

Annual Bridgend Local Authority Scrutiny Report Central South Consortium 2022-23

(Presentation in Spring Term 2024)

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the work of the Central South Consortium (CSC) and to update Members with the contribution of the CSC, working in partnerships with the local authority (LA) to raising standards in schools across Bridgend. This report details the work of the consortium for the academic year September 2022/2023 and the financial year April 2022 to April 2023.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Since 2012, CSC has delivered aspects of school improvement services on behalf of the five local authorities: Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. This covers 380 schools, around 32% of Wales's children. It is a growing region with rapidly changing demographic, encompassing increasingly diverse communities across the economic sub region. It remains the region with the highest number of children living in poverty, with around 25% claiming free school meals.

The service delivers challenge and support on behalf of the five local authorities, governed through a Joint Committee of Cabinet Members from each authority. The Joint Committee meets regularly and formally approves the annual business plan and budget for the service, holding the service to account in terms of performance and budgetary control.

In May 2022, the current business plan was launched for a three-year period and has been developed in conjunction with local authorities to ensure that appropriate local authority priorities are embedded in our work. The business plan is to run from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2025 following the approval of the Joint committee. Annual amendments are made to integrate changing priorities across the five local authorities. The business plan for 2022/25 has the following areas of priority:

- 1. Curriculum, Teaching & Assessment**
- 2. Leadership**
- 3. Equity & Wellbeing**
- 4. School Improvement**
- 5. Effectiveness and efficiency of Central South Consortium**

For each of the priorities, there is a detailed operational plan that outlines how and when the aspects of each priority will be delivered. Our intention remains to support schools to meet the needs of their learners to enable them to make progress. The business plan sets out how CSC aims to deliver these priorities through effective school self-evaluation and improvement

planning, underpinned by building capacity in schools to support other schools through the continued development of the 'Central South Wales Challenge'¹.

Drive Teams comprising senior leaders from across the consortium ensured that the operational plans for each priority were implemented and that impact was measured. Half-termly reviews, including an impact review with the Managing Director of CSC, and LA Directors of Education, were held at the end of each term, and ensured that monitoring was robust.

A [report](#) on the progress and impact of the Business Plan 2022 - 23 is presented to the CSC Management Board and Joint Committee.

The consortium Business Plan for April 2022 to March 2025 can be found [here](#).

3.0 OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

3.1 National Data Collections and Published Information

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Welsh Government (WG) has cancelled most of the statutory data collections for 2020, 2021 and 2022. The collections suspended include:

- Attendance: Primary 2020, 2021 and 2022 data collections
- Attendance: Secondary 2020, 2021 and 2022 data collections
- National Data Collections (NDC): All 2020 and 2021 data collections, and FP and KS2 for 2022

For 2023 however, the following collections have now been resumed:

- Attendance: Primary data collections
- Attendance: Secondary data collections
- National Data Collections (NDC) : KS3 only

The majority of national publications were suspended from Summer 2020 reporting, but performance measures for Summer 2023 results will be reintroduced during Autumn Term 2023. At the time of publication of this report no performance measures are available for the final 2023 results, with the provisional information only being made available at national level.

National examination results released in August 2023 were brought back to be around halfway between the 2019 and 2022 results. Comparison of the results for CSC in 2023 to Wales results showed that CSC either matched or exceeded the national proportions for GCSE %A*-A, %A*-C and %A*-G. For A Level results, CSC exceeded the national proportions for the three measures of %A*-A, %A*-C and %A*-E, with CSC also being above the national proportions for AS Levels (%A, %A-C, %A-E).

¹ Central South Wales Challenge information can be found [here](#)

3.2 Estyn Inspections

All Estyn inspections were suspended in March 2020²; however, a new pilot framework³ was introduced in early spring term 2022. The new inspection framework no longer provides judgements for inspection areas as available in previous inspection frameworks. However, information on ‘Interesting or Innovative Practice Case Studies’ is still identified in the new reports, alongside the recording of any statutory and non-statutory follow-up inspection categories.

In Bridgend, between February 2022 and the end of the 2022/23 academic year, 14 schools were inspected, with one school being placed in a statutory follow up category of Special Measures and two schools requiring Estyn Review. From the schools that have been inspected since the resumption of inspections, three schools have been asked to provide case studies on ‘interesting or innovative practice’ identified as part of the school inspection.

Table 1: Interesting or innovative practice case studies in Bridgend Schools

Date	School	Case study
January 2023	Corneli Primary School	Supporting pupils and families to develop positive financial literacy skills. Read here.
October 2023	Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	Planning for improvement to ensure the best learning experiences for pupils. Read here.
October 2023	Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	The way in which the school ignites a sense of belonging to the school and how this influences the high levels of well-being and attendance. Read here.

In Central South Consortium, 68 schools were inspected between September 2022 and July 2023. Twenty-two schools were placed in Estyn follow-up categories: thirteen in Estyn Review (19.1%), two in significant improvement (2.9%) and seven in special measures (10.3%).

Table 2: Number of schools inspected 2021/22 and 2022/23

	Primary		Secondary		Middle		Special		Pupil Referral Units	
	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23	21/22	22/23
Bridgend	2	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

² <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/news/estyn-will-not-inspect-maintained-schools-next-academic-year-statement-meilyr-rowlands-hmci>

³ <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/news/owen-evans-her-majestys-chief-inspectors-speech-17-february-2022>

The Vale of Glamorgan	5	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rhondda Cynon Taf	8	14	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	0
Merthyr Tydfil	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cardiff	8	18	2	3	0	0	0	4	1	0
CSC	24	54	4	6	1	2	0	5	1	1

Estyn resumed their monitoring of schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in a statutory category (special measures or significant improvement) from autumn 2021. During the academic year 2022/23, across CSC, one school was removed from Estyn Review, with a further three schools remaining in a follow-up category from previous academic years. The follow-up categories for these schools are: one in Estyn Review, one in Significant Improvement and one in Special Measures.

Table 3: Progress of schools in a follow up Estyn category in Bridgend 2022/23

School	Estyn Category	Current position
Archbishop McGrath Catholic School	Estyn Review	The school has made sufficient progress and is no longer in Estyn Review (Nov 2022).
Croesty Primary School	Estyn Review	Estyn Review since the publication of their inspection report (February 2023). The school is addressing the recommendations and the progress is regularly monitored through meetings with local authority and CSC.
Nantymoel Primary School	Estyn Review	Estyn Review since the publication of their inspection report (April 2023). The school is addressing the recommendations and the progress is regularly monitored through meetings with local authority and CSC.
Caerau Primary School	Special Measures	Special Measures since the publication of their inspection report (June 2023). The post inspection action plan developed to address the recommendations has been approved. Progress in addressing the recommendations is regularly monitored through meetings with the local authority and CSC.

3.3 Supporting School Development Planning with Performance Data Discussions

The Improvement Partners (IP) support schools through appropriate challenge to identify clear, manageable improvement priorities as a consequence of effective self-evaluation. The IP works with school leaders to review first-hand evidence, ensuring that this is rigorous and accurate. In supporting schools in the review of their self-evaluation cycle, IPs work with school leaders to ensure there is coverage of the three overarching areas as referenced in the new framework for school improvement. These are:

- Vision and Leadership
- Curriculum, Learning, and Teaching
- Wellbeing, Equity, and Inclusion

This approach works in conjunction with school systems and will not generate additional work for school leaders. This is in line with the Welsh Government School Improvement Guidance: A Framework for Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability, where it is the intention that these priorities will, in part, replace target setting.

Each school has a unique set of priorities, based on their own context, self-evaluation including the analysis of performance data, needs and improvement journey, ultimately seeking to improve learner outcomes. Therefore, priorities need to ensure a focus on pupil progress. Furthermore, the IP will also support schools in ensuring that improvement priorities are drawn together in a single, strategic school development plan, helping to reduce workload, streamline schools' strategic planning processes and avoid unnecessary duplication and bureaucracy.

In 2023-24, key common focus areas that have been identified by schools include:

- Oracy, Reading, and Writing including Welsh language skills
- Numeracy
- Digital Competence Skills and learning
- Planning for the development of skills across the curriculum
- Whole School Approach to Mental and Emotional Well-being
- Early Years (Physical Development in Particular)
- Reducing gaps in progress of key groups (EAL, eFSM, MAT learning)
- Attendance and Exclusions
- Engagement and Readiness to Learn
- Dealing with challenging behaviour
- Complex needs and additional learning needs provision
- Independence at age-appropriate levels
- Transition
- Impact of teaching on learning
- Assessment and progression including baseline and mapping pre progression step 1
- Religion, Values and Ethics
- Accuracy of self-evaluation linked to improvement planning
- Leadership Development

- Curriculum Design and Development

3.4 Alps Analysis

Alps value added performance analysis measures progress against national and ALPS client, aspirational benchmarks for each individual student. For 2023, the analysis identified the following key points:

A Level

- There were 1660 entries at A level across the local authority. This is higher than the number of entries in 2019, which was the previous highest number of entries (from the non-covid years).
- Overall, the value added in 2023 was lower than in 2022 as part of the realignment of results to pre-covid levels. It is currently planned that the national results in 2024 will return and be set in line with 2019 results.
- Prior attainment (Centre Determined Grades) was on average slightly higher for the 2023 cohort than for previous cohorts in the years 2020-2022.
- Across the local authority, the following subjects had strong value-added outcomes in 2023, Film Studies, Drama & Theatre Studies, Art (Craft & Photography), Computer Science, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Economics, English Literature, History and Maths (Further).
- In 2023, at A-level, girls made stronger value-added progress than boys overall, although the difference is marginal. The gap is narrower than the previous two years.
- There was little difference between the value added for eFSM and non-eFSM students (for those students where eFSM information was uploaded).

AS Level

- The number of students taking at least one AS level within the local authority was in line with the 2022 figure and is above the average number of AS entries in the years preceding covid.
- Prior attainment (Examinations with advanced information for some subjects) was higher for the 2023 cohort than for cohorts in 2020 and 2021 but lower than the 2022 cohort.
- Nationally the results were midpoint between 2019 and 2022, as move back to pre-pandemic levels for 2024.
- In 2023, value-added outcomes at AS-level ranked in the top 60% of the dataset.
- Girls made stronger value-added progress at AS level than boys.
- The cohort achieved higher grades in 2023 AS examinations than cohorts in 2018 and 2019 (counting 40% towards A Level).
- eFSM students made stronger progress at AS-level than non-eFSM students.

Level 3 Vocational Qualifications

- Nationally, the results in 2023 are down from 2022, but above 2019 in line with national move to return results to pre-pandemic levels in 2024.
- Fewer pupils took vocational qualifications in 2023 than in 2019.
- In 2023 eFSM students made stronger value-added progress than non-eFSM students in 2016 BTEC qualifications (based on a relatively small number of entries). Boys made slightly more VA progress than girls.

Key Stage 4

- KS4 Results were higher nationally in 2023 than in 2018 or 2019. Results were broadly awarded midpoint between 2019 and 2022 in line with national strategy.
- In 2023, as a local authority, value-added outcomes at KS4 matched providers in the top 40% of the National dataset.
- In 2023, Girls made stronger value-added progress at KS4 than boys. Girls' outcomes matched the top 25% of providers in the dataset, boys matched the middle 50% of providers in the dataset.
- In 2023, eFSM students made less value-added progress at KS4 than non-eFSM students. The gap was slightly more than in 2021/22.

3.5 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

The latest available "Pupil destinations" figures from Careers Wales, show that over the last couple of years, the percentage of pupils in the CSC region "Known to not to be in Education, Training or Employment" has fluctuated from 1.8% in 2019 and 2020, to 1.5% in 2021 and up to 2.0% in 2022. Similar patterns are seen nationally for this data, and CSC has been slightly below the national figure for five of the last seven academic years.

4.0 SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE

With the significant reform agenda that is in progress across Wales, it is important CSC continues to ensure the support provided by Improvement Partners (IPs) is holistic, efficient, and effective in line with the national principles and guidance from Welsh Government.

4.1 Improvement Partner Deployment

In 2022/23, Bridgend local authority contributed £554,243 (15%) towards the core functions of the consortium. In addition to the core costs of the consortium this has provided funding for IPs (3.7 FTE) and a Principal Improvement Partner (PIP) (1 FTE).

IPs continue to have a relevant educational background and level of experience and provide good quality support and challenge to schools. Many IPs are accredited or are working towards accreditation by Association of Education Advisers (AOEA). They have continued to work well and in partnership with the local authority to provide effective monitoring, challenge, support and intervention where needed. Improvement partners have continued to commission bespoke support and intervention from the wider support teams within the CSC.

In September 2022, the School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability was implemented. This revised national guidance is scheduled to become statutory from September 2024. This guidance sets out the roles and responsibilities for stakeholders in the Welsh education system with regards school improvement and accountability.

4.2 Work Programme of Improvement Partners

During the autumn term, IPs worked together with schools to agree appropriate improvement priorities, construct the school development plan (SDP) and broker support. All IPs gathered authentic first-hand evidence to support the school self-evaluation process in partnership with school leaders. IPs joined school meetings and participated in self-evaluation activities as appropriate. The full schedule of activities is contained in the Framework for School Improvement⁵. These are not a 'tick list' but provided a reminder as to key dates when activity should be completed. IPs built an individual work plan with each school to ensure that these activities were built into the school improvement conversations. There were ongoing themes which were a focus of all visits, these included progress of learners, curriculum, learning and teaching, leadership, well-being, equity and inclusion, effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning.

For example, two particular areas of leadership support are listed below:

Improvement Partner Support for Governance

- Attend at least one Governing Body meeting per year.
- Encourage Governors to attend mandatory trainings as appropriate.
- Promote and support Governing Bodies to use the self-evaluation tool.
- Support for Governors as identified.
- Support the Governing Body Panel Headteachers Performance Management process for review, objective setting and mid-year review where appropriate.

Improvement Partner Support for Self -evaluation in partnership with school leaders

- Partnered learning walks.
- Involved in Listening to learners' activities.
- Support school improvement planning/documentation.
- Partner with school leaders to triangulate and validate reviews of teaching and learning.
- Support Senior/middle leaders/teachers to prepare for Estyn inspections.

Case Study: Primary Improvement Partner working with a school Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body

- The improvement partner worked with headteacher on school planning to ensure priorities and associated success criteria have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. The school adapted their strategic planning documents to reflect aspects of the regional school development plan toolkit, including the improved use of milestones.
Impact - Sharply focussed school improvement priorities and clear measurable milestones to evaluate progress and impact of improvement priorities.
- The improvement partner brokered support for the school to support a subject leader in the development of the provision and practice for an area of learning following the previous self-evaluation activity. This development was within the school development plan. The IP completed monitoring activity in partnership with the subject leader to monitor the impact on provision and practice following receipt of the support.
Impact - Provision and classroom practice is responsive to pupils' needs and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Over the course of the academic year, the improvement partner and headteacher completed listening to learner monitoring activities with pupil books to explore their views and progress in the development of the provision for independent learning. Each time taking note of their responses and acting on them when and where appropriate.
Impact - Provision and classroom practice is responsive to pupils' needs and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.
- The improvement partner completed a learning walk with a group of governors supporting governors in the evidence they collected and the questions they asked.
Impact – Governors were better equipped to gather evidence and then ask pertinent questions of the headteacher.
- The improvement partner undertook joint monitoring activities with senior and middle leaders to evaluate the quality of provision and practice in the school and the progress made by pupils.
Impact - Quality assurance of leaders within the school and their effectiveness in the role; Provision and practice is responsive to pupils' needs and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

Case Study: Special School Improvement Partner working with Special Schools/Settings.

- The Improvement Partner worked with the senior leadership team and middle leaders from all areas of the school to support and develop their understanding of their roles within the self-evaluation of the school. Leaders at all levels were mentored and coached on their individual roles within self-evaluation and how these conversations can be shared across departments to develop an holistic picture of strengths and areas for development for the school.

Impact - Sharply focussed school improvement priorities are identified through comprehensive self-evaluation activities and empowerment of middle leaders.

- The Improvement Partner has worked closely with the school's middle leadership team to support the review of the systems for planning and monitoring for the development of skills. The review ensured that the planning for skills allowed pupils to make effective progress, but also ensured appropriate coverage of skills within their new curriculum offer. The work has taken the form of professional discussion, sign posting to good practice and quality assurance of the monitoring processes implemented by the school. The Improvement Partner has also worked with the deputy head to develop professional learning designed to promote collaboration and a culture where staff are able to develop their practice through peer observation and informal 'learning walks'.

Impact – Effective provision developed to support the development of skills and practice shared across the school to develop practitioners.

The Improvement Partner has worked with the setting to identify its curriculum development needs ahead of this academic year. As a result of this work, support was brokered by the improvement partner for the school from the CSC Curriculum and professional learning team who developed a series of bespoke whole staff professional learning days to develop a curriculum offer that meets the mandatory requirements of the Curriculum for Wales but also meets the needs of all learners. The Improvement partner continues to monitor how these developments are planned, delivered and evaluated in partnership with the leadership team.

Impact - Provision and classroom practice is responsive to pupils' needs and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils.

Case Study: Secondary School Improvement Partner working with Secondary Schools.

- The Improvement Partner has worked over a period of time with a middle leader in a coaching/mentoring role to support their development. The support has included professional discussions, joint monitoring activities, quality assurance of report and planning documents and analysis of data.

Impact -Supports the development of leadership capacity and the effectiveness of middle leaders to carry out effective self-evaluation.

- The Improvement Partner and senior leaders identified an area for development following analysis of school data and self-evaluation evidence. The Improvement Partner brokered bespoke support for the school to address the area identified for improvement. The Improvement Partner worked alongside members of the Curriculum and Professional Learning team to monitor the impact of the support and identify further actions and support.

Impact – Effective provision developed to and significant impact on school data.

4.3 Framework for School Improvement

Support for schools will take the form of core or enhanced support that is provided in a fair way that is inversely proportional to needs of the school. All schools will receive a basic minimum allocation of days and further time will be allocated based on the support needs identified.

This minimum is:

- Primary/Nursery - 7 days
- Special/PRU - 10 days
- Secondary – 10 days
- 3-16/19 - 16 days

Enhanced support schools will receive additional time to reflect the development needs and monitoring requirements. All support will be agreed between the school and IP and shared with the LA when the school improvement priorities are agreed. Specified days might not all be from the same IP but might include work of others more specialists in certain areas. The impact of this support will be monitored half termly and will be shared with LAs in the termly review meetings.

The IP supports schools through appropriate challenge to identify clear, manageable improvement priorities as a consequence of effective self-evaluation. The IP works with school leaders to review first-hand evidence and ensures processes are rigorous and accurate. In supporting schools in the review of their self-evaluation cycle, IPs work with leaders to monitor and evaluate progress against school development plan priorities.

If schools are not demonstrating appropriate rates of progress towards achieving their improvement priorities, this information is discussed with the school, governors, LA and CSC and a decision will then be made as to whether the school may need enhanced monitoring. IPs will then provide a detailed evaluation of progress with a judgement on the rate of progress. If the school, governors, LA, and CSC agree that progress is appropriate, a discussion can then take place about moving the school to enhanced monitoring. The same process exists if a school is making sufficient progress to move from enhanced monitoring to core support.

Key improvement objectives are identified, and regular progress meetings held for all enhanced monitoring schools to judge the impact of the support in enabling the school to meet its objectives. A judgement is made on the extent of the progress the schools have made in meeting each objective. This information is provided to Directors in termly progress reports.

Each term CSC prepares a detailed report for Directors. This report contains a detailed breakdown of the support provided within the previous term.

5.0 SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

5.1 Schools Receiving Enhanced Support

During 2022 -23 academic year 6 schools received enhanced support during the year. There were five schools receiving enhanced support at the beginning of the year with another school identified for enhanced support during the course of the year.

All schools that were in enhanced support, were also in receipt of bespoke support from the CSC Curriculum and Professional Learning team to support the school address areas identified for development. In some cases, a school may be receiving bespoke support for a number of strategic priorities. In this case, where a school is receiving a range of support, it is carefully planned to ensure the school has the capacity to engage effectively with the support provided.

The focus of the support will be carefully considered and will be subject to a range of different factors individual to the school including leadership capacity, systems and processes, expertise across the school and teaching capacity. Support offered to school includes engaging in the professional learning programme, school to school support, Curriculum and Professional Learning team working with the school directly, regional networks and sharing of resources.

Schools who receive enhanced support will have regular progress meetings to review the progress and impact of actions for the development of the agreed improvement priorities. The meetings are attended by school leaders/governors, local authority officers, improvement partner and the principal improvement partner. The meeting agrees a judgement with regard progress against the priorities, next steps and consideration is given to the level and focus of support the school is receiving.

Enhanced Support Case study:

In partnership with the Improvement Partner, a school reviewed their self-evaluation evidence and clear strategic priorities were identified for development reflecting the school, local authority and national priorities.

Writing was identified as a priority and the literacy lead engaged in a CSC professional learning programme for writing. The literacy lead was new to the role and received support from a member of the Curriculum and Professional Learning team to develop their understanding of the role and their effectiveness in carrying out their role across the school including monitoring activities and a range of resources to support the development of writing. As the literacy lead became more confident in their role over time, the support focused on quality assuring the judgements of the literacy lead in their monitoring activities.

For mathematics, the focus was ensuring the appropriate coverage and structured progression of learning in mathematics. Appropriate resources were shared with the numeracy leader to support school planning and for maths. The numeracy leader was provided with opportunities to visit schools where good practice has been identified and joined the regional network where resources and practice were shared.

Support for the development of assessment for learning was programmed later in the school year. The school received two days of bespoke support for all classroom practitioners to support the development. Practitioners were then provided with opportunities to carry out action research using different strategies before a review of effectiveness and the co-construction of a new agreed policy.

As a result of the support, challenge and regular monitoring, all schools make good progress over time against a very challenging context. The schools are well-supported, and schools make strong or better progress against most of the strategic priorities or recommendations over time.

5.2 Intervention Strategy for Schools Causing Concern

The Intervention Strategy for schools has been reviewed, agreed with all Directors and shared with schools. This has led to clear processes for intervention being understood and utilised by the local authorities and forms the basis of enhanced support work for all settings in the region.

Within Bridgend in 2022/23 there were no schools in receipt of a LA Statutory Warning Notice and no schools had received a pre warning notice.

6.0 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & SUPPORT

Professional learning (PL) is a change process to improve and develop professional knowledge, skills and understanding. PL should focus on changes that impact on learners through a practitioner's own learning, leading to increased understanding, and changes in their behaviours, i.e., policies, provision, and practice.

In line with the [National Professional Learning Entitlement](#), CSC is committed to equity of access to high quality PL for all school leaders, including governors, and practitioners in our region. CSC PL opportunities are guided by the [eight hallmarks for well-led professional learning](#) as defined by the National Academy for Education Leadership Wales (NAEL).

The CSC Curriculum and Professional Learning (C&PL) team continue to provide a comprehensive range of high quality, evidence-informed PL opportunities to all schools in the region to support local, regional, and national improvement priorities.

PL opportunities are continually considered, planned and published. They include:

- Live or synchronous PL – includes events, programmes, networks and conferences – live focused on a specific area;
- On-demand or asynchronous PL– includes assignments and on- demand recordings of PL focused on a specific area;
- Resources – includes guidance documents, toolkits, poster packs, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, etc; and
- Regional collaboration projects – funded opportunities for school practitioners from across the CSC region to collaborate on a particular project focus.

A wide variety of data and intelligence is analysed, and research undertaken to identify and inform PL needs in the region. This includes:

- Analysis of improvement priorities of all schools in the region;
- Analysis of the business plan priorities from the 5 local authorities;
- Welsh Government policy, guidance and relevant grant terms and conditions;
- Regional recommendations from external reports, e.g., Welsh Government, OECD, Estyn, Children's Commissioner, etc;
- Analysis of CSC PL engagement data and PL evaluations;
- Other relevant internal information, e.g., regional reports, SIPLs, all school risk meetings, etc;
- Analysis of other relevant external information, e.g., schools' Estyn reports, etc; and
- Other educational and relevant research.

All CSC PL and support is available at no charge to schools in the region. Most PL opportunities are developed and facilitated in partnership with schools within the regional self-improving system, the Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC). C&PL officers also work in partnership with LAs, other regional consortia and partnerships, Welsh Government (WG) and where appropriate, external consultants in the development and facilitation of PL.

6.1 Central South Wales Challenge

The CSWC is the partnership of all schools and settings across the CSC region working together to develop a self-improving system. The CSWC is evaluated annually to ensure it meets the current and evolving needs of schools and the wider system.

The CSWC includes a number of components that support the self-improving school system. Each component plays a key role in ensuring that all schools and settings in the region can access appropriate PL and support. Schools and settings should engage with the components and PL activities that best support their school improvement priorities. The CSWC components are categorised broadly into two areas, namely 'professional learning collaborations' and 'professional learning opportunities', (see appendix A - CSWC model 2022-2023).

Practitioners and school leaders, including governors, can contribute to the CSWC in key roles to support other schools across the region, working in partnership with the CSC school improvement team to provide professional learning and/or bespoke support to schools across the region.

Practitioners and school leaders, including governors, can contribute to the CSWC in key roles to support other schools across the region, working in partnership with the CSC school improvement team to provide professional learning and/or bespoke support to schools across the region. Roles include lead practitioners (LPs), leadership pathway programme mentors/coaches, cluster convenors, system leaders (SLs) and regional leaders of governance (RLGs).

During 2022-2023 the following CSWC contributors were from Bridgend schools:

- Lead Practitioners = 5
- Leadership pathways programme mentors/coaches = 2
- Cluster convenors = 9
- System Leader = 1
- Regional Leaders of Governance = 0

6.2 Regional Professional Learning Collaborations

All schools in the CSC region receive collaboration funding to support school leaders and practitioners to participate in collaborative school improvement activities, building capacity both within their school, across their cluster and networks, and within the wider system. These collaborative activities must be focused on the curriculum and wider reforms, and the desired outcome of high standards and aspiration aspirations for all.

During 2022-2023, the total collaboration funding to schools in the region was £5.018m. Each school in the region received a £7,000 lump sum plus £300 per FTE teacher. The total collaboration funded for schools in Bridgend was £786,211.

Headteachers in all schools were requested to complete a short multi-choice survey related to collaboration funding activities. This information is used effectively for knowledge, development and evaluation within the region, for example:

- To evaluate the impact of professional learning and support for schools;
- To inform the development of further professional learning opportunities;

- To target bespoke support to individual school, clusters and groups of schools as required;
- To report to Welsh Government, local authorities and CSC governance groups; and
- To inform CSC self-evaluation and business planning.

During autumn 2022, 99% schools in the region submitted the survey. However, the undertaking of the survey in the summer term 2023 was significantly affected by action short of strike (ASOS) and the further non-engagement of headteachers across the region due the ongoing discussions regarding managing workload and bureaucracy. Only 40% (151/380) of headteachers in the region completed the summer term survey, 28/60 (47%) from schools in Bridgend. Therefore, the following information cannot be read as a full or accurate summary of progress of the majority of schools in Bridgend, but only of those 28 schools where headteachers completed the survey.

6.21 Clusters

Supporting collaboration across clusters continues to be a priority. Cluster collaboration is an expectation from Welsh Government and the Curriculum for Wales framework places a strong emphasis on cluster collaborations. Leaders need to create the time and space for staff to work alongside others within their school and with those across cluster schools to develop a shared understanding of progression and to ensure high aspirations for all learners. A wide range of support is provided to enable school leaders and teachers to engage in regular professional dialogue and to identify common priorities for the learners within their locality. This includes bespoke PL and support available to all clusters from the CSC curriculum and PL team to meet their specific improvement needs.

There are 9 clusters in Bridgend, excluding special schools and the pupil referral unit. Clusters are recommended to identify a named convenor, usually a senior leader from a school within the cluster, who receives £1500 to undertake this role. Cluster convenors are required to complete an SLA at the start of the year stating the focus of the cluster work, and an end of year evaluation of the work. They also facilitate the cluster in their collaborative work. During 2022-2023, all clusters in Bridgend identified a cluster convenor.

Of the Bridgend schools who returned the summer term collaboration survey, all who were collaborating with their cluster stated this included work on Curriculum for Wales. Of these, nearly all were focusing on developing a shared understanding of progression to support their curriculum design, planning and development along the 3-16 continuum. A majority were collaborating on the Areas of Learning and Experience (Areas) and teaching, whilst half of Bridgend clusters stated they have further work to do in developing approaches to incorporating the cross-cutting themes across their respective curricula. A very few stated that they needed to further develop relationships and understanding between secondary and primary practitioners in relation to the 3-16 learning continuum.

Across the region, primary colleagues continued to report the challenge of secondary schools not being able to release subject specialists to support cluster working due to their need to prioritise current examination classes. Expertise to support all disciplines, subjects and Areas is available through the CSC curriculum and PL team and/or school-based lead practitioners.

Examples of effective cluster working in Bridgend:

All cluster work links to SDP priorities and work is ongoing in each of the schools. A variety of staff are involved in the different actions and work is disseminated and shared in schools through staff meetings and discussions with senior leaders. External support accessed includes CSC curriculum team and Perform and Grow (emotional health and wellbeing project). Skills, knowledge and confidence are being developed across all identified priorities. The approach to emotional health and wellbeing had a strong focus on staff wellbeing, with schools carrying out action research in their own schools and implementing actions specific to their schools. The cluster working this year has been effective across all actions as there has been strong collaboration and buy in from colleagues. The work undertaken with CSC colleagues has been effective in developing the shared knowledge and supporting colleagues to develop shared progression maps in 2 of the AOLEs and RSE.

All schools in the cluster have worked in partnership on curriculum design and developing a shared understanding of progression. They have collaborated on developing a cluster continuum and a focus on high-quality teaching, prioritising professional learning and dialogue involving all staff as key. The CSC curriculum team have supported the cluster in this.

6.2.2 School Improvement Groups (SIGs)

A majority of schools across the region are also collaborating on Curriculum for Wales (CfW) with schools from their sector across local authority areas. These self-facilitating school improvement groups (SIGs) predominately focus on progression, teaching, leadership and well-being.

During 2022-2023, 39 SIGs continued as cross LA school collaborations. Staff from the participating schools worked collaboratively on shared areas of school improvement.

Of the schools who submitted the summer term collaboration survey, 58% of schools in the region stated that they are working within a SIG. This included 12/28 (43%) of schools in Bridgend.

As with clusters, SIGs are required to identify a convenor who receives £1500 to undertake this role. SIG convenors are required to complete an SLA at the start of the year stating the focus of the group's work, and an end of year evaluation of the work. They also facilitate the group in their collaborative work. 4 SIG convenors were from schools in Bridgend.

Table 4: SIG Focus Areas 2022-2023

SIG focus area	No of primary SIGs	No of secondary/ all age school SIGs	Total no of SIGs
Leadership	16	1	17
Teaching	13	3	16
Progression	12	4	16
Expressive Arts	3	0	3
Health & Well-being	5	0	5
Humanities	3	0	3
LLC: English	1	0	1
LLC: Cymraeg	2	0	2
Maths and Numeracy	3	0	3
Science & Technology	3	0	3
CCS: Literacy	3	1	4
CCS: Numeracy	4	1	5
CCS: Digital Competence	1	1	2
Whole school approach to mental health and well-being	12	1	13
Other, e.g. RSE, ALN, Diversity, RVE	10	4	14

Examples of effective SIG working:

Sharing best practice and processes related to ALN reform. Working together to establish and refine documentation and communication with stakeholders. SIG working has focussed on an important area for all schools due to new legislation. It is a small SIG but extremely useful to those involved as the schools represent different local authorities who have all provided different support and information for their schools. Therefore all schools in the group were able to benefit from the support given. The work is linked to current priorities in all schools. Many ALNCoS work in isolation within their schools so being able to discuss their role and difficulties with a wider group outside of their cluster / LA is very useful and highly valued. Learners and families are better supported within the new ALN system. ALNCoS feel more knowledgeable and supported in their role.

To develop standards in the Learning and Teaching of Welsh Second Language. Both teachers and pupils worked together on this project. The most successful part of the project was the Criw Cymraeg from each school working together. The SIG has five schools that have been committed to working together. The meetings of this small group were well attended, the group worked well together and were happy to share resources with each other. The work was linked to the school's priorities, which for some are still ongoing. All staff disseminated practice back at their own school and the Criw Cymraeg taught other pupils in their school the

Welsh playground games. The schools are using what they have learned to develop provision of Welsh Second Language throughout their schools, particularly the work of the Criw Cymraeg. The Criw Cymraeg were certainly more enthused in their role and aware of their responsibilities. The teachers involved all felt the sharing of practice was worthwhile and helpful.

6.2.3 School Leader and Practitioner Networks

Networks focus on school improvement related to specific or specific roles. These include regional networks that are facilitated by the CSC curriculum and PL team and/or lead practitioners, National Networks, and self-facilitated networks.

Table 5: Participation in networks 2022-2023

	CSC		Bridgend	
	No of delegates	No of schools	No of delegates	No of schools
Regional networks*	1752	325	213	52
National Networks*	220	152	42	33
Self-facilitated networks**	n/a	93	n/a	16

*figures from attendance registers. ** figures from summer term collaboration survey.

CSC provides additional funding to support three focused self-facilitated networks for Welsh medium schools, and special schools and PRUs. During 2022-2023, each of these networks received £30k funding to plan and facilitate PL where their specific needs were not fully met through the CSC PL offer. Most Welsh medium primary schools participated in 'Y Ffed' and all Welsh medium secondary schools participated in 'Gyda'n Gilydd'. All special schools and PRUs participate in their network.

6.3 Regional and Cross-Regional Professional Learning Opportunities

Engagement in professional learning (PL) events, networks, programmes, assignments, and conferences continues remains high, with school leaders and/or practitioners from nearly all schools in the region participating.

Table 6: Engagement in CSC and Cross-regional Professional Learning

Year	CSC		Bridgend	
	No of delegates	% of schools	No of delegates	% of schools
2020-2021	12,117	99.7%	1975	97%
2021-2022	12,190	100%	1840	100%
2022-2023	10,298	99.7%	1634	100%

Summary of evaluations completed by delegates following participation in PL during 2022-2023:

- 94% stated that there would be a change to practice and that the learning would have an impact on pupils in their settings.
- 97% stated that they were confident in the knowledge of the topic following the PL.
- 98% stated that the PL would change their practice, with 95% planning to use what they have learned.
- 75% stated that the PL was linked to their school improvement priorities.
- 94% stated that the PL would impact on learners in their setting.

6.3.1 Bespoke support

Bespoke support is offered to all schools and groups/clusters/SIGs in the region to support priorities that are not fully met by the published PL opportunities. Requests for bespoke support are monitored, tracked and evaluated.

During 2022-2023, CSC received 171 requests for bespoke support. 270 (71%) of schools in the region received bespoke support, either individually, or as part of a group/cluster/SIG. This includes 49 schools in Bridgend. Bespoke support is facilitated by the CSC curriculum and PL team and/or lead practitioners. Two schools from Bridgend provided bespoke support to other school in the region. Schools are funded for providing this school-to-school support. In all bespoke support there is evidence of impact on the provision at either practitioner or leadership level in the receiving school.

6.3.2 Regional and National Funded Collaboration Projects

During 2022-2023, 65 regional funded collaboration projects were available to all CSC schools to focus on local, regional and national priorities. These included projects relating to curriculum, teaching and assessment.

Table 7: Regional Collaboration Projects 2022-2023

CSC				Bridgend			
No of delegates	No of schools	% of schools	Funding to schools	No. delegates	No of schools	% of schools	Funding to schools
607	237	62%	£723,020	101	35	58%	£122,560

During 2022-2023, five national funded projects were available to all schools across the region focused on national priorities. These included projects related to curriculum design, cross-cutting themes, teaching and all Areas of Learning and Experience.

Table 8 - National Funded Projects 2022-2023

CSC				Bridgend			
No of delegates	No of schools	% of schools	Funding to schools	No. delegates	No of schools	% of schools	Funding to schools
48	38	10%	£261,500	8	7	12%	£57,600

6.3.3 School-led professional learning, enquiry, and research; and professional learning for developing practice and reflection.

During 2022-2023, the focus of this area continued to promote enquiry, research and reflective practice as an integral aspect of school improvement. This supports the development of Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) and builds capacity in the education system.

Regional resources continue to be available to all schools to support the development and embedding of enquiry approaches. Promoting and developing practitioners' experience, knowledge and skills in research and enquiry is also embedded within regional PL programmes, networks and projects, as appropriate to the specific PL opportunity. Funding is provided to support schools' engagement in the WG-led research and enquiry projects.

During 2022-2023, 6 schools from Bridgend were engaged in the National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP):

- Heronsbridge Special School
- Oldcastle Primary School
- Porthcawl Comprehensive School
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon Y Cymoedd

The schools worked with HEI partners to develop enquiry skills and conduct enquiries by selecting a specific enquiry focus relating to their school improvement priorities. All NPEP enquiries are [published on Hwb](#).

Coety Primary School was part of the Embedding Research & Enquiry in Schools where they worked with HEI partners to share the enquiry model in their school and generate learning around an identified focus area to support the system to understand developing sustainable whole school models to engage with research and enquiry.

The expertise and support from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) within these projects are valuable to the participating schools. In evaluations, teachers highlighted that HEIs support them with refining research questions, directing them to relevant literature and articles, methodology, data collection and analysis. However, teachers also raised concerns that without enough time that might not be possible, as some schools had not fully embedded their approaches.

During 2022-2023, three school leaders in the region were appointed as regional SLO champions. During 2023/24 the SLO champions will be funded to support participants from the leadership pathway programmes to further develop their schools as learning organisations.

6.4 Professional Pathways

The Professional Pathways suite of PL and support seeks to equip practitioners at all levels, from teaching assistants through to senior leaders and governors across the region with the knowledge, experiences, skills and confidence to be effective in their roles.

6.4.1 Leadership Development

Developing strong and effective school leadership continues as a key priority for CSC and is essential in realising [Our national mission](#).

Leadership Pathway Programmes

A comprehensive programme of leadership development continues to be offered to all school leaders across the region, aligning to Welsh Government’s Leadership Development Pathway.



These programmes are national programmes that are coordinated and delivered through the region. All programmes have acquired official endorsement from the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL). Middle Leadership Development and Senior Leader Development Programmes have an accreditation option through ILM. They seek to develop the knowledge, skills, experiences and confidence of school leaders, empowering them to maximise their impact on the progress and well-being of all learners.

Table 9: Engagement in Leadership Pathway Programmes 2022-2023 (CSC)

CSC	Middle leaders	Senior leaders	Aspiring Headteacher	New/Acting Headteachers
No of practitioners	128	59	41	33

No of schools	69	53	40	33
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Table 10: Engagement in Leadership Pathway Programmes 2022-2023 (Bridgend)

Bridgend	Middle leaders	Senior leaders	Aspiring Headteacher	New/Acting Headteachers
No of practitioners	15	7	7	5
No of schools	10	6	7	5

All participants in the programmes were supported by an identified mentor/coach. For the middle leadership programme, this is a coach from within their own school. Over 40 headteachers and deputy headteachers from across the region act as coaches to support participants in the other leadership pathway programmes. During 2022-2023, school leaders from two schools in Bridgend undertook this funded role.

Regional networks are established to support middle and senior leaders who are registered on these programmes. Networks for both mentors/coaches and school leaders who facilitate these programmes take place at least termly and ensure consistency in the quality and support for all participants.

The national Experienced Headteacher Programme is aimed at headteachers with five years or more experience in the role to support them to reflect on their leadership journey to date, whilst developing a clear insight into the leadership skills required to create the conditions for change. This programme was due to be piloted during 2020/21 but was postponed due to Covid-19. During 2022-2023 a condensed version of this programme was delivered as a 2-day residential. No headteachers from Bridgend attended. It provided a valuable opportunity for CSC headteachers to engage with colleagues from across Wales. This programme will be evaluated in March 2024 and will inform the future PL offer for experienced headteachers across Wales.

National Professional Qualification for Headship

During 2022-2023, CSC continued to facilitate assessment for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). All candidates were supported by a CSC leadership mentor/coach, a serving headteacher within the region. These guide candidates through their leadership standards review and leadership experience task, and act as a valuable sounding board in preparation for their assessment centre interviews.

30 of the 44 candidates from schools across the region met the criteria and were awarded NPQH. One of the four candidates from schools in Bridgend schools met the criteria and were awarded the NPQH.

System Leaders

This programme has been developed by CSC to extend the leadership pathway. Developing system leadership is critical to support schools in curriculum and wider education reform and achieve equity and excellence for all. The CSC System Leader programme is aimed at experienced headteachers who wish to further develop and support other schools and the wider education system.

A total of 14 headteachers have participated in this pilot programme, including one headteacher from a Bridgend school. Upon successful completion of a comprehensive PL programme, the system leaders were made available for deployment across the region to support schools requiring improvement. Improvement Partners work closely with the system leader to plan, monitor and evaluate the impact of this leadership support. In 2022-2023, no system leaders were deployed to support leadership in three Bridgend schools.

A formal evaluation to analyse the impact of this pilot programme will be completed in Spring 2024.

Other Professional Learning and Support for School Leaders

During 2022-2023, CSC continued to provide high-quality support for school leaders, including governors, via a wide variety of PL events, conferences, assignments, programmes, and networking and collaboration opportunities. This includes providing access to the national coaching and mentoring programme delivered by Results Driven Group, as well as the regional programme of coaching and mentoring (see section 6.4.6).

6.4.2 School Governors

Governors are a crucial part of the leadership of schools. They have an essential role in supporting school improvement and promoting the highest standards and aspirations for all learners. To undertake their strategic role in the school effectively, governors need to ensure they have the relevant up-to-date knowledge and skills.

In partnership with Local Authority Governor Support Services, CSC continues to provide a range of high-quality, evidence-informed PL opportunities, and support and guidance for school governors. CSC facilitates the delivery of mandatory PL for governors. All new governors must attend the understanding data, and new to governors sessions. New chairs of governors must also attend the new chair of governors session.

In addition to the mandatory training, CSC also provides PL sessions for governors in relation to key areas. During 2022-2023, 76 regional PL sessions, 1251 governors engaged with these sessions, including governors from 48 (80%) schools in Bridgend.

Topics covered included:

- Enabling Equity & Excellence – 3 sessions
- Curriculum for Wales (CfW) – 6 sessions
- Headteacher Performance Management – 2 sessions
- Introduction to Coaching Skills – 6 sessions
- School as Learning Organisations – 3 sessions

- Developing Welsh in Education – 2 sessions
- Introduction to the Self-Evaluation Toolkit – 4 sessions
- Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) – 2 sessions
- The School Evaluation, Improvement Accountability Framework – 1 session
- Supporting Schools Through Inspection – 2 sessions
- Well-being – 6 sessions

Bespoke support is also available to governing bodies from the CSC Regional Leaders of Governance (RLG). Requests for bespoke support from an RLG must be discussed with the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Improvement Partner.

The CSC governor self-evaluation toolkit continues to be available to support governing bodies across the region.

Regional Leaders of Governance (RLGs)

Where governance works well, it strengthens school leadership and creates a culture of high ambition where all children and young people are expected to thrive. The best governing bodies have an in-depth knowledge of their schools and provide insightful challenge and support to help drive school performance and ensure that there is robust financial accountability and oversight. Where governance is ineffective, it is important that governing bodies access high quality support and guidance so that they can develop and improve.

CSC RLGs are highly effective governors with extensive experience from schools within the region. RLGs provide strategic and operational support for schools where governance is identified as an area for improvement.

During 2022-2023, 13 RLGs continued to support school improvement across the region. No RLGs are serving governors from schools in Bridgend.

CSC LA Principal Improvement Partners, in collaboration with the headteacher, the school's Governing Body and the LA, are responsible for identifying and brokering support by an RLG for a school. In 2022-2023, no governing bodies of schools in Bridgend were supported by an RLG.

RLGs also support the facilitation of PL for school governors and other regional school improvement activities related to governors, as appropriate.

A formal evaluation analysing the impact of RLGs will be completed in spring 2024.

6.4.3 Teaching Assistant Learning Pathway (TALP)

CSC continues to offer the three national TALP programmes, providing a learning pathway to support teaching assistants (TAs) throughout their career. This includes TAs who wish to gain Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HTLA) status. Each programme builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills of the TA. All programmes are offered in Welsh and English to all TAs across the region.

During 2022-2023, 139 practitioners engaged in the regional TALP programmes, including 48 TAs from schools in Bridgend. Of the 64 practitioners from across the region who completed

the Aspiring HLTA programme, 50 (78%) were assessed and awarded HLTA status, four of these TAs were from schools in Bridgend.

Bespoke support for TAs was made available to all schools and clusters across the region from summer term 2023. This support is provided by two HLTAs seconded to CSC from schools in the region.

During 2022, CSC launched a TALP online community which is updated regularly with resources to support TAs in their role. To date 92 TAs have joined the community.

Experienced TAs and HLTAs also have the opportunity to become trained HLTA assessors, PL facilitators, and TA coaches, supporting other TAs within their own school and in other schools in the region. There are currently 19 trained assessors, three from schools in Bridgend.

6.4.4 Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

During 2022-2023, 272 schools across the region, including 41 schools in Bridgend, supported student teachers in partnership with five ITE providers to deliver a range of ITE programmes and routes.

Of these schools, 12 are Lead Schools across the partnerships and six have employer status with the Open University (with salaried students). The remainder are placement schools.

The total number of students across Wales awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in 2023 was 1,054. Of those, 501 graduates were enrolled with Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Between February and June 2023, a presentation on Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) Induction was given by the cross-regional team to ITE students in all Welsh universities. To bridge the transition into employment, all QTS graduates were invited to sign up to a region for support and communications over the summer period. By August 2023, 319 QTS graduates joined the CSC QTS team increasing from 223 in 2021-22, and 150 in 2020-21. 89 QTS graduates attended a CSC 'Welcome to the region' session in August 2023.

6.4.5 Newly Qualified Teacher Induction

Induction is a statutory requirement for all NQTs in Wales who have gained QTS. Schools have a statutory obligation to provide NQTs with induction support. CSC acts as the Appropriate Body (AB) for all NQTs in the region.

CSC works in partnership with schools in the region to ensure that every NQT in the region has the necessary support during their induction period. NQTs work with induction mentors (IMs), external mentors (EMs), external verifiers (EVs) and the CSC team to undertake induction. CSC, as the AB, leads the necessary verification and administrative processes with regards to induction.

During 2022-2023, there were 570 NQTs in the region. The professional learning offer for induction included:

- National events and programmes, facilitated by regional consortia and other partnerships;
- The CSC NQT Aspire programme, developed and facilitated by the 22 Aspire schools across the region;

- Networking opportunities; and
- Coaching and mentoring PL for IMs, EMs and EVs.

The national induction PL programme was offered between September and December 2022.

Table 11: Engagement in the National Induction PL 2022-2023

CSC			Bridgend		
EVs	IMs/EMs	NQTs	EVs	IMs/EMs	NQTs
100%	81%	94%	100%	90%	77%

The CSC ‘Aspire’ programme is facilitated by trained tutors in 22 host schools from across the region, including all phases and sectors. Five schools in Bridgend facilitate the Aspire programme:

- Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen
- Pencoed Primary School
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd
- Oldcastle Primary School
- Nottage Primary School

The programme consists of high-quality PL, combining discussion, research, sharing, observation, learning walks and time for reflection. During 2022-2023, 363 NQTs, including supply NQTs (88% of all new NQTs), engaged with the programme, including 43 (83%) NQTs from schools Bridgend.

Over the 5-day programme, between 93-97% of NQTs evaluated that the sessions enhanced their knowledge and were relevant and appropriate for their needs. 85% of NQT profiles that passed assessment in July 2023 specifically referenced regional PL in their evidence and the positive impact the PL had on their practice (an increase from 70% the previous year).

With the exception of the leadership pathway programmes, NQTs can also engage with all other CSC PL opportunities, support and resources.

A number of regional PL and support activities were made available for all IMs, EMs and EVs throughout 2023-23. These included:

- Monthly updates posted in the CSC online community;
- A coaching and mentoring programme – spring 2023;
- LA cluster meetings – 20 attended Bridgend cluster meeting; and
- A ‘Mentoring Matters’ conference held in 2023 July. 12 Bridgend mentors attended.

All evaluations provided positive feedback and mentors welcomed the continuation of these opportunities to meet and support each other to effectively undertake their role next year.

In July 2023, 325 NQTs passed induction: 316 on contracts and 9 short term supply (STS). These included 57 Welsh Medium and 268 English Medium practitioners, 44 of whom were working in schools in Bridgend. There were no fails processed.

6.4.6 Coaching and Mentoring

CSC continues to embed its strategy for coaching and mentoring. The strategy aims to build a sustainable culture of coaching and mentoring across the region to support school improvement. During 2022-2023, CSC provided a range of opportunities for schools to access PL in coaching and mentoring.

Table 12: Engagement in Coaching and Mentoring PL 2022-2023

CSC			Bridgend		
Regional programme	National Programme	ILM Awards	Regional programme	National Programme	ILM Awards
50	48	17	12	3	1

The regional PL coaching and mentoring programme is aimed at practitioners and school leaders, including governors, who want to develop their knowledge and skills in effective coaching and mentoring. The programme is facilitated regionally by 6 lead practitioners who have attended the national programme.

The national coaching and mentoring programme continues to be facilitated by Results Driven Group. This a train the trainer programme and participants can then deliver the training to others in their school and clusters across CSC.

Following the national programme, participants continue to have the opportunity to participate in an ILM L3, 5 or 7 Award in Coaching and Mentoring.

Nine clusters in Bridgend now have a trained facilitator in coaching and mentoring PL.

6.5 Professional Learning and Support for Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment

There are wide-ranging [PL opportunities](#) available to all schools focused on curriculum, teaching and assessment. This includes regional, cross-regional and WG-led PL events, programmes, conferences, networks, projects, guidance and resource.

In line with Welsh Government guidance, CSC has defined a school's curriculum as *'everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes. It is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it'*. Therefore, CSC curriculum PL and support includes:

- 'the what' - curriculum design and progression;
- 'the how' - pedagogy/teaching;
- 'the how do you know' – assessment; and
- underpinned by 'the why' - Our national mission and the four purposes.

As such, support for teaching and assessment is embedded throughout CSC's curriculum PL and support, as well as through dedicated PL opportunities.

Table 13: Engagement in regional PL focused on curriculum, teaching assessment 2022-2023

	CSC			Bridgend		
	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of delegates	5416	1868	573	636	301	96
No of schools	370	324	235	58	52	35
% of schools	97%	85%	62%	97%	87%	58%

Over 80 focused regional curriculum networks were available to all schools across the region. These provide opportunities for practitioners and leaders to reflect, share processes and approaches, and critically self-evaluate and improve practice related to all areas of curriculum reform. These included 24 secondary subject discipline networks active across the CSC region to support the development of the level 2 and level 3 qualifications. 67 practitioners across all secondary schools in Bridgend participated in these networks.

In July 2023, the CSC Curriculum Conference focused on the ‘What, How and How Do We Know’. Nearly 200 practitioners from over a third of schools across the region attended this in-person event, including 36 school leaders from 27 (45%) schools in Bridgend. Eight schools and clusters from across the region led high-quality workshops, sharing their practice. The workshops focused on progression, teaching, assessment, cluster working, Welsh and the cross-curricular skills. Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwd led a workshop on ‘A shared understanding of progression – working along the 3-16 continuum’ and Afon-Y-Felin Primary School led a workshop on ‘Welsh as a living language in an English medium primary school’. [Recordings](#) of all sessions are also available to all schools on the CSC website.

CSC has also developed a [CSC Design Thinking Model](#) that provides a scaffold for schools in curriculum design and refinement. Schools and clusters can engage with this model independently or with bespoke support from the CSC team.

Bespoke support for is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools, tailored to meet the needs of school leaders and practitioners to support school improvement priorities related to curriculum, teaching and assessment. During 2022-2023, CSC received 171 requests for bespoke support related to these areas. 48 were related to schools in Bridgend.

6.5.1 Curriculum for Wales (CFW)

Improvement Partners (IPs) continue to support all schools in school improvement related to curriculum and the wider educational reforms. This includes supporting improvement planning and self-evaluation activities related to CfW, signposting relevant CSC PL opportunities, and brokering bespoke support from the CSC curriculum and PL team.

For all primary schools (all year groups), and special schools, the implementation of CfW commenced in September 2022. Mandatory roll-out for secondary schools and PRUs commences with Year 7 and Year 8 in September 2023. However, secondary schools and PRUs were given the option of rolling out to Year 7 in September 2022. Three of the secondary schools in Bridgend implemented CfW in Year 7 from September 2022.

During 2022-2023, CSC provided detailed reports for each LA related to the school's implementation, PL and support.

Roll-out September 2022

All nursery, primary and all-age schools across have designed, developed and implemented a curriculum considering the CfW framework and the needs of all learners. The curriculum in all these schools will be kept under review and further developed and refined through a range of activities within the school's self-evaluation cycle. All these schools have published their curriculum summaries and nearly all have developed transition plans with their cluster.

Six secondary schools in Bridgend designed, developed, and implemented a curriculum for Year 7 considering the CfW framework and the needs of all learners. They also designed, planned and trialled a curriculum for Year 8, with a view to year-on-year roll-out.

These schools continue to further develop their approaches to curriculum, teaching and assessment as appropriate to their school vision, ensuring they are meeting the needs of their pupils in supporting learner progress.

Roll-out September 2023

During the 2022-2023 academic year, one PRU and three secondary schools in Bridgend designed, developed and trialled a curriculum for Years 7 and 8 for implementation in September 2023. During the summer term of 2023 each of the governing bodies (management committee in the case of the PRU) formally adopted their respective curricula, and curriculum summaries were published.

The PRU and two of the non-roll-out secondary schools stated they were fully compliant with the mandatory elements of CfW for Years 7 and 8, whilst one secondary school acknowledged that they had further work to do in ensuring compliance with all mandatory elements. Two secondary schools stated they have minor work to do in further developing, trialling and finalising transition planning with their cluster. One school was further supported by their improvement partner and the CSC curriculum and PL team to achieve full legal compliance of their curriculum for autumn term 2023.

6.5.2 Literacy / Languages, Literacy and Communications: English

The CSC [professional learning offer](#) for Literacy/LLC: English continues to be strong. It supports schools to provide a curriculum that enables learners to be confident and critical receivers of language, through listening and reading, and effective producers of language, in speech and writing, which they can apply across all areas. 747 delegates from 224 (59%) schools in the region engaged in LLC PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments, and networks. This included 118 delegates from 34 (57%) schools in Bridgend.

Table 14: Engagement in CSC LLC PL opportunities 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of practitioners	78	40	19
No of schools	28	22	17
% of schools	47%	37%	28%

Bespoke support for Literacy/LLC: English is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools. During 2022-2023, CSC received requests for bespoke support from 31 schools in Bridgend related to this area.

Whole school approach to oracy and reading

Engagement with the Welsh Government whole school approach to oracy and reading is strong. Networks and online communities provide the vehicle for sharing the national toolkit and effective practice. In 2018 CSC has developed strategic and comprehensive plan to systematically improve provision for oracy. Since 2018 CSC has funded over 200 teachers to engage in professional learning facilitated by Voice 21. This has meant that each cluster has at least one 'oracy champion' to support oracy development. In addition to this currently CSC is funding 28 schools to work towards becoming an accredited centre of excellence with Voice 21. This includes Pencoed, Coychurch and Oldcastle Primary Schools. In line with CSC's ethos of a self-improving system these schools will support and develop oracy across the region.

Support for reading has always been central to the CSC professional learning offer. The PL offer has breadth and depth drawing together the different strands that make for effective reading. It not only targets the teaching of reading from early reading through to text comprehension, but also addresses how building progression into a reading curriculum is vital to develop reading fluency, confidence, and resilience. Central to CSC reading support are a number of PL learning programmes:

- [Effective Teaching of Early Reading Skills](#) - this PL programme supports foundation phase practitioners to strengthen their understanding of how to teach early reading skills in nursery and reception classes.
- [An Introduction to Guided Group Reading](#) - this PL programme focuses on supporting the teaching of guided group reading.
- [Reading Reconsidered](#) - this intensive PL programme comprises three full days of instructional and collaborative sessions to develop rigour, insight and precision in reading. The programme takes practitioners through evidence-informed actionable strategies to develop pedagogy and practice for reading.

- [Developing a Rigorous Reading Curriculum](#) - this PL programme supports practitioners to develop research informed strategies for curriculum planning and the teaching of reading.
- [Words Matter: Supporting the Teaching of Vocabulary](#) - this PL programme includes demonstration of how explicit vocabulary instruction can become part of a repertoire of teaching practice which produces, enhances and accelerates the learning of the lesson.

Table 15: Practitioner Engagement in CSC Oracy and Reading PL Programmes 2022-2023

Synchronous oracy PL	Asynchronous oracy PL	Synchronous reading PL	Asynchronous reading PL
7	5	8	13

N.B. Synchronous PL is live and may be in-person or online. Asynchronous PL is online and on-demand, which may be pre-recorded sessions or assignments.

In evaluations completed by practitioners upon completion of the programmes, the following was stated:

- As a result of engaging with PL focused on LLC, nearly all (97%) participants considered that their knowledge had improved in some way.
- 98% of practitioners intended to use learning from the programme, and over three quarters (79%) of practitioners reported that the learning from the programmes will result in a more fundamental change to practice. (79%).
- Most participants (96%) anticipated the PL would have an impact on learners in their setting, while many participants (79%) felt the PL would have a significant impact on learners in their setting.

6.5.3 Mathematics and Numeracy

During 2022-2023, CSC continued to offer a [wide range of PL](#) for mathematics & numeracy for schools to engage to meet their improvement needs in this area. PL focused on the developing strategies to enhance the teaching of the Area of mathematics and numeracy, and the cross-curricular skill of numeracy, specifically:

- Developing numeracy through the five proficiencies;
- Using manipulatives to support mathematical understanding;
- Teaching strategies to enhance reasoning and problem solving.
- Strengthening numeracy across the curriculum;
- Enhancing whole school strategic development of numeracy; and
- Providing opportunities to share effective practice across the region.

171 delegates from 26.8% (102) schools in the region engaged in PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments, and networks. This included 25 delegates from 15 (25%) schools in Bridgend.

Table 16: Engagement in CSC Mathematics and Numeracy PL opportunities 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of practitioners	2	23	13
No of schools	2	15	8
% of schools	3.3%	25%	13.3%

In evaluations completed by practitioners upon completion of the PL, the following was stated:

- All delegates reported that PL event improved their knowledge of mathematics and numeracy.
- Many delegates (88%) reported that engagement with mathematics and numeracy PL enhanced their knowledge and skills and agreed that it was appropriate to their needs and skill level.
- Many participants (79%) anticipated the PL would have an impact on learners in their setting, and over half (58%) plan to meet with senior leaders to discuss the professional learning.

Bespoke support for mathematics and numeracy is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools. During 2022-2023, CSC received requests for bespoke support from 26 schools in Bridgend related to this Area.

A dedicated online community for mathematics and numeracy continues to provide the opportunity for practitioners from across the CSC region to meet and share their practice and to develop their understanding of local, region and national priorities related to mathematics and numeracy.

Cross regional working with the mathematics and numeracy teams from across Wales develops widescale shared understanding of progression and the five proficiencies within mathematics and numeracy and informs the creation of the regional PL offer.

6.5.4 Digital Learning

CSC continues to offer a comprehensive range of [PL opportunities](#) to all schools in enabling learners to be confident users of a range of technologies, from which they can apply and develop digital competence and proficiencies across all Areas.

PL opportunities also supported practitioners to develop the [effective use of technology](#) to enhance learning and teaching.

441 delegates from 143 (37%) schools in the region engaged in digital learning PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments, and networks. This included 59 delegates from 23 (38%) of schools in Bridgend.

Table 17: Engagement in CSC Digital Learning PL opportunities 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of practitioners	36	23	3
No of schools	16	13	3
% of schools	26.7%	21.7%	5%

In evaluations completed by practitioners upon completion of the PL, the following was stated:

- Many practitioners (88%) intend to share their PL with colleagues, and many (84%) also state their intention to discuss PL with senior leaders in their schools.
- Most participants (93%) reported the PL enhanced their knowledge of the subject matter. Many (86%) reported that the PL was appropriate to needs and skill level, and that it was relevant to their daily role.
- Many practitioners (77%) planned to use what they had learned in their roles and most (93%) reported that the PL would lead to at least some change in their practice.

Bespoke support for digital learning is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools. During 2022-2023, CSC received requests for bespoke support from 15 schools in Bridgend related to this area.

There are two dedicated PL areas on the CSC website for schools to access a wide variety of high-quality PL opportunities, networks, resources and support in [Digital Competence](#) and [Digital Learning](#).

Leaders and practitioners are encouraged to work together through networks and funded projects, leading to peer-to-peer learning, sharing of best practices, resources, and innovative ideas for incorporating cross-curricular digital skills across the curriculum.

Partnerships with external organisations and industry professionals provide valuable opportunities for real-world application of digital skills and the promotion of the Hwb platform.

CSC actively supports the cross-regional digital learning team who have developed collectively a national resource to further support schools plan for progression in cross-curricular digital skills. This strengthens the regional PL offer and promotion of the Hwb platform.

6.5.5 Cymraeg - Welsh in Education

Developing Welsh continues as a key priority for CSC and is essential in realising [Our national mission: High standards and aspirations for all](#); [Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers](#) and the ambitious individual Local Authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) for 2022-2032.

Since September 2022, high-quality PL and support for Welsh at CSC is provided within 3 areas:

- Welsh Development - Leadership of Welsh to include Welsh ethos, heritage and culture in both Welsh and English Medium schools, and special schools/PRUs. Developing the use of informal Welsh through the Siarter Iaith framework and Welsh across the curriculum in English medium schools.
- Welsh Language Professional Learning – Supporting schools to plan Welsh language PL for practitioners strategically, and to report on practitioner Welsh language competence in the School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) accurately. Developing the Welsh language skills of all practitioners and providing post-sabbatical support.
- Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC): Cymraeg - PL and support for the teaching and learning of oracy, reading, writing along with curriculum development in Welsh and English medium schools. The cross-curricular skill of literacy (Welsh) in Welsh medium schools.

All Cymraeg PL, support and resources from CSC can be found in this [playlist](#).

Welsh Development

The leadership of Cymraeg is central to the CSC vision which is anchored in the progressive implementation of [Siarter Iaith / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus](#) across all schools. A variety of PL programmes, networks and resources were provided to support schools to implement the [Siarter Iaith Framework](#) in all sectors, including special schools. Collaboration is key and effective practice is recognised and shared. CSC works in partnership with practitioners to enrich the PL opportunities, e.g., creation of [resources](#), sharing schools’ practice, etc.

All schools have access to bespoke support to make progress along the Siarter Iaith Framework. Schools work towards progressive bronze, silver and gold awards and there is a clear verification process which is led by CSC officers and/or trained peer verifiers. There are clear [guidelines](#) for the verification process and successes are celebrated in a [Regional Awards Ceremony](#).

A successful [Dragons’ Den](#) project was funded with the aim of engaging Criw Cymraeg. An example of the impact of the project can be seen [here](#).

Table 18: Siarter Iaith / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus Awards 2022-2023

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
CSC	47	28	8
Bridgend	7	1	1

During 2022-2023, 257 delegates from 155 (41%) schools in the region engaged in Welsh development PL programmes, events, conferences, assignments, and networks. This included 43 delegates from 27 (45%) schools in Bridgend.

Table 19: Engagement in CSC Welsh development PL opportunities in 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of practitioners	13	30	9
No of schools	9	22	7
% of schools	15%	36.7%	11.7%

Bespoke support for Welsh development is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools. During 2022-2023, CSC received requests for bespoke support from 11 (18%) schools in Bridgend related to this area. In addition to this specific bespoke support, CSC provides regular guidance and support for schools to implement and make progress with Siarter Iaith / Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus.

The Leadership of Welsh Programme continued to be offered during 2022-2023. It is designed to support senior leaders to develop the Welsh language and culture on a whole school strategic level. 16 schools across the region participated in this programme, two from Bridgend.

In the programme evaluations:

- Most stated that they have a clear pathway for developing the Welsh Language, heritage and culture appropriate to their context.
- Most graded the degree to which the programme extended their skills and knowledge as 5/5.
- Most rated the professional learning as 5/5.
- Most stated that they have a robust understanding to lead Welsh successfully across their school and report that it will impact upon practice and behaviour.

CSC funds a collaboration project between Welsh and English medium schools focused on the development of pupil's oracy skills and use of incidental and informal Welsh. During 2022-2023, 17 schools in the region participated in this project, including four from Bridgend. Nearly all schools that participated in the project stated that it supported their PL positively as practitioners and is beginning to improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills. Many schools report that they plan to continue collaborating beyond this funded project.

Welsh language professional learning

During 2022-2023, CSC continued to provide a [range of Welsh language PL for practitioners](#) in line with the Welsh Language Competency Framework. This included PL programmes, events and assignments.

783 delegates from 186 (49%) schools in the region engaged in Welsh language PL. This included 124 delegates from 39 (65%) schools in Bridgend.

In programme evaluations, most practitioners state that Welsh language PL will improve their Welsh language competence and skills and will change their behaviours and classroom practice.

Table 20: Engagement in CSC Welsh language PL opportunities 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional networks	Regional funded collaboration projects
No of practitioners	124	n/a	2
No of schools	39		2
% of schools	65%		3%

Bespoke support for Welsh language PL is available to all schools and clusters/groups of schools. During 2022-2023, CSC received requests for bespoke support from 4 (7%) of schools in Bridgend related to this area.

CSC works in partnership with the Sabbatical Scheme and Welsh Government to recruit practitioners strategically. During 2022-2023, 22 teachers from the CSC region participated in various sabbatical scheme courses, including six from schools in Bridgend. Post sabbatical support is provided by CSC to maximise the impact of practitioners upon their return to school e.g., introduction for headteachers, network meetings, one-to-one sessions, leadership of Welsh programme and collaboration opportunities.

Nearly all practitioners state that the sabbatical scheme has significantly developed their Welsh language competence along with their pedagogical knowledge of effective language teaching.

Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC): Cymraeg

CSC PL intends to ensure that all learners in English medium schools develop their language skills with a view to speaking Welsh with confidence on completing statutory education. For Welsh medium schools, the intention is to support schools with the provision of Welsh literacy, ensuring that all learners develop their listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills in Welsh to access the breadth of a school's curriculum, and develop communication skills that enable them to adapt and thrive in a modern Wales.

- 39 practitioners from 26 English medium schools in the region engaged in LLC: Cymraeg PL for English medium schools. This included 3 practitioners from 2 schools in Bridgend. Additionally, 18 schools requested bespoke support.
- 85 practitioners from 31 Welsh medium schools in the region engaged in LLC: Cymraeg PL for Welsh medium schools. This included 11 practitioners from 3 schools in Bridgend. Additionally, 5 schools requested bespoke support.
- 11 practitioners from 3 schools in the region engaged in LLC: Cymraeg PL for dual language schools.

The [CSC Continuum of Welsh Language Patterns](#) has been developed in accordance with CfW guidance and offers schools a linguistic foundation for designing their school level curriculum for Welsh in English medium schools. This continuum is a series of progressive and developmental language patterns. It has been divided into Progression Steps 1 to 3 in line with the Curriculum for Wales. Language patterns develop within each progression step as well as from one step to the next.

The continuum was piloted with six schools across the region during 2022-2023. Afon-Y-Felin and Pencoed Primary Schools participated in this pilot. Feedback on the continuum was very positive, for example:

“ We found it so easy to use. The hyperlinks are genius, and the appendices are so useful for both staff and pupil knowledge. It's going to make teaching & learning Welsh more accessible and improve teacher confidence. Diolch yn fawr”.

“ Although we only used the document for a short period of time towards the end of the year, all staff in PS2 and PS3 were very positive about it and expressed relief, to see a layout and structure that worked for everyday classroom practise with more scaffold for not only children but staff too. A very positive initial response”.

From September 2023, the continuum will be available to support all schools in the region and beyond.

Network meetings for practitioners operate at a regional and cross regional level, designed in partnership with school-based lead practitioners where appropriate. In addition, CSC facilitates support for each local authority's immersion centre through termly network meetings.

Funded regional collaboration projects enabled schools to engage with co-construction of PL, which in turn forms part of the asynchronous offer to all schools in the region. A range of schools from CSC, including Maes yr Haul Primary School, collaborated to produce exemplified support and guidance for the teaching of Welsh in an English medium school. Participating schools, indicated that they developed an improved understanding of effective curriculum design for pedagogy and language learning. Schools also fed back that the project impacted positively on both standards and engagement, for example:

“The children have developed a much greater passion for learning Welsh, our culture and our country. The children use Welsh naturally around the school and enjoy listening to Welsh music artists. The whole school environment has become passionate about and promotes the development of the Welsh language”.

“Confidence of teachers has grown in using the games and any barriers to playing the yard games have been removed, opportunities to play the games are regularly provided. Noticeable enjoyment of children engaging with the Welsh language through games. Criw Cymraeg enjoyed giving responsibility for the project and then seeing the positive impact on their peers' enjoyment and Welsh language skills”.

6.5.6 Other Curriculum Areas

During 2022-2023, PL and bespoke support continued to be available from CSC to schools in all other areas of the curriculum, including:

- Expressive arts
- Humanities
- Health and well-being
- Science and technology
- Relationships and sexuality education
- Religion, values, and ethics
- Careers and work-related experiences

6.5.7 Qualifications and Post-16 Education

Secondary schools are supported to develop their curriculum for current GCSE/level 2 and A-Level/level 3 qualifications through regional networks. Many networks are facilitated by Lead practitioners from across the region and encourage the sharing of practice. Bespoke support is also available to all schools in the region where qualifications improvement priorities are not fully met by the available networks. Qualifications reform updates, opportunities for school participation and consultation communications from Qualifications Wales and WJEC were shared to all schools and cascaded through network conversations. CSC area leads and representatives from schools across the region participated in stakeholder groups to support the development of the new Made-For-Wales GCSEs. This work will continue into the next academic year as specifications are developed. In collaboration with WJEC, CSC will support ongoing PL requirements for leaders and practitioners for the revised specifications.

PL and bespoke support continued to be available to all schools with sixth forms across the region. During 2022-2023, CSC PL focused on a culture of enquiry and collaboration to drive self-improvement in post-16 settings. Key areas included curriculum offer, self-evaluation, transition, retention, well-being, and learner progress.

Table 21: Engagement in Post-16 PL 2022-2023

Bridgend	Regional PL Post 16	Regional PL Welsh Bacc.	Regional funded collaboration projects	National PL/Projects Post-16
No of practitioners	11	12	5	1
No of schools	5	6	5	1

Through the funded project work, collaborating schools reported successful improvements in relation to the implementation of VESPA (Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice, Attitude) approaches to improve self-regulation and metacognition strategies and support learner progress and attainment. Bilingual resources were also developed via the project work to support all schools across Wales accessing the VESPA platform. Planning for learner well-being has been supported through the inclusion of the Mental Health UK Bloom project.

The [Post-16 leaders network](#) continues to be well-attended and supports schools' broader awareness of national and regional priorities in the sector. Schools are encouraged to share approaches and effective practice during the sessions. 51 delegates from 19 schools in the region engaged in this network. This included 10 delegates from five schools in Bridgend.

The [Welsh Baccalaureate/Skills Challenge Certificate network](#) meetings were available for all qualification levels. 27 delegates from 13 schools in the region engaged in this network. This included 12 delegates from six schools in Bridgend. WJEC regional support officers attended CSC meetings to share updates and resources, and support qualification reform. Bespoke support was available in this area through the appointed CSC Welsh Baccalaureate/Skills Challenge Certificate lead practitioner.

The [Post-16 Education: Newly Qualified Teacher Module](#) (NQT) has been created cross regionally as an optional module for the National NQT induction programme. The module highlights how post-16 education differs from other phases of education, the key priorities for this phase of education and the importance of effective transition (post-16 and post-18) to support learner aspiration and destinations. This is hosted on the Welsh Consortia website.

CSC takes a lead role in the cross-regional PL programme. The [National Post-16 Leadership Development Programme](#) attracts aspiring, new and established post-16 leaders from across Wales, where 12 CSC school leaders have enrolled for 2023-24 to date. A joint [Post-16 PL programme](#) has also been developed to reflect national priorities and collaboration across Wales which will begin in the 2023-24 academic year.

7.0 Equity and Vulnerable Learners

Central South Consortium continues to work in partnership with local authorities and other stakeholders to support equity in all schools across the region, with high standards and aspirations for all. A key driver to this work is the fostering of effective partnership with key stakeholders across the local authorities to support schools work on areas including attendance, exclusions, looked after children and well-being.

CSC has also worked effectively with the Implementation Lead for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board on supporting schools in their work on the 'Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing'. CSC have also delivered professional learning sessions for governors to support the understanding of the requirements for the schools in adopting the statutory framework. 6 governors from Bridgend attended these sessions.

CSC has facilitated PL sessions focused on equity and vulnerable learners. This included within the professional pathway's programmes, including Aspiring Headteacher and Aspiring Higher Level Teaching Assistant Development programmes.

The Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups continues to provide bespoke support to individual schools and clusters focused on equity and vulnerable learners.

The Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups continues to provide bespoke support to individual schools and clusters focused on equity and vulnerable learners.

CSC receives PDG Grant funding for the following areas:

- Looked after Children aged 3- 15
- PDG Adviser
- Consortia Led Funding

Previously, CSC has provided regional PL opportunities specifically aimed to support Looked After Children. However, since 2022, this funding has been allocated to the individual LAs to provide bespoke professional learning for schools focusing specifically on the needs of that LA. This ensures local knowledge of the needs of schools in LAs is provided and removes any duplication of support.

7.1 Enabling Equity and Excellence

The CSC 'Enabling Equity and Excellence' document aims to promote thought and discussion amongst a school community, to ask pertinent questions as to how equitable the organisation is, and how effective it is in transforming policy into practice to ensure excellence for all learners.

All schools must ask:

- Do we know every learner well?
- How do we know about them?
- What experiences, knowledge and skills do they bring?

Over 70% of school in the region have reported engagement with the document to support their school improvement.

During 2022-2023, CSC led a collaboration project involving 11 schools from across the five local authorities focusing on an element of enabling equity and excellence linked to their school improvement priorities. The Bridge Alternative Provision and Coety Primary School participated in this structured programme which included face-to-face PL sessions, intersessional tasks and some peer reviews. The pilot supported schools to manage change according to their individual contexts, draw on the expertise and support of CSC and the LAs, and learn from the experiences of other schools in the mission to achieve equity and excellence for all learners. The work of the pilot group was also instrumental in supporting and informing the work of CSC in supporting equity in schools and driving transformational change across the organisation.

7.2 Pupil Development Grant (PDG)

April 2022 – March 2023, the PDG was allocated to schools at a rate of £1,150 per learner to support:

- Learners who are eligible for free school meals (e-FSM) and who are educated in maintained schools.
- Eligible learners aged 3 and 4 years old educated in maintained schools.
- Eligible learners who are singly registered in pupil referral units (PRUs) and education other than at school (EOTAS).
- Eligible learners in early years settings where the Foundation Phase is delivered.
- Looked after children, and former looked after children who have been adopted from care or who are subject to a special guardianship or residence order aged 3-15.

The allocations were based on Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) 2021.

All schools continue to be supported by their Improvement Partner (IP) to ensure that the PDG plan/strategy is appropriate and meets the bespoke needs of their eFSM learners and in accordance with the eight focus areas stated in the Welsh Government Guidance:

- High quality learning and teaching - with a particular focus on the pedagogy used by teachers, the role of support staff and the professional learning provided for practitioners.

- Community schools - with a particular emphasis on the role of Family Engagement Officers, the role of the school within the wider community and work with other children's and family agencies.
- Early childhood education and care, developing the long-term vision to ensure equity and quality for our youngest learners wherever they access education or care which supports their learning and development.
- The health and well-being of children and young people - in line with the Framework on Embedding a Whole-School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-being.
- Developing high aspirations through strong relationships - aligned to the role of the Careers Service, the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, the Young Person's Guarantee, and the Seren Network.
- The Curriculum for Wales and qualifications - focusing on the importance of language development, meta-cognition and self-regulation as being key enablers of success within the new curriculum and offering learners a wide range of qualification routes.
- Leadership - focusing on its importance in overcoming the impact of poverty on attainment and the leadership of community schools.
- Post-16 progression- through forging strong partnerships with further education institutions, work-based learning providers and other post-16 providers.

Summary of the analysis PDG plans/strategies of schools in Bridgend for 2022/23 (not including schools who do not engage with their IP due to action short of strike.

- Most schools (94%) have an appropriate PDG plan / strategy that meets the needs of eFSM learners across the school. In a minority of schools (6%), the plans are deemed as developing.
- The PDG plan has resulted in change in practice or provision in many schools (88%). The grant has not result in any changes in practice of provision in a few schools (12%).
- PDG funding has been effective in improving learner well-being in most of the schools in Bridgend (92%). In very few schools in Bridgend (8%), this aspect is developing.
- In many of the schools (76%), the PDG funding has been effective in improving achievement of eFSM pupils. In a minority of schools (24%), this aspect is developing.
- In many of the schools (80%), their self-evaluation and MER activities support vulnerable learner progress. In a few schools (20%) this aspect is developing.
- In a many of the schools (84%), the teaching and learning of vulnerable pupils is effective. In a minority of schools (16%) this area is developing.
- Many schools (72%) are effective in being poverty aware. A minority of schools (28%) are developing this area.
- Many schools (78%) are effective in addressing the attendance and exclusion needs of eFSM pupils. In a minority (22%) of schools, this aspect is developing.

Strong practice noted included:

- Effective use of Family Liaison Officers to work with targeted families;
- Graduated systems in place when attendance is below average;
- Bespoke programmes and intervention to avoid excluding vulnerable groups;
- Careful monitoring of pupil attendance; and
- Staff accessing professional learning.

CSC continues to work with the LA leads for looked after children (LAC), including the virtual headteachers and the LAC Coordinators, to support the planning and evaluation of the PDG LAC grant. Looked After Children in Education (LACE) meetings have taken place regularly. In response to feedback from cluster leads, amendments have been made to LAC cluster plans and evaluations.

CSC facilitated LA cluster leads meetings within each LA to identify PL needs. As part of the quality assurance processes the CSC Lead ensured that all cluster plans had been received and approved. This process will continue in 2023-24.

7.3 Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY)

A significant number of disadvantaged learners in the region are not realising their potential outcomes. In 2021/22, following discussions with the local authority, CSC engaged Challenging Education to facilitate the RADY Programme in targeted schools. Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen and Ysgol Maesteg have participated in this programme.

RADY is a support programme for schools to mitigate the impact of poverty and disadvantage for identified learners through an equity approach. The principles of RADY support the regional approach to achieving equity as set out in CSC's Enabling Equity and Excellence document, and links to the Equity and Well-being priority area of CSC's business plan. The RADY programme has also supported Bridgend's improvement priority, 'to ensure all vulnerable children and young people receive the right support and are able to maximise their potential in schools in Bridgend'.

RADY is a long-term school improvement strategy. It facilitates cultural change, a hearts and minds approach. It focuses on supporting schools to become equitable in all aspects of the education they provide, ensuring that those learners who need it most get the extra support required to succeed.

RADY consists of a range of strategies which focus on disadvantage and disadvantaged pupils in schools. These start with what Challenging Education term the 'uplift', a mechanism for raising the targets, and subsequently the aspirations, set for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. This catalyst is applied at the start of a phase of education, supporting long-term strategies to ensure the 'extra' makes life-changing differences to these pupils.

After applying the catalyst, schools on their RADY journey integrate the RADY principles as a 'golden thread' through their school development plan. This is to ensure that equity is embedded in all aspects of school life, ensuring every member of staff has an understanding and commitment to an equitable approach.

All participating schools have received visits from RADY consultants. The consultants work with senior leaders in each school to develop the conditions required for effective cultural, policy and practice change to affect equitable provision and outcomes for all learners.

All schools in the RADY programme also have access to an online suite of practical resources, 'Thinking Differently'. These resources on the areas of pedagogy, metacognition, and family and community engagement aimed specifically at eFSM learners. These resources are also available to all schools across the authority.

To date, impact has been recognised in the participating schools where the school leadership is strong and stable. In these schools, leaders have demonstrated the vision, drive, commitment, and capacity to engage purposefully with RADY, and enact the RADY principles to provide equitable experiences for disadvantaged learners. It is reported that as a result, the culture and ethos of the school has been affected powerfully by the RADY programme.

8.0 CSC CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORTING LA PRIORITIES (APRIL 2023 – OCTOBER 2023)

As part of CSC's business planning process, Bridgend provides CSC with their priorities in the Spring Term 2022, and these were built into CSC's business plan for 2022/23. As agreed by CSC's Joint Committee, CSC provide an update on progress supporting Bridgend's priorities on a twice-yearly basis.

[See Appendix B for a detailed evaluation of the progress that has been made as well as an update on how CSC are supporting Bridgend's priorities].

9.0 VALUE FOR MONEY

The consortium's funding is made up of two principal sources:

- Core Local Authority funding with individual Local Authority contributions.
- Dedicated funding for schools and school improvement activities routed through consortia by Welsh Government. Major Welsh Government grants, such as the Regional Consortia School Improvement grant (RCSIG), are administered by consortia and delegated to schools via Local Authorities. Consortia retain elements of the grants (amounts set in the terms and conditions of each grant) on a regional basis to support local and national school improvement priorities.

9.1 Efficient Use of Core Contributions

In line with the legal agreement between the five local authorities making up Central South Consortium, Local Authorities commission CSC to provide a school improvement service predominantly funding Improvement Partners to work with schools.

In 2022-23, the consortium received £3,624,875 contributions from the five Local Authorities across the region. The funding was used to support the core function of school improvement. The budget provided to CSC by Bridgend represents 0.4 % of Bridgend's total education budget in 2022/23 and 2.4 % of the budget retained by the LA.

During 2022/23 Bridgend contributed £554,243 core funding to CSC. This core funding is determined using the Indicator Based Assessment for education (IBA) and agreed by Joint Committee. In 2022/23, Bridgend contributed 15% of CSC's core budget.

For every £1 of core budget received from Local Authorities, 71 pence is spent on front line delivery.

To realise our joint ambitions for the region's learners, the core funding provided by LAs is used to provide:

- Principal Improvement Partners (LA)
- Improvement Partners
- Business Intelligence Unit (BIU)
- Information Management
- Communications Team
- Governor Support
- Finance Team
- Outdoor Education
- SACRE (Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education)
- Project Management

Summaries of the work provided in the areas listed above to support Bridgend and Bridgend schools, can be found [here](#).

9.2 Local Authority Annex

During the 2022-23 financial year, the Bridgend LA Annex Total Budget of £19,265 was used for the following priorities:

Support the implementation of the local authority's post-inspection action plan and its three strategic education priorities (i.e. safety, wellbeing and literacy)

- The local authority makes effective progress in meeting its strategic priorities as identified in the Education & Family Support Directorate's business plan. Progress is subject to regular monitoring of impact.
- Schools review the literacy progress of learners using a range of evidence and have identified appropriate areas for literacy priorities within their strategic plans.
- Bespoke support has been brokered for schools as identified through their self-evaluation and monitoring processes.
- Schools access professional learning to support their improvement planning.
- The progress and impact of the literacy strategic priorities are monitored regularly with levels of support refined appropriately.
- A safeguarding Board has been established within the directorate to support safeguarding activity including a programme of review of policies.
- Safeguarding audits and reviews held with all schools to identify issues and focus for support.
- Schools have been supported in their self-evaluation and strategic planning processes to identify appropriate pupil and staff wellbeing priorities for development that are monitored for impact regularly.
- The whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing is being developed as appropriate within schools and in line with the Welsh Government Framework.

Support the implementation of the Expressive Arts area of Curriculum for Wales in alignment with the National Music Plan. Offer targeted training to school-based staff.

- Training programmes for practitioners were developed and delivered to support the teaching of expressive arts.
- A 'new expressive arts experience' programme for all year 3 pupils in the local authority was piloted with positive feedback.
- A recruitment exercise took place to increase capacity within the team to deliver on the musical instrument 'First experiences' programme.
- New instruments were purchased and asset tracked to support the delivery of the music programmes.

For the 2023-24 financial year, the Bridgend LA Annex Total Budget of £14,916 is targeted for the following priorities:

LA Priority from SER/PIAP 2023 - 2024

To support the implementation of the Education and Family Support Directorate's Strategic Plan 2023-2026 with a focus on Themes 5, 6 and 7.

- Co-ordination of the Team Bridgend networking groups to support the development of distributed leadership.
- Support communication between local authority, schools and Central South Consortium (for example, professional learning offer).
- Support the sharing of effective practice across the local authority and region.

Outcome Measure

The local authority makes effective progress in meeting its strategic priorities (as identified in the Education and Family Support Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026).

9.3 Added Value: Grant Funding

LAs fund the core budget for CSC and this represents less than 4% of the total budget available to CSC in 2022-2023. Additional funding is received from Welsh Government via specific grant funding streams. With the launch of the national strategy, 'Education for Wales: Our National Mission', WG streamlined the grant funding processes. During 2022-2023, only three grants were received by consortia: Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG), Pupil Development Grant (PDG), and Siarter Iaith.

CSC adds value to the school improvement service commissioned by LAs by using elements of the above grants to fund CSC's delivery strategy of the Central South Wales Challenge as well as commission work and support packages for schools across the region. These funds are allocated according to the needs of individual schools, LAs, the region and nationally (as outlined in section 6.0 above) and are provided by the curriculum and professional learning team.

In 2022-23, the following funding was received:

Table 22: WG Grant Funding

Grant	Total	Delegated to LAs/schools	Centrally retained
	£	£	£
RCSIG	48,891	43,687	5,204
Siarter Iaith	43,484	43,174	310
PDG	78	0	78
Total	92,453	86,861	5,592

Elements of the above grants were used to commission work and support packages for schools across the region. These funds were allocated according to the needs of individual schools, LAs, the region and nationally. Initiatives have been split below across the key enabling objectives included in the WG 'Education in Wales: Our National Mission' report:

Table 23: Expenditure of the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant by LA in 2022-23

Cost Category	Outturn 2022-23	City & County of Cardiff	Bridgend CBC	Vale of Glam CBC	Merthyr CBC	RCT CBC
		£	£	£	£	£
		36.59	15.29	14.83	6.33	26.96
Curriculum & assessment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Developing a high-quality education profession	38,301	12,917	4,827	5,914	4,829	9,815
Leadership	172	27	36	39	22	48
Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence equity & wellbeing	43,174	19,795	5,889	3,350	2,071	12,069
Supporting a self-improving system	5,214	1,784	826	788	344	1,471
Total	86,861	24,524	11,578	10,090	7,266	23,403
% spend received		39.75	13.33	11.62	8.37	26.94

Bespoke Support Budget

In addition to the above funding, CSC has also developed a process for supporting vulnerable schools which are identified within the financial year. IPs are able to coordinate support for schools that are most in need, examples of support may include a Regional Leader for Governance or a System Leader for a specific number of days, supply cover to release staff for professional learning or funding for a lead practitioner.

During 2022/2023 a budget of just over £145k was available to support schools across the region. Schools within Bridgend LA received £2,200 of the available budgets representing 1.5% of the total budget available.

The impact of the activities funded by this budget is evaluated by the school and the individual Improvement Partner, and, where appropriate, included within local authority information reports.

Case Study: Bespoke Support Funding Example

School A

All foundation phase staff engaged with regional professional learning to develop their knowledge and understanding of effective outdoor learning in the foundation phase. The school foundation phase lead received in school support from the CSC foundation phase lead to support their leadership role and develop an improvement plan for the school on effective learning environments and outdoor learning. The school also received support from an enhanced lead practitioner to monitor improvements and ensure the planned progress and impact was achieved.

Impact

- *Professional learning for all staff provided a shared understanding and guidance materials shared with all staff supported their ongoing developments.*
- *School leaders have a clear vision for improvement and a purposeful plan to achieve this.*
- *A consistent and progressive approach was developed across the foundation phase and was consistently monitored.*
- *A more effective learning provision across the foundation phase enabled learner engagement and pupil independence to be developed.*

Curriculum Reform and Development

CSC supports schools in all areas of curriculum reform with the aim of realising our National Mission of ‘strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence equity and wellbeing’. This includes working with the other regional consortia and partnerships, local authorities, external agencies, and schools to develop national and regional events, programmes, support and guidance for practitioners and school, leaders, including governors.

The PL opportunities are wide ranging and comprehensive, with Curriculum for Wales embedded throughout. The CSC team provide and broker specialist bespoke support to clusters, groups of schools and individual schools to meet their specific improvement needs.

9.4 Collaborative Advantage

This can be defined as the additional benefits of working as a region when compared to working at either local authority or individual school level. By working collectively, schools have been able to build capacity within the system by training staff and sharing practice.

The [Central South Wales Challenge](#) (CSWC) is a partnership of all schools in the region working together to develop a self-improving system. This is based on improvement being driven for schools by schools. It provides delivery structures and networks through which most regional professional learning opportunities are offered.

Collaborative working underpins the CSWC. Cluster working has formed a significant workstream for all area this year in line with the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. This has facilitated collaborations between schools and built significant capacity within those clusters that have engaged. There are multiple examples of where lead practitioners

have been used effectively to support the system and provide additional capacity. In nearly all cases, projects have led to improvements for at least the practitioners/schools involved, and in the best cases, offered resource to the region overall.

However, significant budgetary pressures and capacity of schools are becoming an increasing barrier to collaborative working.

Specific details regarding the engagement of Bridgend schools with the CSWC can be found in section 6.0.

9.5 Additional Examples of Value for Money

In addition to how CSC provides evidence of the efficient use of resources as well as how added value and collaborative advantage are supported, CSC is also able to provide evidence of value for money in several other areas.

Equity

CSC provides a universal service to all schools which includes:

- A named Improvement Partner who monitors and reviews the progress of each individual school against their agreed evidence-based improvement criteria.
- All schools will be identified as needing core or enhance support. Enhanced support offers additional monitoring and review for schools that have specific challenges.
- IPs broker and monitor any additional support ensuring that all schools have the right support to address their needs as well and prevent any potential issues from impacting on learners.
- Support for governors to carry out HT performance management in line with national guidance.
- Governors have access to all mandatory training, and this is supported by additional training and support. The role of Governors across CSC has been enhanced with the reestablishment of the Governors Steering Group on our governance structure and the establishment of Regional Leaders of Governance.
- Additional support and training is provided to IPs to ensure they can reach the internationally recognised AOEA standards, demonstrating that our staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to support schools.
- In addition, where further support is required (either identified by CSC, the LA or Estyn, a tiered package of further improvement challenge and monitoring will be provided depending on the level of concern registered. This additional intervention will be focused on schools in most need of support irrespective of in which authority they reside.
- IPs coordinate and broker the support going into schools ensuring that it is appropriate to need and that it is addressing a key school/departmental priority.
- School progress is monitored termly in all schools and half termly in schools with additional concerns.

Economy

The national model of regional working was published in 2015 and recommended CSC receive £5.4m to fund the school improvement serviced on behalf of the five LAs. In 2022/23 CSC budget was £3.6m

CSC have worked to ensure that costs are minimised without reducing the quality of service provided. Over the period since the inception of CSC, further efficiency savings have been identified, enabling core contributions to CSC to be reduced without affecting the quality of service provided.

All curriculum & professional learning areas can offer assurance of their financial spend and a clear rationale for decisions. These spends are carefully monitored through CSC area operational plans and robust financial processes. All area leads carefully manage their resources to balance the needs of the system, to be as strategic and proactive as possible whilst ensuring the ability to be agile to respond to PL and support needs as they arise.

Some recurrent bespoke support has been shaped into programmes demonstrating that evaluation is being used to shape future work and best manage human resource to create greater economy.

There are many examples where regional collaboration projects have offered highly effective professional learning and provided learning and resource for the system suggesting effective spend of resource to provide greater economy.

However, significant budgetary pressures may become a barrier to delivery of a comprehensive offer and funding for regional collaborative activities.

Sustainability

The definition of sustainable is something that can be continued or a practice that can be maintained over time once the resource from CSC (whether financial or leadership) is removed. CSC has developed a sustainable strategy for collaboration in the Central South Wales Challenge (CSWC).

There is a significant amount of high-quality PL and support at the point of delivery, both in intensive and less intensive forms. All areas can detail strong examples of intensive forms of PL and support that have developed capacity of practitioners and groups of practitioners within a school or cluster. In the bespoke support, coaching or mentoring ensures that action is taken as a result of the professional learning, though this is either less developed in the less intensive forms or less known about. When practitioners are supported to apply their learning, the feedback is consistently positive.

Leadership is often the main development need and relies upon middle leaders operating in a wider learning organisation for changes to be realised. To ensure sustainability, a further focus on the development of knowledge and skills of middle leaders is required to lead change following their engagement in PL and support.

Efficiency

As a region, CSC is able to take advantage of economies of scale and can therefore provide a full and comprehensive professional learning offer across all areas of school improvement. In addition, CSC is provided with Welsh Government grant funding to ensure full coverage of support across all AoLEs within the new curriculum.

The [website](#) developed by CSC ensures schools have access to resources and a comprehensive professional learning offer in one site. This is complemented by the [website](#) specifically for Curriculum for Wales which can be accessed from the main CSC website.

A comprehensive communication strategy is also in place to ensure schools receive timely and appropriate communications aligned to need.

A strength of the PL offered to schools is the wide range of PL and support opportunities - programmes, projects, networks and bespoke support - available to all practitioners and school leaders across the region. In addition, the breadth of topics on offer receives positive feedback. Practitioners report that they value the range and breadth of PL that they can engage with which implies efficiency in terms of scope and scale. A summary of the support provided to the region can also be found in the [professional learning compendium](#).

All CSC areas can clearly articulate their approach to PL, and why they have selected each aspect they have included in the offer. Strong examples of CSC self-evaluation shaping the PL offer are evident. In nearly all areas, there is clear thought about how the PL is designed to be taken to scale, either by a practitioner within a school or regionally.

Effectiveness

Within the 2022-23 Annual Financial Year Report, CSC provided evidence to support the achievement of outcomes and the impact of the work. During recent LA inspections of LAs, Estyn reported that

“The local authority has established strong working relationships with principal improvement partners from the regional consortium and there are robust processes for the support and challenge to schools causing concern.”

“...improvement partners provide a sound evaluation of progress based on first-hand evidence of provision and leadership in these schools...”

In addition, during 2022/23 there were 278 priorities within schools in Bridgend LA. By the end of the academic year 273 priorities were deemed to be on track with 5 not on track.

The CSC professional learning opportunities available to all schools across the region is comprehensive and is consistently of good quality according to the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) hallmarks for professional learning. This demonstrates that the component parts of the PL offer are effective.

Evaluation from a wide variety of feedback confirms strongly that the PL opportunities provide significant school improvement opportunities through a structured and comprehensive approach. Many PL resources developed by the team across all areas well received by schools and used to good effect, promoting efficient sharing of learning. There is more evidence of impact in the more intensive programmes of PL and bespoke support than in some of the less intensive PL opportunities (e.g. one-off events etc.). This is attributable to the proportional approach to support and evaluation in each activity. Overall, the quality of the cluster bespoke support is reported to have a significant impact on curriculum development.

CSC offers high quality PL and support, however, for this to effect school improvement, the conditions of the school need to allow this learning to be implemented by practitioners. Also, where appropriate, the learning taken to scale across departments, phases and the whole school. There is an appetite from practitioners for less intensive episodes of PL which are more time efficient to engage with but may lack depth of knowledge and skill development. This does not align to the indicators of effective professional learning.

Quality

All CSC school improvement colleagues have a depth of knowledge and expertise which is supplemented with extensive professional learning to ensure the highest quality of support to schools.

In addition, all IPs are working towards an internationally recognised AoEA standard demonstrating that CSC staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to support schools.

To ensure the ongoing quality of this service, a comprehensive professional learning offer is in place to ensure school improvement professionals are well trained (as well as experienced) and able to support schools across the region. This is supported by an extensive quality assurance programme which feeds into the performance development or probation arrangements for individual IPs.

All PL and support is of high quality according to the NAEL hallmarks. All areas are able to demonstrate how the PL and support in their area aligns to the professional standards for teaching and leadership. Also, how the PL and support promotes and enables schools to develop as learning organisations. Academic research, coupled with organisational experience and expertise, underpins all decisions, aligned to national policy in their plans. Learning from activities is shared with practitioners who are interested and engaged in the focus areas.

The Bridgend IP Team (primary and secondary IPs) meet regularly in a school setting to share effective practice that has been identified in the school, to enhance the understanding of how different schools in the local authority are approaching educational reform and meeting the needs of their learners. The meetings also provide opportunities to share information and strategies to support the local authority education priorities.

Added Value

Curriculum areas enact their work as part of a longer-term strategic plan which may span multiple years as part of a coherent theory of change. For any new or innovative activity that has been developed, leads can explain how these fit within their vision and priorities for improvement. In the majority of cases there are clear examples of new strategies being used to accelerate school improvement.

However, the pressures to demonstrate significant impact on school improvement within one year can influence the planned activities. One year is often not enough time of a measure of value if work is sitting in a longer-term strategic plan.

10.0 SHARING OF PRACTICE

Sharing of practice

Consortium Canolbarth y De
Central South Consortium
Cwmwlwrth Addysg ar y Cyl
Joint Education Service

Estyn Inspection Reports	
No. of inspections: Sept 2022 - Sept 2023	12
No. of inspections: Sept 2021 - Sept 2022	2
No. of Estyn good practice case studies: Sept 2022 - Sept 2023	3

★ Leadership	
No. of participants engaged in MLDP (Middle Leaders Development Programme)	21
No. of participants engaged in SLDP (Senior Leaders Development Programme)	7
No. of participants engaged in Aspiring Headteacher Programme	12
No. of participants engaged in New and Acting Headteacher	5
No. of system leaders available from deployment from within Bridgend LA	1
No. of Governors engaged in Governor training (at least 1 event)	116
Total number of Governors in Bridgend LA	763

✍ Professional Learning - Sept 2022 - Aug 2023						
No. of schools engaged with PL	Proportion of schools engaged with PL	No. of practitioners engaged with PL	No. of schools engaged with regional networks	Proportion of schools engaged with regional networks	No of practitioners engaged with regional networks	No of Lead Practitioners
60	100%	1634	52	87%	312	7

📊 General Context Data	
No. of schools in Bridgend LA (January PLASC 2023 & EOTAS 2023)	60
No. of teachers in Bridgend LA (January PLASC 2023)	1360
No. of clusters within Bridgend LA	10

🤝 Collaborations	
No of schools engaged in funded collaboration projects (inc. Regional and National)	37
No of practitioners engaged in funded collaboration projects (inc. Regional and National)	109

👥 Curriculum, Teaching & Assessment PL and Support					
	Regional PL (excl.networks)	Regional Networks	Regional Funded Projects	National Networks / Camau Project	Bespoke Support Requests
Practitioners	636	301	96	42	
No of schools	58	52	35	33	49
% of schools	96.7%	86.7%	58.3%	55%	81.7

📄 Sharing Practice - Sept 2022 - Sept 2023	
No. of Bridgend schools with at least one Snippet of Success	34
No. of times Bridgend schools featured in Snippets of Success - our half termly celebration of news and success stories from schools in CSC	56
No. of podcasts produced:	2
• Data and Information Literacy Project	
• Disciplinary Literacy	

💬 Coaching & Mentoring	
No. of facilitators trained (RDG)	3
No. of teaching staff trained in coaching & mentoring (Lead Practitioner)	15

11.0 CONCLUSIONS

CSC has developed a framework for self-evaluation based upon the guidance provided by Estyn on the Inspection of Local Authorities.

As a result of extensive self-evaluation activity, strengths and areas of development are identified. From this analysis, a series of focus areas are identified for inclusion within the planning for 2023-24.

Self-evaluation activity has continued across the organisation to ensure any areas of development identified because of evaluation activity, is incorporated into the planning cycles.

11.1 Leadership and Safeguarding within CSC as an organisation.

Strengths include:

- Leaders / Managers have established a clear vision involving all stakeholders over time, which encompasses partnership working.
- Local Authority strategic priorities embedded into the CSC Business Plan.
- Strong strategic partnerships with stakeholders.
- Leaders incorporate feedback to improve quality of provision and processes.
- Effective induction programme results in staff being well placed to work effectively with schools.
- High expectations to engage in Professional Learning developed to support individual and regional priorities.
- Transparent robust financial management (as confirmed by Audit Wales).
- Maximisation of grant funding to schools / Regional formula for distribution of grant funding to schools.

Areas to develop include:

- Further developing professional relationships with elected members / officers in local authorities.
- Embedding the evaluation framework.
- Continue to rationalise the reporting to stakeholders to ensure information shared is effective in meeting their needs.
- Embedding risk management processes.
- Promotion of equality diversity & inclusion.
- Continue to develop processes to support staff wellbeing & healthy cultures.
- Embedding working practices and quality assurance programmes.
- Evaluation, outcome and impact of internal Professional Learning and Performance Development.
- Safer recruitment practices.

11.2 Professional Learning

Strengths include:

- A wide variety of quality professional learning opportunities aligned to local, regional and national needs and along all milestones of the professional pathway from newly qualified teacher to experienced headteacher.
- Equity of access to high-quality professional learning for all practitioners and school leaders, including governors.
- Bespoke support available for all schools in the region to supplement the professional learning programme and meet the needs of school strategic and developmental priorities.
- Robust quality assurance of professional learning and bespoke support.
- The Enabling Equity and Excellence document provides supports the regional approach with strong positive feedback from school leaders (75% in survey), reporting the document has increased their understanding of equity and excellence in the school and that it was being used to support school improvement conversations.
- Work with Higher Education Institution partners ensures learning from the wider system adds academic rigour to systems and processes, including the Enabling Equity and Excellence approach.
- Since April 2022, over 98% of schools in the region have engaged in the professional learning programme for curriculum including the wider reforms.
- Curriculum for Wales bespoke support for schools, clusters and individual drop-in sessions offers a menu of options of support for schools to support their curriculum development.
- The evaluation of professional learning is strong, with 95% of delegates already using or planning to use the learning in their current role.
- Evaluations from all leadership programmes demonstrates the positive impact on developing the leadership skills of participants and the impact on learners through the practical leadership experience tasks undertaken.
- Engagement with Welsh language development professional learning has increased by 20% on the previous year.
- Since April 2022, 101 schools have progressed on the level achieved for Siarter Iaith and Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus awards, an increase of 15% from the previous year. Since April 2020 there has been 301 bronze, silver or gold awards awarded to schools across the region.
- CSC provides strong support to local authorities as a key partner in delivering Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) targets.

Areas to develop include:

- Analysing the volume of professional learning available for schools and ensuring effective communication of the CSC offer.
- Ensuring coherence of the professional learning offer in curriculum design, teaching and assessment to ensure it continues to meet the needs of all schools.

- Developing the cluster convenor role within to further support the 3 – 16 curriculum and developing a shared understanding of progression.
- Improving participation of delegates in the evaluation of professional learning programmes and events.
- Redeveloping professional learning programme and support for Teaching Assistants across the region.
- Further development of higher-level Welsh language professional learning (gloywi iaith).
- Ensure professional learning opportunities are available to support all elements of the Enabling Equity and Excellence document.
- Further develop professional learning and support for leadership beyond the national pathway programmes.
- Develop and implement a tiered approach to governor professional learning that builds on knowledge, experiences and skills.
- Further develop the regional approach for coaching and mentoring.
- Continue to develop the reporting on the outcomes of professional learning in school improvement.

11.3 Support for School Improvement

Strengths include:

- The range and depth of skills, expertise and knowledge of CSC team.
- Improvement partners develop strong relationships with schools to support and challenge, in partnership with local authorities.
- First-hand evidence gathering is aligned with school monitoring and self-evaluation processes.
- Strong systems and processes to monitor ‘schools causing concern’ through the enhanced strategy.
- Sharing of school level intelligence and information with local authority partners identifying significant risks, concerns by exception and agreeing actions for challenge and support as appropriate.
- An agile and bespoke approach is used to support the needs of individual schools.
- CSC have a clear regional approach for equity and excellence.
- Nearly all schools have engaged in collaborations and/or professional learning for the Curriculum for Wales.
- CSC staff engagement with schools supported schools’ readiness and implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.
- Quality of the Central South Wales Challenge strategy supports a self-improving system across the region.

Areas to develop include:

- Continue to evaluate and refine reporting arrangements.
- Continued roll-out of the agreed EEE implementation plan.
- Continue to support schools to develop effective cluster working arrangements.
- Follow up aspects arising from quality assurance processes.
- Widen the profile of CPAG to reduce the impact of poverty across more schools.
- Further embed Welsh as part of school improvement conversations.

12.0 NEXT STEPS

As a result of all self-evaluation activity across the organisation the following areas were identified for inclusion within the Business Plan for 2023/24:

12.1 Leadership and Safeguarding within CSC as an organisation

- Further develop professional relationships with elected members / officers in local authorities.
- Embed the CSC evaluation framework.
- Rationalisation of reporting to ensure it meets the needs of stakeholders.
- Embedding risk management processes.
- Promotion of equality diversity & inclusion.
- Staff wellbeing & healthy cultures.
- Embedding working practices and quality assurance programmes.
- Evaluate the outcome and impact of internal professional learning and performance development programmes.
- Further develop safe recruitment practices.

12.2 Professional Learning

- Analyse the volume of professional learning available for schools and ensure effective communication of the offer.
- Ensure coherence of professional learning for curriculum design, teaching and assessment and that it meets the needs of all schools.
- Develop the cluster convenor role to further support the 3 – 16 curriculum and developing a shared understanding of progression.
- Improve participation of delegates in evaluation of professional learning programmes and events.
- Redevelop professional learning and support for Teaching Assistants across the region.
- Further development of higher-level Welsh language professional learning (gloywi iaith).
- Ensure professional learning opportunities are available to support all elements of the Enabling Equity and Excellence document.

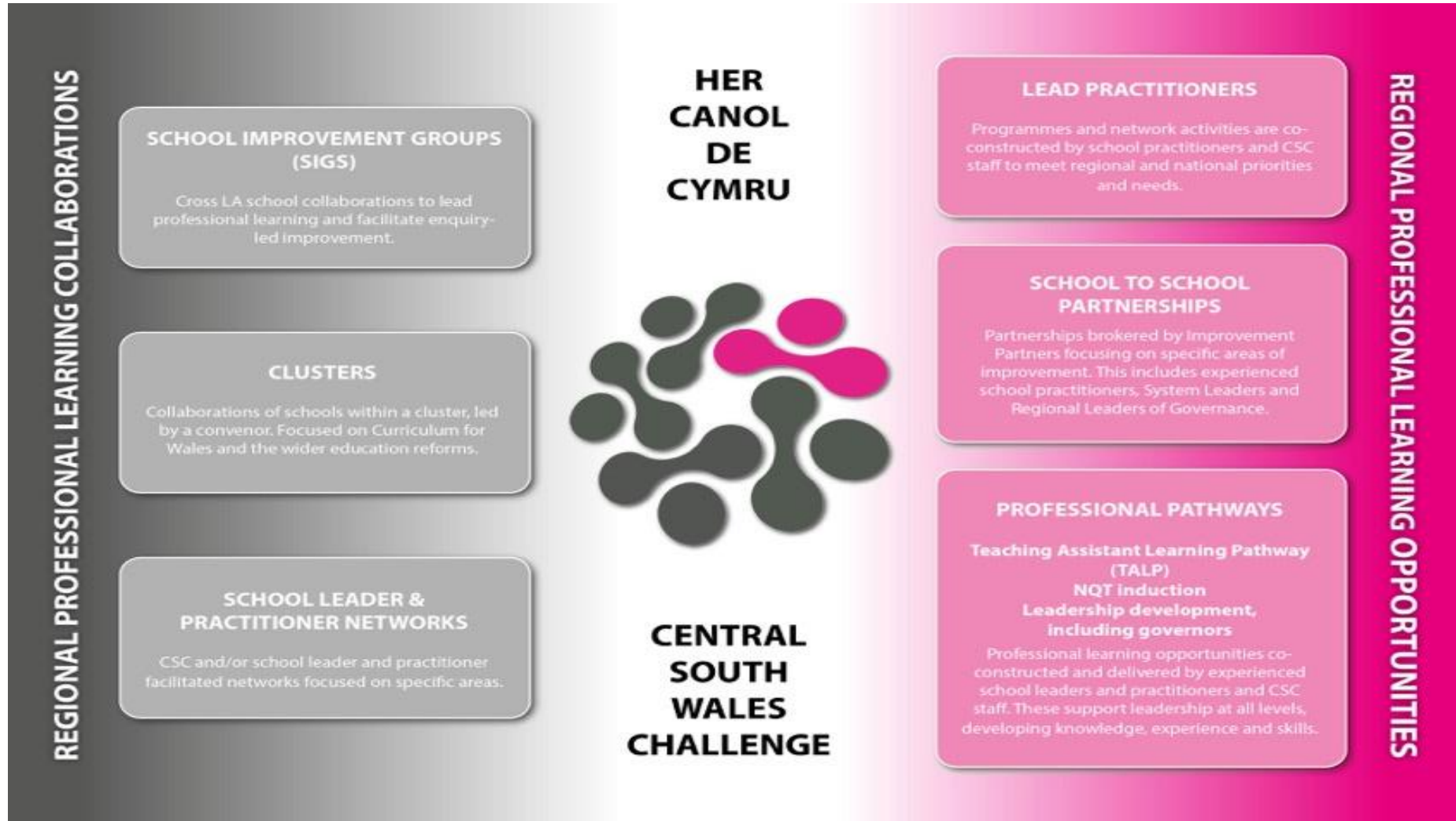
- Further develop professional learning and support for leadership beyond the national pathway programmes.
- Develop and implement a tiered approach to Governor professional learning that builds on knowledge, experiences, and skills.
- Further develop the regional approach for coaching and mentoring.
- Continue to develop reporting on the outcomes of professional learning in school improvement.

12.3 Support for School Improvement

- Continue to evaluate and refine reporting arrangements.
- Continued roll-out of the agreed EEE implementation plan.
- Continue to support schools to develop effective cluster working arrangements.
- Follow up aspects arising from quality assurance processes.
- Widen the profile of CPAG to reduce the impact of poverty across more schools.
- Further embed Welsh as part of school improvement conversations.

Appendix A

Central South Wales Challenge 2022-2023



Appendix B
Bridgend Strategic Priorities 2023-24 CSC Progress Updates

	Area	Expected Outcomes (as provided by the LA)	Delivery requirements (Proposed by the LA)	Evaluation of Progress of CSC activity to support LA Priorities (April 2023 – October 2023) Extracts taken from CSC operational plans following impact review meetings in October 2023	Next Steps
T1	Pupil and staff wellbeing: <u>To support the wellbeing of pupils and staff in all schools across the local authority.</u>	Pupil attendance rates improve. Staff absence rates decrease.	Ensure wellbeing remains a high priority for all staff, promote work-life balance and reduce external pressures on staff.	Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and Well-being leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions. CSC lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups taking an active role in the Bridgend task and finish group looking at attendance. This has led to the development of a attendance campaign in Bridgend LA.	Discuss the way forward with Lead Director and LAs.
		Our ability to recruit and retain staff, especially in targeted areas, improves.	Provide effective professional learning for all school-based staff to support them in their professional development.	Strong progress has been made in the development of professional learning and networking opportunities to develop the Health & Well-being curriculum. Bespoke support is available to schools on request. A comprehensive offer informed by partnership working with schools and wider	Continue to support schools as required and develop ongoing PL opportunities in response to emerging needs.

			<p>stakeholders, is available to support schools to develop their curriculum in all areas.</p> <p>All PL is evaluated using the Kirkpatrick model which informs future planning.</p> <p>Nearly all schools completing an evaluation report that it will develop their practice/behaviour.</p>	
		Promote the Raising Attainment for Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) Programme and share practice.	<p>PDG funding not approved by directors; as a result, RADY work will not take place this financial year.</p> <p>Thinking Differently resources continue to be available for schools, staff (school / CSC / Bridgend LA officers).</p>	<p>Discuss the way forward with Lead Director and LAs.</p> <p>Gather impact of RADY programme in targeted schools during autumn term.</p>
		Support an effective whole-school support model for emotional and mental wellbeing.	<p>Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and well-being leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions.</p> <p>CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups taking an active role in the Bridgend task and finish group looking at</p>	

			attendance. This has led to the development of an attendance campaign in Bridgend LA. Regional professional learning event held for governors on the Whole School Approach; two governors from Bridgend in attendance.	
		Work in partnership with the local authority to support senior leader recruitment and safe recruitment practice.	CSC framework for improvement will be published in early Autumn term.	
		Monitor the progress and impact of school wellbeing strategic priorities through review of evidence.	Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and Well-being Leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions. Improvement Partners continue to have a regular focus on well-being, attendance and exclusions, regularly supported by LA Principal Improvement Partner for Bridgend. Regional professional learning event held for governors on the Whole School Approach; two governors from Bridgend in attendance.	Examples of appreciate inquiry / good practice to be identified and shared.

			Work in partnership with school senior leaders to support their wellbeing.	Where appropriate, Improvement Partners have held discussions with senior leaders.	
			Signpost support for staff or pupils as appropriate.	Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and Well-being Leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions. Improvement Partners continue to have a regular focus on well-being, attendance and exclusions, regularly supported by LA Principal Improvement Partner for Bridgend.	
T2	Support for pupil behaviour, attendance and exclusions:	Reduction pupil (fixed-term and permanent) exclusions. An improvement in pupil attendance. An enhanced strategy to support parents and families is established	Continue to provide a high-quality professional learning programme for all school-based staff.	Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and well-being Leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions. Improvement Partners continue to have a regular focus on well-being, attendance and exclusions, regularly supported by LA Principal Improvement Partner for Bridgend.	
			Monitor the behaviour of pupils in partnership with school leaders through the	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	
	<u>The development of effective strategies and practice to support pupil behaviour, attendance</u>				

	and exclusions across all schools in the local authority.		agreed joint monitoring activities.		
			Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives on behaviour and attendance if appropriate through review of evidence.	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	
			Share effective practice or professional learning as identified.	Regular regional meetings continue to take place involving LA Attendance, Exclusion and well-being Leads with the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups. Strong focus on sharing common challenges and identifying common solutions. Improvement Partners continue to have a regular focus on well-being, attendance and exclusions, regularly supported by LA Principal Improvement Partner for Bridgend.	
T3 Support for vulnerable children and young people:	All schools have an equity plan in place, Swifter support is provided when schools have exhausted all options.	Sharing of best practice in schools (for example, social worker at Brynteg School and family engagement staff at Maesteg School) as appropriate.	An appreciative inquiry has been undertaken during the summer term linked to the Whole School Approach for Mental Health and Well-being. Findings collated in a report and disseminated via school and LA.	CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups will work with LAs to identify practice worth sharing.	

<p><u>To ensure all vulnerable children and young people receive the right support and are able to maximise their potential in schools in Bridgend.</u></p>	<p>Support for parents of vulnerable children is improved.</p> <p>Support workers are linked to a cluster and based in a school.</p>	<p>Develop participation of vulnerable learners.</p>	<p>Key messages regarding equity project shared by Managing Director with all staff during CSC Professional Learning and Development programme. As a result, all staff have a developing understanding of the importance and expectations of this work.</p> <p>Session on Equity, Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and Poverty disseminated to all school facing staff during the CSC professional learning and development week.</p> <p>Comprehensive bank of resources shared with all school facing staff to support their engagement with schools.</p> <p>Session delivered on Equity and Excellence as part of the Governor Accreditation Programme to many improvement partners. Consequently, staff are increasingly engaging with the fundamentals of Equity and Excellence.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with stakeholders across the organisations to amend programmes and to highlight how Equity and Excellence can be embedded in all professional learning programmes.</p>	<p>Continue to develop this work as part of the Equity and excellence project brief.</p>
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				Principal Improvement Partner for Bridgend contributing to a Headteacher session on the requirements of the PDG; this has resulted in raising awareness of headteachers of requirements.	
			Promote the Raising Attainment for Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY) Programme and share effective practice.	<p>PDG funding approved by directors; as a result, support for RADY work will continue with four schools receiving support.</p> <p>Thinking Differently resources continue to be available for schools, staff (school / CSC / Bridgend LA officers).</p>	Discuss the way forward with Lead Director and LAs.
			In partnership with school leaders monitor the progress and standards of vulnerable learners.	<p>Findings of discussions between Improvement Partners and schools on the use and impact of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) collated for 2022-23. Regional PDG evaluation presented to Welsh Government with a visit to a CSC school to exemplify effective practice. One LA report developed and disseminated with others in draft format.</p> <p>Professional learning sessions delivered for all CSC school facing staff on terms of conditions and expectations of PDG grant for 2023-24. Comprehensive bank of resources also shared to support engagement and</p>	<p>Finalise and disseminate LA PDG impact reports.</p> <p>Continue to support the effective use of PDG in schools - Improvement Partners and Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups.</p>

			<p>discussions between Improvement Partners and schools.</p> <p>Bespoke support ongoing by the CSC Lead for Well-being and Vulnerable Groups with six schools across the region, including Brynteg Comprehensive.</p> <p>Key messages about the PDG and Poverty shared at the Aspiring Headteachers Conference in July 2023. Attendance from five Bridgend Schools: Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd, Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sger, Brynteg School, Heronsbridge Special School and Faldau Primary.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions held between Improvement Partners and school leaders on progress of vulnerable leaders. Evaluation of progress shared with Bridgend LA in September 2023.</p>	
		<p>Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives for vulnerable children and young people if appropriate through review of evidence.</p>	<p>During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.</p>	

T4	Support for pupils with ALN: <u>To ensure all pupils with ALN receive the right support and are able to maximise their potential in schools in Bridgend.</u> <u>All schools in the local authority successfully implement the Welsh Government ALN reforms.</u>	An effective local authority ALN Strategy, bespoke to Bridgend, which has been co-constructed, clearly communicated and understood by all, is in place.	Work with schools to implement the local authority vision for ALN, ALN strategy and ALN behaviour strategy as appropriate to individual schools.		
		Clear evaluative processes are present in all schools.	Further share effective practice across schools.		
		A quality assurance protocol of ALN practice in schools is established.	In partnership with school leaders monitor the progress and standards of pupils with ALN as appropriate.	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	
		An improvement in the recruitment and retention of school ALNCo. Seamless process of transition between childhood and adulthood.	Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives for pupils with ALN if appropriate and the development of the provision through review of evidence.	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	
T5		All schools and the local authority have a	Continue to support the successful implementation	A comprehensive offer is available to all schools to support the development of	

<p>Curriculum for Wales & assessment:</p> <p>All schools in the local authority successfully implement the Curriculum for Wales and develop a shared understanding of progression across the continuum.</p>	uniform, shared understanding of progression.	of the Curriculum for Wales in all Bridgend schools.	curriculum, teaching and assessment . Bespoke support is available to schools, clusters and groups of schools to develop a shared understanding of progression.	
		Further develop cluster collaboration.	Bespoke support is available to all clusters and groups of schools across the authority. Cluster convenors receive funding to support the development of the cluster priorities. All schools across the region receive collaboration funding to work together on identified priorities.	
		Provide more opportunities for schools and local authorities to share effective practice.	Schools to share effective practice through cluster and regional networks as practice identified.	
		Provide high-quality professional learning for all staff.	A comprehensive offer is available to all schools to support the development of curriculum, teaching and assessment . Bespoke support is available to schools, clusters and groups of schools to develop a shared understanding of progression.	
		Ensure pupils are prepared for new qualifications	CSC teams support the development of Made for Wales GCSEs. The information is shared via regional networks. CSC works closely with Qualifications Wales and WJEC to support	

			qualifications reform and regularly communicate updates to all schools through the CSC school bulletin.	
		Ensure school curriculum includes local and Welsh history and culture and Black, Asian and minority ethnic history and culture.	PL, support and guidance is available to all schools in relation to diversity in the curriculum.	
		Implement the Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability Framework.	CSC Framework for improvement will be published in early Autumn Term.	
		Support the establishment of 'Areas of learning and experience' working groups to support high-quality teaching and learning for the delivery of the curriculum.	CSC regional networks provide opportunities for practitioners within Bridgend to network with colleagues from across the region. 44 Bridgend schools engaged in regional network opportunities between April – October 2023. CSC funded collaboration projects support practitioners to focus on the development of PL and guidance for specific priority areas. The outcome of the projects is shared with schools across the region.	
		Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives for curriculum for Wales and assessment	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	

			through review of evidence.		
T6 High-quality teaching & learning: All pupils receive high quality teaching that improves outcomes for all pupils.	Develop and adopt 'The Bridgend Way' (a document that outlines the principles, priorities, and expectations of effective pedagogy in Bridgend schools) across all settings and service areas.	Continue to share effective practice.	Schools sharing practice is integral to CSC PL and networking opportunities		
		Continue to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities.	Regional PL and networking opportunities are summarised in the recent PL compendium publication		
		Support increased collaboration involving Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE) Leads.	CSC regional networks provide opportunities for practitioners within Bridgend to network with colleagues from across the region. CSC funded collaboration projects support practitioners to focus on the development of PL and guidance for specific priority areas. The outcome of the projects is shared with schools across the region.		
		Support the development of more effective support mechanisms for new/acting headteachers/deputy headteachers.	Senior leaders continue to be supported by an allocated leadership coach in SLDP and New and Acting programmes.		
		Provide a development programme for learning support staff at all levels.	Senior leaders continue to be supported by an allocated leadership coach in SLDP and New and Acting programmes.		

			Provide high-quality support for self-evaluation and school development planning.	Autumn term discussions with senior leaders will focus on effectiveness of self-evaluation processes and will highlight potential support needs (curriculum and PL team).	
			Support a clear approach to the development of teaching and learning to focus on (for example, differentiation and independence) to avoid overload and 'noise' in the system.	CSC PL, support and guidance for teaching is available to all schools. The Great Teaching Toolkit provides both a synthesis of evidence from authoritative studies, and the findings of this evidence, that teachers can relate to their own experience.	
			Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives for curriculum for Wales and assessment through review of evidence.	Improvement Partners are planning initial Autumn term workstream with Headteachers as highlighted in CSC School Improvement Framework. Improvement Partners held initial discussions relating to school improvement priorities following self-evaluation processes.	
T7	Effective leadership & governance: High quality support to ensure that there is	All school governors have completed statutory training modules. There is a significant reduction in the number	Provide high-quality training opportunities for school governors in respect of the Evaluation, Improvement and Accountability Framework.	Governor Induction, Data and Equity and Excellence modules have been updated taking in professional opinions from a range of stakeholders.	

effective leadership and governance in all schools.	of vacancies on school governing bodies.	Continue to promote governor self-evaluation tool kit.	Governor Induction, Data and Equity and Excellence modules have been updated taking in professional opinions from a range of stakeholders.	
	We see an improvement in the number of schools being judged by Estyn as having effective leadership and governance arrangements in place.	All governing bodies to receive a report biannually to support the work of the governing body and their accountability role.	Report to provide the governing body with appropriate information to support their accountability role. IPs to support the work of the governing	
		Deliver a development programme for learning support officers.	RLGs provide vital support for governing bodies identified by IPs as having greatest need.	
		Support the recruitment of senior leaders and through safe recruitment practices.	IPs continue to support governors in senior recruitment processes.	
		Support the development of more opportunities to develop leaders at various levels within schools and other settings.	Governor Induction, Data and Equity and Excellence modules have been updated taking in professional opinions from a range of stakeholders.	
		Support the development of more effective support mechanisms for new/acting headteachers.	Governor Induction, Data and Equity and Excellence modules have been updated taking in professional opinions from a range of stakeholders.	

		Provide high-quality support for self-evaluation and school development planning.	IPs work in partnership with school senior leaders to take part in self-evaluation activity. The regional toolkit for school development planning is shared with all schools. IPs work with senior leaders to ensure strategic priorities are accurate and reflect school self-evaluation evidence.	
		Continue to provide a high quality professional learning programme to support staff as they move through the leadership pathway.	Governor Induction, Data and Equity and Excellence modules have been updated taking in professional opinions from a range of stakeholders.	
		All schools to have an improvement partner to support school leaders and governing bodies, and complete strategic planning and self-evaluation in partnership.	During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.	
		Monitor the progress and impact of school strategic objectives for curriculum for Wales and assessment through review of evidence.	Improvement Partners are planning initial Autumn term workstream with Headteachers as highlighted in CSC School Improvement Framework. Improvement Partners held initial discussions relating to school improvement priorities following self-evaluation processes.	

Estyn Recommendations	Evaluation of Progress				
<p>R1 Raise standards of literacy in primary schools</p> <p>Where appropriate, schools work with their IP to develop action plans to develop literacy provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Appropriate support is identified/brokered for schools to support their strategic plans for literacy.</u> 	<p>CSC PL supports schools to provide a curriculum that enables learners to be confident and critical receivers of language, through listening and reading, and effective producers of language, in speech and writing, which they can apply across all Areas.</p> <p><u>Whole school approach to oracy and reading</u></p> <p>Engagement with the Welsh Government whole school approach to oracy and reading is strong. 50 schools engaged with regional asynchronous PL for reading, with an additional 21 attending a synchronous PL programme for reading and pedagogy. 16 schools engaged with asynchronous PL offer for oracy, while nine attended oracy and 22 schools participated in the regionally funded oracy project. Networks and online communities provide the vehicle for sharing the national toolkit and effective practice.</p> <p>The summer term 2023 networks focused on reading, and three schools explored how they had used the toolkit to develop a whole school bilingual approach to reading. An additional 13 schools shared case studies on areas such as: disciplinary reading; reading for pleasure; self-evaluation and improvement planning for reading and whole school shared reading approaches. Book Trust Cymru also supported this network and focused on reading for pleasure and developing a reading culture across the school community.</p> <p><i>Bridgend schools' engagement in English Literacy PL opportunities April 2023- October 2023</i></p>				
		Regional PL (excl. networks)	Regional Networks	Regional Funded Projects	Bespoke
Practitioners		39	19	20	
Schools		22	14	19	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Quality of literacy provision and progress of learners is monitored in partnership with IPs.</u> • <u>A high quality professional learning programme to be provided for all schools to support the development of literacy.</u> 	<p>The autumn 2023 networks focused on oracy, with schools sharing case studies on areas such as: integrated approaches to oracy and reading, progression in oracy across a cluster and effective oracy provision.</p> <p>Evaluation data indicates that many participants (81%) intend to share their PL with colleagues, and 59% state their intention to discuss PL with senior leaders in their schools. Many participants (89%) anticipated the PL would have an impact on learners in their setting, while a majority of participants (63%) felt the PL would have a significant impact on learners in their setting.</p> <p>As part of Summer term visits, Improvement Partners have supported the development of draft SDPs and self-evaluation processes.</p> <p>Where need has been identified, brokered support has been planned for, delivered and evaluated.</p> <p>During Autumn term visits, Improvement Partners will work alongside school leaders to plan and stress test self-evaluation activities.</p>
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R2	<p>Improve outcomes for post-16 learners in sixth forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>LA will implement the Post-16 Improvement Plan with our network groups and in liaison with the CSC Post-16 Strategic Lead.</u> 	<p>PL and bespoke support continue to be available to all schools with sixth forms across the region. Through funded project work, collaborating schools have reported successful improvements in relation to the implementation of VESPA approaches to improve self-regulation and metacognition strategies and support learner progress and attainment. Bilingual resources have been developed via the project work to support all schools across Wales accessing the VESPA platform. Planning for learner well-being has been supported through the inclusion of the Mental Health UK Bloom project.</p> <p>The Post-16 leaders network continues to be well-attended and supports schools' broader awareness of national and regional priorities in the sector. Schools are encouraged to share approaches and effective practice during the sessions.</p> <p>The Welsh Baccalaureate/Skills Challenge Certificate network meetings were available for all qualification levels. WJEC regional support officers attend CSC meetings to share updates and resources, and support qualification reform. Schools could access bespoke support as needed through the appointed CSC Welsh Baccalaureate/Skills Challenge Certificate lead practitioner.</p> <p>To support in-year monitoring and tracking processes at post-16, 2 schools from Bridgend engaged with the free Alps Connect training for Heads of Sixth Form and Senior Leadership Teams which was delivered in the summer term by Alps Consultants. In addition, and in conjunction with the School Support - Lead Officer Strategic Development (Secondary) at BCBC, Curriculum and ASBW/SCC Leads received training in October to track student progress and evaluate outcomes at post-16. As a result of the first session, a follow up training session will take place at the Bridgend Welsh Baccalaureate (SCC/ASBW) Network meeting in December.</p> <p>The Post-16 Education: Newly Qualified Teacher Module (NQT) has been created cross regionally as an optional module for the National NQT induction programme. The module highlights how post-16 education differs from other phases of education, the key priorities for this phase of education and the importance of effective transition (post-16 and post-18) to support learner aspiration and destinations. This is hosted on the Welsh Consortia website.</p> <p>CSC takes a lead role in the cross-regional PL programme. The National Post-16 Leadership Development Programme attracts aspiring, new and established post-16 leaders from across Wales, where 12 CSC school leaders have enrolled for 2023-24, which 2 practitioners from Bridgend schools. A joint Post-16 PL programme has also been developed to reflect national priorities and collaboration across Wales. The first event, related to learner voice and future inspections attracted</p>
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17 CSC schools (2 Bridgend schools), the second event on Welsh Government performance measures attracted 12 CSC schools (1 Bridgend school) and the third event on Using Alps Connect to raise attainment at post-16 attracted 8 CSC schools (2 Bridgend schools).

Bridgend schools' engagement in Post-16 PL opportunities April 2023- October 2023

	Regional Network Meetings	Regional PL Post-16	Regional PL Welsh Bacc	Regional Funded Projects	National PL / Projects
Schools	3 Schools 4 Practitioners	5 Schools 5 Practitioners	Tim: 2 schools (Autumn 1 meeting) 5 schools booked onto Autumn 2 in person meeting	6 Schools 6 Practitioners	2 Practitioners – Leadership programme 3 Practitioners– PL Events

R3	<p>Increase the pace of improvement in schools causing concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Schools in enhanced monitoring receive appropriate levels of support from improvement partner and curriculum and professional learning team.</u> <u>Where appropriate bespoke support is brokered to support the school.</u> 	<p>CSC staff work closely with schools causing concern to identify appropriate focus for support and levels of support, and this is integrated into the appropriate school plan. The progress and impact of the strategic priorities, and the pace of improvement is regularly monitored and reported through the School Improvement Partnership Log and detailed Progress Reports.</p> <p>In 2021/22 there were 4 schools in enhanced monitoring for at least part of the year. As a result of the support and challenge, many schools continued to make good progress against a very challenging context. Schools causing concern are well-supported and many schools make strong or better progress against many of the strategic priorities or recommendations.</p> <p>During this academic year 2022/23, Estyn have visited 4 out of the 7 schools in enhanced monitoring. One school has been placed in Estyn Review, and another school that was in Estyn Review deemed to have made sufficient progress.</p> <p>All schools in need of additional / high level of support have been identified as enhanced support with progress reviews taking place.</p> <p>Schools requiring additional support have been identified with appropriate PL brokered.</p> <p>Processes have been reviewed and aligned within CSC School Improvement Framework.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>The progress of schools is monitored regularly.</u>• <u>At least termly progress meeting is held to review progress of the school against the agreed priorities and identify next steps.</u>• <u>At least termly progress report is compiled in conjunction with the local authority.</u>	
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R4 Strengthen the role of the Welsh Education Strategic Forum to ensure timely progress in delivering the priorities identified in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	CSC is a key partner in Bridgend's Welsh in Education Strategic Forum.
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