

9 October 2012		ITEM 6
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
PROGRESS REPORT ON STANDARDS IN THE EARLY YEARS, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PHASES		
Report of: Cllr O Gerrish, Portfolio Holder – Education and Children's Social Care		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Accountable Head of Service: Carmel Littleton, Head of Learning and Universal Outcomes		
Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Director of People Services		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: to provide an overview of standards across all phases in settings and schools based on national tests and examination results for summer 2012.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the progress towards the achievement of Thurrock's ambition to achieve at least national average in all key stages by 2013. The report shows accelerated progress at foundation stage and key stage one, taking performance to at or above national average. At key stage two, progress over the two years 2010/2012 shows accelerated progress (national average improved by 6%, Thurrock by 8%), with greater progress in narrowing the gap in year one, and a sustained strong improvement trajectory over both years.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

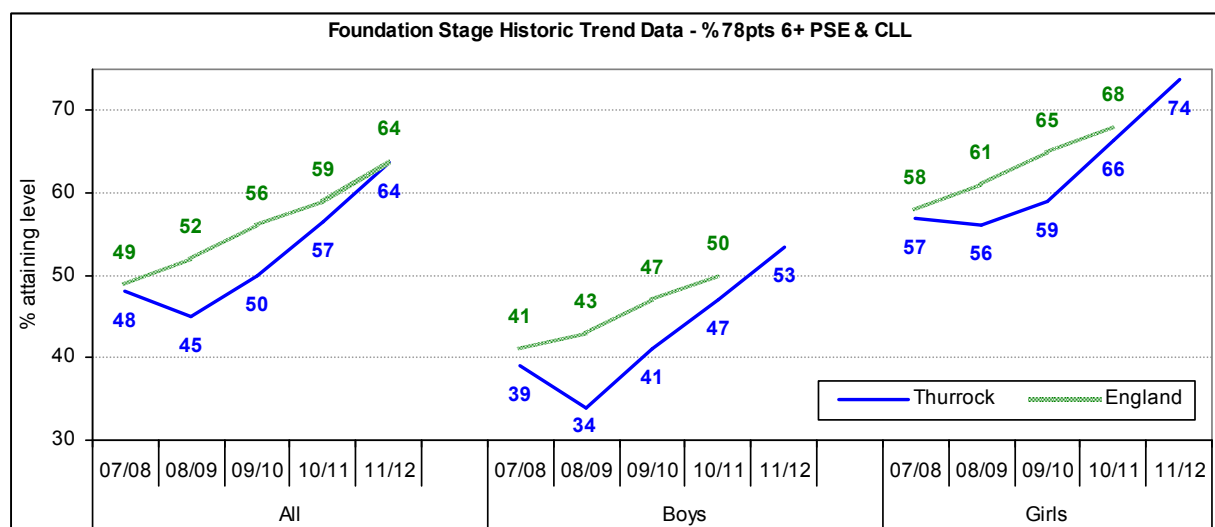
- 1.1 That Overview and Scrutiny note the outcomes of the summer 2012 tests and examinations and**
- 1.2 That Overview and Scrutiny tests the primary school improvement strategy to ensure that the strategy is capable of ensuring standards reach the council target of exceeding national averages by 2013.**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Primary school standards have been, and continue to be, a priority for challenge and support as the local authority strives to ensure that standards in Early Years, at the end of Key Stage One (age 7) and at the end of Key Stage Two (age 11) increase to be in line with national averages within two years.
- 2.2 Through targeted support and close partnership working with settings and schools, the outcomes have shown improvement this year, at Key Stage One in particular.
- 2.3 This report presents an overview of current standards of attainment and progress in all phases of compulsory education based on data from summer 2012. It should be noted that, at this juncture, none of the results is finally validated and minor changes can occur. A report on fully validated results, with detailed analysis of the performance of vulnerable and underperforming groups, will be available in the New Year.

3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

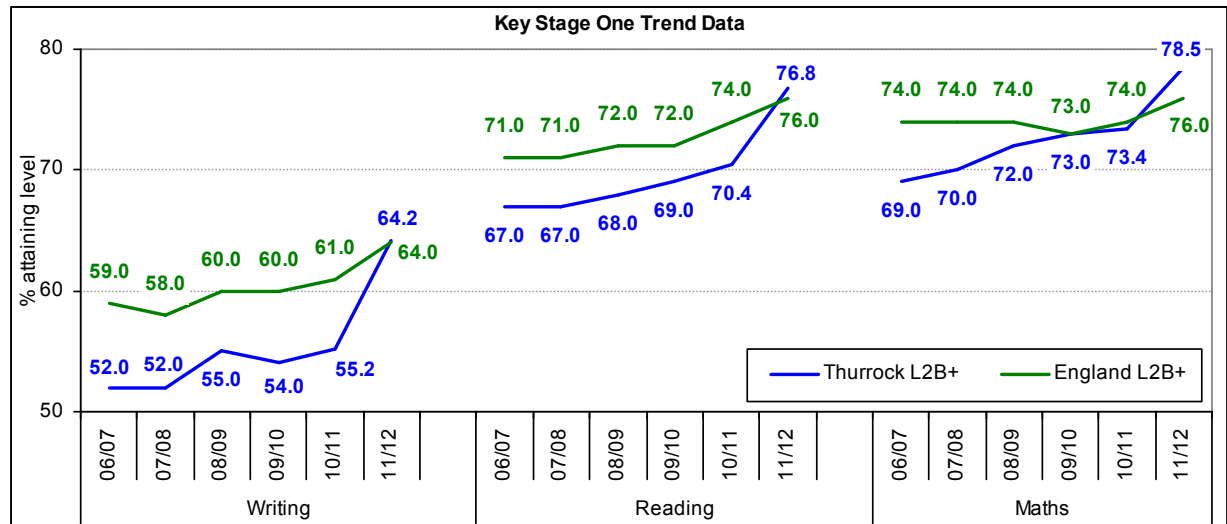
3.1 Early Years and Foundation Stage (age 5)



- 3.1.1 The key national measure by which children’s development is assessed is the number achieving at least 78 points across all 6 areas of learning including at least 6 points in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) and Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSE). This is known as the Foundation Stage Profile.
- 3.1.2 Performance in 2012 has improved across all 6 areas of learning with 8.6 points improvement in CLL and 5.6 in PSE respectively. This brings Thurrock in line with the national average.

3.1.3 The average profile points score has increased both for boys and girls at a similar rate. Across all 6 areas of learning, boys have achieved an average of 84.5 points and girls 89.8.

3.2 Key Stage One (age 7)



3.2.1 At the end of Key Stage One (KS1), children are expected to achieve at least level 2b in reading, writing and maths. Thurrock's performance at KS1 has improved significantly in all three areas from that of 2011 to exceed the national averages in reading and maths with a 9% improvement in writing.

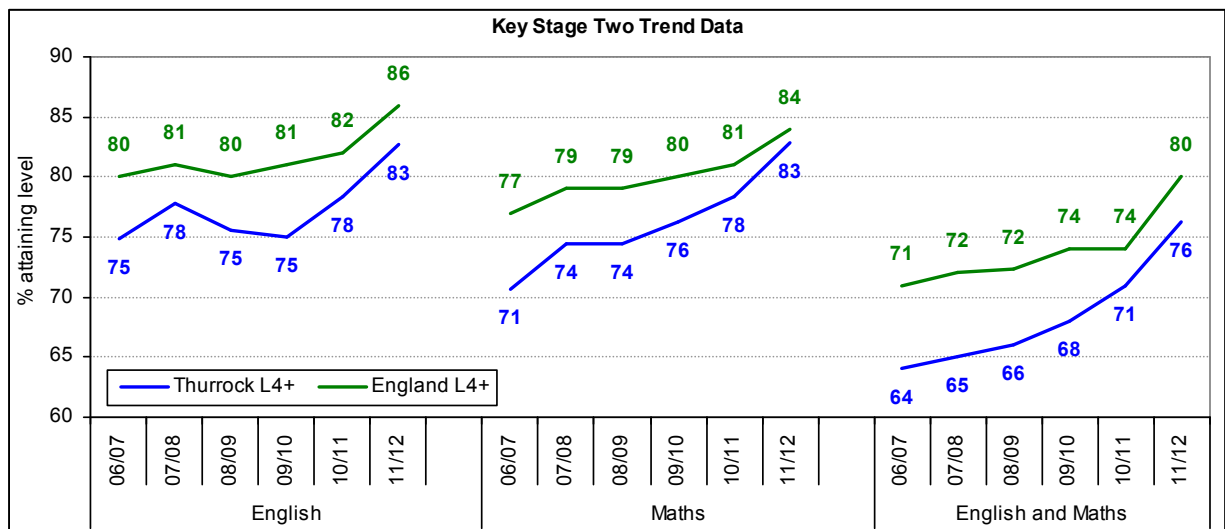
3.2.2 The number of children achieving level 3+ (above expected performance) in reading, writing and maths also increased this year. The greatest improvement was in maths – 6.2% - which narrows the gap with the national average to 3.5%.

3.2.3 These improvements have been underpinned by the local authority's 2011-12 KS1 Strategy. This incorporated targeted support for the schools in Tier 1 and 2, that is those in most need. School Improvement Officers worked in schools and provided training to help teachers shift children's performance from level 2c to 2b+. In addition, they supported staff new to year 2, with moderation and with the teaching of writing. A Local Leader of Education (LLE), headteacher of a local primary school, was commissioned to work with some schools to enhance middle management and subject skills.

3.2.4 The improvement in level 3+ has resulted from a greater focus on raising ambition and expectation and on the steps to making secure progress in the classroom.

3.2.5 This year has seen the introduction of the year 1 test to assess the number of children working to age related expectations in terms of their knowledge and understanding of phonics for reading. Fifty-eight per cent of Thurrock children achieved at this level. To date there is no national comparator.

3.3 Key Stage 2 (age 11)



3.3.1 The national benchmarked standard at the end of Key Stage Two (KS2) is the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above both in English and maths. Thurrock achieved 76.3%, an increase of 5.4%. Again, the gap narrowed more in maths than English but both saw significant improvement. There is still some way, however, to meet the national figure for the combined measure.

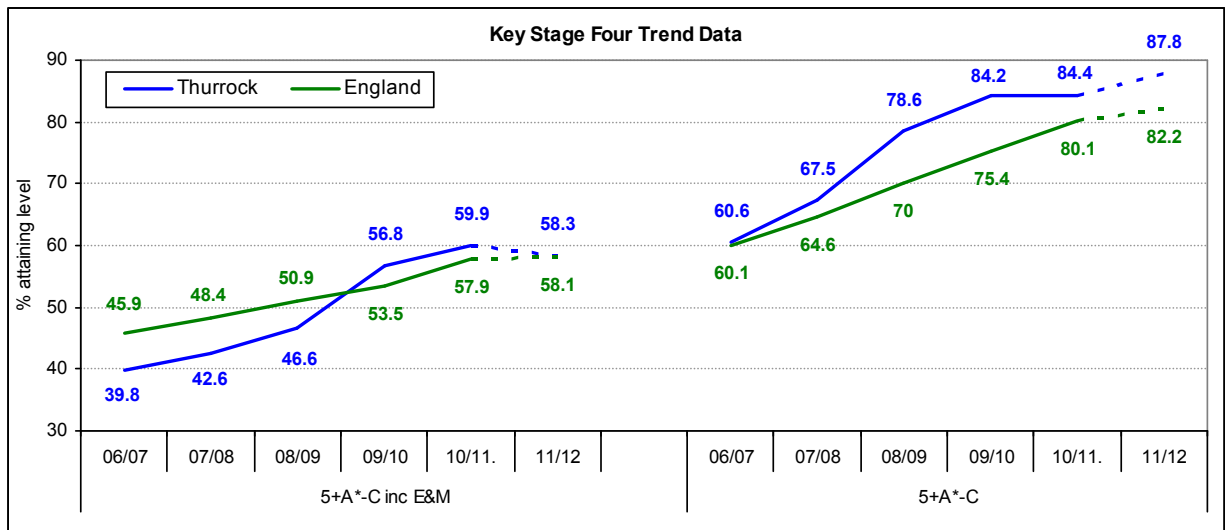
3.3.2 At level 5+ (above expected performance), there were improvements across the board. In English, the improvement from 2011 was 6.9%.

3.3.3 The improvements in performance reflect a strategy of intervention similar to that at KS1; targeted support to Tier1 and 2 schools, support for new assessment systems and subject leadership. In tandem, there has been a focus on training teachers to support year 6 readiness and to raise aspirations around level 5+. Another avenue for raising achievement has been joint working with colleagues in relation to aspirations for pupils with special needs and through parent workshops run by TACC.

3.3.4 The DfE identifies a minimum expected measure of a school's performance on attainment and progress, known as the floor standard. At primary, this is 60% for level 4+ in English and maths combined and 87% obtaining 2 levels of progress in English and 86% in maths between KS1 and KS2. Four schools are currently below the floor standard, 3 fewer than in 2011.

3.3.5 Of the schools receiving targeted support, 8 have seen increases of 10%+ in the benchmark KS2 figure at level 4+. At level 5+, 11 schools have seen improvement.

3.4 Key Stage 4 (age 16)



3.4.1 Students taking GCSE this year have maintained a slight improvement over the national average for 5 A* - C passes including English and maths (5ACEM) but the overall performance has declined.

3.4.2 This may be the result in part of the change to the grade boundaries in English in the summer exam from those of January. Once the detailed data is available, it will be possible to obtain a clearer view of the impact.

3.4.3 The floor standard for 5AC EM is now 40% which means that two schools have fallen below this measure.

3.5 Looked After Children (LAC)

3.5.1 At KS2, in a cohort of 9 pupils, 55% obtained a level 4+ in English and in maths. Although this represents a decrease from 2011, it is still above the national average for that year and is a creditable achievement when an increase in the percentage of pupils with statements is taken into account (from 25% to 55%).

3.5.2 There is a similar scenario at KS4 where the percentage of those obtaining GCSE 5AC EM has fallen to 5% (national average in 2011 was 12.8%). Of the cohort of 22, 41% attended special school, PRU or specialist residential care in 2011-12 and there was an increase of 22% in unaccompanied asylum seekers. Furthermore, there was a significant decrease in the number attending Thurrock schools which could also have had an impact.

3.5.3 For those young people involved with the Virtual School, schools have acknowledged that individuals achieved and improved on their predicted grades.

3.6 Academic year 2012 – 13

- 3.6.1 A clear priority for the year is maintaining the focus on improvement at KS2 and consolidation of gains at KS1 to ensure that the target in relation to national averages is met in summer 2013.
- 3.6.2 Specific packages of support for KS2 subject leaders have been commissioned and work with colleagues at KS3 is being undertaken to help raise aspiration and subject knowledge as well as smoothing transition. Support for leadership and management, including governing bodies, and a continuing focus on gender issues and SEN will also feature.
- 3.6.3 There will be a focus on enhancing partnership and school-to-school working, especially in relation to schools, Teaching Schools and Academies in the secondary phase.

4. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 4.1 A further report to Overview and Scrutiny will be presented in the New Year when fully validated data is available.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 5.1 This report relates to the council priority to improve the education and skills of local people.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652010**
sclark@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications in this report.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lee Bartlett**
 Telephone and email: **01375 652167**
lbartlett@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct legal implications in this report.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
 Telephone and email: **01376 652472**

sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct diversity and equality implications in this report. The January report will offer greater detail of the performance of key groups.

6.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental

6.4.1 RISKS

6.4.2 Schools that do not meet the floor standard are liable to be subject to sponsored academisation.

6.4.3 The sustainability of the school improvement service, and hence of support to lower performing schools, will be uncertain if numbers of schools and Academies buying into the traded service decline. Explorations with neighbouring boroughs to increase resilience are underway.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Outcomes for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 show healthy improvements. They need to be consolidated and translated into Key Stage Two where progress, while increasing, needs to accelerate if the target is to be met. Strategies for intervention have been important in generating improvement and need to continue.

7.1.2 Results at GCSE are more difficult to deconstruct as a result of the English results. The January report will contain more detailed analysis.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

None

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

None

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Vivien Cutler

Telephone: 01375 652539

E-mail: vcutler@thurrock.gov.uk