

# **‘Raising Aspirations, Raising Standards’ – Working in Partnership with Central South Consortium**

## **Introduction**

Central South Consortium (CSC) is the school improvement partner for all schools in Merthyr Tydfil. We are fully committed in supporting the Local Authority in achieving the goals that have been set out in the ‘Raising Aspirations, Raising Standards’ (RARS) strategy. The Local Authority requested CSC to identify how it will support the commitments and actions pledged in the RARS strategy. We have therefore, put together a plan which outlines the support that CSC will provide to schools as a key partner. We recognise that well-being, inclusion of all learners, developing the workforce and high quality teaching is integral to the plan in terms of post pandemic recovery and sustainable, longer term aspirations for learners.

## **Our Approach**

This document contains a high level overview outlining the significant support CSC will deliver over three years in order to contribute to the Local Authority’s success in delivering its RARS strategy. Alongside this document are more detailed CSC strategic improvement plans. These will be developed by strategic advisors in conjunction with school leaders and improvement partners.

The plan supports the development of the Curriculum for Wales. The plan creates a platform for school leaders to work together in a positive collaboration for the benefit of all pupils in Merthyr following the principles of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) ‘Schools as Learning Organisations’ model. These are:

- Developing and sharing a vision centred on the learning of all students
- Creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff
- Promoting team learning and collaboration among all staff
- Establishing a culture of inquiry, innovation and exploration
- Embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning
- Learning with and from the external environment and larger learning system
- Modelling and growing learning leadership.

The solutions to raising standards across the schools involved can be found within Merthyr Tydfil schools. Fostering collaboration amongst leaders across the schools will improve the sharing of good practice so that schools will be able to support each other effectively. In essence, the strengths and effective skills set exhibited by one school could be shared with another school to address its own improvement priorities. This plan will allow CSC to work with schools to unlock the expertise, share good practices that will impact positively on raising standards and find a local solution to ensuring excellence across Merthyr schools.

In this plan we set out:

- CSC key areas of focus
- Why Merthyr Schools will be better places because of their involvement in this plan
- What we will deliver and when
- Impact on outcomes
- Evaluation
- Associated risks

This year more than ever, plans may need to adapt and change to deal with the high level of uncertainty which faces us due to Covid 19. We also need to be mindful that all timescales in the plan are provisional until the plan is shared with Headteachers by the Local Authority.

**Our focus is to:**

- Empower Headteachers and Senior Leaders to robustly lead and manage school improvement
- Empower school leaders and practitioners to confidently plan for and implement curriculum reform
- Empower Governing Bodies to robustly lead and manage school improvement
- Empower middle leaders to know, understand and enact their role in securing school improvement
- Improve standards of teaching and assessment
- Improve provision and standards of literacy, numeracy and digital competency

## **Why Merthyr Tydfil Schools will be better places because of their involvement in this plan:**

**Learner outcomes will improve and that these improvements are sustainable over time giving Merthyr students the opportunity to access further education, training and employment opportunities.**

- Successfully embedding the principles of the OECD ‘Schools as Learning Organisations’.
- Excellent standards of leadership (including governance) across the borough in all settings
- Collaborative professionalism
- Equity for all learners
- Clear lines of communication between schools and stakeholders
- Schools are fully prepared and teachers are confident in delivering Curriculum for Wales
- A curriculum which addresses local and national need
- Authentic learning experiences and enrichment activities that raise learners’ aspirations
- High quality professional learning to provide a highly skilled workforce across the borough
- A common understanding of the improvement journey of all learners and how we collaboratively signpost them to success
- Multi agency approach – sharing of knowledge and information in the system to best support children
- Excellent quality first teaching in all settings
- All children have a quality learning experience which meets their needs
- Bespoke individual learning pathways
- Effective and seamless transition arrangements for learners

## Strategic Objectives:

Over the lifetime of the plan CSC support will focus on:

1. Improving leadership at all levels across the system to ensure schools can implement and manage change
2. Ensuring all schools are ready to implement Curriculum for Wales from 2022
3. Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure at consistently good teaching across every year and subject
4. Improve literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that all learners have the foundations in place to make effective progress

## In year 1 the focus will be:

- **Improving leadership across the system with a particular focus on secondary schools and school governance**
- **Curriculum Reform – all schools**
- **Developing teaching and learning**
- **Improving provision and standards in literacy – Oracy focus**

## Objective 1 – Improving leadership at all levels across the system to ensure schools can implement and manage change

<b>Focus:</b>	Leadership – Senior leaders	<b>Participating schools:</b>	High schools & PRU	<b>LA Lead:</b>	Sue Walker
				<b>CSC Lead:</b>	Vaughan Davies
Objectives	Success criteria	Actions	Monitoring and evaluation		
<b>Empower Headteachers and Senior Leaders lead effective schools that have aspirational targets for all pupils</b>	<p>School vision and aims clearly understood and realised by the wider school community</p> <p>Leadership when externally evaluated is at least good.</p> <p>Robust school self-evaluation and improvement planning leading to measurable impact on improved standards</p> <p>Leadership posts filled</p>	<p>2 days PL on ‘Inspirational Leadership’ with Ten Development 22<sup>nd</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 plus follow up day Nov 2020 on ‘Managing change’ and ‘Building teams’ with Ten Development</p> <p>Remainder of SLT plus heads of core subjects from each school Nov 2020, 2 days PL on ‘Inspirational Leadership’ with ‘Ten Development’</p>	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model shows that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>Schools monitoring &amp; evaluation systems demonstrate pupils are making progress towards targets</p>		

<b>Focus:</b>	Leadership – middle leaders	<b>Participating schools:</b>	High schools & PRU	<b>LA lead:</b> <b>CSC Lead:</b>	Anthony Lewis Vaughan Davies
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>		
<b>Middle leaders to know, understand and enact their role raising and sustaining standards</b>	<p>Defined departmental vision, aims and goals</p> <p>Clear understanding of their role and responsibilities</p> <p>Knowledge and skills to hold staff to account for provision and standards</p> <p>Robust self-evaluation used to inform improvement planning</p>	<p>2 days PL on ‘Inspirational Leadership’ with Ten Development Nov 2020</p> <p>CSC to design and deliver bespoke national accredited middle leaders programme for 3 x core subject HODs.</p> <p>Programme consists of 10 x 2hr facilitated sessions with playlists (tasks and pre-reading) to complete in between.</p> <p>School HT/SLT act as coaches for the participants and also participate in the PL programme as facilitators of activities.</p> <p>HODs to enact the PL from the programme – during and after, embedding what is learnt.</p> <p>HT/SLT to support with school based practice.</p>	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>Headteacher/SLT monitoring and evaluation of impact on provision on standards through schools’ MER processes - supported by IP and CSC strategic team, this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle leaders Self Evaluation documents</li> <li>• Pupil progress data and evidence of interventions and effective hybrid learning</li> </ul>		

<b>Focus:</b>	Leadership – Governors	<b>Participating schools:</b>	All schools and PRU	<b>LA Lead:</b> <b>CSC Lead:</b>	Gary Winston Emma Wilmott
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>		
<b>Developing governing bodies as effective leaders in schools</b>	<p>All governors fully understand their role and responsibilities in securing school improvement</p> <p>School vision and aims clearly understood and realised by governors</p> <p>Bespoke governor Improvement Programme in place to support governors</p>	Merthyr Improving Governance programme established and developed in conjunction with GIGs	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>External evaluation shows governance is effective</p> <p>Governors engaging with the wider school community</p>		

## Objective 2 - Ensuring all schools are ready to implement Curriculum for Wales from 2022

<b>Focus:</b>	<b>Curriculum Reform</b>	<b>Participating schools:</b>	<b>All schools and PRU</b>	<b>LA Lead:</b> <b>CSC Lead:</b>	Sarah Bowen Kathryn Lewis
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Success criteria</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>		
<b>Empower school leaders and practitioners to confidently plan for and implement curriculum reform</b>	<p>All HT, SLT and governors fully understand their role and responsibilities in curriculum reform</p> <p>Schools meet the shared expectations milestones</p> <p>School curriculum vision developed and realised</p> <p>Schools plan and implement a coherent and sequenced curriculum to meet the needs of their learners to embody the four purposes</p>	<p>Schools to engage with CSC Strategy for Equity and Excellence, re: curriculum reform – supported by IP</p> <p>School to engage with shared expectations document to plan and implement Curriculum for Wales in their schools</p> <p>Schools engage with the national and regional PL programme for curriculum reform</p> <p>Schools work effectively within their clusters in curriculum planning and sequences to meet the needs of their learners</p>	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>Headteacher/SLT monitoring and evaluation of impact on provision on standards through schools’ MER processes - supported by IP and CSC strategic team, this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that all shared expectation milestones are met</li> </ul>		



### Objective 3 - Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure at consistently good teaching across every year and subject

<b>Focus:</b>	Teaching & Assessment	<b>Participating schools:</b>	All	<b>LA Lead:</b> <b>CSC Lead:</b>	Jill Watkins Louise Muteham
Objectives	Success criteria	Actions	Monitoring and evaluation		
<b>Improve standards of teaching and assessment</b>	<p>High expectations and challenge for all pupils consistent across the school</p> <p>Aspirational targets set for all pupils</p> <p>Teaching and learning policy agreed, known, understood implemented consistently</p> <p>High quality assessment for learning known, understood implemented consistently</p> <p>Improved outcomes for learners</p>	<p>Schools to engage with CSC Strategy for Equity and Excellence, re: teaching – supported by IP</p> <p>High schools/LRBs and CSC IPs attend IRIS PL and implement to support raising standards of T&amp;L in schools.</p> <p>Cluster working of T&amp;L leads: Engage with CSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PL on teaching models, cognitive science, metacognition, high challenge, enquiry, etc</li> <li>• Schools review current and develop common T&amp;L policy - supported by CSC strategic team</li> <li>• Schools engage with Merthyr College and external partners as appropriate to support PL related to teaching models</li> <li>• Schools review current and develop common AfL provision - supported by CSC strategic team</li> <li>• Schools implement above across their schools and monitor the impact through enquiry approach</li> </ul>	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>Headteacher/SLT monitoring and evaluation of impact on provision on standards through schools' MER processes - supported by IP and CSC strategic team, this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners achieve personal targets and make at least expected progress.</li> <li>• Evidence of learning strategies that meet pupil needs</li> </ul>		

## Objective 4 Improve literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that all learners have the foundations in place to make effective progress

<b>Focus:</b>	Literacy	<b>Participating schools:</b>	All schools & settings	<b>LA Lead:</b> <b>CSC Lead:</b>	Chris Hole Cath Billington-Richards
Objectives	Success criteria	Actions	Monitoring and evaluation		
<b>Improve provision and standards of literacy</b>	<p>Voice 21 oracy development implemented across all Merthyr schools for all staff</p> <p>High expectations and consistent strategies for oracy evident across the school</p> <p>Cluster vision for oracy clearly established. High expectations and consistent strategies for oracy evident across the cluster</p> <p>Robust self-evaluation process used to monitor impact</p> <p>Increased understanding of vocabulary development by</p>	<p><b>V21 strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>V21 leads in each school to complete CSC e-learning module on moving forward with V21</li> <li>4 x 0.5 days group coaching for V21 leads focused on progressing V21 roll out within school. Secondary and primary separate sessions to facilitate specific needs of sector.</li> <li>4 x 0.5 days bespoke cluster working developing a cluster led approach to oracy based on V21 strategies</li> <li><b>Vocabulary development strategy.</b> At least one member of staff from each department/year group, Literacy coordinator and SLT literacy lead to complete CSC-</li> </ul>	<p>Evaluation of PL using Kirkpatrick model that PL is impacting on behaviours across the school</p> <p>Headteacher/SLT monitoring and evaluation of impact on provision and standards through schools' MER processes – supported by IP and CSC strategic team and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear evidence of improvement in vocabulary seen in pupils' books and through discussion</li> <li>Evidence that the vocabulary framework is being used across schools and impacting on learners</li> <li>Teachers make progress in their oracy teaching and show progress from the baseline.</li> </ul>		

	<p>al staff in each curriculum area.</p> <p>School vision and expectations for teaching vocabulary clearly defined. Teaching and learning policy adjusted to reflect this.</p> <p>High expectations and consistent strategies for teaching of vocabulary evident across the school.</p> <p>Cluster vision for the teaching of vocabulary clearly established. High expectations and consistent strategies for the teaching of vocabulary evident across the cluster.</p> <p>Robust self-evaluation process used to monitor impact of the strategy from the base line assessments</p>	<p>e-learning module on vocabulary teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 x 0.5 days group coaching for literacy leads to develop a school wide approach to the teaching of vocabulary. Secondary and primary separate sessions to facilitate specific needs of the sector</li> <li>• 3 x 0.5 x days bespoke cluster working developing a cluster led approach to the teaching of vocabulary</li> </ul>	
--	--	---	--

## What we will deliver and when

The table below sets out our ambitious delivery timescales, these will be amended throughout the year in light of the current situation and school circumstances. It also indicates where there is a measurable output that can be shared with stakeholders, some of the activities will not produce specific outputs but will be essential for delivering other outputs. We have also recognised the continued importance of developing the Welsh language across the schools and will be supporting schools to achieve Cymraeg Campus Bronze Awards throughout the year.

2020 – 2021					
Obj	Focus	Activity	Start Date	Output	Output completion
	Stakeholder buy in	Agree all timescales with headteachers for all elements of the plan	By October half term 2020		
2	Curriculum reform	All Schools to engage with CSC Strategy for Equity and Excellence regarding curriculum reform – supported by their improvement partner which will allow them to design adopt and implement a new curriculum in line with the shared expectations document.	After October half term 2020	Curriculum plans developed	Primary teaching September 2022 Secondary from Sep 2022 rollout
4	Literacy – Oracy	Voice 21 initiative is launched in primary and secondary schools. E-learning modules launched for literacy leads.	After October half term 2020		
4	Literacy - Vocabulary	Work commences on development of Vocabulary Strategy with all schools.	After October half term 2020	Vocabulary Framework developed and shared with all schools	July 2021

3	Teaching and Assessment	CSC Welsh in education officers will support schools throughout the academic year towards verification for Cymraeg Campus.	November 2020	11 additional primary schools and 1 secondary Cymraeg Campus Bronze Award	July 2021
1	Leadership – Senior Leaders	Resume Professional Learning for Senior Leaders ‘Inspirational Leadership, ‘Managing Change’ and ‘Building Teams’ in High Schools and PRU ‘	By the end of November 2020	Evidence of course completion	July 2021
3	Teaching and Assessment	High schools/LRBs and CSC IPs attend IRIS Professional Learning and implement it to support raising standards of teaching and learning in schools.	By the end December 2020		
4	Literacy – Oracy	CSC Voice 21 coaching programme commences with literacy leads in schools.  Base line data set established	By the end of December 2020	Register of trained coaches  Baseline data set at School and LA level	April 2021  July 2021
1	Leadership – Governance	Governors’ professional learning programme for governors of all schools commences.	By the end of January 2020	TBC	July 2021
1	Leadership – Middle Leaders	‘Inspirational Leadership, Building Teams and Managing Change’ programme is launched with heads of core subjects in high schools and PRU.	By the end of January 2020	Evidence of course completion	July 2021

3	Teaching and Assessment	All schools to commence engagement with CSC Strategy for Equity and Excellence regarding teaching and assessment supported by Improvement Partners	By February half term 2021	Teaching and learning strategy in all schools	July 2021
1	Leadership – Middle Leaders	Delivery of bespoke national accredited middle leaders programme for heads of core subjects in high schools and PRU is launched.	By Easter 2021	Evidence that tasks have been completed and impact on the school	July 2021
3	Teaching and Assessment	Cohort 1 - Engagement with Merthyr College begins to support Professional Learning related to effective teaching models (OTP)	By Easter 2021	The output will need to be agreed with the college	
4	Literacy – Oracy	Voice 21 approaches and strategies cascaded in all schools.	By Easter 2021		
4	Literacy – Vocabulary	Literacy champions cascade training in all schools	By Easter 2021	Literacy champions group established	May 2021
	Collaboration – CSC/Schools	CSC and LA officers will in collaboration with schools commence planning the details of activities for the second year of the programme	By Easter 2021	Year 2 plan developed	September 2021
4	Literacy – Oracy & Vocabulary	Monitoring activities commence in all schools to evaluate the impact of training.  Cluster working for oracy approaches begins. Clusters define vision for oracy & vocabulary	By July 2021	Evaluation of the impact of training informs next steps in programme  Cluster vision for oracy clearly established.	June 2021

3	Teaching and Assessment	Cohort 2 - Engagement with Merthyr College begins to support Professional Learning related to effective teaching models	By July 2021	The output will need to be agreed with the college	
---	-------------------------	---	--------------	--	--

## 2021-22 and 2022-23

The approach to delivery in years two and three will contain similar actions as outlined above in year one but will move from the introductory phase through to consolidation and embedded practice by 2022-23. In addition, support for numeracy skills for schools will be introduced in 2021-22 with support for digital competency skills being introduced in 2022-23.

## Impact on Outcomes

### By delivering the actions in the plan CSC believe that:

- Standards will improve across the system and that this is sustainable beyond the life of the strategy. We know this will happen because:
  - All Headteachers, senior leaders, middle leaders and governors will fully understand their role and responsibilities in securing school improvement and have the knowledge and skills to hold staff to account for provision and standards
  - School vision and aims will be clearly understood and realised in all schools
  - Robust school self-evaluation and improvement planning will lead to measurable impact on improved standards.
  - Evidence in pupils' books will show that all pupils will make at least expected progress
  - All Headteachers, senior leaders, middle leaders and governors fully understand their role and responsibilities in curriculum reform
  - Schools will meet the shared expectations milestones of curriculum reform
  - Schools' curriculum vision will be developed and realised in all schools
  - All schools will plan and implement a coherent and sequenced curriculum to meet the needs of their learners to embody the four purposes (in line with the Curriculum for Wales roll out)
  - Cluster working will be embedded and highly effective in self-improving system within Merthyr

- The adaptive capacity model in the CSC Excellence and Equity Strategy will be a key scaffold for improvement conversations with schools to ensure that specific targeted professional learning is appropriately deployed.
- Teaching and learning policies will be agreed, known, understood and implemented consistently by increasing number of practitioners in schools
- High expectations and consistent strategies for literacy, numeracy and digital competency will be evident across all schools
- High quality assessment for learning will be known, understood and implemented consistently by increasing number of practitioners in schools
- High expectations and challenge will exist for all pupils consistent across all schools
- Evidence in pupils' books will show that all pupils will make at least expected progress
- All schools will have achieved at least the Cymraeg Campus Bronze Award

## Evaluation

CSC will regularly evaluate and report the impact of the strategies contained within this plan by:

- Using the Kirkpatrick model
- The Improvement Partners for each school and CSC strategic staff will support headteachers and senior leaders in monitoring and evaluating the impact on provision and standards through the schools' MER processes.

## Associated Risks

- The potential of further disruption to schools and their communities because of the current Covid 19 pandemic
- As schools manage the day to day challenges of Covid this may limit the capacity to implement the plan and may prevent schools working together.
- Professional learning is not taken to scale in each setting and rests with the small cohorts that attend any training.
- An overly uniform approach is taken to teaching and learning that does not take account the context of each school and setting.
- Links between all improvement areas not made explicit leading to pockets of practice rather than overall school improvement.
- Quality of release cover for participating practitioners