To: Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

Report on the impact of the project to accelerate pupil progress in four schools

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update members on the process and outcomes related to the implementation of Accelerated Improvement Plans (AIP) in four schools. In addition to provide information on how AIPs will be implemented in other schools categorised as either Category C or Category D

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 The Local Authority (LA) has a statutory role in monitoring the quality of education provision and standards of performance in all schools and LA maintained learning settings. In addition the LA is required to provide support in inverse proportion to success.

LAs have a responsibility to demonstrate that they;
- know schools well in order to make accurate judgements about their progress;
- identify, celebrate and disseminate effective practice;
- challenge and support all schools to improve;
- target challenge and support to secure improvement in schools where the need is greatest;
- identify needs and intervene as early as possible; and
- use statutory intervention powers where this is necessary

Cross cutting themes
The drive for school improvement in Merthyr Tydfil CBC is underpinned by key themes i.e. Improving leadership and teaching through
- Increased accountability
- Capacity building
- Effective use of information
- Collaboration
**Key Strategies**
The key strategies to deliver school improvement through these themes are:

1. **Basic Skills Strategy** to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy
2. Targeting additional **challenge, support and intervention** in identified schools through the categorisation process in conjunction with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES)
3. Facilitating **school-to-school support** in order to accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and leadership

**1.2 Basic Skills Strategy**

In order to raise standards in basic skills funding was allocated to schools for a Basic Skills Manager (BSM) in every school to drive improvements. The focus is to build capacity by improving the leadership skills including action planning, data analysis and evaluating impact. Training has also been provided for the implementation of a range of specific literacy and maths interventions including Read Write Inc, and Big Maths. The schools are held to account through the collation of termly data across all schools which will be shared with all schools at school level to make more effective use of the information. A key element in the strategy is the development of collaboration between schools through best practice meetings.

**1.3 Targeting additional challenge, support and intervention in identified schools**

In schools which have been identified as needing external support to accelerate pupil progress

- The precise focus for school improvement is established
- An **Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP)** is developed between the school and the LA to address issues identified
- The support needed to accelerate this process is brokered – the team around the school
- Regular progress checks take place to ensure rapid progress against outcomes agreed

**1.4 Accelerated Improvement Plan**

The purpose of an AIP is to ensure

- The key priorities for improvement are identified
- The targeted support is precisely matched to the needs of the school
- There are measurable outcomes which are sufficiently ambitious i.e. for accelerated progress
- The actions to bring about rapid improvement are planned for one term instead of a year
- Schools and CSCJES are held to account for bringing about the improvements

In September 2013 four schools were selected to pilot ways of bringing about accelerated improvements in outcomes for pupils through an AIP and using different models of support:

- Bedlinog Primary School – In a soft federation with Trelewis Primary School to develop leadership capacity and external support from CSCJES for underachieving pupils
• Edwardsville Primary School – External support from CSCJES focusing on vulnerable groups of pupils
• Afton Taf High– External support from CSCJES for underachieving pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4
• Pen Y Dre High – School-to-school support from Bishop Gore Comprehensive School to improve the quality of leadership and management and external support from CSCJES for underachieving pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4

2.0 OUTCOMES

2.1 Progress was monitored throughout the autumn term by the schools, CSCJES and the LA. Evaluations against the measurable outcomes were made at the end of November 2013.

2.2 Overall impact

Accelerated progress by pupils is evident in all four schools. Nearly all targeted pupils made rapid gains in two to three months. For example

• The average gain in pupils’ maths ages in Bedlinog Primary School was between 12 and 36 months in three months
• The average gain in the pupils’ reading ages in Edwardsville Primary School was at least 10 months in two months
• In Afon Taf High School and Pen Y Dre High School the average gain in maths ages for pupils in years 7 and 8 was between 14 months and 20 months in three months

Please refer to Appendix one for the data on accelerated progress in each school.

AIPs supported the process because of the sharp focus on actions to bring about rapid improvement against measurable outcomes in one term. The successful impact of the interventions has been as a result of both the specific programmes in each school and also the commitment of the head teachers and staff to achieve rapid improvements. The partnership between Bedlinog Primary School and Trelewis Primary School has been successful because the head teachers have worked together to develop as well as share good practice across both schools.

Joint working practices with consortium personnel have improved. This has enabled support to be targeted appropriately and bring about a common understanding and approach to support and challenge in schools.

2.3 Next steps

• AIPs are being implemented in schools in category C and D unless they have recently had an Estyn inspection and are required to have a Post Inspection Action plan. Progress against targets set is monitored regularly by System Leaders and through Case Conference Reviews
• The mathematics intervention programme which was very successful in Bedlinog Primary School and Edwardsville Primary School is now being implemented in a further five schools
• All head teachers have been informed about the specific actions taken and the impact so they can identify specific actions they might take to accelerate progress in their own schools
• Three of the four schools will continue to have an AIP and targeted support from CSCJES as they are in category C or D
• A range of models of school-to-school support and partnerships is being developed

2.4 Facilitating school-to-school support in order to accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and leadership

To build on the success of the partnership working in Bedlinog and Trelewis, and on other partnerships between schools across the county, further models of school-to-school support are being developed in conjunction with the CSCJES in the spring term.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no additional financial implications beyond support commissioned from the CSCJES

4.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that

4.1 The Schools’ Department updates the Scrutiny Committee regularly on
• Progress against targets set in individual school Accelerated Improvement Plans.
• The impact of school-to-school support across schools in Merthyr Tydfil CBC on improving outcomes for pupils
• The impact of the Basic Skills Strategy on raising attainment in basic skills and on building leadership capacity

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<tr>
<th>BACKGROUND PAPERS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Title of Document(s)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>CSC challenge framework</td>
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Appendix One

| Bedlinog |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| **Baseline and targets** | **Key Actions** | **Impact and evidence** |
| At KS2, standards in writing in books in all curriculum areas are at least commensurate with standards in | School | Targeted pupils in writing |
| | • Worked in partnership with Staff from Trelewis Primary e.g. moderation of writing, BSM coaching | • In Year 3 - 43% have made good progress i.e. one sub-level progress |
| | • Developed distributed leadership structure | • In Year 4 - 47% have made good progress i.e. one sub-level progress |
| | • Implemented a new scheme | • In Year 5 - 76% have made good progress i.e. one sub-level progress |
| | | • In Year 6 - 92% have made good progress |
English books. Identified pupils make good progress i.e. two sub-levels across the year of work for a thematic curriculum to mapped to the LNF. Implemented interventions and progress monthly. Tracked pupils attainment monthly.

**Interventions**
- Catch up literacy
- Fresh Start
- Nippers

**CSC/JES**
- Provided training and guidance for governors
- Provided training and support for Nippers maths intervention
- Provided network support for the school in implementing other interventions to raise standards in basic skills

**Across the school**
Standards in writing in books in all curriculum areas are at least commensurate with standards in English books for most pupils.

**Maths intervention - Nippers**
- Year 3. On average pupils made an increase of 17 months (maths age)
- Year 4. On average pupils made an increase of 16 months (maths age)
- Year 5. On average pupils made an increase of 12 months (maths age)
- Year 6. On average, pupils made an increase of 36 months (maths age)

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**Edwardsville**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Key Actions</th>
<th>Impact and evidence</th>
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</table>
| All targeted pupils make accelerated progress (at least 7 months in 6 months) On average targeted pupils make a ratio gain of 2:1 (i.e. 12 months progress in 6 months). All targeted pupils maintain or increase their standardised score (in line with WG guidance). The proportion of pupils in each year group with a standardised score (SS) of below 85 decreases by at least 20% | School
- Incorporated the AIP into the SIP
- Identified pupils and implemented interventions
- Ensured staff and HLTAs worked together to link learning from interventions was linked to learning in class
- Reinforced learning in interventions through homework and involving parents
- Monitored progress monthly | Reading
- Year 2 – 4/4 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 12 months
- Year 3 - 10/12 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 11 months
- Year 5 - 5/6 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 10 months

**Maths**
- Year 2 – 5/5 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 14 months
- Year 3 - 13/13 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 24 months
- Year 5 – 8/8 pupils have made accelerated progress and the average gain is 22 months.

**Across the school**
The school reports positive impact on pupils’ confidence, self-esteem, concentration and enjoyment of learning. This has resulted in a greater willingness to persevere and be successful.
- Provided support for the SENCo.
- Provided tools for the school to use e.g. early identification of language needs, miscue analysis.

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<tr>
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<th>Key Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7 and 8 targets</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Pupils in need of different levels of additional support correctly identified. (RAG) – provision map</td>
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<td>Continued with planned actions using capacity within the school as well as implementing the actions and interventions from the external support</td>
<td>Half termly assessments in literacy and numeracy have produced the following results.</td>
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<td>LA</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
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<td>Coach provided support for the leadership team</td>
<td>Year 7, 12/12 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 51 months.</td>
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<td>CSC/JES</td>
<td>Year 8, 13/14 pupils have made accelerated progress, 12/14 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 16 months.</td>
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<td>• Support for BSMs in improving standards of literacy and numeracy at KS3 from the CSC/JES’s targeted support team in relation to assessment and planning a graduated response.</td>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Training provided for teachers in Numeracy Nailed and LLC organised jointly by LA BSM and CSC/JES.</td>
<td>Year 7, 14/16 pupils have made accelerated progress, 13/16 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 20 months.</td>
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<td>• CSC/JES support for subject leaders of English and mathematics to improve pedagogy and standards of attainment at KS4 including the use of item level data to ascertain pupils’ individual strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>Year 8, 16/16 pupils have made accelerated progress and a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 14 months.</td>
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<td>• System Leader monitors the actions undertaken and ensures school assesses attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy each half term and uses the tracking system to record attainment and the provision map to evaluate the impact of current interventions and to carry out any necessary</td>
<td>KS4 English</td>
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<td>• 9/12 pupils producing work of C grade standard, increasing cohort pass rate to 61.8% against AIP target of 62%.</td>
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<td>KS4 Mathematics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• 23/24 pupils now working at a C grade, increasing cohort pass rate to 48.5% against AIP target of 60%.</td>
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Afon Taf

- School
- LA
- CSC/JES
- English 62% (Baseline 2013 - 46%)
- Mathematics 60% (Baseline 2013 - 49%)

Pupils in need of different levels of additional support correctly identified. (RAG) – provision map

Half termly assessments in literacy and numeracy have produced the following results.

**Literacy**
- Year 7, 12/12 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 51 months.
- Year 8, 13/14 pupils have made accelerated progress, 12/14 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 16 months.

**Numeracy**
- Year 7, 14/16 pupils have made accelerated progress, 13/16 pupils have made a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 20 months.
- Year 8, 16/16 pupils have made accelerated progress and a ratio gain of 2:1, average gain 14 months.

**KS4 English**
- 9/12 pupils producing work of C grade standard, increasing cohort pass rate to 61.8% against AIP target of 62%.

**KS4 Mathematics**
- 23/24 pupils now working at a C grade, increasing cohort pass rate to 48.5% against AIP target of 60%.
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<th>Year 7 and 8 targets</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Pen Y Dre</th>
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<tr>
<td>All targeted pupils make accelerated progress (at least 7 months in 6 months)</td>
<td>Head and staff engaged with Bishop Gore as part of the WG lead and emerging practitioner project.</td>
<td>Pupils in need of different levels of additional support correctly identified. (RAG) – provision map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On average targeted pupils make a ratio gain of 2:1 (i.e. 12 months progress in 6 months)</td>
<td>Head teacher provided standards committee with accurate half termly progress data.</td>
<td>Half termly assessments in literacy and numeracy have produced the following results.</td>
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<td>All targeted pupils maintain or increase their standardised score (in line with WG guidance)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Literacy</strong></td>
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<td>The proportion of pupils in each year group with a standardised score (SS) of below 85 has decreased by at least 20%</td>
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<td>• Year 7, 27/38 pupils made accelerated progress, the average ratio gain exceeded 2:1, <strong>average gain 9 months.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>KS4 targets 2014</strong></td>
<td><strong>CSC/JES</strong></td>
<td>• Year 8, 26/36 pupils made accelerated progress, the average ratio gain exceeded 2:1, <strong>average gain 9 months.</strong></td>
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<td>English 48% (provisional) (Baseline 2013 - 40%)</td>
<td>• System leader provided guidance for governing body and initial training for senior and middle leaders on self-evaluation.</td>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics 45% (provisional) (Baseline 2013 - 44%)</td>
<td>• Support for BSMs in improving standards of literacy and numeracy at KS3 from the CSC/JES’s targeted support team in relation to assessment and planning a graduated response.</td>
<td>• Year 7, 20/21 pupils made accelerated progress, the average ratio gain exceeded 2:1, <strong>average gain 20 months.</strong></td>
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<td>• Training provided for teachers in Numeracy Nailed and LLC organise jointly by LA BSM and CSC/JES.</td>
<td>• Year 8, 23/24 pupils made accelerated progress, the average ratio gain exceeded 2:1, <strong>average gain 19 months.</strong></td>
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<td>• CSC/JES support for subject leaders of English and mathematics to improve pedagogy and standards of attainment at KS4 including the use of item level data to ascertain pupils’ individual strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td><strong>KS4 English</strong></td>
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<td>• System Leader monitors the actions undertaken and ensures school assesses attainment and progress in</td>
<td>• 19/28 pupils producing work of C grade standard, increasing <strong>cohort pass rate to 34%</strong> against school target of 48%.</td>
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<td><strong>KS4 Mathematics</strong></td>
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<td>• 6/16 pupils now working at a C grade, increasing <strong>cohort pass rate to 36%</strong> against school target of 45%.</td>
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<td><strong>New staffing structure in place with job descriptions that identify clear roles and responsibilities.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Self-evaluation processes including data analysis and the gathering of first hand evidence is improving.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Governors have a clear idea of the school’s strengths, shortcomings and risks from the data and other relevant information.</strong></td>
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<td>literacy and numeracy each half term and uses the tracking system to record attainment and the provision map to evaluate the impact of current interventions and to carry out any necessary revisions.</td>
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