision and priority that all children (disabled and non-disabled) will be able to attend play, leisure, sports, arts and other activities in their local communities. We aim to support organisations and groups offering these services, to ensure that staff are well trained and confident to look after disabled children. When needed, we aim to support individual children to enable them to attend activities of their choice. For those children who require more specialist short break care services, we will do an assessment to ensure that they receive the most suitable services to meet their needs.

Short break care services include:

- Community activities
- Support in the family home
- Short break foster care
- Short break residential care
- Youth groups
- Holiday play schemes
- Before and after school clubs
- Childminders
- Day nurseries.

IMPROVE THE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Research suggests that looked after children and young people are several times more likely to have a statement of special educational needs, to be excluded from school, and to leave school with no qualifications compared with children in the general population. In the Year 11 cohort in 2015 45% were on the Special Needs register and 21% had a Statement of Educational Needs. Children and young people who are looked after have the same core health needs as other young people, but their backgrounds and experiences are likely to make them particularly vulnerable to poorer health outcomes. Children and young people who have experienced disrupted childhoods and inconsistent or broken attachments with their parents and families are very likely to have mental health problems, and often struggle to make attachments with carers. The effects of separation from birth families on entry into care can also contribute to or accentuate mental health problems.

We will ensure that all looked after children have access to a broad and balanced education, commensurate with their needs and wherever possible, this will be in a mainstream school. Education is considered fully when a change of placement is necessary to ensure there is as little disruption to their learning as possible.

Termly designated teacher forums ensure designated teachers are briefed and trained on relevant issues including attachment issues and well-being. The progress of Looked After children is discussed in every Team Around the School (TAS) meeting and under performance is challenged. Challenge Advisers know the names of the LAC pupils in their schools and discuss their progress with the Headteacher. School Governors are briefed on their responsibilities as part of the LA governor training programme.

We will work with partners in health to ensure that early support for children with emerging emotional and mental health difficulties are supported early and play an active part in supporting the reshaping of these services being led by the Health Board to reshape.

In the context described above, it is critical that we take effective action to support Looked after Children in order to enable them to maximise their potential. We have a dedicated Looked after Children service in order to improve our focus on outcomes for looked after children. The Operational Manager for the Looked After Service works closely with the Senior Manager in Education with responsibility for looked after children and there are processes in place for information sharing, tracking attainment and attendance, rapid responses and joint training. Multi-Agency meetings are held monthly with children's service, education and health representation. Underperformance of individuals is discussed and actions clearly identified to move issues forward.

Over the last year, our Looked After children have achieved success in the number of young people we are now supporting in University. There have been no permanent exclusions of looked after children and the attendance of Looked After Children has

improved. We have also launched the Traineeship Scheme within the Council, offering work placement opportunities to looked after children and care leavers.

All Looked After Children have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The process of completing a high quality PEP has been re-visited and a clear timeline is now in place with clear responsibilities for different stakeholders. A comprehensive training programme with foster carers, social workers and designated teachers re-visited everyone's role within the process. To further build on this success we are keen to develop a Virtual School for looked after children. The Virtual School will be instrumental in gathering data regarding attainment and progress of the looked after cohort from nursery school through to post-16. This will enable the monitoring of the cohort and ensure that the appropriate initiatives are put into place for both the primary and secondary sector. The school will be key in training designated teachers and ensuring schools receive support and advice on subjects such as attachment and the needs of looked after children. The Virtual School tracking system will enable more robust termly tracking of Looked After Children to ensure there is the earliest possible response and intervention to underachievement. Personal Education Plans will be amended to reflect the intervention that is taken with smart targets that will demonstrate progress when reviewed.

The role of Achievement Leader (Closing the Gap) has been established within Education to work closely with the Operational manager in Children's Services. The focus of her work is solely to oversee the attainment and achievement of the Looked After Children in the authority.

There is a consortium plan with key priorities that focus clearly on improving standards achieved by Looked After Children:

1. Strategic oversight of Looked After Children and their outcomes
2. Children are provided with personal education plan which are monitored and reviewed regularly
3. Provision is in place at the right time and in the right place and in the most efficient and effective way
4. Each Local Authority provision plan is based on the Learner Voice of the Looked After Child being heard and reflected upon in the commissioning of effective provision
5. School staff are able to access training and support to be able to identify and provide for the needs of LAC children appropriately
6. Foster carers and looked after children's social workers are aware of what works in improving educational outcomes
7. Looked After Children co-ordinators work together to identify innovation and what works across the region.

School to school support and the identification of good practice is a focus in designated teacher forums. Rumney Primary for example has the most Looked After Children in the primary sector and has developed some interesting practice with lego therapy. St Teilos in the secondary sector has an impressive tracking system and Cantonian High School's pastoral care is exemplary.

Outcomes in the Foundation Phase for Looked After Children in 2015 are above the Wales average in 2014. At Key Stage 3 and 4 outcomes are just below Wales' national average and at Key Stage 4 Level 2+ threshold outcomes match the Wales average figure. Improving outcomes at all Key Stages remains our focus. We aim to close the gap between the performance of Looked After Children and the rest of the school children in Cardiff.

IMPROVE AND SUPPORT THE EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

We know that Looked After Children are approximately four times more likely to have a mental disorder than children living in their birth families. It is also true that whilst some young people receive loving and nurturing care from consistent carers others can experience a lack of attention to their emotional needs. Young people can be let down by a system that does not always recognise their behaviour as a sign of distress and fails to provide them with support to develop secure attachments to their carers.

Research undertaken by the NSPCC (June 2015) identifies that Looked After Children are just over three times more likely to have a disorder than disadvantaged children and over five times more likely to have a diagnosed mental disorder than non-disadvantaged children. The high rate of behavioural disorders among Looked After Children is particularly striking, with almost two out of every five children having some kind of diagnosed behavioural disorder. This is a cause for concern as research suggests that children with disruptive and hyperactive behaviours are at particularly high risk of placement breakdown, as their carers can struggle to cope. In partnership with the University Health Board, we are keen to put this right and provide enhanced emotional well-being support for Looked After Children and their carers at the earliest opportunity.

The Looked after service within the University Health Board is led by a named doctor for Looked after Children, Adoption and Fostering. The team develops health services to improve health outcomes and ensure all looked after children have an up to date health plan, are up to date with childhood immunisations and are registered with a local dentist.

Nationally and locally there is a significant focus on the need to improve support for children and young people with Emotional and Mental Health issues. The Welsh Government has launched a national programme 'Together for Children and Young People' to focus on the whole range of services provided from early intervention through to specialist NHS CAMHS. In addition they have released funding to improve services and our Health Board partners are implementing new services and ways of working.

The developments being put in place locally include:

- An early emotional and mental health support service with easy and clear access to a range of supportive therapeutic interventions
- A Neurodevelopment team to focus on early diagnosis and support for children with difficulties such as Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- A transition service for young people aged 14 – 25 with early psychosis
- Improved access to Psychological Therapies in specialist NHS CAMHS for those children with clear Mental Health issues
- A crisis intervention and liaison service.

We recognise that we need to develop and maintain a clear mental/emotional health profile of our looked after children working with our colleagues in health so that we understand the nature of their mental/emotional health needs in more detail. This will enable us to ensure looked after children to have better access to services for their emotional and mental health needs and reduce inequalities in the future.

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Cardiff Children's Services has a key role as a Corporate Parent to ensure that all children in its care receive the care, stability, attention and opportunities that responsible parents provide to their own children. Cardiff Children's Services also has a role in leading and co-ordinating the work of partner agencies in Cardiff to ensure that we meet our collective responsibilities.

The central principle of Corporate Parenting is that we should seek for the children in our care the same outcomes that every good parent would want for their own child. This covers their education, health and welfare, what they do in their leisure time and holidays, how they celebrate their culture and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements. It also extends to providing appropriate support once young people have left care, including continued assistance around education, training or employment, and emotional and practical support.

Corporate Parenting is a responsibility for the whole Local Authority – all its members and all its officers. It is not limited solely to those services targeted at children. Cardiff's approach is for services across the Children's Services to work together and with partner agencies to bring together areas such as education, housing, employment and leisure.

(NSPCC 2015, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/achieving-emotional-wellbeing-for-looked-after-children.pdf>)

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

DRAFT

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

10 NOVEMBER 2015

CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM – CORRESPONDENCE

Reason for the Report

1. To enable Members to consider the content of a letter received by the Committee's Chair on 27 October 2015, proposing a new model through which elected Members across all five Local Authorities can effectively scrutinise the work of the Consortium, (copy attached at **Appendix A**).

2. The letter included:
 - a. a copy of a report on the Central South Consortium response to the findings of a recent Welsh Audit Office / Estyn remit review of the Consortia in Wales (copy attached at **Appendix B**), and
 - b. a briefing paper for the National Assembly for Wales' Children, Young People and Education Committee (copy attached at **Appendix C**).

Background

3. This Committee has previously invited the Central South Consortium to present a report three times across the year:
 - a. In November, to scrutinise the Central South Consortium and its contribution to raising standards in Cardiff Schools.
 - b. In January, to support the scrutiny of the Cardiff Schools Annual performance report and to present an account of the role of the Consortium in raising standards and the Consortium's plans to further strengthen the impact of its work.

- c. In June, as part of the scrutiny of the Education and Lifelong learning Directorate Delivery Plan, when the Consortium presents its business plan for the year to enable Members to identify the linkage between the two organisations in driving forward improvements in Education in Cardiff.

Issues

4. The Managing Director of the Central South Consortium, Hannah Woodhouse, has written to all Children and Young People's / Education Scrutiny Chairs in the Central South Region, setting out proposals for a common scrutiny work programme and sharing best practice, copy attached at **Appendix A**.
5. The letter explains that it was agreed at the recent Joint Committee of Central South Consortium by all five authorities that a common programme would be put in place. This would entail the Consortium presenting its outcome against targets and any further areas of questioning, once a year in January to coincide with the Schools Annual Report.
6. The letter further suggests that termly meetings would be held with all Scrutiny Chairs to share developments, areas of concern and sharing best practice. In addition wider briefings with elected Members on the role and function of the Consortia could be provided.
7. The letter also provides feedback on the recent Estyn and Wales Audit Office review of all consortia last year. In the Central South region they gave cautiously positive feedback with a number of areas which need to be addressed. Attached to the letter was a copy of the briefing paper on these reports which the Consortium recently presented to the Children and Young People's Select Committee in the Senedd (copies attached at **Appendix B & C**).

Scope of Scrutiny

8. This report will provide the Committee with an opportunity to review and respond to the proposals contained in the letter around the common scrutiny work programme across all five Local Authorities, and provide any comments or concerns on the Consortium's response to the review of the Consortia (attached at **Appendix B**) and the briefing paper on School Improvement in Central South (attached at **Appendix C**).

Way Forward

9. Members may wish to review the information contained in the letter and associated documents attached at **Appendix A, B and C**, agree a response to the Consortium's Joint Committee proposals, and determine whether there are any issues or comments which they would like to pass on to the Managing Director of the Consortium, Chairman of the Consortium's Joint Committee, Cabinet Member for Education or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning.

Legal Implications

10. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the

Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

Recommendations

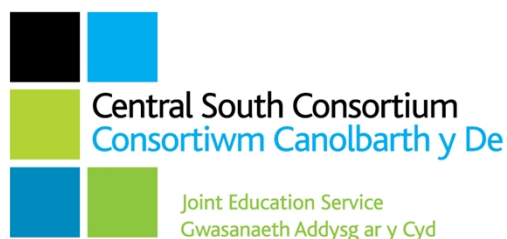
The Committee is recommended to:

- I. consider the information provided in the letter from the Managing Director of the Central South Consortium;
- II. agree a response to the Consortium's Joint Committee proposals for the future scrutiny of the Central South Consortium;
- III. consider whether they have any observations, comments or recommendations they wish to make to the Managing Director of the Consortium, the Chairman of the Joint Committee, the Cabinet Member for Education and the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning.

MARIE ROSENTHAL

Director of Governance and Legal Services

4 November 2015



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Our Ref: HW/TD

27th October 2015

All Children and Young People's/Education Scrutiny Chairs in the Central South Region

Dear Colleagues,

A Common Scrutiny work programme and sharing of best practice

I wanted to write to follow up a number of discussions we have had concerning the need for a common consistent scrutiny work programme across the Central South region, as well as some joint work across your roles as Chair of Scrutiny.

You will be aware that the Estyn and WAO reviewed all consortia last year. In this region they gave cautiously positive feedback with a number of areas which we need to address. I attach our briefing paper on these reports which we recently presented to the Children and Young People's Select Committee in the Sennedd.

You will be aware from our recent visits that Central South Consortium works in partnership with the five authorities – providing the school improvement function for authorities, alongside the wider education functions of each authority. Therefore the Consortium is subject to Scrutiny in the same way as any Council's service.

One of the recommendations was the need to consider the best model through which elected Members can effectively scrutinise the work of the Consortia. A joint scrutiny model was suggested but has since been ruled out by Welsh Government in their latest iteration of the national model for consortia working.

It will be important both that high quality timely information is provided to all Scrutiny Committees and that sufficient time is allowed to scrutinise the work of the Consortium working with and on behalf of authorities. However it would also be useful if the Consortium was invited to attend a consistent number of scrutiny meetings in each authority presenting ideally similar information at the same point of the year, recognising that sometimes additional oversight is necessary.

It has therefore been agreed at the recent Joint Committee of Central South Consortium by all five authorities that a common programme would be put in place through which for Scrutiny Committees invite the lead officer from each authority together with the relevant lead from the Consortium to meet with Scrutiny Committees to present outcomes against targets and any further areas of questioning that may be relevant. We would like to propose that this should take place once a year in January ideally when published data is readily available the Consortium's own self evaluation report and draft business plan is available to be scrutinised. This often coincides well with the annual school performance reporting from officers in the Council.

Secondly, it has been proposed that it would be helpful if a termly meeting of Scrutiny Chairs were arranged to share developments and areas of concern from each Scrutiny Committee with a view to sharing best practice. Councillor Elmore and I would be very happy to attend this meeting to brief Members on the latest developments of Consortia working.

Finally, if it is ever helpful to provide wider briefings to more elected Members on the role and function of Consortia, either in writing or in person, we would be delighted to do so.

I welcome your views on this proposal and if you are content we will seek to put the meeting of Scrutiny Chairs into the diary as soon as practicable.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hannah Woodhouse'.

Hannah Woodhouse
Managing Director

Encl.

Cc. All Directors & Lead Cabinet Members

School Improvement in Central South

Briefing paper for Select Committee 16th September 2015

In 2015 pupils in schools across the Central South region again improved their outcomes significantly, setting a three year consistent upward trend of improvement at rates faster than the national rates of improvement.

The region, previously amongst the worst performing in Wales, now sits at or above the national average at every indicator.

Key stage results:

- At foundation phase the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected level (Outcome 5 or above) has increased by 3.5 percentage points from 84.1% to 87.6%. This compares to an increase of 1.6 percentage points nationally.
- At key stage 2, the number of pupils achieving at least their expected level (Level 4 or above) has increased by 2 percentage points from 85.8% to 87.8% in 2015. This compares to a national increase of 1.6 percentage points.
- At key stage 3 the proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected level (Level 5 or above) have seen a significant rise of 3.3 percentage points in 2015 from 80.3% in 2014 to 83.6%. This is against a national increase of 2.9 percentage points.
- Finally provisional data indicates that the percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE passes at grades A* - C including English/Welsh and mathematics (L2+) has improved by at least 3.9% points to 58%, up from 54.1% in 2014 and 47.8% in 2012.
- Very early figures also indicate that the gap between children claiming free school meals and their peers has narrowed at every key stage.
- Primary and secondary attendance data has shown three year trends of improvement bringing the region to above the national average at both measures.

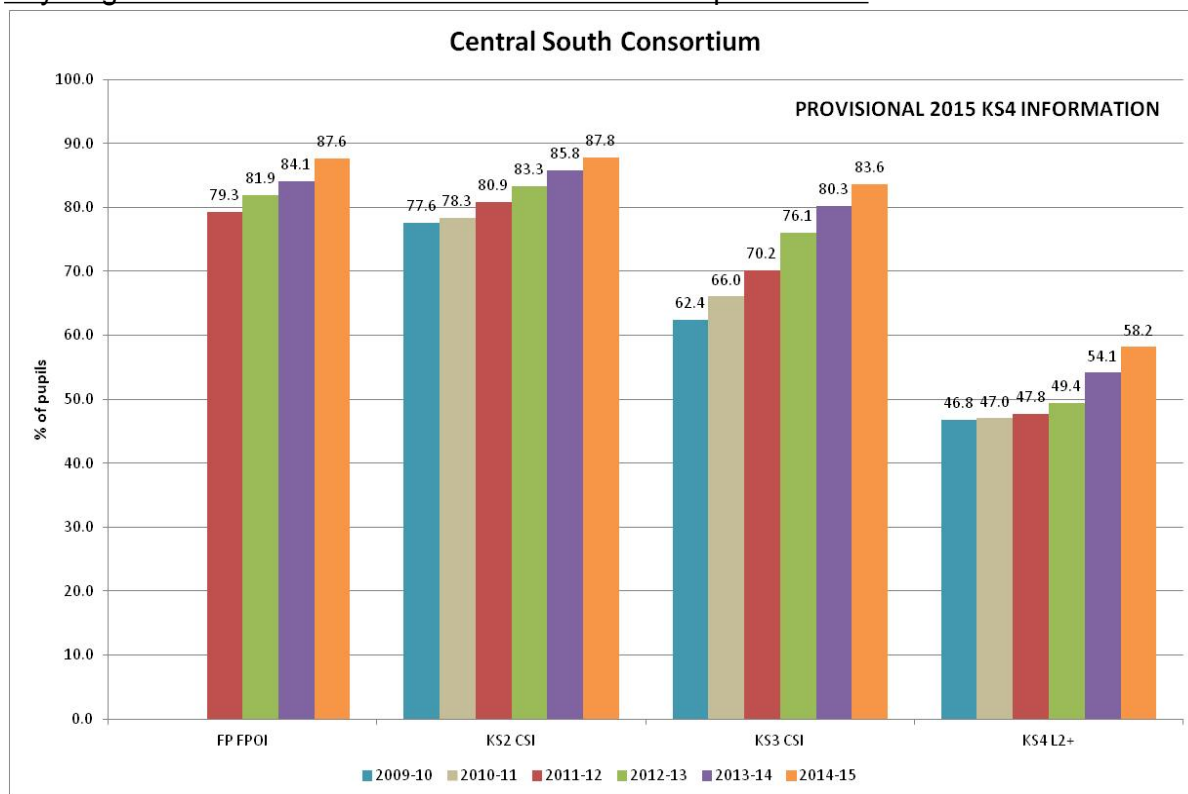
Local authority monitoring inspections across all five authorities in the past year have shown improvement in the service received by authorities from the Consortia and in RCT and Bridgend both authorities were removed from monitoring in 2014/15.

Areas for further work

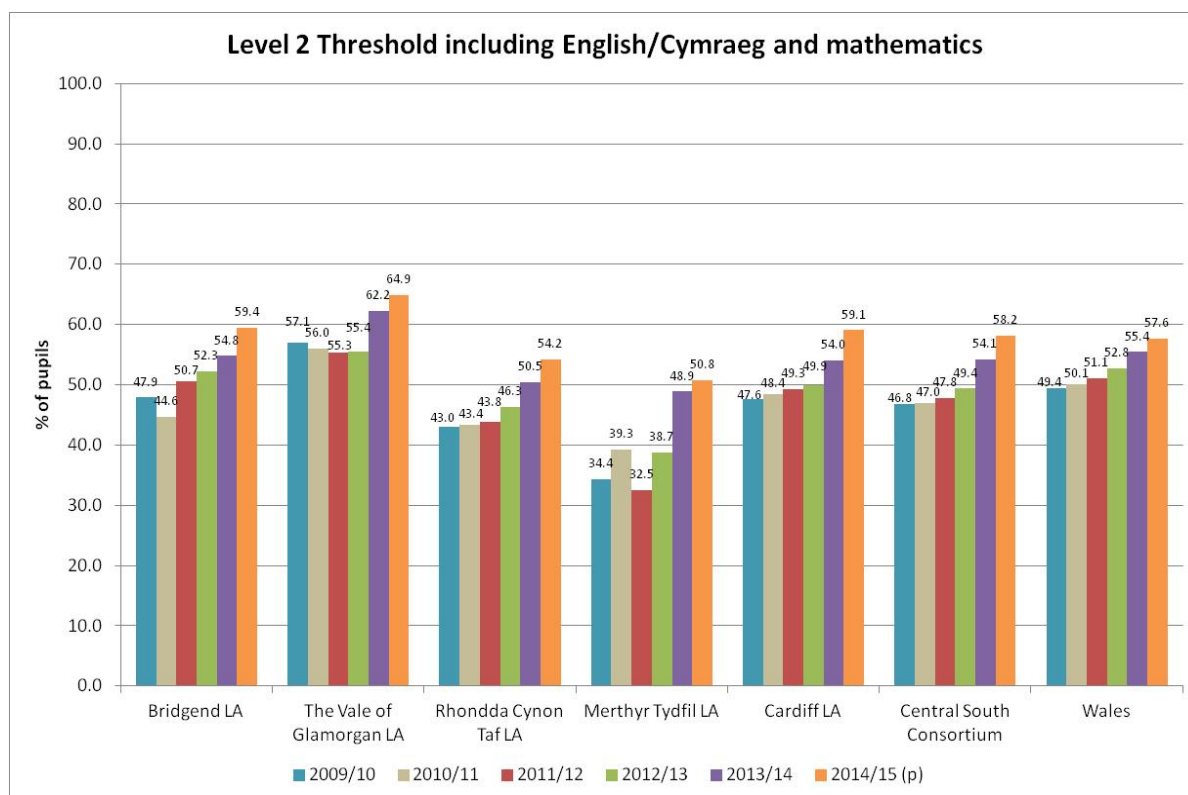
There is a need for further significant improvement. In particular in the following areas:

- Faster progress to close the gap for children claiming free school meals, particularly in the valleys communities and in more affluent areas of the region.
- Learning from what is working well to shift improvement with vulnerable red and amber support category schools.
- A need to focus on sustaining good schools to excellence.
- Focus on Level 1 at key stage four with a focus on provision for young people at risk of not engaging in further work, training or education post 16.

Key stage results in Central South show a consistent upward trend



Performance against the Level 2+ threshold has been particularly strong again in 2015



Report on the Central South consortium response to the Welsh Audit Office / Estyn remit review of Consortia, published in June 2015.

Background

Estyn and the Welsh Audit Office undertook fieldwork together in October 14 to January 15 to review the progress of the implementation of regional consortia working since 2012.

The WAO were looking particularly at the effectiveness of governance arrangements. Estyn were reporting on the progress being made by consortia to provide school improvement services. Estyn were also keen to use the process to develop a framework through which consortia could be inspected. The framework is due in September 2015 and inspections of all four regional consortia will follow in the Spring/Summer of 2016.

Central South Consortium's response to the findings

The five authorities and Consortium in Central South Wales welcome the findings of both reports and the contribution that Estyn and the Welsh Audit Office are making to supporting improvement in the region.

History of the Consortium

The Central South region is the most populous region of Wales with a third of the children in Wales served by 406 schools across the five authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. The region also represents a third of the most deprived communities in Wales and increasing diversity with more communities without English or Welsh as a first language.

The Central South Consortium was established at pace by the five local authorities in the region in September 2012. It was established very quickly and struggled to gain the confidence of schools and authorities in the early days.

In 2013 the five authorities commissioned a review of the consortium's effectiveness which resulted in some significant restructuring, a review of governance, the appointment of a permanent leadership team and the launch of a new strategic direction for the region: 'The Central South Wales Challenge': leading a self improving school system led by Professor. Mel Ainscow.

The Consortium receives £4.4m annual revenue funding from the five authorities which is (according to the WAO) approximately 1% of education spending in the region. This has remained the same since 2012 and is below the recommended level of funding which the Consortium should receive as proposed by the Welsh Government. A key focus of our work is delivering value for money and increased efficiency in our work in the region.

Central South Wales Challenge

In January 2014 the Central South Wales Challenge strategy group launched the 'Challenge' to all heads in the region. The approach is based on the evidence of what works in high performing school systems. This means our aims are that:

- schools are communities where teachers work together to improve teaching practice;
- groups of schools engage in joint practice development;
- more intensive partnerships 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 to act as the conscience of the system.

The strategy is coordinated by a strategy group made up of headteachers from the region. The work includes a number of strands of work which include putting all schools in the region into groups (School Improvement groups or SIGs) to learn from each other. The approach also involves brokering 'pathfinder' partnerships between schools which can learn from each other, investing in 'hub' schools which are schools with strong teaching and learning systems as a resource for all schools across the region and brokering 'peer reviews' of schools by schools to build effective self-evaluation leading to improvement.

Working together with evidence based intervention

An area of focus in Central South has been a consistent, evidence-based approach to the way that we challenge and support schools. Consortia are able to both recruit and develop a stronger workforce than individual local authorities, work together to harness the best practice in the region for the whole region and evaluate effective interventions together. The partnership of five authorities and consortia in Central South has been working hard to learn from what has worked in a number of areas, including in attendance strategies, governor services and in consistent high quality intervention processes where progress in schools has been unsatisfactory.

We have also reviewed the role and appointments of challenge advisers. The challenge adviser role is about working with governors and schools' leaders to challenge and support their capacity to be self-improving. The approach is much more about working in partnership with schools rather than "doing to" schools. We have reviewed our challenge adviser team to ensure that we have very experienced staff working with schools, the majority of whom are or have been recently, successful senior leaders in schools. We will continue to intervene rigorously and robustly in schools where improvement has been insufficient. Whilst we are growing a school led system we do also provide direct support to vulnerable schools in core subjects and we are working more closely to support effective governance and Human Resources services to schools seeking to delegate as much resource to schools as possible so that it can be put to effective use.

Results in the region

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) and Estyn reports published in June questioned the impact of the Consortia partnerships. The results in 2015 in the Central South Consortium demonstrate that by working together schools, authorities and consortia, schools across the Central South region are now showing real and sustained progress since 2012.

In particular:

- In 2011 the region was one of the worst performing regions in Wales but now sits above the national average at foundation phase, key stage 2 and 4 in many indicators.
- At key stage 2, the number of pupils aged between 7 and 11 years old, achieving their expected target has increased by 2 percentage points from 85.8% to 87.8% in 2015, up from 80.9 in 2012. This compares to a national increase of 1.6 percentage points and a national average of 87.7%.
- At key stage 3 pupils aged between 11 and 14 years olds have seen a significant rise of 3.3 percentage points in 2015 from 80.3% in 2014 to 83.6%, up from 70.2% in

2012. This is against a national average of 2.9 percentage points improvement taking the national figure to 83.9%.

- Key stage four results in the region in 2014 at the Level 2+ measure (5 GCSE passes at grades A* - C including English/Welsh and mathematics) saw the fastest improvement nationally rising by just under 5 percentage points. Provisional results in the region in 2015 are once again very promising – data to be published in the autumn;
- The gap between the achievement of children claiming free school meals and their peers has narrowed again at every key stage.

In inspection too, the region is showing improvement with more schools demonstrating good or better performance and receiving a good or excellent judgement on standards compared to 2011/12. Inspection of local authorities, in particular in RCT and Bridgend, have demonstrated the added value consortia working has brought where both authorities were removed from Estyn monitoring in the last year.

Areas for improvement

Following the fieldwork by Estyn and WAO in the Central South region in November 14, a number of recommendations were made. These recognised positive progress in CSC in establishing strategy and vision, engagement and relationships, self evaluation, governance and financial management and improving challenge adviser credibility.

However, there were a number of areas where improvement is needed both in CSC and nationally which are reflected in the recommendations of the Estyn and WAO report. We have summarised these below:

1. **Governance and scrutiny.** The Central South Consortium operate as a partnership of the five authorities working together to generate improvement and efficiencies across the region. This can be demonstrated by the appointment of joint roles working across the authorities and consortium. We have revisited the job descriptions of these roles to make sure accountability is tight. We have also included the Diocese in our governance model. The consortium will report to every one of the local authorities' scrutiny committees in January each year. We will hold our Joint Committees in each authority and invite the Scrutiny committee to observe. We are bringing the Chairs of Scrutiny together to discuss progress and areas for improvement with the leadership team of the Consortium.
2. **Business planning, smarter operational planning and collaboration with other consortia.** We have a business plan with a three-year vision and will be modeling the next three years with indicative budgets. We have reviewed our operational planning making the review of progress and evaluation of impact smarter. We were noted for our honest self- evaluation, decision making, transparency and risk management but will improve links further between self-evaluation and business planning this year and continue to review risks regularly. We have led a conference in September of the four consortia to share practice and have a number of areas of joint work not least Challenge Adviser training delivered in partnership with EAS.
3. **Quality assurance and performance management.** This is always a priority. We have reviewed our framework for challenge advisers and will be providing additional training to tighten assessment of teaching and leadership and to strengthen evaluative writing to provide evidence about the impact of intervention when required.

We have also reviewed our quality assurance approach across all of our work and strengthen our performance management system.

4. **Focus on reducing the gap and use of data.** Our new strategic lead for this area has developed our Closing the Gap strategy and guidance for schools. We will strengthen the use of data, including target setting by challenge advisers to highlight the progress of vulnerable groups. We have strengthened the accountability for improvement of these groups across schools particularly at risk of underperformance. We already use pupil level data in our work, and we will be developing a common pupil level database that will link schools' and pupils' performance data held in the region with the wider data in each local authority.
5. **Financial management.** Again Estyn and the WAO commented in feedback on good financial management in place in CSC. We will continue with a particular focus on demonstrating value for money across the region and in each authority.

Areas for further work by Welsh Government

We would highlight a number of specific areas.

- **School funding.** The Welsh Government Department for Education needs to review how grant and revenue budgets are set, allocated and reviewed to ensure as much efficiency in the system as possible. The Minimum Funding Guarantee is welcome and needs to continue and be monitored across the country. In particular, a number of flexibilities in relation to the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) were announced last year which have yet to be realised in practice because of retained terms and conditions around predecessor grants. The Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) and Schools Challenge Cymru (SCC) grant are both very significant levers focused at the most vulnerable whilst building sustainable capacity in the school system. They are crucial to ongoing levels of improvement, whilst continuing to focus on efficiency and value for money. Most immediately it would be helpful if work were done as early as possible this autumn to set grant budgets so that we can indicate funding levels to schools to plan for improvement work.
- **Strategic medium term planning.** We support the need for a consortia business planning model, ideally with a three-year timescale but are realistic about the uncertainties of the election and local government re-organisation. It would be helpful if some thought were given to the long term future of Consortia within this. The national accountability model can be made more efficient to enable regions to be more impactful.
- **Risk of distraction by new policies poorly implemented.** Consideration should be given to managing new national initiatives very carefully including that of the new qualification and curriculum changes in a way that least disrupts and builds on the progress nationally.
- **More freedoms and flexibilities for good schools.** In a tighter financial climate we need to enable our best schools to lead the way towards better models of school improvement. This means increased flexibilities to work together in challenging ways with other schools and fewer burdens. It would be helpful if there could be some strategic thinking about ways that increased freedoms could be earned by schools with strong leadership, a clear capacity to improve and a willingness to be suitably self reflective, so that resources are used in the most effective way across all regions.

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

10 November 2015

CORRESPONDENCE UPDATE – INFORMATION REPORT

Background

1. Following most Committee meetings, the Chair writes a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member or Officer, summing up the Committee's comments and recommendations regarding the issues considered during that meeting.

Issues

2. **Schools Causing Concern report letter** - The Committee has recently reviewed the draft letter to the Cabinet Member for Education following the completion of the first phase of the Schools Causing Concern investigations. The letter has been circulated to all Members and the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning has provided some feedback on the overall contents of the letter. The Committee is requested to approve the report (attached at **Appendix A**) for presentation to the Cabinet Member.
3. **Committee letters and responses** - The key points raised in the Committee's letter are taken from the way forward discussion at the end of each meeting and attached as part of the formal minutes of the meetings. Responses are evidenced in future reports or copied to Members if requested. A summary of the letters sent and responses received is attached at **Appendix B** and a copy of the letter sent and received since the last meeting are attached at **Appendix C**.

Legal Implications

4. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations.

Financial Implications

5. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to

- Approve the inquiry letter for presentation to Cllr Sarah Merry, Cabinet Member for Education; and
- Review the responses received to the recent letters sent by the Committee.

MARIE ROSENTHAL
Director of Governance and Legal Services
4 November 2015

28 October 2015

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW



Dear Sarah

Schools Causing Concern – Committee Members’ Investigation

The Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee has been undertaking a series of investigations to explore the factors challenging the performance of the City’s schools currently identified as being in the “red support category”.

Although the Committee has not completed its investigation into this matter and will continue with the Inquiry during this Municipal Year, I felt that it could be useful for you to receive some early feedback resulting from the evidence heard at the meetings held so far by way of a letter, rather than needing to await the publication of a formal scrutiny report at the end of the process.

The investigation has been organised for Members to have a clear understanding of:

- the processes in place to support and improve the performance of individual schools in Cardiff;
- the issues causing poor performance in schools, and the key actions to be taken to address those issues;
- In order that Members can constructively challenge and test the actions being taken by head teachers and chairs of governors of the selected schools;
- Participating schools will feel supported and encouraged to meet performance challenges or other areas of concern, and provide their comments or suggested improvements to the Cabinet Member for her consideration and action.

The meetings were organised for Members to receive background information, operational and procedural briefings, presentations from the head teacher and chair of governors from two high schools and three primary schools.

On behalf of the Members who attended I would like to thank all of the witnesses who provided information and attended the meeting. Members found their input into the investigation honest, open, enlightening and very informative. The Members were particularly thankful for the amount of preparation that Officers had undertaken to ensure the investigation was a success.

The explanations, advice, and comments provided by witnesses enabled the Members to understand the progress that all parties are making to help improve the outcomes for Cardiff's pupils. After the meetings Members considered the evidence presented and highlighted a number of key findings and recommendations which they felt should be demonstrated to you.

The Inquiry's meeting structure so far has been as follows:

Meeting one

- Chloe Langson, head teacher, Meadowlane Primary School
- John Griffiths, chair of governors, Meadowlane Primary School
- Mike Clinch, head teacher, St Illtyd's High School
- Maureen Greening chair of governors, St Illtyd's High School
- Martin Price, foundation governor, St Illtyd's High School.

The Members were also briefed by the following officers:

- Carol Jones, Assistant Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
- Debbie Lewis, Senior Challenge Advisor, Central South Consortium
- Sarah Griffiths, Cardiff's Governors' Association.

Meeting two

- Carolyn Mason, head teacher, Fairwater Primary School

- Jacquie Turnbull, vice chair of governors, Fairwater Primary School
- Paul Mitchell – local authority governor, Fairwater Primary School
- Rachel Woodward – acting head teacher, Christ the King Primary School.

The Members were also briefed by:

- Debbie Lewis, Senior Challenge Advisor, Central South Consortium.

Meeting three

- Huw Jones–Williams, head teacher, Whitchurch High School
- Mrs Gaynor Bell, deputy head teacher, Whitchurch High School
- Mrs Jenny Ford, deputy head teacher, Whitchurch High School
- Mrs Joyce Slack, chair of governors, Whitchurch High School
- Mrs Sian Hopkins, vice chair of governors, Whitchurch High School
- Dr Paul Bulpin, community governor, Whitchurch High School
- Cllr Jonathan Evans, local authority governor, Whitchurch High School
- Mr Mike Newman, governor, Whitchurch High School
- Mr David Roylance, community governor, Whitchurch High School.

Task Group Members

Councillors Richard Cook, Dianne Rees, Iona Gordon, Joe Boyle, Paul Chaundy, Jim Murphy, Ashley Govier, Catrin Lewis, Patricia Arlotte and Carol Cobert.

Inquiry Recommendations

The Inquiry's 14 recommendations identified, to date, for your consideration, the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate and South Central Wales Consortium are detailed below. Beneath these recommendations you will find a set of key findings and observations offered by Members to underpin the recommendations.

Recommendations 8, 9, 10 and 12 have already been included in the Scrutiny report on "*Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – High level of Local Authority Governor Vacancies in Cardiff and the Appointment and Effectiveness of Local Authority Governors*" (dated 1 December 2014) and "*Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – The effectiveness of school governing bodies in improving the educational attainment of their pupils*" (dated 16 July 2015). Such recommendations do not require a separate response.

School Improvement Process Recommendations 1 – 7

1. That the Council must ensure that the performance of all schools – regardless of their current category – is continually reviewed and challenged, to ensure that no school can coast or fall through the monitoring system. (Key Finding 1A)
2. That the Council must ensure that where schools identify external factors as impacting on improvement plans, senior Council officers engage with head teachers, in a timely manner, so that the school can better focus on improving its performance. (Key Findings 1B, 5B)
3. To address concerns identified by Head Teacher, the Council and Consortium must review and confirm that appropriate mechanisms are in place to both enable schools to highlight any issues they have with implementing their improvement plans and ensure they are receiving the support they require. (Key Findings 4A, 5A)

4. That the Consortium must ensure that the quality checking of challenge advisors' work is consistently moderated and the results are reported annually. (Key Findings 1E, 4A)
5. That the Consortium considers pursuing the principles of a 'Bank of Excellent Teachers', as recognised as good practice in North Somerset, to support teaching staff and raise standards. (Key Finding 3C)
6. That the currently discretionary practice of sharing bespoke, exemplar improvement models across all schools be adopted by the Consortium to increase collaboration, the sharing of good practice, and the raising of standards. (Key Finding 1C)
7. That, where a school has a high percentage of Special Education Needs (SEN), Additional Learning Needs (ALN) or Looked After Children (LAC) pupils, the Council engages with the school's senior management team to ensure that an appropriate level of support is available to that school and the outcome carefully monitored. (Key Findings 1B, 5B, 5E)

Governing Bodies and Governors – Involvement in School Improvement Recommendations 8 – 13

8. That the Council must monitor that governing bodies, undertake skills self assessments, to ensure that the governing body is fit for purpose and any skill gaps are identified and addressed. ¹ (Key Finding 2E)
9. That the Council and Consortium ensure that governing bodies are provided with appropriate, quality training to challenge and support

¹ "Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – The effectiveness of school governing bodies in improving the educational attainment of their pupils" (dated 16 July 2015).

their schools in improving their performance.² (Key Findings 1F, 2A, 3A, 4C)

10. That the Council and Consortium deliver mandatory training in school settings as well as County Hall.³ (Key Finding 2A)
11. Develop a process so that the Council, Consortium and schools ensure that all performance data and assessments are available and understood by the whole governor body in a timely manner to inform the school's review of its improvement plan. (Key Finding 2B, 2C)
12. That the Council must assist schools, who are having difficulty, in filling governor vacancies, so that the governing body is sufficiently competent to meet the challenges of each school improvement programme.⁴ (Key Finding 4B)
13. That the Council collaborates with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese and Church in Wales Archdiocese to confirm that appropriately experienced Governors are appointed to their schools, in a timely manner, to maintain appropriate standards and responsibilities. (Key Finding 4B)

School Support Categorisation Recommendation 14

14. That the Council and Consortium ensures that cases where final categorisation of the school is moderated, are reported annually to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee as part of the annual education report. (Key Finding 7C)

² As above

³ "Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – The effectiveness of school governing bodies in improving the educational attainment of their pupils" (dated 16 July 2015)

⁴ "Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Phased Inquiry – High level of Local Authority Governor Vacancies in Cardiff and the Appointment and Effectiveness of Local Authority Governors" (dated 1 December 2014)

1. School Improvement Process

Background

The Members received a briefing from the Senior Challenge Adviser, on the improvement and challenge process, for red and amber support category schools, as well as the relationships with other partners, the interventions and support processes, together with some of the challenges facing the Consortium in improving Cardiff's schools performance were also highlighted.

Members were made aware that head teachers are responsible for standards and the Consortium is there to challenge and support, and that there are bespoke packages of support devised for each red support category school to facilitate rapid school improvement. Bespoke packages are also in place for head teachers, to upskill, so that they meet the standards they are expected to achieve. Members were informed that most head teachers are "up to the challenge" of their job, although there are a small number that are 'stuck' and the Consortium is putting intensive support and coaching in place for them.

Members were also made aware of an IT training programme for teachers, to help them improve the quality of their teaching, called **Continua**. There is also a list of "outstanding teachers" as an exemplar. Additionally, schools often share good practice with each other and provide visits for teachers to other schools as part of the school to school working model. Members were also informed by a red category school, that the improvement model they were using was very good and should be shared with other schools.

It was pointed out by a Member that some of the school's Estyn judgements are not showing significant improvement this year. It was explained that in 2010 Estyn changed their assessment framework. The bar has been raised and it is continuously rising. Although the majority of schools are improving, there are a few schools that are not progressing at an appropriate pace.

Members however were pleased to hear that 19 of 24 amber schools are making rapid progress and should be on yellow level of support category by

this summer. The number of red support category schools has been reduced by 50% during this current academic year.

Key Findings

KF 1A Members noted that amber and red support category schools receive more support than yellow and green. For red support category schools the process states that following meetings with Consortium, heads of school and governors should discuss what the school's capacity to improve is. Amber and red support category schools are invited to progress review meetings where the challenge advisor judges their progress. Members expressed the view that schools which were identified as green also needed to be monitored to ensure that they did not become complacent and drift into the amber or red support category.

KF 1B Members noted that some head teachers and governors cited external factors (for instance lack of a nursery, numbers on roll and the number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs) as a key challenge to improvement, which are outside their control.

KF 1C Members heard that schools often share good practice with each other and provide visits for teachers to other schools as part of the school to school working model.

KF 1D It was acknowledged that in some circumstances the Consortium can give a school a low rating on 'capacity to improve' where the quality of teaching is good, but the head teacher is not supporting improvement. Members were informed by head teachers that the challenge advisors' quality assurance of school improvement plans was critical and must be a priority for the Consortium.

KF 1E Members also questioned the level of quality checking of the challenge advisors' work by the Consortium as this had been identified as a cause of

concern by head teachers, governors and the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate.

KF 1F Heads of governing bodies commented that there needed to be more bespoke training for their governing body to help challenge and support the school's performance data and improvement programme.

2. Governor Bodies and Governors – Involvement in School Improvement

Background

Members were briefed by the Vice Chair of the Cardiff Governor's Association, on the Association's views of the governor bodies' capacity to challenge and support head teachers to improve the performance of their schools. She also highlighted a number of concerns that the Association had identified, as needing to be addressed by schools, the Consortium and the Council, which are demonstrated as key findings below.

Members were informed that Governors have to rely on their head teacher to communicate about activities undertaken involving the school in the challenge process. It was commented that in the past Governors were passive, particularly in schools that had been identified as drifting down in performance. Another issue highlighted was that some Chairs of Governors are too supportive of their head teacher and do not challenge performance.

Key Findings

KF 2A Members were aware that there is plenty of training available, but there is nothing specific to help governors to engage with the school improvement and challenge process of their school. Members considered that bespoke training for governors works best and creates better attendance. Some schools are using a range of activities to help improve the governing body's performance. Members noted that there should be a variety of training models, such as cluster training and whole school training.

KF 2B Governors should be actively involved in schools' "School Improvement Group" meetings and actions, Members did however hear, that this was now starting to happen in some schools, but felt that this should be happening across all schools.

KF 2C Members agreed that all governors must be provided with or be able to find relevant information, data and assessments to be able to challenge and support the head teacher. Governing bodies must be kept fully informed of the performance and management actions being undertaken in their schools.

KF 2D It became evident that the Governors Association is not clear as to who is taking the lead – the Council or Consortium.

KF 2E Following consideration of all the evidence members remarked that governing bodies must be fit for purpose and regularly undertake a skills self assessment to ensure that the appropriate training is in place and skill gaps are filled.

3. Meadowlane Primary School - School Improvements

Background

Debbie Lewis, Senior Challenge Advisor initially explained that the major problem in the school prior to 2014. The previous head teacher did not provide the governing body with sufficient information on school improvement aspects for them to effectively challenge decisions. New head teacher was appointed in September 2014 followed by considerable changes in the governing body. The school has made a huge amount of progress since appointment of the new leadership.

The head teacher identified a number of challenges faced in raising the school's standards, which are:

- Budget
- Premises

- Family backgrounds
- Attendance and punctuality
- Mobility
- Complex behaviour issues
- Time – curriculum coverage
- Attitudes – parents, children, staff
- Pressures from ‘above’
- No baseline assessment for progress measure

The head teacher also highlighted the actions that have been undertaken in response to the above challenges, which include:

- Head teacher's focus: Teaching and Learning
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Building relationships with parents
- Building links with the community
- Links with other schools
- Working with other professionals
- Honesty

Members were informed, by the head teacher, that the school leadership team now assess and collates pupil performance data every half term, making sure all children are making progress. Any child that is not making progress is identified and review meetings are arranged to discuss it.

The Head teacher was asked if she felt supported by the local authority, the challenge advisor and Consortium. She said the school had lots of contact with the Consortium through the challenge advisor, half termly meetings and support from other pathfinder schools. The head teacher agreed with the school's assessment and stated that there had not been much progress in improvements prior to September 2014. However since her appointment there has been a swift change, supported by the staff.

A Member asked the senior challenge advisor if there were clear mechanisms to deal with leadership issues, particularly when change is needed. She stated that there are progress review meetings, which are regularly held and the chair of governors is informed. Cardiff's culture is changing but improvements are still needed and there is now a robust system in place. There is more pressure on red and amber support category schools.

Key findings

KF 3A The Members were concerned to hear that the chair of governors considered that a key issue was the need for more training about school performance from the local authority and/or Consortium.

KF 3B Members heard from the chair of governors that the rapid improvements had occurred since appointing the new head teacher. Teachers already knew they can make improvements.

KF 3C The head teacher considered that there would be a benefit from being able to call on expert teachers to support her staff. In her previous role as head teacher in North Somerset there was access to a "Bank of Excellent Teachers".

4. St Illtyd's High School – School Improvement

Background

The Members were informed that the school was put into special measures in 2012. In June 2013, a new head teacher was appointed, Mike Clinch. Upon taking up post the head teacher found the school to be dysfunctional, but with a desire to improve, from pupils, parents and governors.

The head teacher identified a number of issues which he felt had impacted on the school's performance and capacity to improve, these included:

- Parents' low opinion on the school;
- Minimal performance management for staff;
- Lack of clear roles of staff;
- Very low students' aspiration;
- Classrooms not standard;
- Staff reduction - out of 55 staff 15 left;
- No support from Consortium;
- Budget – not allowed to set up overdraft;
- Business Manager left.

The head teacher highlighted a number of significant changes that had recently been made including:

- Governance – upgraded the governing body;
- Support from Link Adviser – Now part of Challenge Cymru;
- Restructure of staff;
- Training of staff;
- Links with feeder primary schools have improved greatly now that the school is part of Challenge Cymru.

Members were pleased to hear that pupil results had improved last year and further improvements were expected this year. However there were no quick fixes. Changes were difficult due to staff and union discussions.

Key Findings

KF 4A Head teacher expressed his view that there was insufficient support from the Council and not enough support from the Consortium. However, the school itself managed to arrange to receive school to school support through Hub Schools and through the Link Adviser. Contacts were dependent on personal links and private arrangements. Head teacher expressed the view that there was not a clear understanding of the long term strategies for school improvement.

KF 4B Members noted that the governor body has changed due to the realisation of what was needed. The Archdiocese had problems appointing governors for the school. However the governor body is now better structured and fully committed to improving the school.

KF 4C Members were concerned to hear that the head teacher felt that training for governors is inconsistent, and that there needs to be training of governors to deal with the new strategies for school improvement.

5. Fairwater Primary School – School Improvements

Background

The head teacher provided a briefing about the background of the school, the current position and challenges for the school. Fairwater Primary School is in a Communities First area. There are currently 205 children on the roll, 35% FSM (Free School Meal) and 35% ALN (Additional Learning Needs). The school accommodates a Special Resource base for children with serious social, emotional and behavioural needs with a current intake of 8 children. The head teacher has been in post for 4 ½ years during which time the school has undergone considerable change in staffing, curriculum provision, and doubling FSM and ALN pupil needs. At the time of the new head teacher's appointment in September 2010 the school was not operating statutorily.

During the period approaching Estyn revisit in September 2014 (following an inspection in July 2014) the head teacher and governing body had been assured by the systems leader that the school was on track to meet the ESTYN requirements. The outcome of the September 2014 revisit resulted in the judgement that “significant improvements” were needed. This was totally unexpected by the head teacher. She felt that the goal posts had been moved as all targets had been met.

The head teacher highlighted a number of significant changes that had recently been made following the September 2014 inspection, including:

- New challenge advisor to support the school;
- Restructuring of the leadership team;
- The development of systems and processes to raise standards.

Members were reassured to hear that the school was now on track to achieve its improvement targets and that the local community understands that the school is a good school, but needs to show improvement in standards through data. In addition, Members noted that the Governor Body has also seen a dramatic change in the school over the past 2 years.

The challenge advisor informed the Members that a further review would be undertaken and if no progress had been made further additional support would be provided.

Key Findings

KF 5A The head teacher identified a number of issues which had impacted on the school’s performance and capacity to improve, these included a need for refreshed senior leadership team and improvement of monitoring systems. Another issue pointed out by the head teacher was the governors’ insufficient involvement in the improvement process and challenge and also lack of quality assurance from the Consortium;

KF 5B The head teacher indicated a number of external factors including lack of a nursery provision impacts on standards in Reception. Members were also informed that there are too many on the school roll. Other external element identified by the head teacher were the high number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) including hosting an 8 pupil Special Resource Base for pupils with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) whose data is not disaggregated from mainstream pupils in the formal WG reporting process, Free School Meals (FSM) and Looked After Children (LAC).

KF 5C The head teacher stated that they had a good model for improvement, but she did not think it was a Consortium's model. It provides good support and should be shared with the other schools. The model matched the school challenge needs but still does not provide quality assurance. The challenge advisor later confirmed that the model was a Consortium model, a bespoke package to facilitate rapid school improvement and up skill leaders at all levels.

KF 5D Members were concerned that the head teacher, when questioned explained that the school had had meetings to discuss the funding of increased pupil numbers in certain year groups requiring additional classes, but no funding was forthcoming; she said this was impacting on the resources available to support pupils in the school.

KF 5E Members were also concerned to hear that the school had reduced capacity or resources to address the "Children in Need" pupils, and that it was difficult to access specialist teachers/educational psychology for ALN and LAC pupils.

6. Christ the King Primary School – School Improvements

Background

Members were informed that the school, which had previously been an excellent (Green support category) school, unexpectedly found itself without a head teacher and chair of governors. The deputy head teacher was appointed as acting head teacher in September 2014. The acting head teacher and Consortium challenge advisor immediately undertook a review of the school and developed a rapid improvement plan to avoid the school being placed in special measures. Estyn undertook an inspection in November 2014 and assessed the school's performance as "adequate" but its prospects of improvement as "unsatisfactory".

The acting head teacher explained the key actions that the school had put in place to address the six recommendations that Estyn had identified.

Members, noted that the school's senior leadership team and governors had put in place actions to address all recommendations and that the governor body has a much better skill mix now which is helping to drive the improvements.

Members heard from the head teacher that the lack of the nursery at the school was putting extra pressure on the reception class. In addition there was concern that the school was a one form entry school. In some years, there were 42 pupils on the school roll. The challenge advisor explained that there were now mechanisms in place to actively discuss these issues.

Key Findings

KF 6A The acting head teacher identified a number of issues which she felt had impacted on the school's performance and capacity to improve, these included the systems for monitoring and evaluation, which in head teacher's opinion, were not robust. Members also noted that shortcomings had been kept from staff, senior leadership team and the Governing Body.

KF 6B Members were informed that there were very few monitoring visits and the governors were not actively challenging. The challenge advisor also explained that there was now a more open and honest exchange of information between the head teacher, senior leadership team, governors and the Consortium.

7. Whitchurch High School – School Improvements

Background

The Members had an opportunity to visit the upper and lower sites of Whitchurch High School. Members noted the recent improvements to the school's buildings and classes; they also noted the investment that is needed in the school to replace the condemned and poor quality terrapins building to accommodate high numbers of pupils.

The head teacher highlighted that the recent red support categorisation had been a huge disappointment to the school's governors, leadership team and the three hundred teaching and support staff. He highlighted that it had caused a lot of work to raise teachers' morale. Members noted that students and parents had questioned the judgement, which was against their own understanding of the school, and they had been affected too.

The school expressed their view that the school can demonstrate at least amber capacity to improve and has not been assessed appropriately. They also feel they have a great strength in leadership. The governing body indicated that it takes its challenge and support role seriously and that the school has high expectations for continued improvement and sustained success in all areas.

Chair of governors, stated that the school does demonstrate improvements and the people that categorised the school didn't seem to know it well. Members heard that categorisation looked at a small part of performance and it does not take into account other achievements and opportunities provided.

A governor added that the school is above the all Wales average and deals very well with ethnic minorities and children with Special Educational Needs. The school was aware of the underperformance of boys' achievements and was already addressing the issue.

Head teacher, when asked about support from Consortium replied that their challenge advisor was very professionally challenging and supportive. However he had recently left and had just been replaced. The head teacher pointed out that therefore there will be a change in dynamic of the engagement for the remainder of this year and next, due to also not being a red support category. It was stated that school has actively sought its own engagement with other partners, where appropriate, for effective impact and not relied solely on the Consortium.

Members asked about the school's intake for this year and whether it had changed. Governors responded that under the foundation Status they are the admissions' authority but the school maintains the principle of being a local school and is not selective in its intake. The intake is increasing as the higher birth rate is now reaching secondary level. The school uses Welsh Government admissions guidance. This flexibility allows for better budget control.

Members were informed that a suggestion came from the governing body to appoint an additional deputy head as part of a business case decision. The senior leadership in the school currently consists of:

- Head teacher
- 2 deputy head teachers (3 from 1 January 2016)
- 7 assistant head teachers (5 from 1 September 2015)
- 1 business manager.

Member asked if the school has any problems in recruiting quality and experienced teachers. Governors said that they have a dedicated HR person who supports governors and senior leaders in recruitment and they have never had any problems with the recruitment of teaching and support staff.

None of the staff has attendance and wellbeing issues or warnings. The Governors added that the school creates opportunities for teachers' development and promotion. Governor recruitment and retention is always strong.

Key Findings

KF 7A The chair of governors stated that the local authority does not seem to know Whitchurch High School well enough. School visits were passed to the Consortium; however the chair of governors felt that the local authority should be more involved.

KF 7B The head teacher stated that the accountability process and operational workings between the Consortium and local authority were improving and that the previous Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and current Director of Education and Lifelong Learning had driven the improvement.

KF 7C The head teacher and governors pointed out that they do not agree with the assessment as documented in the School Improvement Report. It was discussed with Challenge Advisor that the level of support required, reflecting the significant work undertaken and current impact on practice, is amber. However the level of support category was later moderated by the Consortium to red. Members noted from the School Improvement Report that in light of the fact that the Local Authority has issued the school with a warning notice, it has to be an appropriate balance between challenge and support so that school makes the rapid progress that is needed. The school has been in category C within the previous consortium arrangements for the last two years and it has made insufficient progress during that period against a number of key indicators.

KF 7D Members were told that the school is not allowed to take on Initial Teacher Training (ITT) student this forthcoming year as a consequence of the

red support category. Members were told that despite this ITT students had been in school all this year.

KF 7E Members were informed that the chair of governors sent a letter to the previous Cabinet Member in September 2014 regarding budget constraints and perceived inequalities of provision across the authority. The letter, which still remains unanswered, covered the following issues:

- *The current administration inherited a Fair Funding system which was meant to support areas of deprivation across the City. Governors and schools could accept the need for this. At the time the school did not make a representation that instead of additional funding being given to these schools the formula funding was re-applied so that the schools funded this additional support from with the existing ISB (Individual School's Budget).*
- *The funding arrangements have not been reviewed since. When the Welsh Government introduced the Pupil Deprivation Grant the most deprived schools continued to benefit at a much greater rate than other schools.*
- *There is currently a difference in pupil funding at secondary school level within the authority of £1,673 per pupil.*
- *This inequality is further highlighted by the fact that during the past five financial years certain schools have seen a percentage increase in funding levels of around 20% whereas others have not even seen a 5% increase during this period.*

Conclusion

Thank you for giving time to consider this report. I would be grateful if you, following discussions with the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and Consortium representatives, would consider and respond to the key findings and recommendations made in this letter within next two months. As indicated above, recommendations 8, 9, 10 and 12 have already been included in separate scrutiny report and do not require a separate response.

Should you require clarification or have any questions about any of this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Councillor Richard Cook
Chair of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc to:

Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Carol Jones, Assistant Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Gareth Newell, Operational Manager
Joanne Watkins – Cabinet Business Manager
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager
Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Correspondence Report summary 2015 - 16

Committee date	Recipient	Subject	Response Required	Response date	Response received	Future Action
15 September 2015	Cllr Merry	Quarter one performance	A further update on the outcome of the admission appeals, following the completion of the 30 day statutory timescale for an appeal hearing, and the numbers of pupils who have not yet attended school because of appeals or pressure on the admissions process;	4 November 2015	All appeals have been completed within the statutory 30 day time scale. Pupils have been offered places and it is now down to parental choice as to which option is taken up by the child	N/A
			Assurance that additional management actions would be put in place to ensure that the SOP programme would be fully implemented;		Additional experienced staff has been secured to strengthen the capacity of the team	To continue to monitor throughout the year
		Provisional School Results	A copy of the recent Eastern High Estyn letter;		Copy attached to letter	N/A
			Details of the measures being implemented to		Details of the measures being taken to bring	To continue to monitor

			<p>bring about significant improvements in results in mathematics across all key stages;</p> <p>Details of the actions being implemented to address the inconsistencies in teacher assessments</p>		<p>about significant improvements in Maths results is contained in a report of the Education Development Board, attached to the letter</p> <p>The consortium have been commissioned to address the inconsistencies, a copy of the processes are listed in the letter.</p>	<p>To continue to monitor the Consortiums work</p>
15 September 2015	Cllr Lent	<p>Child Health and Disability progress report</p> <p>Families First Review</p>	<p>Recommended that you consult and implement the new Child Health and Disability eligibility criteria as soon as possible;</p> <p>Recommends that regular consultation meetings are undertaken with children and their carers who use the Child Health and Disability service;</p> <p>That you and officers lobby the Welsh Government to ensure that the Families First funding and packages</p>		<p>Awaiting a response</p>	

		Quarter one Performance	<p>continue to be provided post 2017;</p> <p>That future corporate performance quarterly reports include the relevant performance indicators published by the Wales Data Unit and publicised by the Welsh Government; and</p> <p>Provide details of the use of the contingency budget for Children's Services.</p>			
13 October	Cllr Hinchey	Budget Monitoring	<p>More robust assessment of achievability needs to be undertaken to ensure decisions are made on the correct information</p> <p>Corporate contingency should only be allocated and approved at the end of the Year, should it be needed</p>		Awaiting a response	
13 October	Cllr Lent	Budget Monitoring	Payment by Results - Information on the barriers to achieving this		Awaiting a response	

			<p>saving and further details on the ongoing review of all out of county placements to help identify other savings</p> <p>Business support review – As this saving will now not be achieved, details of alternative actions to achieve the saving</p> <p>Commissioned residential services – An explanation of why this saving could not be achieved and the alternative actions being undertaken to fully achieve this saving</p>			
13 October	Cllr Merry	Budget Monitoring	<p>Deteriorating position in respect of school balance – detail of actions being taken to address the deficits</p> <p>Funding for the Central South Consortium – contribution to savings</p> <p>Staff realignment and</p>		Awaiting a response	

			restructure – detail of how the savings will now be achieved			
13 October	Suzanne Griffiths	National and Regional Adoption Service	Future reports to include Comparative information from similar English authorities Future Scrutiny of the National Annual Report must include the regions annual report		Awaiting a response	

Inquiry Letters

Outcome Letter date	Recipient	Subject of Investigation	Key Findings and Recommendations	Response date	Response received	Future Action
16 July	Cllr Magill	School Governors	Effectiveness of the Governing Body Support for Governing Bodies . Training of Governors		Awaiting response	

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

18 September 2015

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW



County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
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Dear Sarah

Thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015 to provide an opening statement and answer questions on the agenda item **Quarter one performance and Provisional School Results 2014/15**. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar for his introduction of the report and answers to Members questions. During the way forward section of the meeting the Members' considered the information in the report and answers to their questions, and identified a number of comments, concerns and recommendations for your consideration, as detailed below.

Quarter 1 performance

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be presented with the Directorates Quarter 1 performance report. Members were pleased to read about the progress being made to improve the performance of all areas of Education. In particular Member commented on the improved performance in respect of Neets, which had been in decline. Members noted that many of the problems were now being addressed and performance had improved. The Committee also considered that the new data sharing protocol, across organisations, should further help reduce the number of Neets.

Members did however question the primary schools admissions procedure, as some Members were aware of a cohort of pupils who were still not attending school as places had not been found. Members noted the Directors comments that all pupils had been offered a school place, however a number of appeals were still being processed and they will all be completed within the statutory time scale. The Committee requested a further update on the outcome of the appeals, to Members, following the 30 days statutory time scale. Furthermore Members would like a breakdown of the numbers of Primary and Secondary school children who as of 16th September 2015 had not yet attended school because of appeals, or that they had not yet accepted an offered place.

A Member expressed concern that in the Q1 performance reports, corporate risk section, the School Organisation Programme (SOP) was shown as "red/amber". The Director stated that the "red/amber" risk was due to capacity issues in achieving the ambitious timescales for project delivery. The Committee requested assurance that

additional management actions would be put in place to ensure that the SOP programme would be fully implemented.

Members, when questioning the poor performance of certain school causing concern, were informed by the Director that Estyn had recently sent a letter about Eastern High, stating that improvements had been made. The Committee requested that they receive a copy of this and any other similar letters that Estyn send in respect of their monitoring visit to any schools causing concern.

Provisional School Results

Members welcomed the continued and sustained improvements in the overall results, however, Members did express their wish for further improvements, across all performance measures, to ensure that every Cardiff school is a good school where learners achieve well.

The Committee did however express considerable concern that the performance of pupils, in Mathematics, was the most significant area that needed improvement, particularly in certain schools. The Committee recommended that you and the Director of Education ensures that the Central South Consortium immediately implements appropriate measure to bring about significant improvements in results in Mathematics across all key stages, and in all schools.

The Committee also expressed its concern that teacher assessments were inconsistent across schools. The Committee requested details of the actions being proposed by you, the Director of Education and the Central South Consortium to address this issue.

Finally the Committee wished to inform you that they approved their work programme for the year, as required by the Constitution, and I have attached, for your information, a copy of the work programme calendar so that you and your officers are aware of the issues that the Committee will be seeking to scrutinise at each meeting.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendations, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested additional information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires a response:

- A further update on the outcome of the admission appeals, following the completion of the 30 day statutory timescale for an appeal hearing, and the numbers of pupils who have not yet attended school because of appeals or pressure on the admissions process;

- Assurance that additional management actions would be put in place to ensure that the SOP programme would be fully implemented;
- A copy of the recent Eastern High Estyn letter;
- Details of the measures being implemented to bring about significant improvements in results in mathematics across all key stages; and
- Details of the actions being implemented to address the inconsistencies in teacher assessments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar – Director of Education and Lifelong learning
CC: Cheryl Cornelius – Cabinet Support Manger
CC Nichola Hayward – Resources Manager
CC Paul Burke – Committee Clerk



My Ref / Fy Ref: CM32215

Your Ref / Eich Ref : Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

Date / Dyddiad: 4 November 2015

Councillor R. Cook
Chair
Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard,

RE: Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee 15 September 2015

Thank you for your letter of the 18th September, 2015 following the meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee on 15th September, 2015.

Quarter 1 Performance

You requested a further update on the outcome of appeals. I can confirm that all appeals have been completed within the statutory 30 day timescale. Pupils have been offered places in both English and Welsh medium provision in both the Primary and Secondary sector and it is now down to parental choice as to which option is taken up for the child. This is because, within the Primary Sector, there are currently 222 places available in 19 different English medium schools and 36 places in 7 different Welsh primary schools. In addition, in the secondary sector there are Welsh medium places available in Ysgol Glantaf and Bro Edern and English medium places in a number of community schools.

You also expressed concern that in the Q1 performance reports, corporate risk section, the School Organisation Programme (SOP) was shown as red/amber. SOP is shown as red/amber because, whilst the design of Eastern High Project has progressed to Planning Committee, the high value construction contract has not yet been signed off. This is anticipated to be completed on time and by the end of the year. At this point the risk rating of the Project will be reduced when there is certainty of delivery of this large scale project. Additional experienced staffing has been secured to strengthen capacity in the SOP Team.

With regards to the discussion of schools causing concern, I enclose a copy of the Estyn Monitoring Report for Eastern High dated June 2015, which identifies the improvements that have been made, and what more needs to be done.



Provisional School Results

With regard to the Committee's concerns about performance, specifically in mathematics, please find attached a report that went to the Education Development Board on the 7th October, 2015 which outlines the appropriate measures that are being taken to bring about significant improvements in results in mathematics.

You have requested details of action being implemented to address the inconsistencies in teacher assessments. The Consortium is commissioned to address the consistencies in teacher assessment and have taken the following actions:-

In 2014 – 15 there have been some key developments that have begun to improve the standardisation, moderation and verification processes across the Central South Consortium region, namely:

- Many headteachers and senior leaders attended the information sharing sessions for the dissemination of the CSC booklet "Securing Consistency in Teacher Assessment. These sessions provided further training and guidance to support a consistent approach to standardisation and moderation of teacher assessment within and between schools.
- Many clusters across the region provided dates for their moderation and had consortium officers to attend and monitor end of foundation phase and key stage 2/3 cluster moderation meetings in English, Welsh and mathematics.
- Clusters provided CSC with a clear audit trail of their standardisation and moderation processes.
- A 10% sample of schools across the region have had their teacher assessments verified by the consortium. This exercise exemplified some examples of good practice but also highlighted in some cases insufficient evidence as a key barrier to awarding accurate levels.

The Welsh Government commissioned a report on the external verification of Teacher Assessment, in the summer term of the last academic year. It is currently still in draft and will be submitted to WG at the Internal Partnership Board meeting on 18th November. Once they have agreed it then copies can be distributed to all stakeholders.

Yours sincerely
Yn gwyir



CIlr /Y Cyng Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education/
Yr Aelod Cabinet Dros Addysg
Member for Cathays /
Aelod Dros Cathays



Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

**Report following monitoring
Level of follow-up: special measures**

**Eastern High School
Quarry Hill
Newport Road
Rumney
Cardiff
CF3 3XG**

Date of visit: June 2015

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and
Training in Wales**

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The monitoring team

Robert Davies	Reporting Inspector
Vaughan Williams	Team Inspector
Delyth Lloyd Gray	Team Inspector
Steven Pringle	Team Inspector

Outcome of monitoring

Eastern High School is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the core inspection in December 2014.

As a result, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales is maintaining the level of follow-up activity.

Estyn inspectors will re-visit the school in about three months' time to inspect progress against the recommendations.

Progress since the last inspection

Recommendation 1: Ensure that all pupils are safe in school

No judgement applied

The school has acted successfully upon many of the health and safety issues identified at the time of the core inspection. Pupil safety has improved by securing the perimeter fence and having one point of entry. This helps prevent unauthorised access into the school and has substantially reduced the number of pupils leaving the school grounds during the day. An effective new CCTV system contributes to making the site more secure and safer for pupils. The school has increased the number of staff on duty around the school during lessons, morning break and at lunchtime. This has helped to ensure better supervision that has resulted in pupils conducting themselves in a more appropriate manner.

The school has responded well to ensure that safety related policies and risk assessments are in place and shared with all staff. These include clear and useful guidance on issues such as the administration of medicines, fire evacuation and security protocols.

Since the core inspection, the school has introduced clear guidance on safeguarding of pupils for all staff. Appropriate training for staff has increased their awareness of the procedures to follow within the school. However, the appointment of a new child protection officer is very recent and a full review of safeguarding procedures is ongoing. The school intends to support the systems and procedures for safeguarding through its 'Eastern Promise' scheme, based on privileges, developed in conjunction with pupils.

The school has conducted a wellbeing survey with around half of pupils that included questions about how safe they feel in school. The survey showed that the majority of these pupils usually or always feel safe in the school. However, the majority of pupils interviewed during the monitoring visit said that they feel insecure in school at least some of the time.

The school keeps suitable records of bullying incidents in the anti-bullying log. This shows that the number of reported incidents have decreased this term with the majority of reported cases being resolved successfully. However, the records do not show the actions that staff have taken to resolve such incidents or details of any

further actions required. The school has plans to develop a new anti-bullying policy through consultation with pupils and staff. This is to include a clear definition of bullying and agreed actions to tackle incidents.

Recommendation 2: Raise standards and improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school has focused the majority of its efforts on strategies to raise the achievement of Year 11 pupils, especially in English and mathematics. This has included an appropriate range of interventions, such as individual mentoring and revision sessions, which have been suitably targeted at those pupils most at risk of underachievement. However, it is too early to ascertain the impact of these initiatives.

Lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the standards achieved by pupils remain too low. In the minority of lessons where pupils make good progress, they recall prior learning well and engage successfully in tasks. They work effectively with each other to share and develop their understanding. However, overall, in many instances pupils complete little work.

Pupils' ability to express their understanding of the topics being studied has improved, and a minority articulate their understanding clearly. However, the majority of pupils still lack the confidence to share their ideas fully with each other and in class discussion.

A few pupils write confidently and fluently for a range of purposes and audiences. However, the literacy and numeracy skills of many pupils remain well below expectations. They make frequent errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar, and lack confidence in expressing themselves through pieces of extended writing. In a few lessons, pupils use their numeracy skills well in subjects other than mathematics, but many pupils do not have a secure enough grasp of basic number skills and are over reliant on the use of a calculator.

Provisional key stage 3 data indicates that most pupils continue to perform at a level well below that of pupils in similar schools, and noticeably so in English.

A range of strategies have reduced the negative impact of poor behaviour on learning. However, the poor attitude to learning of a minority of pupils continues to limit the progress that they make.

Planning to implement the literacy and numeracy framework is still significantly underdeveloped.

Recommendation 3: Improve pupils' behaviour, attendance and attitudes to learning

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, the school has implemented suitable procedures to respond swiftly to the very poor behaviour of a few extremely challenging pupils. Feedback from pupils and staff indicates a clear reduction in disruption to lessons. There is now a greater clarity in procedures to manage behaviour and a few staff are beginning to gain confidence in challenging the behaviour of individuals in lessons. However, a majority of staff ignore low level disruption and off-task behaviour in their classrooms. As a result, too many pupils do not listen attentively in lessons and do not apply themselves well enough to activities. A very few pupils continue to display very poor behaviour in lessons. In general, the behaviour of pupils during unstructured times of the day has improved. However, the behaviour of a few pupils around the school remains a concern.

Since the core inspection, the school has made small steps in improving pupils' attendance. Improvements include support staff dealing effectively with pupils who avoid attending lessons. However, the school does not monitor whole-school attendance closely enough and does not follow up persistent absence. The school has not analysed the attendance of different groups of pupils.

Since the last inspection, exclusion figures have reduced significantly and more pupils now receive internal exclusions and are supported within the on-site inclusion centre. The school's "after school workshops" are beginning to have a positive impact on the reduction of fixed term exclusions.

During registration time, a lack of structure, poor punctuality and pupils' consumption of food and drink with high levels of fat and sugar are not conducive to developing positive attitudes to learning. Staff and most pupils are positive about the recent introduction of initiatives such as The Eastern Promise, The Pupil Class Charter and the Teacher Pledge to Learners in order to promote positive learning experiences. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these initiatives.

Recommendation 4: Improve the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of assessment across the school

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection, leaders have had not had enough time to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Overall, teaching across the school remains weak. However, a few areas of good practice exist.

In a minority of lessons, teachers communicate high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning, and teachers have strong working relationships with pupils. Importantly they communicate enthusiasm for their subject. In these lessons, teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and activities engage, enthuse and sustain the interests of pupils well. Tasks build progressively on pupils' previous learning and extend their understanding into new areas. Teachers use a range of

questioning styles well to test and extend pupils' understanding of concepts. Teachers' classroom management skills are strong and instances of poor behaviour are dealt with sensitively and effectively.

In a majority of lessons, teachers do not communicate high enough expectations for pupils' behaviour, learning and presentation of work. Planning is often weak and activities do not engage pupils sufficiently well. This means that pupils often stray off task and as a result do not complete much work in lessons. This is a common feature and is evident in pupils' work books which contain many examples of poorly attempted tasks and exercises by pupils. In addition, in these lessons, teachers' classroom management skills are weak and they do not challenge or deal with poor or off task behaviour effectively.

The school has devoted considerable resources to improving the assessment of Year 11 pupils' attainment. A range of strategies has been deployed to improve pupils' level of achievement. However, it is too early to establish the impact of these initiatives. Strategies to monitor the attainment of other pupils remain underdeveloped, and there is a lack of consistency in assessment practices within and across subject areas.

The majority of teachers mark pupils' work regularly. A minority of written comments give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work. However, the quality and consistency of written feedback remains too inconsistent. Very few pupils take note of teachers' feedback and respond to the targets they have been set.

The quality of reports to parents has been improved since the core inspection, and they now receive suitable information regarding pupils' progress and areas for improvement.

Recommendation 5: Strengthen leadership at all levels and improve the rigour and consistency of self-evaluation and improvement planning

No judgement applied

Since the core inspection there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team. The changes have involved the appointment of a new headteacher in January 2015. Since his appointment, the headteacher has undertaken a swift and efficient leadership review and restructure. The new leadership structure provides a coherent framework for securing improvement. However, it will be some time before all leaders are appointed to new roles in this structure. Currently, two new deputy headteachers, a new assistant headteacher, a part time assistant headteacher and a business manager support the headteacher in the senior leadership team. The new senior leaders are temporary in post. Permanent appointments will be made for January 2016.

School governance has been strengthened. The appointment of an experienced chair of governors along with additional governors has improved the expertise of the governing body. All statutory committees are now in place. As a result of the changes, governors are beginning to have a fuller understanding of the issues in the

school and are able to monitor the school's progress more closely.

The school has also benefitted from leadership expertise provided by a local secondary school. This support is improving the school's curriculum organisation and data systems. In addition, leaders have reviewed the school's alternative curriculum and this is being rationalised to provide a more sustainable model for next year. The school's policies are being updated and important policies such as teachers' performance management are now in place. However, further work remains to ensure that all statutory policies and documents are updated to meet the school's needs.

Up to now, senior leaders have prioritised their work well and have made consistent progress in improving safety across the school, reducing exclusions, supporting pupils in Year 11 and in improving aspects of leadership. However, overall, senior leaders have not been in post long enough to impact in key areas such as improving:

- pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons
- pupils' academic standards and attendance
- the quality of teaching and learning
- levels of accountability through well organised line management arrangements
- the quality of whole school and departmental self-evaluation, review and planning processes
- the quality of middle leadership

Furthermore, the leadership of special educational needs in the school is very weak. The local authority is providing some additional support in this area, but given the needs in the school the current level of support and overall provision is insufficient.

Recommendations

In order to maintain and improve on this progress, the school should continue to sustain the level of progress it has already made, and continue to address those inspection recommendations where further progress is required.

Report for Education Development Board

7th October 2015

Cardiff 2015 GCSE mathematics

Introduction

This report provides an overview of educational outcomes in mathematics for the academic year 2014-2015 and attempts to set them in the context of regional and national performance and that of the core cities. The data is based upon the provisional results reported by schools. In some aspects the results are still awaiting the outcome of appeals.

Background

The table below shows the trend in performance in mathematics, English and the level 2 inclusive threshold for Cardiff over the last four years. It can be seen that performance in the level 2 inclusive measure is inhibited by the outcomes in mathematics. If outcomes in mathematics were in line with outcomes in English, then performance in the level 2 inclusive measure would be closer to 65% which is the local authority's target for 2016.

Performance Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015 Prov SSSP	2015 Target	2015 Prov Wales
Mathematics L2	55.3%	56.7%	59.2%	63%	69.4%	64%
English L2	63.1%	62.1%	66.0%	72%	70.1%	68%
Level 2+	49.3%	49.9%	54.0%	59%	63.0%	58%

It can also be seen from the table that the level 2+ threshold has improved by 10 percentage points since 2012, whilst mathematics and English have only improved by 8 and 9 percentage points respectively. Schools are becoming more effective at reducing the number of pupils that achieve level 2 in only one of mathematics or English/Welsh but not both. The improvements in schools' pupil tracking processes, in combination with successful intervention have improved schools' effectiveness in this area.

Context

In the Welsh context, Cardiff's performance in mathematics is just below the national average, whilst performance in English is 4 percentage points above. Although the core cities data for 2015 is not yet available, it can be seen from the 2014 data that Cardiff's performance is lower than four out of eight of the core cities. The city context cannot therefore be the underlying factor in the performance of the city's pupils in mathematics.

Core Cities 2014

	Birmingham	Bristol	Leeds	Liverpool
Mathematics Level 2	66.6%	65.3%	59.1%	61.3%

	Manchester	Newcastle	Nottingham	Sheffield
Mathematics Level 2	60.7%	70.4%	59.1%	64.5%

Outcomes

In 2015 outcomes in mathematics by school ranged from 92.8% down to 18.9%, with four schools having outcomes below 50%. Three out of these four schools are part of the Schools Challenge Cymru programme and have been subject to local authority intervention.

In nine secondary schools, the results in the level 2+ threshold were less than expected. In all but one of these schools this stems from lower than expected performance in mathematics.

Four schools improved their results in mathematics in 2015 and their level 2+ performance was above their FFTD estimate.

One school's result in mathematics was slightly lower in 2015 than in 2014 but their level 2+ performance remains above their FFTD estimate.

Five schools improved their results in mathematics in 2015 but their level 2+ performance is below their FFTD estimate. These schools will be supported to ensure that successful learning and teaching strategies are implemented to improve provision across all year groups and that there is not an over reliance on last minute interventions in year 11.

The remaining seven schools produced lower outcomes in mathematics in 2015 than in 2014 and these outcomes are below the FFTD estimates for the schools.

Identified Reasons for Poor Performance

In the schools where outcomes in 2015 decreased, some or all of the following causes are present:

- Instability at senior and departmental leadership level, leading to a lack of leadership monitoring and quality assurance processes
- Poor quality teaching
- Staffing absence and the lack of good quality mathematics supply teachers
- Difficulty in recruiting to vacant mathematics posts at all levels
- Inaccurate assessments at both key stages and ineffective examination entry policy
- Lack of department collegiality
- Too slow in implementing agreed improvement strategies
- Inaccurate targeting and resourcing of interventions
- Inaccurate self-evaluation and improvement planning linked to pupil outcomes

Future Actions

The local authority has commissioned the consortium to take action to address the factors identified above.

Data Analysis

Further data analysis needs to be undertaken by schools to identify specific groups of pupils who may be underperforming. In mathematics, across the city, FSM pupils do not perform as well as nFSM pupils. In some schools girls' performance is lower than boys and some ethnic minority groups also under perform.

Strategies for improving the performance of vulnerable pupils are being included in the termly head of department network meetings. Challenge advisers are expecting to see this level of analysis by mathematics departments in schools along with suitable action plans to address identified underperformance.

Quality of Leadership

Head of department network meetings are arranged by the consortium and used to share best practice and provide peer to peer challenge and support. Leadership development groups have been established to enable heads of department to work collaboratively on leadership tasks, for example, book scrutiny and data monitoring. Red and amber schools have access to match funded support to provide coaching for their subject leaders and can be linked with successful mathematics departments. Consideration is being given to the possibility of using successful subject leaders to become "executive" heads of department across more than one school.

Quality of Teaching

The quality of teaching needs to be improved significantly, across all year groups (and in the primary sector), if sustainable improvement is to be made in mathematics across the city. The consortium has started a "Qualified for Life" project, to be rolled out to all schools, in preparation for the new key stage 4 mathematics curriculum to be first examined in June 2017. This project involves coaching teachers to develop their pedagogical practice before disseminating across the department and across the region in a similar manner. Dissemination across the region has already started with the open days held at eight schools across the consortium during the summer term 2015.

The consortium has fully funded the Outstanding Teachers Programme (including supply cover) for mathematics teachers and also arranges "Teachmeets" and drop in clinics for specific areas of practice. In-school triad development work and/or coaching is facilitated by the consortium and match funded for red and amber schools. "Count On", developed by the consortium is a strategy for sharing good practice through the observation of lessons. There are a significant number of non-specialist teachers of mathematics and additional support for them is being provided through courses such as "Want to teach mathematics?" which is a subject knowledge enhancement programme for non-specialist teachers.

The need to increase the supply of qualified and effective mathematics teachers continues to be a challenge. A strong, well timed recruitment campaign, funded by the consortium, is being planned. Schools are also being proactive in advertising posts with additional recruitment and retention allowances and other incentives for strong heads of department such as assistant Headteacher positions.

Improvement in the learning and teaching of mathematics is a focus of many of the secondary school improvement groups (SIGs), with stronger departments taking a lead in this area.

Accuracy of Assessment

11 secondary schools reported greater 'currently secure' figures in May 2015 than the school reported provisional 2015 figures. In some cases this was caused by schools using previous grade boundaries without any consideration to the fact that these may change.

The strategic adviser for secondary numeracy is visiting those schools where assessment has shown to be insufficiently accurate. This issue is also being addressed at the head of department network meeting during the autumn term. Moderation and verification is also a part of the leadership group programme.

Angela Kent – Head of Achievement and Inclusion

Laura Morris – Strategic Adviser Secondary Numeracy

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

19 October 2015

Suzanne Griffiths
Director of Operations
National Adoption Service
County Hall
Cardiff



County Hall
Cardiff,
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2087

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd,
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088

Dear Suzanne

I would like to thank you, Rachel Evans, Head of Children's Services for the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Angela Harris, Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Service Manager, for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 13th October 2015 to present the **National and Regional Adoption Service briefing updates**. I would also like to thank Councillor Sue Lent, as Board Member and Tony Young, Board Member, for their contribution to the report and the full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. Following consideration of the report presented at the meeting and answers to Members' questions, the Committee has asked me to write to you with the following comments, concerns and recommendations.

The Committee was pleased to receive the National Adoption Services first Annual Report together with a briefing on the Governance and Operation of the National Adoption Service. The Members were really impressed with the work that had achieved since the service had been set up. The Members also appreciated the briefing on the Vale, Valleys and Cardiff (V V C) Regional Adoption Service. Members welcomed the additional performance data as well as the positive picture it was now showing.

The Committee did however express some concern that the VVC region was not as yet performing consistently at the same level as the other regions and looked forward to seeing steady improvements in performance in future reports. Members did also request that future reports should have some comparative information from relevant English Authorities.

The Members considered that the scrutiny of the National and Regional Adoption Service should continue, to enable the Committee to be assured that the services are providing an appropriate service for Cardiff's Looked After Children. The Committee recommended that the Annual Report should therefore be presented to Committee, at this time each year, together with an additional Regional Annual Report, to allow the Committee to fully scrutinise the work of the VVC Regional Adoption Service.

I hope that the comments, advice and recommendation, detailed above, will be of use and support in the adoption of children across Wales and in particular in Cardiff, and I look forward to a positive response to this letter within a month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC Rachel Evans, Head of Children's Services for the Vale of Glamorgan Council,
CC Angela Harris, Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Regional Adoption Service Manager
CC Councillor Sue Lent, Board Member
CC Tony Young, Board Member

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/MJH

Date: 21 October 2015



Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Learning
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – Budget Monitoring Panel

I am writing to you on behalf of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, following its consideration of an update report from the Committee's Budget Monitoring Panel.

The Committee established this Panel as part of its 2015/16 work programme, to seek ways to optimise Committee time in line with WAO advice managing the length of meetings within a three hour target. While the approach will place some extra burden on Panel Members and on the committee scrutiny officer, I and my Committee colleagues hope that it will maintain the effectiveness of our current scrutiny consideration, while reducing the burden on you and senior managers. We will be interested to hear your thoughts as the work of the Panel develops.

The Panel met on 6 October and reviewed the Month 4 budget monitoring Cabinet report, and associated documents, which were relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

At its 13 October meeting the Committee considered a progress report from the Panel which included a number of comments and concerns that the Panel Members made during their consideration of the Children's Services budget projections for the end of 2015/16. The Committee agreed that I should write to you with these concerns, namely:

- **Line 203 Payment by Results Looked after Children & Rehabilitation Project Year 1.** Members requested further information on the barriers in achieving this saving, as well as further details of the ongoing review of all "out of county placements" to identify other savings and plans to ensure that this budget saving is fully met.
- **Line 212 Business Support Review (Lean Review).** The Panel were concerned that it did not appear that robust challenge of this proposal had been undertaken prior to it being included in the Budget proposals, as the Finance comment now indicated that this saving would not be achieved. Members requested information on how the Directorate would be seeking

alternative actions to ensure that this saving is fully achieved along with a timeline and milestones in achieving this saving.

- **Line 217 Market and Demand Management of Commissioned Residential Services.** Members expressed concern that the finance comment stated that there was some doubt as to whether the whole targeted savings would be achieved in 2015/16. Members requested further explanation on why the saving would not be achieved and what actions were being developed to ensure that alternative saving were being developed.
- **Budget Realignment** - The Panel expressed concern that Children's Services had consistently had budget realignments in recent years. In 2015/16 this amounted to £2.4 million to meet on-going pressures on the budgets for external placements, leaving care support costs and adoption allowances. The Panel agreed to undertake a further investigation into these areas of consistent overspend at the next Panel meeting, when it considers the Month 6 Budget Monitoring Report.

Finally the Panel also agreed to hold a further meeting shortly after the Month 6 Budget Monitoring Cabinet Report had been published, and a further meeting at full Committee after the Month 9 Budget Monitoring report has been published. This will enable Committee to assess the progress made in monitoring and managing the Education and Children's Services budgets, as well as reviewing the responses received to the Committee's letter.

I look forward to receiving a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc Tony Young, Director of Social Services
Christine Salter, Section 151 Officer
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/MJH

Date: 21 October 2015



Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Sarah

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – Budget Monitoring Panel

I am writing to you on behalf of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, following its consideration of an update report from the Committee's Budget Monitoring Panel.

The Committee established this Panel as part of its 2015/16 work programme, to seek ways to optimise Committee time in line with WAO advice managing the length of meetings within a three hour target. While the approach will place some extra burden on Panel Members and on the committee scrutiny officer, I and my Committee colleagues hope that it will maintain the effectiveness of our current scrutiny consideration, while reducing the burden on you and senior managers. We will be interested to hear your thoughts as the work of the Panel develops.

The Panel met on 6 October and reviewed the Month 4 budget monitoring Cabinet report, and associated documents that were relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Panel's findings were referred to our Full Committee meeting on 13 October, and this letter contains the Committee's agreed feedback on issues pertinent to your Portfolio.

The Committee welcomed Neil Hardee's attendance at the Panel meeting, as the Members had a number of queries and concerns, on which Neil was able to provide a detailed response or explanation. The Panel did, however, raise a number of concerns during its consideration of the Education Services budget projections for the end of 2015/16, and the Committee agreed that I should write to you with the following observations and requests for clarification:

- The Panel questioned the deteriorating position in respect of delegated schools' balances, and the risk that it represented. Members sought assurance that appropriate actions have been put in place to ensure that all school deficits are addressed within a reasonable timescale. Members did, however, wish to receive further information on the actions being taken in respect of Cantonian High, and in Michaelston Community College and Glyn Derw High School which were "federated" in 2011.
- Members also requested details of the discussions being undertaken to review the City of Cardiff Council's contribution to the funding of the Central South

Consortium in future budgets. Members were of the opinion that the Consortium should contribute to the savings required by the commissioning Councils.

- **Line 134: Staff Realignment and Restructure** – Members expressed concern that the finance comments against this saving stated that “Whilst some savings have been achieved there is a level of uncertainty in respect of the full level of savings”. Members noted that this saving had been put on hold, due to the Estyn inspection. The Panel considered that as the Estyn inspection was known well before the budget saving was agreed, this delay should have been built into the overall savings proposals. The Committee therefore expect that this saving will be fully achieved by the end of this financial year and request details of how the full saving will be achieved.

Finally, the Panel also agreed to hold a further meeting shortly after the Month 6 Budget Monitoring Cabinet Report had been published, and a further meeting at full Committee after Month 9 Budget Monitoring report has been published, to assess the progress made in monitoring and managing the Education and Children’s Services budgets, as well as reviewing the responses received to the Committee’s letter.

I look forward to receiving a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Neil Hardee, Operational Manager, Resources
Christine Salter, Section 151 Officer
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/MJH

Date: 21 October 2015



Councillor Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance
City of Cardiff Council
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear Graham

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – Budget Monitoring Panel

I am writing to you on behalf of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, following its consideration of an update report from the Committee's Budget Monitoring Panel.

The Committee established this Panel as part of its 2015/16 work programme, to seek ways to optimise Committee time in line with WAO advice managing the length of meetings within a three hour target. While the approach will place some extra burden on Panel Members and on the committee scrutiny officer, I and my Committee colleagues hope that it will maintain the effectiveness of our current scrutiny consideration, while reducing the burden on you and senior managers. We will be interested to hear your thoughts as the work of the Panel develops.

The Panel met on 6 October and reviewed the Month 4 budget monitoring Cabinet report, and associated documents, which were relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Panel's findings were referred to our Full Committee meeting on 13 October.

The Committee considered a number of concerns that the Panel had raised, during its consideration of the Education and Children's Services budget projections for the end of 2015/16. The Members agreed that I should write to you with some comments made by the Panel as they considered to be of a general and corporate nature.

The concerns raised were:

- In the "comments" column the projected budget showed that a number of budget savings (e.g.: **Line 212 Business Support Review (Lean Review) in Children's Services** and **Line 134: Staff Realignment and Restructure in Education**) were unlikely to be achieved. The Panel felt this indicated that, in future, a more robust assessment of achievability needs to be undertaken prior to approval, to ensure that decisions are made on the correct information.
- Members did not understand why the draw down of the Corporate Contingency budget of £950,000 had already been included in the budget monitoring narrative. The Panel believed that the contingency budget should

only be allocated and approved by Cabinet at the year end, should it be needed.

Finally the Panel also agreed to hold a further meeting shortly after the Month 6 Budget Monitoring Cabinet Report had been published, and a further meeting at full Committee after the month 9 report has been published. This will enable Committee to assess the progress made in monitoring and managing the Education and Children's Services budgets, as well as reviewing the responses received to the Committee's letter.

I look forward to receiving a positive response to this letter within the next month.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Cc Christine Salter, Section 151 Officer
Cheryl Cornelius, Cabinet Support Manager



My Ref / Fy Ref: CM32533

Your Ref / Eich Ref :

Date / Dyddiad: 5 November 2015

Councillor R. Cook
Chair
Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard,

**RE: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BUDGET
MONITORING PANEL**

Thank you for your recent letter, following the Budget Monitoring Panel meeting held on the 6th October 2015.

In response to the issues that required further clarification;

Delegated School Balances – I note and share your concerns regarding the deteriorating position of certain schools deficit balances. However I can assure you that officers are working closely with every school with a deficit budget within an agreed protocol. Schools in deficit are obliged to agree a medium term financial plan showing how they will balance their delegated budget and any staffing changes can only be made with the authorisation of Council Officers. Additionally you will be aware that the Council has intervened in four schools; Michaelston, Glyn Derw, Eastern and Cantonian High Schools and withdrawn delegation from the Governing Bodies. In each school a senior officer from the Finance Department is assigned to work with the school to ensure the medium term financial plan is adhered to.

Central South Consortium – I share your opinion that the Consortium should contribute to the savings being made by the commissioning Councils and I can confirm that this has been made clear to the Managing Director of the Consortium. The next meeting of the Consortium Directors will be considering how these savings targets can be met.



Line 134: Staff Realignment and Restructure – I note your concerns regarding the current level of savings that have not been achieved within this financial year. This saving will be achieved through restructuring and reduction of posts which will be in place before the start of the new financial year.

I also note your request for further meetings after the months 6 and 9 monitoring figures are available and I will ensure that officers are available to attend.

Yours sincerely
Yn gwyir



**Cllr /Y Cyng Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member for Education/
Yr Aelod Cabinet Dros Addysg
Member for Cathays /
Aelod Dros Cathays**

**SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM32531
Eich Cyf / Your ref: T: Scrutiny/CYP/MJH



Dyddiad / Date: 05 November 2015

Councillor Richard Cook
Chair, Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Services
Room 263
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl / Dear Councillor Cook

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee – Budget Monitoring Panel

I refer to your letter dated 21 October 2015. I am sure the work undertaken by the panel will be of assistance to the Committee in identifying and reviewing any issues arising from the budget monitoring process during the year and I look forward to seeing how this progresses. With regard to the specific issues raised, I would comment as follows.

The budget savings in relation to the Business Support Review (Lean Review) in Children's Services and the Staff Realignment and Restructure in Education were both proposed by the respective directorates as part of the 2015/16 Budget and subsequently approved by Council in February 2015. In both cases the risk analysis identified the level of risk associated with these proposals as red / amber acknowledging that further work was required in order to fully identify and implement the savings. However, at the time that these were approved the directorates anticipated that these savings would be fully achieved.

There is a limit to what can be achieved in relation to the assessment of achievability and where further detailed work and actions are required in order to implement savings then to some extent at least I have to assume that the necessary actions will be taken. Where concerns are identified then these are discussed with the directorates and the risk analysis included at budget time provides an indication that there were some concerns around these proposals. In the current financial climate however and with the scale of the budget savings the Council has to make, it is inevitable that an element of risk will be present in the overall quantum of the proposals and to reflect this a general contingency budget of £4 million was built into the budget. Ideally though this should not be required and it is essential that directorates take the necessary actions to fully implement their saving proposals within the timescales identified. These are closely monitored and reported on during the year with Directors challenged on any shortfalls in their areas.

Due diligence is currently being undertaken in relation to proposals for the 2016/17 Budget and this will be progressed as rigorously as possible however as indicated above, the overall scale of the budget savings the Council has to make on top of the savings found in previous years means that some degree of risk will be inevitable in the increasingly difficult task of preparing a balanced budget for the Council. As ever, our role in Council will be to approve a budget that balances risk with the impact on service users and council tax payers.

With regard to the allocation of the £950,000 contingency budget to Children's Services, the treatment of this sum is in line with previous years and is consistent with the treatment of other specific contingency budgets allocated as part of the Council's Budget. In this case the contingency was set aside to reflect the potential for additional costs to be incurred in supporting looked after children in external residential and fostering placements. At month 4 the projected expenditure was above budget in this area and therefore the drawdown of the contingency sum was put forward for approval. The allocation of the contingency budget was therefore in line with the purpose of the budget as approved by Council in February 2015 and was approved by Cabinet as part of the Month 4 Monitoring Report. If the monitoring position in this area were to improve during the year then an adjustment to the contingency allocation can be made, however at this stage there is no indication that this will be the case.

Yn gwyir,
Yours sincerely,



Councillor / Y Cyngorydd Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance
Aelod Cabinet dros Wasanaethau Corfforaethol a Perfformiad