

Central South Consortium Business Plan

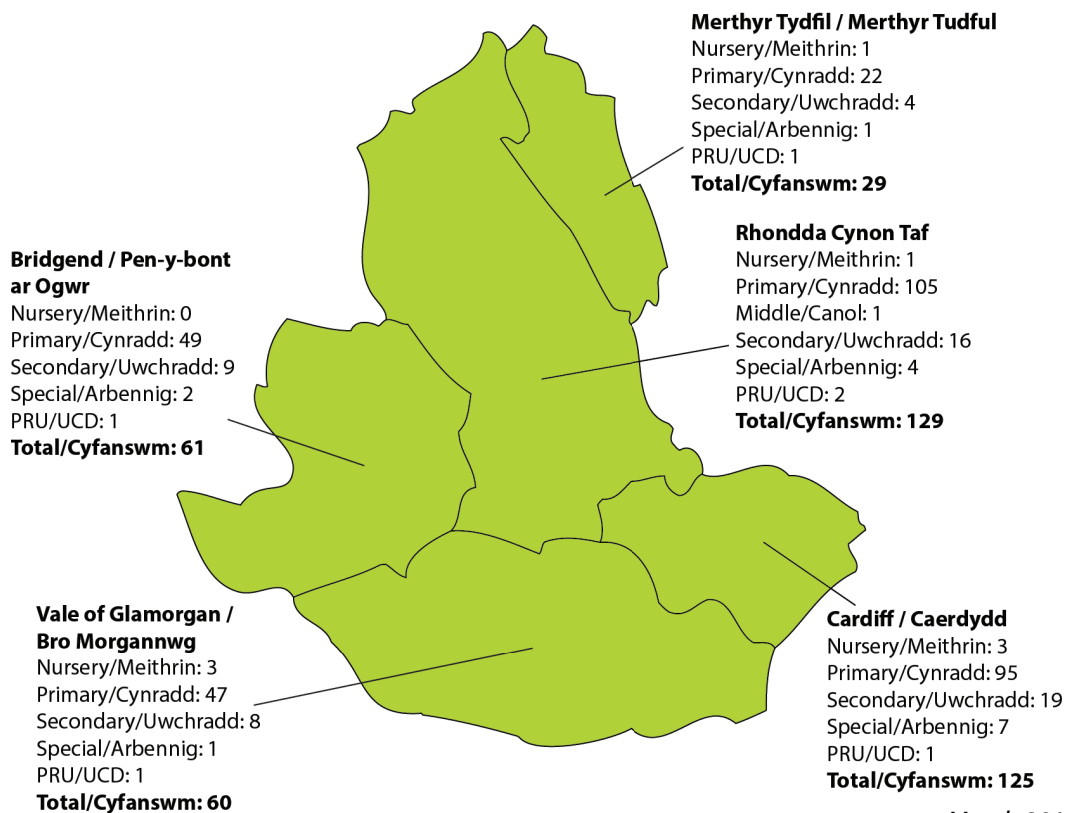
2015/16

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The Central South Consortium

A self-improving school system: Working together to give all children and young people the best start in life.



March 2015

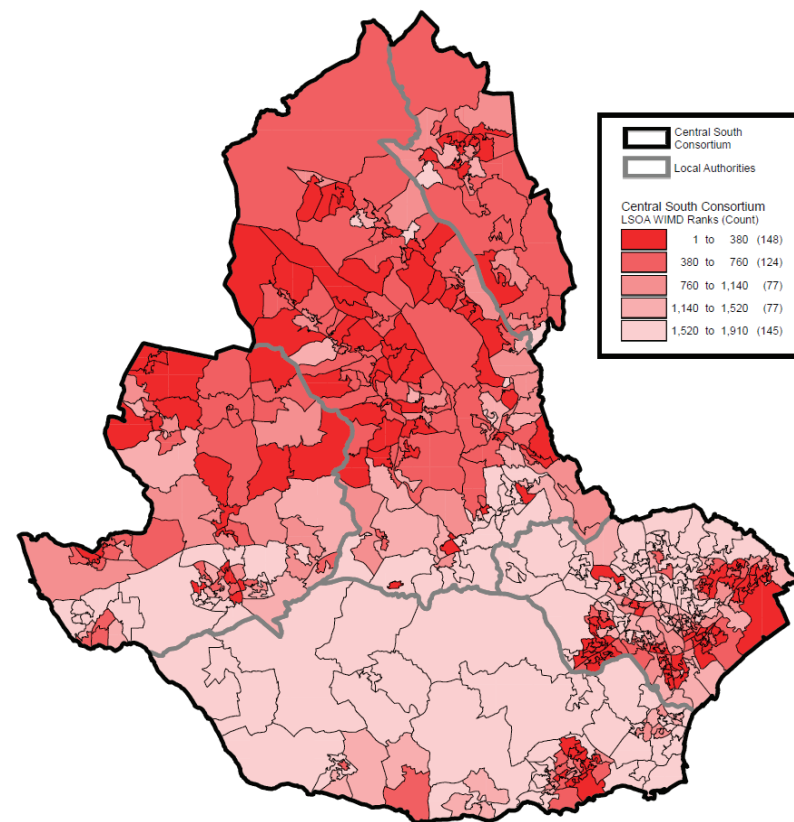
Improvement in schools in the Central South Consortium can drive improvement nationally

The 400 schools across the Central South region are the key to the future of educational improvement in Wales. This is the most populous region in Wales, contains the capital city and the economic, financial, creative and media industries of the city region. It also represents wide diversity from the proud historical valleys to the affluent rural coastal communities.

This region contains a third of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales, the most of any region in Wales. It is increasingly diverse with more ethnic minorities and communities without English or Welsh as a first language. This is why if we are to break the link between deprivation and low attainment across Wales we must demonstrate how this can be done in the Central South region. It is why we are determined to demonstrate progress in improving the outcomes of the most vulnerable fastest.

How well children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable, achieve in education and training in this region significantly influences the reality and perception of education in Wales. The role of schools in driving social cohesion and economic prosperity in this region is crucial to the health and wellbeing of Wales as a whole.

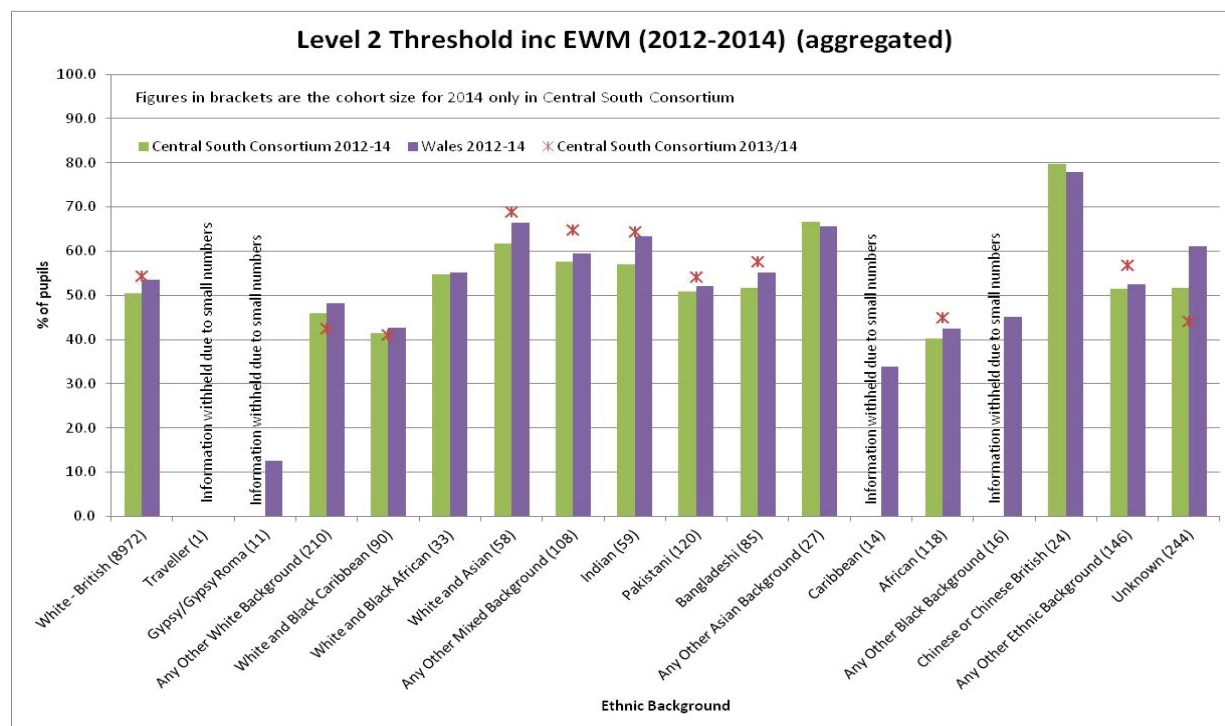
Central South Consortium Lower Super Output Area by Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Rank



The population across Central South Wales is increasingly diverse and includes some of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales

We are committed to developing a world class system of education in the Central South Consortium (CSC). We want to raise the aspirations of all young people and their parents and give them confidence in education. And we want the region to be known as the place to teach and to lead schools in Wales where professional development is central to all that we do. We want to work across the communities and authorities of the region to give all children and young people the opportunities to match their talents and enable them to succeed in further learning and in life.

The outcomes of children from ethnic minority communities vary considerably



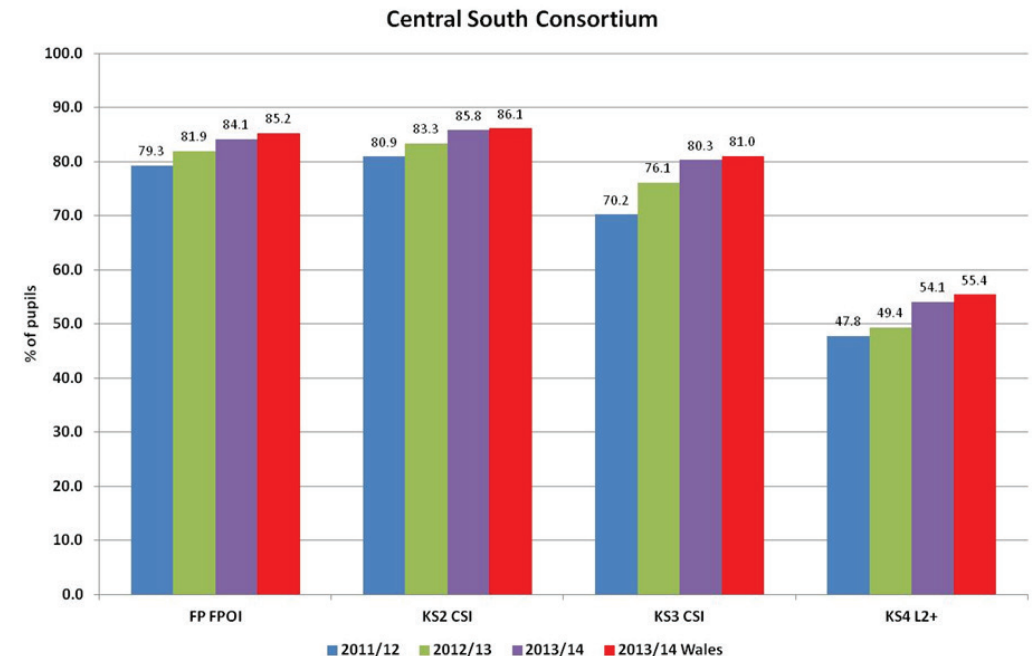
Schools in the Central South Consortium are driving improvement across Wales

We are already seeing excellent progress as a result of the hard work of schools supported by authorities across the region. It has been the improvement in schools in the Central South Consortium which has driven improvement nationally. In 2014 in particular:

- In the Foundation phase, outcomes improved by 3.2% against a national improvement of 2.2%;
- At Key Stage Two outcomes improved by 2% points against 1.8% points nationally;
- At Key Stage Three results rose by 4.2% points against 4% points nationally; and
- At Key Stage Four all authorities improved L2+ by more than the national average leading to a regional average of 4.6% points against a national improvement of 2.2% points.
- In mathematics in particular L2 improvement at KS4 was 4.4% points on average against a national average improvement of 1.4% points.
- Attendance also improved in both phases taking the region to above the national average at secondary level with a 2.5% point improvement in some authorities.

- Some schools in the region are excellent and many have excellent practice. We want to build on what the best schools do and are confident the rest can do at least as well.

Summary tables of the performance data for the Region can be found in Appendix 1 available on the Central South Consortium website (www.cscjes.org.uk).





CENTRAL SOUTH WALES CHALLENGE
HER CANOL DE CYMRU

The Central South Wales Challenge: A self-improving school system

In January 2014 we launched the Central South Wales Challenge. This strategy is led by head teachers, includes all schools across the region and draws on international research. It is based on six underlying principles which are commonly found in successful school systems:

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

A simple ambitious strategy: where schools care about the improvement of all

Our strategy is about all schools acting collaboratively to improve all schools in the region. It is simple and ambitious.

We are committed to a strong sense of common moral purpose. We want to develop a system where schools care about improvement for all as much as for their own school.

We want to shift school improvement from a model that is centrally driven to a model that is by schools for schools, where the reliance on wider external bodies is lessened as capacity for collective improvement is strengthened across the system.

Since we launched our strategy we have:

- launched the 43 School Improvement groups (SIGs) in which every school is involved. The SIGs include schools who have previously had little in common but have worked well to identify and build joint practice development across the region. They are supported by Cardiff University;
- launched two rounds of pathfinders including over 60 schools. These are school to school partnerships funded with agreed outcomes and inputs;
- piloted a 'peer review' leadership model for wider roll out across all schools;
- launched the 'hubs' programme whereby schools provide high quality programmes of support for others, quality assured and accredited.



Shifting away from a dependency model to 'by schools for schools'

We want to shift the culture of school improvement from dependency on central support to a model which is led by schools for schools. This will take time and energy, but high performing school systems internationally have shown that this is the right strategy and will lead to the greatest sustainable long term improvement.

Our ambitious plans to build on our approach so far in 2015 and 2016 are set out in this business plan.



Meeting the Central South Wales Challenge

The self improving system will take time to mature and develop. Looking ahead, success for the Central South Wales Challenge will mean:

- The schools in this region will be the best in Wales. All schools will be committed to the improvement of all schools across the region and every school will be recognised with leadership and teaching at least good and striving to be outstanding.
- Schools in the region will be known for their commitment to professional development and to professional learning communities where innovation is fed by joint practice development in partnership with other schools. Improvement capacity for schools is developed and provided by schools in the region in a dynamic way, responsive to the needs of children and young people in the region.
- Challenge advisers in the consortium identify and evaluate best practice and monitor impact, intervening rapidly on behalf of the authorities where necessary. The consortium works well in partnership with authorities to provide seamless improvement support to schools. Intelligent accountability is in place, and effective support and challenge brokered by the consortium working with local authorities.

The Central South Consortium's Business Plan 2015/16

This business plan sets out how we will build on progress so far. It sets out our approach, our long term vision, how we will measure progress and what we plan to do through the year. It includes how we intend to use our resources and our governance model.

Our aims for the 15/16 year and beyond are:

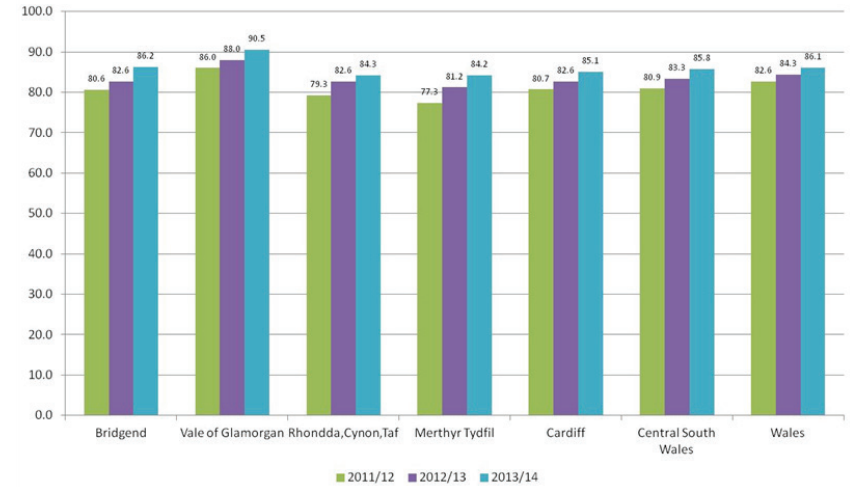
- **To improve standards for all children and young people in all schools**, and for the most vulnerable fastest, so that every child achieves their full potential and every school is a good school with at least good leadership of teaching and learning.
- **To improve capacity in the school system**, within and across schools so that schools increasingly are professional learning communities and work together to support each other with a commitment to developing staff and evaluating and learning from each other.
- **To develop robust and enabling partnership working** with local authorities and the consortium which get behind the efforts of schools to improve, provide the necessary challenge and support, and intervene only where necessary.

Improving outcomes

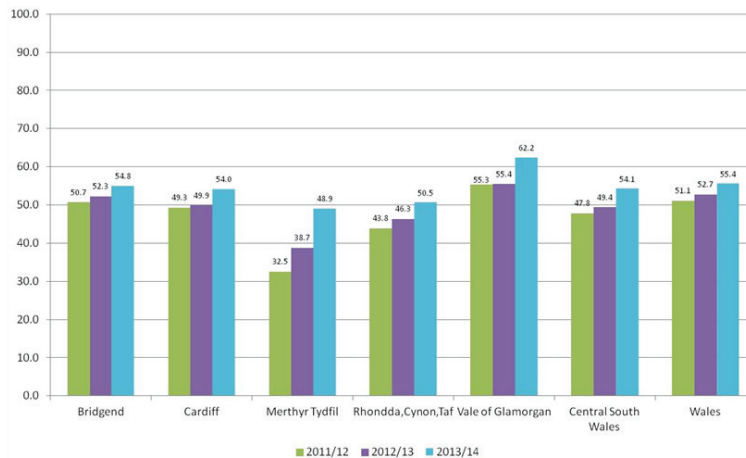
Outcomes have improved across the region at every level, at every key stage and in every authority since 2012. In most instances this has been by more than the national average.

There is a great deal more to be done to realise the full potential of children in the region.

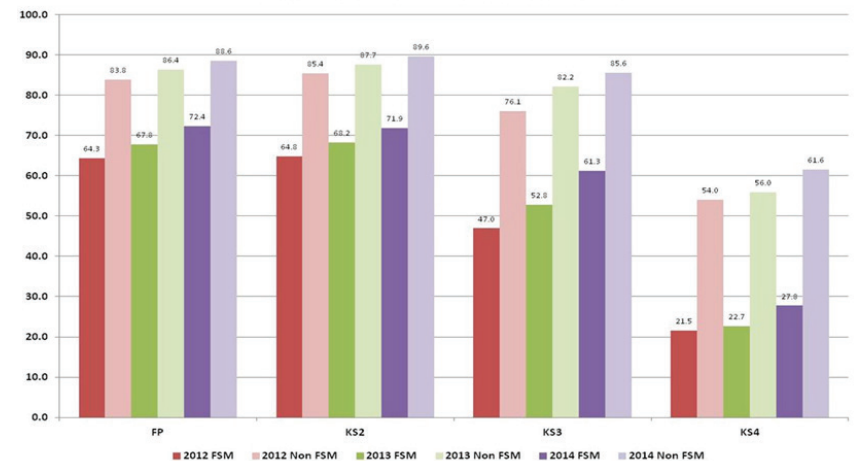
Key Stage 2 - Core Subject Indicator
(% of pupils Level 4 or above)



Key Stage 4 - Level 2 Threshold Including Eng/Cym and Maths



Central South Consortium - FSM vs Non-FSM



Delivering in our targeted areas

Tables of the targets for each Key Stage within CSC are given in Appendix 2 (available on the Central South Consortium website - www.cscjes.org.uk). Performance targets by local authority are also set out in Appendix 2 of the business plan.

Our priorities to be delivered remain to:

- Close the gap in outcomes for children and young people in poverty and for looked after children by a quarter by 2015/2016 and a third by 2016/2017.
- Raise standards in English and Welsh first language and mathematics so that: nine out of every ten pupils reach the expected outcome/ level in the Foundation Phase and at key stages 2 and 3 by July 2015; between a third and two-fifths of pupils reach the expected outcome/ level + 1 in the Foundation Phase and key stage 2 and over half at key stage 3 also by July 2015.
- Raise standards in English by a further 12%, Welsh by 4% and mathematics by 8% by September 2015 compared with September 2014 to reach 77%, 79% and 68% respectively.
- Improve outcomes at Level 2+ by at least a further 6% by September 2015 compared with September 2014 to exceed 60%.
- Improve attendance by a further 0.9% in secondary schools and by a further 0.5% in primary schools to reach 94.5% and 95.2% respectively by September 2015. Continue this trajectory so that the region's ambition of an average of at least 95% in both sectors is achieved by September 2016.

Delivery Strategy 2015/16

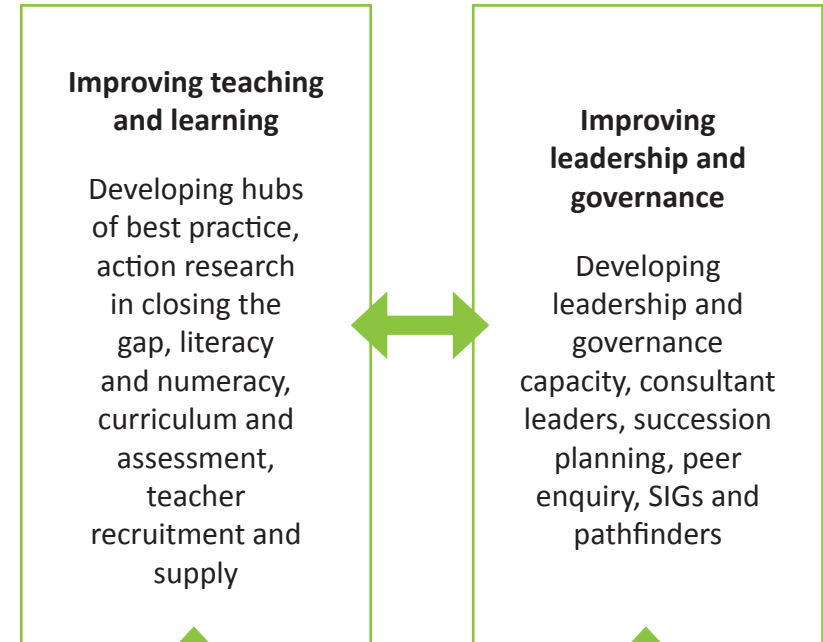
How will we do this?

We will achieve impact through our three big strategic aims.

We aim to:

- Improve Leadership and Governance
- Improve Teaching and Learning
- Improve Partnerships

Improving schools in Central South Wales through the development of a self-improving school system



Improving partnership working
Effective challenge and support
Data and information management
Developing and evaluating practice
Identifying and sharing effective practice
Providing support and intervention where needed

Two double-headed vertical arrows connect the top two boxes to this bottom box, indicating that both teaching and learning and leadership and governance contribute to partnership working.

Leadership and Governance

In 15/16 we will:

- Develop high quality leadership and middle leadership programmes led by schools (from hubs programme) to build leadership capacity in succession planning;
- Improve the consistency and quality of Human Resources (HR) support for governing bodies and schools in implementing robust continued professional development and performance management;
- Evaluate and roll out the peer enquiry model;
- Identify and develop succession planning and talent management strategies with authorities across the region in order to develop current and future excellent leaders;
- Strengthen capacity for rapid and robust intervention where needed particularly by recruiting a cadre of highly experienced 'consultant leaders' who work with schools in need of leadership support;
- Evaluate pathfinder programmes with a clear focus on improvement planning;
- Continue to develop effective joint practice development through SIGs taking on those with potential for further collaborative action research in partnership with Higher Education Institutions;
- Work with governor support services to provide consistent high quality training in good governance for school improvement;
- Develop a cadre of experienced governors and improve communication with all governors.

Teaching and Learning

In 15/16 we will:

- Develop the hubs programme providing teaching and learning programmes that link to best practice schools across the region;
- Develop a best practice knowledge bank across the region, quality assured and founded in the evidence base;
- Support lead 'closing the gap' schools recognised for their work in improving the outcomes of vulnerable learners to further develop their practice and provide support across the region;
- Continue to deliver high quality support to schools in order to enable delivery of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and build the foundations of a literacy and numeracy school-led approach;
- Provide direct match funded support to vulnerable schools, where required, to develop sustainable improvements in teaching, leadership or outcomes for vulnerable learners;
- Engage with leading schools for support in the Foundation Phase and identify lead digital technology schools;
- Resource and develop a system of support for Welsh-medium schools and second language provision led by schools over time;
- Lead a tighter approach to moderation of teacher assessment and communication and support for curriculum change;
- Launch a collaborative action research project and teaching innovation fund across the region drawing on the strongest practice amongst schools working together;
- Work with Initial Teacher Training providers, Teach First and recruitment agencies to improve the supply of high quality teachers into the region;
- Promote working with effective schools to share practice of strategically working with 'lead curriculum schools' and promoting excellence across the region as a building block to supporting curriculum change.

Improving Partnerships

In 15/16 we will develop good and effective practice to support a self-improving school system working in partnership with local authorities in the central south region, the strategy group, schools, Welsh Government and other regional consortia across Wales. Such work will include:

- Continuing to provide high quality challenge and support to schools in inverse proportion to success;
- Sharpening the awareness and use of best practice, improving brokerage of support for red/amber schools and evaluating impact;
- Sharpening partnership working with local authorities making sure where performance is poor and where intervention is needed, robust action can be taken and capacity is available to bring about improvement rapidly;
- Working with local authorities to improve the consistency and quality of the interface with wider services including inclusion and school organisation services;
- Launching a promise or pledge bringing community, cultural, sporting, voluntary, employer and business resources together in practical ways to get behind the efforts of schools to engage vulnerable children and families;
- Improving the provision of high quality data and access and use of information management by schools, authorities and within the consortium;
- Working with Welsh Government to ensure the timely and high quality delivery of ministerial and national priorities including the Schools Challenge Cymru programme, Qualified for Life strategies and developing programmes to support curriculum and assessment change;
- Continuing to provide value for money and focus on the most effective use of resources within the commitment to devolve more resources in flexible ways.

Budget

The budget for the organisation for 2015-16 is outlined opposite.

Local authority contributions remain unchanged from 14/15 levels. The actual apportionment by authority is based on the appropriate indicator based assessments (IBAs) published by the Welsh Government as part of the 2015/16 revenue budget settlement.

Category	Proposed Budget 2015/16 £
Expenditure	
Employees (including secondments and school led capacity building)	3,678,308
Premises	253,733
Transport	65,000
Supplies & Services	310,444
Repayment of Redundancy Costs	100,000
Commissioning (Additional support for schools)	289,441
Support Services	90,000
Gross Expenditure	4,786,926

Income	
Local Authority (LA) Contributions	4,416,486
Tŷ Dysgu Income	300,440
Grants & Other Income	70,000
Total Income	4,786,926
Net Expenditure	0
<i>Budget confirmed at Joint Committee 26/03/2015</i>	

Education Improvement Grant

Although the final terms and conditions for the Education Improvement Grant (EIG) have not been received, the following principles have been agreed:

Delegation Principles

Due to the additional flexibility within the grant, the Central South Consortium has agreed with the local authorities the following principles in relation to the amount retained and delegated to schools:

- There will be an increase in the percentage of funds delegated to schools.
- The consortium will apply a protection mechanism (on a sliding scale) to all schools to prevent significant winners and losers.
- A number of grants (Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG) and Education of Gypsy Children and Traveller Children) will continue to be administered and distributed at local authority level with a focus on impact on outcomes for these children and young people.

Centrally Retained Funding

Retention of the EIG by the Consortium and local authorities has been radically reduced. However, there will still be a need to continue to provide some time-limited support within the consortium and the local authorities.

Examples of this include:

- provision of resource to support the drive towards a school-led, self-improving system;
- provision of specific support for vulnerable schools and for the development of a headship development as a strategic priority;
- provision of high quality literacy and numeracy support on a match funded basis to vulnerable schools.

Furthermore, a small number of grants awarded to individual schools have been allocated over the academic year, not the financial; therefore these will already be committed for summer term 2015.

Delegation to Local Authorities

Funding will be released to the local authorities to fund the Foundation Phase non-maintained settings and also contribute to funding the administration support in authorities covering Welsh Audit Office fees and internal audit costs.

Delegation to schools via local authorities for specific circumstances

Funding associated with the MEAG and to meet the needs of Gypsy/Traveller pupils will be delegated to the local authorities. Funding to support 14-19 provision will be delegated to schools via the local authorities.

Delegation to Schools

The balance will be delegated to schools as a single grant according to an agreed formula with the local authorities. The consortium has applied a protection mechanism (on a sliding scale) to all schools to prevent significant winners and losers.

Education Improvement Grant	£
Centrally retained funding including literacy and numeracy support, Welsh Education Grant (WEG) and Foundation Phase provision	3,324,945
Funding held to support vulnerable schools	500,000
School Improvement Groups	564,000
Delegated to local authorities for non maintained settings	440,550
Delegated to local authorities for administration of grant	108,530
Delegated to schools via local authorities for specific circumstances – MEAG, Gypsy and Traveller Grant and 14-19	7,616,300
Delegated to schools	34,045,211
Total Grant (to be confirmed)	46,599,536

Pupil Deprivation Grant

The total amount of the Pupil Deprivation Grant for the region is £26,150,250. In line with our key priorities, schools will be required to complete their school development plan highlighting the use of the Pupil Deprivation Grant. Challenge advisers will work with schools to ensure that schools are adopting an evidence-based approach to reducing the impact of poverty on educational achievement.

Governance Framework

In this region we have a joint commitment to work in a partnership including the five authorities, schools and the consortium to monitor, evaluate, challenge, support and discuss progress towards the implementation of the business plan.

Roles and responsibilities

- **Schools** are accountable to parents, communities and local authorities through their governing bodies.
- **Local authorities** are responsible for the statutory provision of school improvement services and hold the consortium to account for providing functions on their behalf under the National Model for School Improvement. They are accountable to the electorate through their Cabinet and Scrutiny function.
- **Central South Consortium** is responsible for delivering the agreed business plan and any additional requested agreed actions working closely with the authorities. It is governed through a Joint Committee with responsibility for agreeing budget and priorities. The consortium's managing director is advised by an advisory board with guidance from directors of education as well as steering groups of representative schools and governors.

In addition

- **Welsh Government** holds the consortium to account for delivery against the national priorities and national model through challenge and review sessions. This involves the lead director and is held each term.

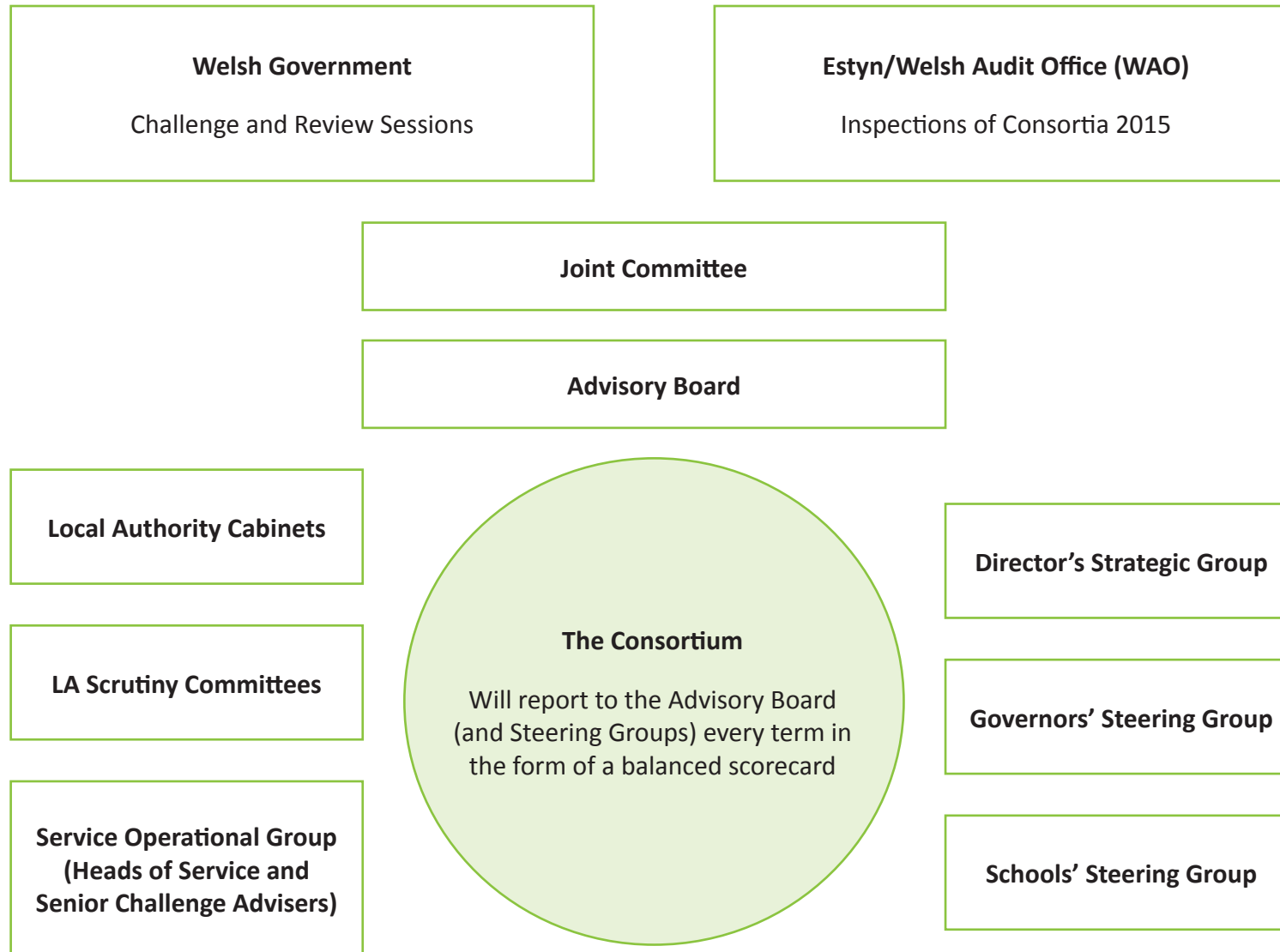
Membership of groups:

- Joint Committee meets termly and includes portfolio holders in each authority, the lead chief executive and lead director and meets each term.
- CSC advisory board meets termly and includes the lead director, the Welsh Government, a local authority cabinet member representing the Joint Committee and up to five external experts, one of whom will be the chair of the advisory board. The board meets twice per term.
- The directors' strategic group meets monthly and includes all five education directors with statutory responsibility for education.
- The service operational group meets monthly and includes heads of service in education functions in the local authorities as well as senior officers in the consortium.
- Steering groups (School Leaders' Group and Governors' Group) meet termly and as far as possible include elected or representative headteachers and governors from the five authorities.

Reporting arrangements

- **Annual reporting on performance (in the autumn term) to the Joint Committee**
- **Self-evaluation report (by the end of the autumn term) to the Joint Committee** including a comprehensive needs analysis of the region, with stakeholder and staff input setting priorities for attention in the forthcoming year/ financial year – leading into the development of the next business plan
- **Proposals for the new business plan priorities and targets (in the spring term) to Joint Committee** including budget setting proposals.
- **Annual reporting against budget (in the summer term) to the Joint Committee**
- **Termly progress reporting** to scrutiny committees and to local authorities' directors on progress against the agreed priorities in each local authority's annexe to the business plan.

Accountability Architecture



Conclusion: A three year vision for the region

This business case sets out our plans for the 2015/16 year. If we are successful in our work together we will see significant improvements in educational outcomes and a closing of the gap at every level across the region as measured by the targets set out in this business plan.

By 2017/18 if we are building on our progress to date we would expect to see a radical change in the way schools, the consortium and authorities work with each other and across the region. At the minimum we would expect to see:

- The majority of schools producing effective self-evaluation and improvement plans investing in support without input from the consortium, demonstrating robust accountability for their improvement;
- Schools investing in innovative action research and practice development with other schools across the region, many will work with one or two other schools to achieve shared outcomes and will use a common pricing system to access research led support or programmes from schools across the region, organised and quality assured by the hubs programme;
- Significantly improved school governance providing effective constructive leadership and challenge to the majority of schools;
- Challenge advisers supported by the data team provide monitoring and intervention on behalf of the authorities in high risk schools, support joint practice development and engage on a light touch basis with other schools as required;
- The regional strategy group coordinating policy or curriculum changes and brokering and evaluating the development of best practice across the region;
- Minimal centralised support other than that based in or delivered by schools through the hubs and collaborative partnerships models;
- Authorities responsible for support for vulnerable children and young people, provision of school places and intervention in schools where needed.

We look forward to working with you to realise this vision for the children and young people in the Central South region.