

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **16 January 2024**

Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.

Membership:

Councillors Elizabeth Rigby (Chair), Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair), Qaisar Abbas, Vikki Hartstean, Srikanth Panjala and Maureen Pearce

Sarah Barlow, Church of England Representative
Kim James, Chief Operating Officer, HealthWatch Thurrock
Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative

Substitutes:

Councillors Paul Arnold, Aaron Green, James Halden, Susan Little, Sue Shinnick and Cici Manwa

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 16 November 2023.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. To agree any relevant briefing notes submitted to the Committee.	

4	Declaration of Interests	
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Rhiannon Whiteley, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **8 January 2024**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Elizabeth Rigby (Chair), Sara Muldowney (Vice-Chair), Qaisar Abbas, Vikki Hartstean, Srikanth Panjala and Maureen Pearce

Parent Governor Representative, Nicola Cranch

Apologies: Church of England Representative Sarah Barlow and Kim James

In attendance: Sheila Murphy, Executive Director of Children's Services
Janet Simon, Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Early Help
Sarah Williams, Service Manager, Education Support Service
Rhiannon Whiteley, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

21. Minutes

The minutes of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 12 September 2023 were approved as a correct record save that the Parent Governor Representative was not recorded as in attendance.

22. Items of Urgent Business

The Vice Chair confirmed that the RAAC item had been moved off the agenda for the meeting as the work programme was full. However, as items have fallen away there is time to hear the issue now as an urgent item of business. The Vice Chair noted that the Portfolio Holder for Educate was present. The Vice Chair requested an update on how schools were progressing with providing temporary accommodation as the briefing note shared stated that this would be happening in mid-November.

The Head of Education Support Services confirmed that there had been some changes since the briefing note and providing a full update report to the Committee at the next meeting in January would be beneficial.

All children remain in school as the mitigation plans are being worked on. Two schools have large marquees, at the Thameside Primary school this is to accommodate the breakfast club only and all children are being taught in classrooms. A marquee is also going into Arthur Burgler School. The

marquees are heated. Members were invited to visit to view them. The Head of Education Support Services highlighted that the specification for the marquees was put together by the Department of Education.

The Vice Chair stated she had concerns about the use of a marquee in the winter months.

The Head of Education Support Services confirmed they are not going ahead with temporary accommodation at St Clare's and instead plan to bring forward the remedial works.

The Vice Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Education to confirm if he viewed the arrangements were satisfactory.

The Portfolio Holder for Education clarified that 54 out of the 55 schools in Thurrock were Academies and therefore the Improvement Grant which covers improvements to school buildings was between the Department of Education and the Academies. In terms of Education achievement Councillor Carter confirmed that Thurrock has had success with its primary schools and secondary schools are also improving.

The Head of Education Support Services confirmed that all primary school children are receiving face-to-face learning. At St Clare's secondary school years 8, 9 and 10 are receiving hybrid teaching but it is hoped this will only be up until 27 November 2023.

Members queried what the hybrid arrangements were. The Head of Education Support Services confirmed she did not have the details but could obtain it. Parents are being kept full updated and the school meets weekly with the Department of Education too. Work has started at Corringham.

The Head of Education Support Services confirmed that she will arrange a visit for Committee members.

23. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

24. Youth Cabinet Update

Representatives from the Youth Cabinet were not in attendance at the meeting so the Chair noted that a written report was provided in the agenda and moved on to the next item.

25. Children's Social Care Performance - Quarter 1 2023-24

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help presented the report.

- The Vice Chair requested that the statistical neighbour and national data be put back into graph format as it is easier for members to see the visual representation even if it is written in the detail. Members have to read a lot each week and absorb a lot of data.
- Members queried that the data was being compared to national data from 21/22. The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed that the 23/24 data had not been released yet.
- Members queried that 41% of MASH referrals resulted in no further action.
- The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help clarified that no further action was misleading and what it means is that cases aren't referred further into Children's Social Care. The department are looking at a better way of wording this outcome as it can mean a variety of things. As a result of contacts received, cases may be stepped down to early help, referred to universal services and MASH also signpost people. It was also confirmed this is not a figure the department are worried about and they monitor trends from previous years for example, referrals often go up before the summer holidays. In August referrals are lower as children aren't in school.
- The Vice Chair commended the excellent performance on assessments being completed within timescales.
- The Vice Chair queried the low adoption numbers
- The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed the authority is small, there are still court delays and parents often appeal which delays adoption. The numbers are always under 20 annually and therefore 5 adoptions in the first quarter is about right.
- The Executive Director of Children's Services confirmed that the department focus on rapid permanency planning for under 5's but this is not always adoption and could be special guardianship with a family member or being rehabilitated home.
- Members queried the ages of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers in the Local Authority's care
- The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed they are normally 16 or 17 and male. The Authority has received a child as young as 14 but this is rare. They report fleeing violence, being in fear of their own safety or their families have disappeared. They have often experienced real trauma.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That members review the areas of good practice and performance in Children's Social Care and work undertaken to date to manage demand for statutory social care services.**
- 1.2 Members provide appropriate challenges around areas for development or any areas of concern.**

26. Update: Stable Homes, Built on Love: Government Implementation Strategy and Consultation on Children's Social Care Reform 2023

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help presented the report.

- Members queried social workers caseloads compared with statistical neighbours. The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed they believe they are comparable. In the 2019 Ofsted inspection they commented that caseload numbers were appropriate. If caseloads are too high social workers cannot build relationships. There is not a national standard for caseloads. It is also not an exact science some cases demand more time than others, the court team caseloads are often lower as the cases are more complex.

Councillor Rigby joined the meeting at 19:54

- Members queried why social workers leave. The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed that they always complete exit interviews to learn what to do differently. Reasons given are moving to agency work to earn more money, working closer to home or different opportunities. They are not saying caseloads are too high or they are not supported. The department does have a lot of scrutiny and panels but this is to make sure the decisions being made are right.
- The Committee discussed the placement crisis and huge costs of residential care.
- The Vice Chair highlighted the Council's financial situation and queried plans to cut non-statutory services. The Executive Director for Children's Services confirmed that so far the department has been well support and everyone understands the importance of Early Help and the savings identified are not looking at Early Help. Early Help is about preventing high costs further down the line. The Executive Director for Children's Services stated that she could not say that non-statutory services wont be cut and noted that more savings will be required each year.
- Members queried if there had been any feedback on the family hubs yet
- The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help responded that feedback had been received and it was positive. Families can receive services from social care, midwives and Health Visitors in one place. Members were invited to visit.
- Members queried if the Authority received funding for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children. The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help confirmed they received some funding but it does not cover all the costs.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 **That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the Government's implementation strategy for reforms to children's social care and the potential impact these will have on service delivery over the next few years.**
- 1.2 **That Overview & Scrutiny note actions taken thus far in implementing the Government Strategy.**

27. Children's Transport Contract Procurement 2024

The Head of Education Support Services introduced the report and stated that the contracts for Children's Transport provision were extended by one year and agreed by Cabinet on 15 March 2023. The extension was agreed from September 2023 to July 2024. The provision of home to school transport is a statutory duty on the Local Authority and a re-procurement exercise is required. This report recommends a full re-procurement of the Children's home to school Transport for the start of the academic year 2024/2025 to ensure best value is achieved and to allow for new transport operators to join during the contract period.

The Head of Education Support Services stated that under the current framework to procure transport operators, once closed, no new operators can join. Market engagement with operators has been completed and they have also looked at what other Local Authorities do. The Home to School transport policy will be reviewed shortly as new statutory guidance was received in June. Further updates will be provided to the Committee.

Consultation between Essex and Thurrock regarding the license Essex pays for and if Thurrock will be required to contribute. The Dynamic Purchasing system will give Thurrock a greater pool of operators who can come on board at any time. They will have to go through compliance and obtain a license. Some of the operators Thurrock use are already onboarded with Essex.

- The Vice Chair commented that she found it unlikely Essex would not charge Thurrock for the onboarding and sought a direct comparison of costs now and what they will be
- The Vice Chair queried what the impact would be on local operators. The Head of Education Support Services stated that they have met with operators. They are aware they can complete the onboarding and apply for contracts as they do now, they do not want to put any operators out of business.
- The Parent Governor representative highlighted the importance of autistic children needing stability and the same operator is important.
- Members raised concern about recommending option 4 in the absence of the costs information. They noted the decision is due to be made by Cabinet on 13 December and the next committee meeting for Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny is not until January
- The Vice Chair commented that she would not want to recommend option 4 without having the costings confirmed

- The Chair proposed alternative wording to recommendation 1.1 adding the words “*subject to comparative costing with current system*” which was seconded by Councillor Abbas
- The Chair, Councillor Abbas and Councillor Pearce agreed with recommendation 1.1. Councillor Muldowney, Councillor Hartstean and Councillor Panjala did not agree to recommendation 1.1.
- All Committee members agreed to recommendation 1.2.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 Children’s Overview and Scrutiny recommend Cabinet agree the recommendation for the Council to collaborate with Essex County Council (ECC) on a procurement exercise for a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) subject to comparative costing with current system and to undertake further competition via the DPS to award contracts for Children’s home to school transport as set out in section 3.**
- 1.2 Children’s Overview and Scrutiny recommend Cabinet agree that the Director of Children’s Services, in consultation with the Education Portfolio Holder is given delegated authority to award contracts following further competitions under the DPS.**

28. Work Programme

The Vice Chair requested a briefing note prior to the next meeting on the issue of RAAC in schools. An update report on RAAC is also required to be added to the January meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.03 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Children's Services
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting
Tuesday 16 January 2024
Youth Cabinet Update



Purpose of the report: The Youth Cabinet would like to provide members with an update of their work.

1.1 House of Commons visit

On Friday 17 November 2023, Thurrock's Member of Youth Parliament (MYP), along with over 300 other MYPs from across the UK, travelled to London to take part in a series of debates in the House of Commons. The debates were chaired by Mr Speaker in the morning session, and his deputy in the afternoon. The day saw UK Youth Parliament debate on the following motions around the Food for Learning Campaign:

- Holiday hunger
- Quality of food
- Standardisation
- Financing and funding
- Additional pricing

To our delight, Thurrock's MYP was selected by Madam Deputy Speaker to voice his views on Holiday Hunger from the green benches. It was a very proud moment for us all.

Following the debates, MYPs then voted to decide which area they would like to focus on for the remainder of the Food for Learning Campaign. They voted for finance and funding free school meals.

Here is a quote from Thurrock's MYP, reflecting on his experience of the day.

"On Friday 17 November I left Thurrock early in the morning for the Youth Parliament House of Commons sitting. I spoke to over 300 MYPs from all parts of the UK including devolved nations, overseas territories and crown dependencies to prioritise the issue of Holiday Hunger following a consultation of young people in my constituency. It was a privilege to speak and was a great day and reminded everyone of the importance of youth voice!" See Appendix A images.

1.2 **SEND Youth Voice**

Thurrock Youth Cabinet are currently in the process of developing a new strand to our work to encompass SEND Youth Voice. We have felt for some time that this is an area of growth to ensure that the voices of SEND young people are captured in our work.

The Youth Cabinet recently planned and facilitated a Youth Voice drop-in event for SEND young people in November 2023. Hosted by five Youth Cabinet members with the support staff, the event saw a number of young people sign up to take part in the new group. The first meeting will be in the February Half Term 2024.

We are still looking for more sign ups. Please promote the opportunity within your networks and encourage eligible students to sign up. *See Appendix B image.*

1.3 **Thurrock Music Services**

Recently Thurrock Youth Cabinet has been supporting Thurrock Music Services with the development of a new Youth Music Advisory Board to ensure youth voice is at the heart of emerging music education plans.

The new group will help to shape the future of music education in Thurrock, aiming to bring bigger and better music experiences to the young people of Thurrock. Members of the new group will research and provide insights that will help create a vision and new opportunities for Thurrock young people. Please promote this opportunity to your contacts. *See Appendix C image.*

Work on the horizon

1.4 **Make Your Mark and Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) Elections**

Next year the Make Your Mark campaign will run again. Running since 2011, Make Your Mark has reached millions of young people. It is the largest UK wide youth consultation. It gives young people aged 11-18 the opportunity to vote for the topics they feel are the most important to them locally and across the UK.

We are inviting schools, colleges, and youth groups to sign up and take part in Make Your Mark 2024 between Monday 29 January – Friday 1 March 2024. During this time, we shall be busy encouraging Thurrock young people to vote. Every vote matters!

Make Your Mark is a great opportunity to gather young people's views on a local level and generate conversations around youth democracy.

Alongside Make Your Mark, elections for Thurrock's new Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) will also take place. Thurrock has eight MYP candidates that will be running in 2024. We shall be hosting a results night at the end March to announce the Make Your Mark and MYP results.

1.5 **Thurrock Youth Cabinet Recruitment**

Thurrock Youth Cabinet's recruitment drive is currently in progress. We are looking for student representation from the following schools:

- Ormiston Park Academy
- Harris Academy Riverside
- St Clere's School
- The Gateway Academy
- Thames Park Secondary School

If you have connections with these schools, please ask them to get in touch at youthcabinet@thurrock.gov.uk to book a meeting. The Youth Cabinet lead worker is happy to attend the school to discuss the Youth Cabinet with students.




Appendix

Appendix A

Thurrock's MYP, Lionel, at the House of Commons



New Youth Voice Group supported by Thurrock Youth Cabinet



YOUTH VOICE GROUP SUPPORTED BY THURROCK YOUTH CABINET

Are you 16-25 years old?

Would you like to have a say on life, learning and living in Thurrock?

If so, Thurrock Youth Cabinet would like to hear from you!

Do you identify as neurodiverse, additional needs, special needs, SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) ?

Join a new Youth Voice group and turn your ideas into action.

- Attend three times a year at Grangewaters in South Ockendon
- Lunch, drinks and an activity provided
- Meet new people (16-25 olds with additional needs)
- Collaborate with Thurrock Youth Cabinet members and staff
- Have your say and be listened to!



To sign up or find out more, email today at youthvoice@thurrock.gov.uk

New Youth Music Advisory Board opportunity



**Are you 13 – 18 years old,
living in Thurrock and
passionate about music?**

**Join the NEW Youth Music Advisory Board
and help shape the future of music
education in Thurrock!**

Your role would involve:

- Attending termly meetings
- Sharing your ideas to make positive change
- Connecting with like-minded young people to create a new vision
- Creating new music opportunities for young people in the borough

Meetings will be held in Purfleet at
High House Production Park

To find out more email
music.services@thurrock.gov.uk



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16 January 2024	ITEM: 6
Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RACC) Update	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Sarah Williams, Head of Education Support Services	
Accountable Head of Service: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Executive Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report which provides an update in relation to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RACC) within Thurrock Schools.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) is a lightweight, ‘bubbly’ form of concrete commonly used in construction between the 1950s and mid-1990s. It is predominantly found as precast panels in roofs (commonly flat roofs, sometimes pitched) and occasionally in floors and walls.
- 2.2 Given all our schools are either standalone Academy’s or part of Multi Academy Trusts the council does not have a statutory duty to monitor the condition of school buildings. The council recognised the seriousness of the situation around RAAC in schools and has a duty of care to the pupils being educated within them. The condition of buildings is monitored and managed by the schools governing bodies as they are academies, except for Grays Convent which is a voluntary aided school.
- 2.3 The Education Support Service (Thurrock Council) communicated to all schools in July 2023 to understand whether any schools had found RAAC in any part of their school building. In addition, schools responded to a questionnaire sent by the Department for Education (DfE). Based on the

responses provided by the schools governing body, the DfE commissioned specialist surveying companies to visit several schools to verify whether RAAC is present.

2.4 On 31st August 2023, the Department for Education announced new guidance about reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in schools. The announcement outlined a policy shift meaning that urgent action would need to be taken for any schools with known RAAC.

2.5 The Department for Education confirmed the following schools have RAAC found within their buildings:

- St Cleres School
- East Tilbury Primary School
- Arthur Bugler Primary School
- Thameside Primary School
- Ortu Corringham Primary

The Osborne Co-Operative Academy and ORTU Federation Trust communicated to the Council and to all parents to inform them of the mitigation plans being put in place for the start of the academic year.

The school Trusts and DfE are working extremely hard to make sure staff and children are impacted as little as possible. Parents have been updated regularly and are supportive of actions taken to date.

- Thameside Primary delayed their opening to 11th September whilst they prepared additional teaching spaces.
- Arthur Bugler Primary delayed their opening for years 4, 5 and 6 to 7th September whilst they prepared alternative teaching spaces.
- Corringham Primary moved their year 4 and year 6 pupils to alternative teaching spaces.
- East Tilbury Primary have moved their pupils across a number of years groups to alternative teaching spaces within the school.
- St Cleres had a considerable number of teaching spaces affected by RAAC in their original building. This meant there was a hybrid solution put in place which was a mixture of both face to face and remote learning for years 8, 9 and 10 students. All students have now returned to face to face learning as of 13th December 2023.

2.6 The Department for Education is working directly with those academies to provide support in relation to short and long term mitigation plans. Weekly meetings have been taking place between the DfE and Academy Trusts with regular updates being provided to the council.

2.7 To manage the communication around this, all members were provided with briefing notes on:

- 30th August 2023
- 31st August 2023
- 6th September 2023
- 24th October 2023
- 23rd November 2023

2.8 Following the request of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th November, visits were organised at Arthur Bugler Primary, Thameside Primary, East Tilbury Primary and St Clere's for all committee members which took place on 4th and 6th December. Positive feedback was received.

2.9 Current position as of December 2023:

St Cleres School

All students returned to face to face learning on Monday 13th December 2023.

Instead of placing a considerable number of demountable classrooms to provide 30 teaching spaces onsite, the school have sourced and installed three large, impressive Losberger units.

Two of the units are providing a total of 20 classrooms, which include a staff room and toilet facilities.

The third unit comprises of six classrooms and hall for assembly and dining.

Within the main building, the sports hall has been converted into four classrooms. Therefore, providing a total of 30 classrooms.

The trust continues to work with the DfE on mitigation plans in the main building on a phase programme. The kitchen has now had mitigation works completed and is fully operational. Phase two will see the specialist classrooms brought back into use. It is anticipated that the longer term solution will be announced by the DfE mid January 2024. A briefing note update will be provided to all members once a decision has been made.

East Tilbury Primary

All students have received face to face learning within alternative spaces within the school since the start of the academic year. Remediation works to the RAAC affected areas is due to start in the spring term with completion in the summer term.

As a temporary measure a high quality, heated marquee was placed on onsite to provide additional facility to enable planned Christmas activities to continue.

Without this facility pupils would not have been able to take part in these important activities. There is no teaching taking place within the marquee.

Thameside Primary

A double temporary classroom has been installed to provide two teaching spaces along with temporary internal alterations to provide additional teaching spaces.

Remediation works to the RAAC affected areas is due to start in the spring term with completion in the summer term.

A high quality, heated marquee has been installed and is being used one hour per day so that the school could continue to provide the breakfast club for disadvantaged pupils.

A second marquee has been placed on onsite as a temporary measure to provide additional facility to enable planned Christmas activities to continue. Without this facility pupils would not have been able to take part in these important activities. There is no teaching taking place within the marquee.

Arthur Bugler

All students have received face to face learning within alternative space within the school since the start of the academic year. Remediation works to the RAAC affected areas is due to start in the spring term with completion in the summer term.

As a temporary measure a high quality, heated marquee was placed on onsite to provide additional facility to enable planned Christmas activities to continue. Without this facility pupils would not have been able to take part in these important activities. There is no teaching taking place within the marquee.

Corringham Primary

The remedial works to the affected RAAC area within the school are in progress and are due to complete by the end of January 2024.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 None. Both short and long term remedial works are being managed between the Department for Education and Academy Trusts.

4 Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 For Children's Overview and Scrutiny to have oversight of the impact RAAC has had in the identified schools.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 No consultation is required.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 None.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Head of Financial Management

There are no financial implications for the Council. The Department for Education is funding solutions and alternative accommodation where required.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Nicola Monerville**
Principal Solicitor – LBBDD

This report provides Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee an update in relation to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RACC) within Thurrock Schools.

The responsible body in control of the school, usually the relevant local authority, academy trust or voluntary aided body, must manage the condition of its buildings and ensure they are safe.

The DfE is accountable for providing those bodies responsible for school buildings with the funding and support to enable them to meet their responsibilities to ensure the school buildings are safe and well maintained.

The report confirms that Thurrock Borough Council schools are either standalone Academy's or part of Multi Academy Trusts and therefore there is no statutory duty to monitor school buildings.

The report is of note. There are no legal implications arising.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**

Team Manager, Community Development

At this stage there are no direct diversity and equality implications. The Council does not have any statutory duty in relation to Academies and the monitoring of the condition of school buildings. It is noted children and young people have continued to receive education since the start of the academic year with alternative accommodation provided within each of the schools. Students at St Cleres received a mixture of face to face and remote learning for years 8, 9 and 10 students, however all students have now returned to face to face learning.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report

- All briefing notes provided to all members.
- Department for Education RAAC Identification Guidance

9. Appendices to the report

None.

Report Author:

Sarah Williams
Children's Services

16 January 2024	ITEM: 7
Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Educational Attainment Data 2022-2023	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Andrea Winstone, Head of Service, School Effectiveness and Special Educational Needs / Disabilities	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education & Skills	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Executive Director, Children Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

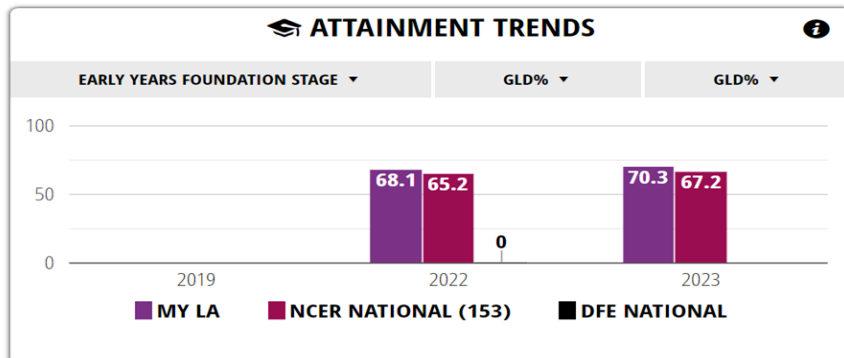
1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **Children’s Overview & Scrutiny receive the provisional outcomes of the summer 2023 tests and examinations and commends early years’ settings, schools, pupils, and parents/carers on their achievements.**
- 1.2 **Children’s Overview & Scrutiny formally thank our early years, school and college settings for the work that has ensured a range of positive outcomes for our children and young people.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Outlined below is the data for our children and young people across Thurrock who are of statutory school age and 18 year olds. The target is to be above the national averages at the end of:
 - Reception Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) assessments (5 years old)
 - phonics screening check in year 1, (6 years old)
 - end of year 2 SATs in key stage 1, (7 years old)
 - end of year 6 SATS in key stage 2, (11 years old)
 - end of year 11 in GCSEs key stage 4 (16 years old)
 - end of year 13 A Levels in key stage 5 (18 years old)

- 2.2 **At the end of the Reception** year children are expected to have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) when assessed against the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage Profile. This measures their achievements against a number of goals across the EYFS curriculum.
- 2.3 **End of Y1 Phonics Screening Check** measures early reading decoding skills, where children are assessed at their ability to decode 40 words using their knowledge of letter sounds.
- 2.4 **End of KS1 assessments** are standardised assessment tests (SAT) and tasks continue to be based on teacher assessments which are informed by statutory end of key stage standardised assessment tasks (SATs). They also include a combined reading, writing and maths measure, in line with KS2 results.
- 2.5 **End of KS2** results of standardised assessment tasks are used to determine how pupils have attained and made progress in mathematics, reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Teachers also make teacher assessments in writing and science. A combined measure of the reading test, maths tests and writing teacher assessment is also included.
- 2.6 **End of KS4** Progress 8 measures schools, not only on the results pupils achieve, but on how much progress they have made since they started secondary school. These have replaced the previous measure of five good GCSE grades. Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English. A grade 5 is a considered a 'strong' pass. The key measure of combined English (EN) and mathematics (MA) is being used by the Department of Education this year and will be supplemented to include Progress 8 and Attainment 8.
- 3. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS aged 5 end of reception year)**
- 3.1 The Good Level of Development (GLD) measure is awarded at the end of EYFS (Reception year), when a pupil has achieved at least expected in the prime areas of learning and in literacy and maths.
- 3.2 To reach the percentage of children making a good level of development (GLD), each child is assessed against 17 Early Learning Goals; whether she/he meets the level, has not reached the level or exceeded it and points are awarded accordingly in a range 17 – 51. If a child meets every Early Learning Goal, she/he will receive at least 34 points.

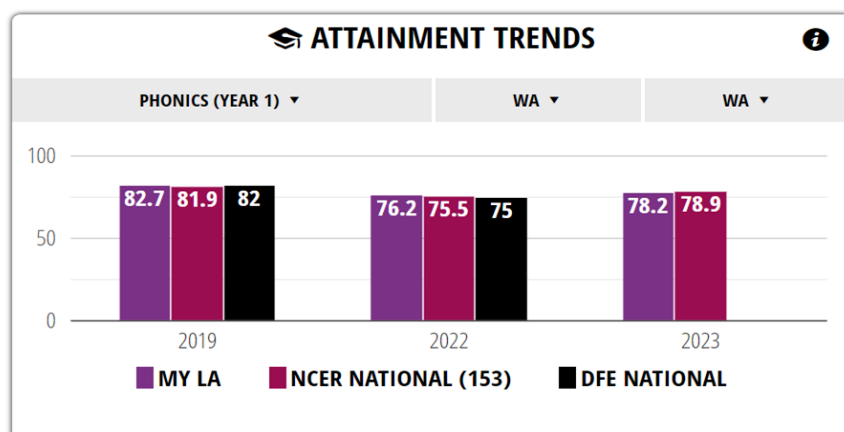


3.3 2019 is not showing as this was before the pandemic when children had a much more consistent and settled time in early years. In 2019 74% of Thurrock children achieved a good level of development. The gap is narrowing between 2019 and 2023 but there is still some way to go.

3.4 All areas of learning were affected by the pandemic and settings are being supported to develop them, most specifically communication and language. Early language development takes place in a range of settings including playgroups, parent & toddler groups and general socialisation. During the pandemic much of this was lost and, as a result, we are seeing significant language delays in our early years cohorts.

3.5 To address some of these challenges, the School Effectiveness Early Years Team is working closely with all Early Years Providers and Family Hubs to support them to further develop their knowledge and skills around addressing speech, language and communications difficulties and delay. This work has been co-funded by the Early Years Team and the Family Hubs and will remain a key focus for the forthcoming year.

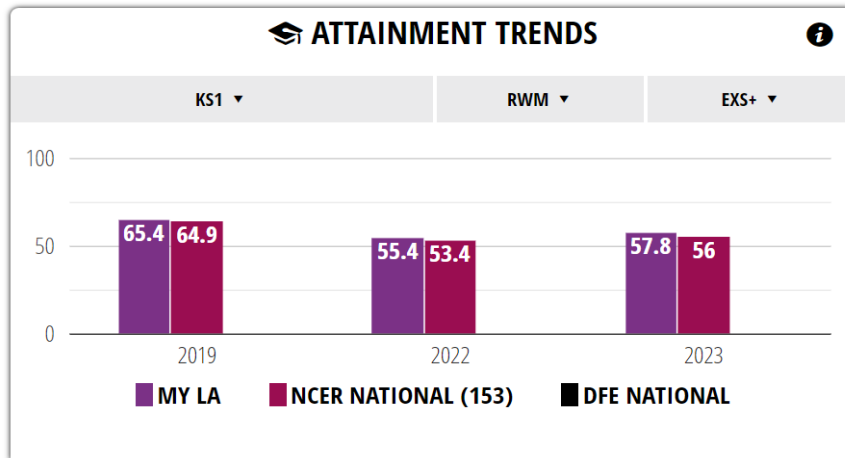
3.6 Y1 Phonics Screening Check



3.7 These children will have had a very disrupted nursery/ pre-school period and it is evident that fewer children have achieved the expected standard as a result. Schools are working hard to implement phonics as soon as children enter but

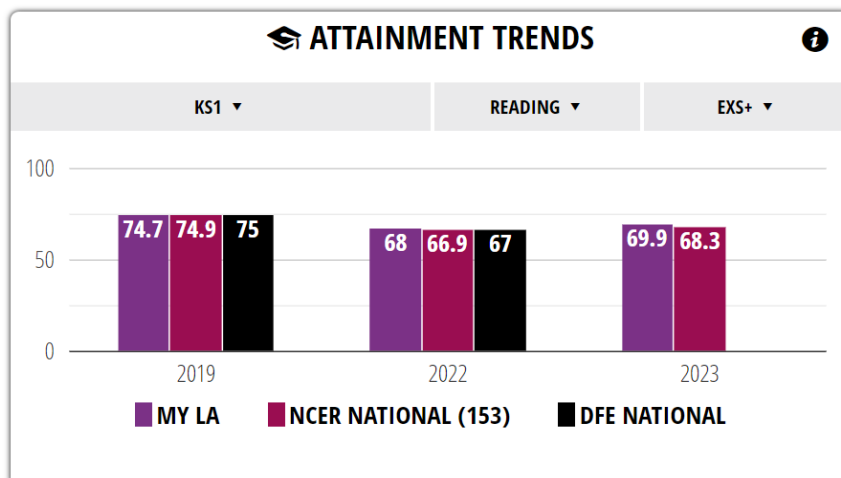
many of the pre-phonics skills and learning behaviours were disrupted in the preceding years.

3.8 KS1 Teacher Assessment

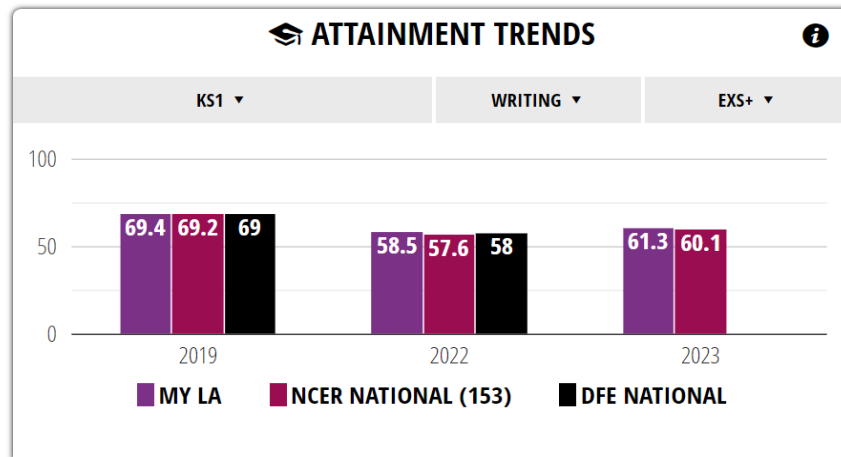


The above chart shows the outcomes for children at the end of the infant stage (KS1) in reading, writing and maths combined. This shows the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected standard in all 3 subjects.

3.8.1

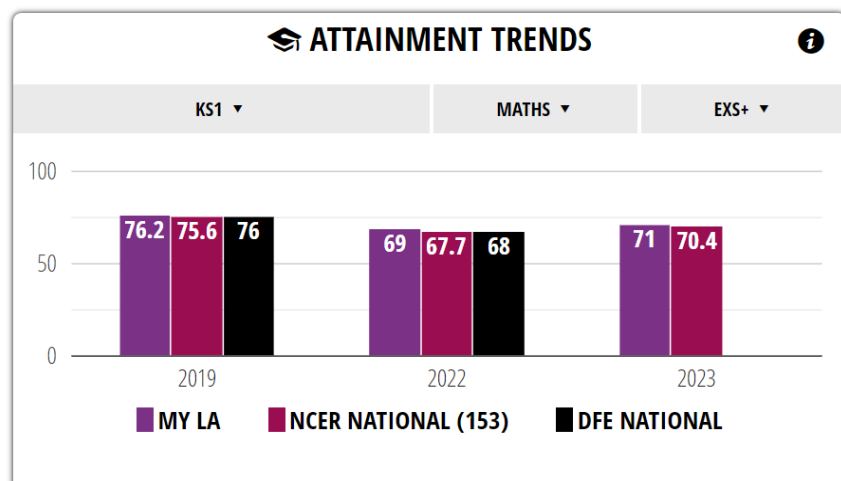


3.8.2 The data shows that whilst pre-pandemic levels have not been achieved yet, more children in Thurrock achieved age related expectations in all three subjects than their peers nationally.



3.8.3 The data shows that whilst pre-pandemic levels have not been achieved yet, more children in Thurrock achieved age related expectations in writing than their peers nationally. Writing skills develop after reading skills and are much harder to acquire which accounts for the lower writing scores.

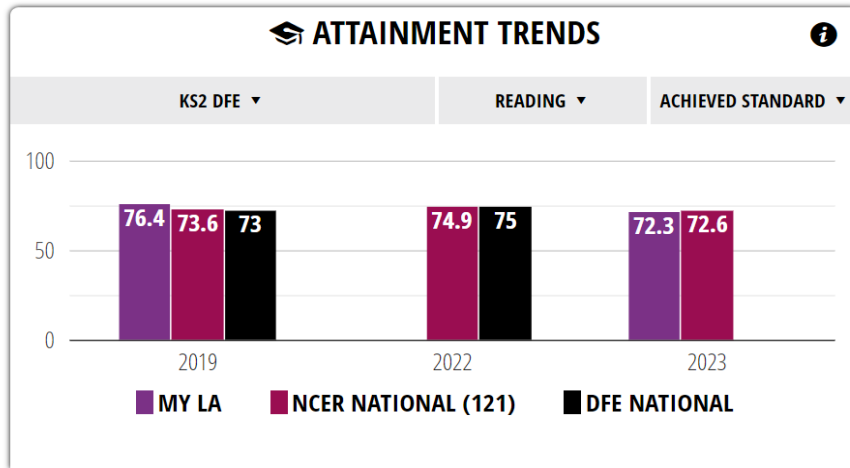
3.8.4



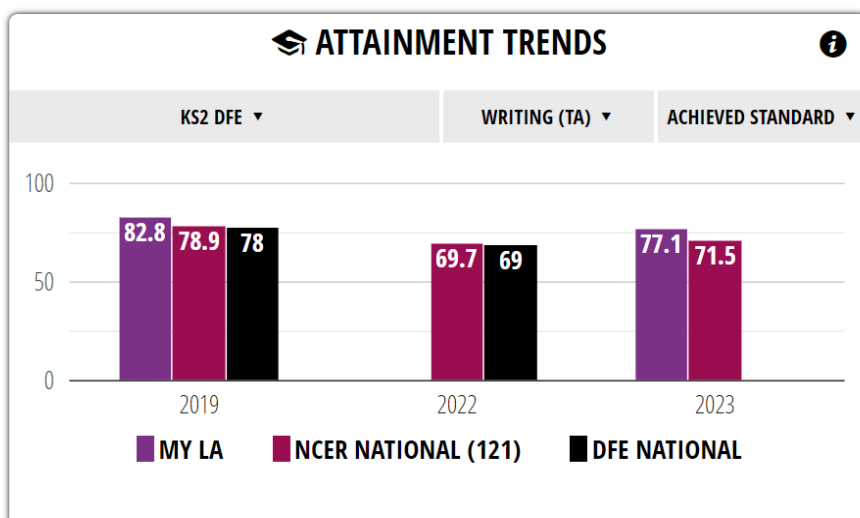
3.8.5 The data shows that whilst pre-pandemic levels have not been achieved yet, more children in Thurrock achieved age related expectations in all maths than their peers nationally.

3.9 Key Stage 2

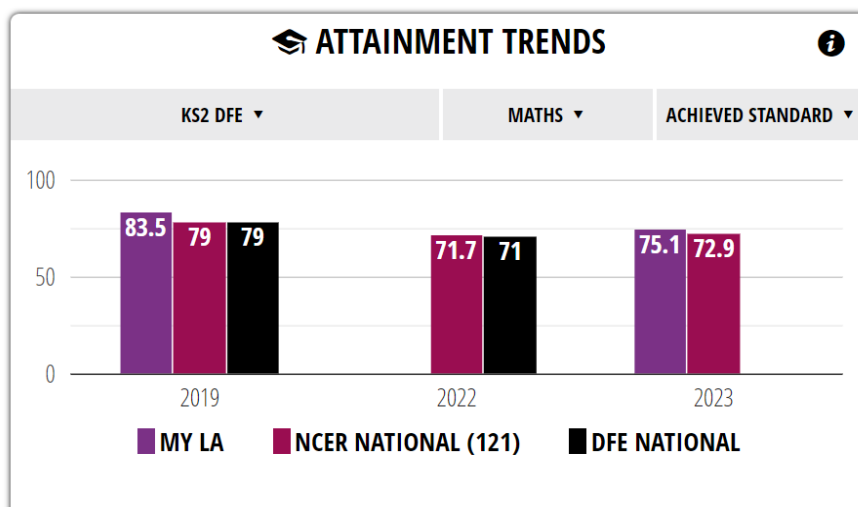
Standards are not yet in line with pre-pandemic times. However more children in Thurrock reached age-related expectations in writing and maths than their peers across the country.



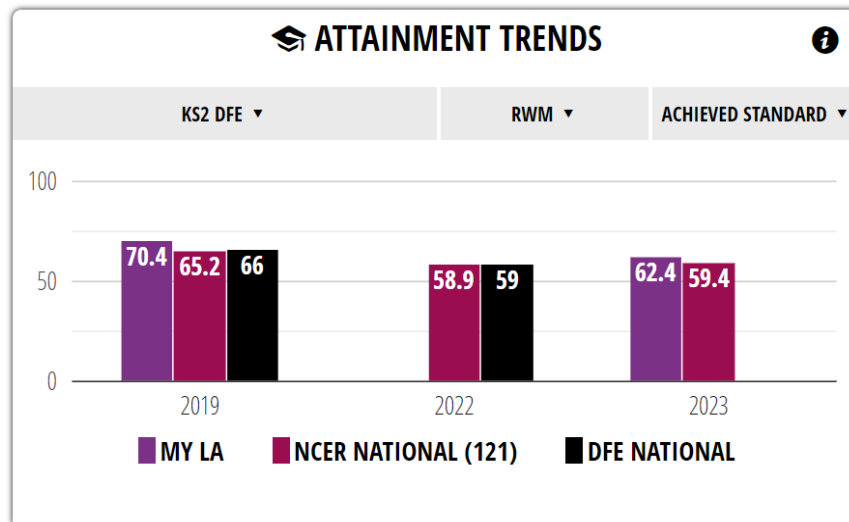
3.9.1



3.9.2



3.9.3



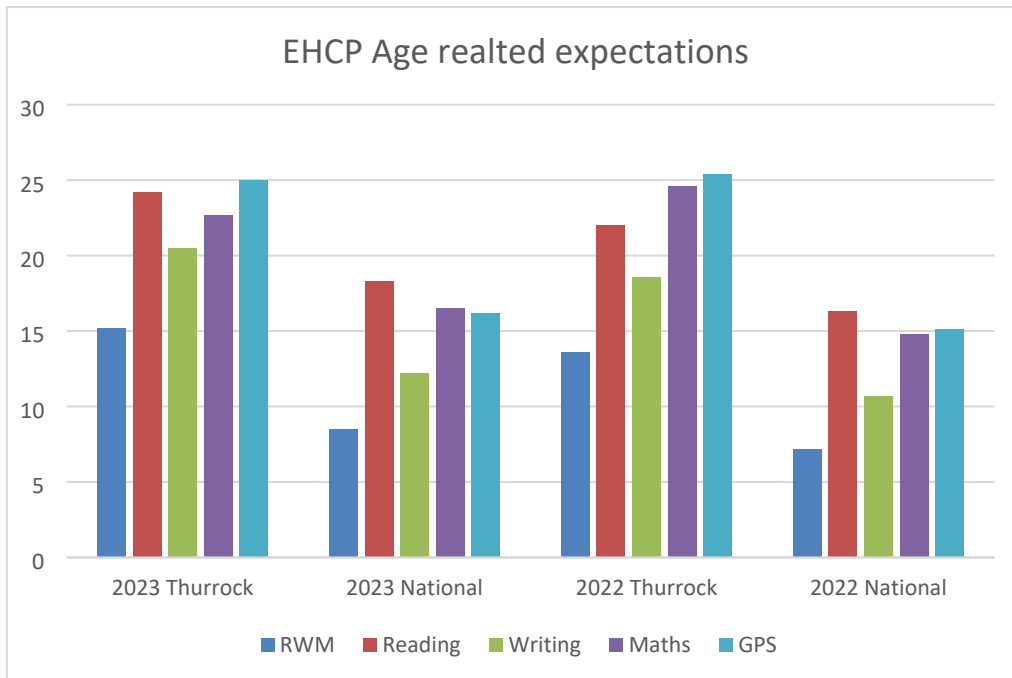
3.10 This chart shows the percentage of pupils who reached age-related expectations in all three subjects. It shows that a higher proportion of children in Thurrock achieved age-related expectation than their peers across the country.

Children in Thurrock made better than expected progress in writing and maths compared to children nationally.

3.11 **Percentage of children with an EHCP achieving expected standards**

More children with an EHCP in Thurrock achieve age related expectations than their peers across the country. This is a demonstration of how well children’s needs are being met and the effectiveness of the EHCPs.

2023	RWM	Reading	Writing	Maths	GPS
National	8.5	18.3	12.2	16.5	16.2
Thurrock	15.2	24.2	20.5	22.7	25
2022	RWM	Reading	Writing	Maths	GPS
National	7.2	16.3	10.7	14.8	15.1
Thurrock	13.6	22	18.6	24.6	25.4

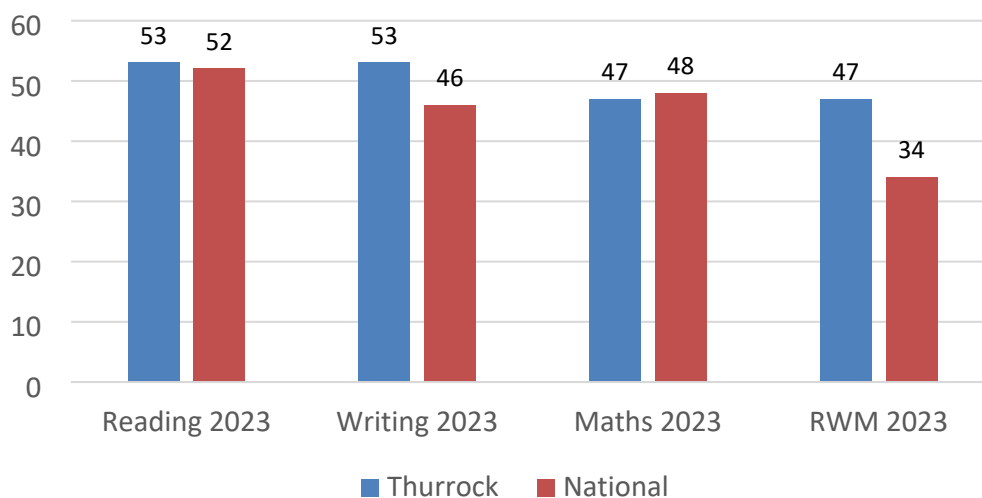


3.12 Children Looked After by Local Authority

- GLD at end of YR 57% (cohort of 7) compared to 41% nationally
- Y1 Phonics 35% passed (cohort of 14)
- Y2 SATS RWM combined 80% (cohort of 5) (National CLA was 30%)
- Y6 SATS RWM combined 36% (cohort of 12)

More Children Looked after (CLA) by the Local Authority in Thurrock achieve their age related expectations than their peers across the country.

3.13 Y6 Outcomes Children Looked After by Thurrock



Children Looked After by the Local Authority achieve similar outcomes to their peers across the country in single subjects. A higher proportion of CLA by Thurrock achieved a combination of age related in reading, writing and maths. This is due to the commitment of the Virtual School to improving the outcomes for all Children Looked After. This is achieved through tuition that is provided by the Virtual School to children at the end of year 5 and throughout Y6.

3.14 GCSE English & Maths early results

	Thurrock	National	
Attainment 8	46	45	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-0.14	-0.03	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE(9-5)	57%	60.5%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	49%	51%	Strong pass
Basics (Eng & Maths 9-5)	43%	45%	Strong pass
2022 (teacher assessment)	Thurrock	National	
Attainment 8	46	47	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-0.12	-0.03	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	61%	65%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	52%	55%	Strong pass
Basics (Eng & Maths 9-5)	45%	50%	Strong pass

3.15 Attainment in Thurrock is slightly lower than national averages. However, there were four schools in Thurrock that exceeded the national averages in English and maths combined 9-5 and one that was in line with national averages.

3.16 GCSE % EHCP

	Thurrock	National	
Attainment 8	16	14	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-0.89	-1.15	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	9%	11%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	9%	10%	Strong pass
Basics GCSE (9-5)	6%	7%	Strong pass
2022 teacher assessment	Thurrock	National	

Attainment 8	14	14	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-1.33	-1.39	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	12%	12%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	10%	10%	Strong pass
Basics (Eng & Maths 9-5)	11%	10%	Strong pass

Young people with an EHCP in Thurrock achieve broadly in line with their peers nationally.

3.17 Disadvantaged % GCSE

	Thurrock	National	
Attainment 8	44	46	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-0.49	-0.59	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	39%	40%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	30%	30%	Strong pass
Basics GCSE (9-5)	23.5%	24.5%	Strong pass
	Thurrock	National	
2022 teacher assessment			
Attainment 8	37	37	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English
Progress 8	-0.63	-0.61	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	43%	45%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	34%	34%	Strong pass
Basics (Eng & Maths 9-5)	41%	43%	Strong pass

Disadvantaged children in Thurrock achieve similar outcomes to their disadvantaged peers nationally.

3.18 Children Looked After by Thurrock

	Thurrock	National CLA	
Attainment 8	35.5	23	Attainment 8 measures pupils' attainment across 8 qualifications including maths and English

Progress 8	-0.56%	-1.20	Closer to 0 better
English GCSE (9-5)	36%	22%	Strong pass
Maths GCSE (9-5)	32%	16%	Strong pass
Basics GCSE (9-5)	27%	12%	Strong pass

3.19 The Virtual School uses Pupil Premium Plus to ensure that all children are well prepared for their GCSEs through 121 tuition and the provision of laptops and resources to support their studies.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 From the data it is evident that schools have been working incredibly hard to support their pupils to catch up and return to pre-pandemic levels.

4.2 Attendance rates are still lower than pre-pandemic levels (92% compared to 96% before the pandemic). It is hoped that Overview and Scrutiny members will join officers in promoting good school attendance which will, in turn, ensure better outcomes for children and young people in Thurrock.

5 Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

5.1 This report relates to the council priority Prosperity - a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations - vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Head of Finance, Children Services

There are no direct financial implications in this report. Funding is provided to schools through the Dedicated Schools Grants and deployed in accordance with the conditions of grant and School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2022. This report requires the Committee to note its contents only. No decision is required.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Deputy Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)

This report requires the Committee to note its contents only. No decision is required. However, there are relevant general duties on the Council, of which are: i) A duty is imposed on the Council by Section 13A Education Act 1996 to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential, ii) Section 22(3)(a) Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on the Council to safeguard and promote the welfare of any child it looks after, and this includes, in particular, a duty to promote their educational achievement, iii) Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 imposes a duty on local authorities to facilitate the development of children and young people to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and section 20 onwards includes children with special education needs.

There are no direct legal implications in this report.

6.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**
Head of Community Development I AHH: Adult Social Care and Community Development

While there are no direct implications arising from this report, it is important to note the statement at section 3.12 to 3.18 that demonstrates that children looked after by the Local Authority and children with an EHCP in Thurrock do better than their peers nationally, ensuring better education and career opportunities and outcomes for these vulnerable groups.

6.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children)

None

7. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

8. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Andrea Winstone

Head of Service, School Effectiveness & SEND

Education and Skills

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16 January 2024	ITEM: 8
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2023	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Andrea Winstone, Head of Service, School Effectiveness and SEND	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director Education and Skills	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Executive Director of Children Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report presents Thurrock’s Annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023.

The Council has as statutory duty to report annually to the elected council members on how we are meeting our statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare in our borough, as set out in the Childcare Act 2006. This report is available and accessible to the public.

The report recognises the regeneration opportunities locally and will look to support some of the national drivers around early year’s education. The report recognises the challenges around forecasting sufficiency and is working hard with planning to ensure we have an overview of potential developments coming forward and the need to provide enough childcare places.

The Childcare Sufficiency Report

- sets out the principles and planning guidelines on early years both nationally and locally.
- provides demographic and contextual picture of the early year's provision in Thurrock.
- provides information on the demand of childcare in Thurrock including data in relation to children with special educational needs and or disability (SEND), school-age children and the take up of funded early education places.
- provides an indication of the supply, quality, and affordability of childcare across the borough.

- provides childcare sufficiency data, population of 2-, 3- and 4 -year-olds and number of childcare providers by ward.
- provides details of the take-up of the 30 hours free childcare entitlement
- provides details of future planning and developments and population increases/decreases.
- details how the Council plans to support childcare sufficiency in the borough.
- details the Council's implementation plan for the new childcare entitlements.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the Annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023 and offer any additional comment or feedback.

2. Introduction and Background:

2.1 Local Policy Context

The Annual Assessment links with the following Council vision and priorities: -

Vision - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

Priorities:

1. People – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay.
2. Place – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future.
3. Prosperity – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

2.2 National Policy

2.2.1 As reported in last year's assessment, we have seen Recruitment and retention of staff in early years remaining a key risk. School Effectiveness Officers are working with other Local Authority's both locally and nationally to develop a recruitment and retention strategy to support the early years sector. This year we have organised a recruitment fair to encourage people to consider a career in this sector. The Fair was very successful with a number of attendees being offered interviews with Thurrock early years settings. Our intention is to run this event annually.

2.2.2 Thurrock Council continues to support providers in offering 30 hours of childcare for three- and four-year-olds of working parents, ensuring that we have the appropriate early education and childcare pathways including wrap

around care for both early years children, and as they progress to school. This will be critical to the success of encouraging residents to take advantage of the local job opportunities.

2.2.3 The government announced in the Spring budget: large scale childcare reforms to increase the availability; reduce costs to parents who wish to access early education and childcare, and increase the number of parents using childcare. Flexible early education and childcare expands the opportunity for parents to return to or enter the job market. High quality early education and childcare significantly improves the outcomes of children reducing disparities in later life. Nationally the government is expecting 60,000 more parents will enter the workforce.

2.2.4 **The existing childcare offer:**

- All parents are entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support for 3- and 4-year olds.
- Parents who earn the equivalent of at least 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and earn less than £100,000 adjusted net income per year, are entitled to 30 hours childcare support a week for children aged 3 and 4.
- Parents of 2-year-olds who receive some specific forms of support are also entitled to 15 hours per week childcare support.

2.2.5 **Childcare Reforms**

September 2023

- Childminder grants to become available - £1200 for those who register with a childminder agency and £600 for those who register with Ofsted.
- Staff 2-year-olds ratio change from 1:4 to 1:5 for two-year-olds in England.

April 2024

- 15 hours for eligible working 2-year-olds introduced.

September 2024

- National wraparound support begins.
- 15 hours eligible working parents of children 9 months plus

September 2025

- 30 hours for eligible working parents of children from 9 months to primary aged introduced.

September 2026

- All schools able to offer 8am to 6pm wraparound on their own or in partnership.

2.2.6 The Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient early education and childcare for parents who live in Thurrock and to deliver the reforms. The School Effectiveness Team is working with colleagues from across the Council and with existing and potential new providers to implement these reforms. The reforms will be challenging due to the lack of suitable premises, recruitment and retention of quality staff, capital and revenue costs and future financial sustainability.

The School Effectiveness Team will support providers to implement the changes:

- Supporting pathways for new early years providers.
- Regular visit to providers to ensure quality of care and education.
- Continued support for settings with recruitment and retention of staff.
- Liaising with the planning department and assets team to support new providers to open provision in Thurrock and existing providers to expand provision to meet the new early education and childcare entitlements.
- To work with the planning department to produce information on planning regulations for early years settings and early education and childcare on domestic premises.
- Monitoring new planning applications to ensure early years provision is included in new development as and when required.
- Work with local schools to ensure wraparound care is offered to parents either on school site provided by school, on site provided by independent providers or off site by local providers including childminders. School Effectiveness Team will work with all parties to broker relationships.

We also appreciate councillor support in including early year's education and childcare in any new strategic developments.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The key risk is associated with the recruitment and retention of staff and lack of suitable premises. We have outlined some of the measures we have taken to support this earlier in the report.
- 3.2 Lack of suitable early education and childcare for children with complex needs remains an issue in Thurrock. We work with providers to promote inclusive practice and share information on how to access the Disability Access Funding and Early Years Inclusion Funding. Providing wraparound care for school aged children who attend special provision may be difficult as many of these children access school transport. We will work with our special education providers and our colleagues in School's transport to find a solution to this challenge.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Children's O&S are asked to review and offer comment on this report. The Department of Education recognises the importance of local governance arrangements and, as a result, Local Authorities must present the childcare sufficiency assessment to a range of governance structures. The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to make sure that there are enough early education and childcare places within its locality for working parents or for parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0 to 14 (or up to 18 for disabled children). The Childcare Sufficiency Report is a statutory report that must be published on our website and updated annually.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 We work closely with all our early years settings to gather data and feedback and continue to work with them to identify potential opportunities. The School Effectiveness Team capture parents' views via an on-line parental survey, the Local Offer website and the Family Information Service to ensure we are capturing the voice of parents/carers.

6. Impact On Corporate Policies, Priorities, Performance and Community Impact

- 6.1 This report contributes to the following corporate priorities:
1. People - a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live, and stay.
 2. Prosperity - a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Head of Finance, Children Services

This report is part of the statutory duty as set out in the Childcare Act 2006 which states Local Authorities need to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of early years entitlement with due regard to planning and growth across the Local Authority.

Funding to fulfil this duty is provided by Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) through the Dedicated Schools Grant. The funding to the Local Authority in 2023/24 is to be based on the January 2023 and 2024 census.

Funding to providers is based on a termly head count and distributed through the local early years funding formula.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Judith Knight**
Interim Deputy Head of Legal (Social Care and Education)

The Council has a statutory duty under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 to secure sufficient early education and childcare for working parents. In determining whether the provision of childcare is sufficient to meet those requirements, the Council must have regard to the needs of parents in the area for childcare where working tax credit or universal credit is payable as well as the provision of childcare which is suitable for disabled children. Disability has the same definition as in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council is obliged to have regard to the statutory guidance of the Secretary of State. The guidance requires that the Council produce an annual report that is considered by elected members. The format of the report is not prescribed but the guidance suggests it covers provision for specific groups of children, supply and demand, affordability, and any gaps in provision.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer | Adults, Housing & Health

The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010, and equality of opportunity is a key principle of all early years' providers; they ensure they meet statutory duties around offering places to all early year's children. Part of the Ofsted requirement is to evidence how they have ensured quality of opportunity. Further information on the demand of childcare in Thurrock including data in relation to children with Special Educational Needs and or Disability (SEND), the school age children and the take up funded early education places, is contained within the body of the assessment.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children)

None

8. Appendices to this report:

- **Appendix 1: Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2023**



Childcare
Sufficiency Assessment

Report Author:

Andrea Winstone

Head of Service, School Effectiveness and SEND

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16 January 2024	ITEM: 10
Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Update on Thurrock Adult Community College	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Keeley Donati – Acting Principal Thurrock Adult Community College	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Assistant Director, Education & Skills	
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Executive Director of Children Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

1. Recommendations:

- 1.1 Children’s Overview & Scrutiny to gain an understanding of how the college’s curriculum offer meets local need and priorities.
- 1.2 Children’s Overview & Scrutiny to gain an understanding of the funding streams the college uses to deliver provision to residents of Thurrock.
- 1.3 Children’s Overview & Scrutiny to have an update on the college’s actions and progress on the areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted inspection report published in June 2023.

2. Introduction & Background:

- 2.1 Thurrock Council’s Adult Learning Service, Thurrock Adult Community College, provides learning opportunities that improve people’s lives and outcomes, enable people to participate in their communities and support growth and prosperity in Thurrock.
- 2.2 **College Intent** - Leaders and managers have designed and planned a broad curriculum offer with the intent to engage with the hard to reach, support residents to become active citizens and reduce social isolation, develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need to take advantage of the considerable opportunities for employment both within Thurrock and in the surrounding areas.

- 2.3 Thurrock Adult Community College reaches approximately 1400 adults across Thurrock each academic year. Opportunities include skills development at level 2 and below in Essential Skills (maths, English, ESOL [English for Speakers of Other Languages] & digital skills) and level 3 and below in vocational qualifications as well as Community and Family Learning.
- 2.4 Vocational training includes Childcare, Teaching Assistants, Counselling, Bookkeeping and Health & Social Care.

3. Ofsted Inspection

- 3.1 In May 2023 the college underwent a full Ofsted inspection. The outcome of this inspection is now available in the published Ofsted report. The Lead Inspector acknowledged that leaders and managers were aware of the areas for improvement and had put in place clear actions to address these. However, they felt that the improvements were not moving at a sufficient pace and that it was too early to see the full impact.
- 3.2 Apart from the apprenticeship provision, the Ofsted gradings were in line with the college's own self-assessment. Leaders and managers had assessed the apprentice provision as *requires improvement*.
- 3.3 With an overall grade of *requires improvement*, the college will now have a monitoring visit within 7 – 13 months of the date the report was published (June 2023). The inspectors will focus on the areas for improvement and judge how well the college has made progress against these. The outcome of the monitoring visit will be either – *insufficient progress, satisfactory progress, or significant progress*.
The college's aim is for the inspectors to agree that the college has made *significant progress*.
Following the monitoring visit the college will be subject to a full inspection within 12-30 months of the monitoring visit.

3.4 Key Actions following inspection

- In view of the significant work needed to improve the quality of the apprenticeship provision, Senior Leaders, with the agreement of the Governing Body made the decision to cease apprentice training provision for Thurrock Council and transfer the apprentices on programme to an alternative training provider. 4 providers were invited to tender to take over the apprentices' "Off the Job Training". The decision was made for the provision for twelve apprentices to move to South Essex College with effect from 1 September 2023. The college continued to support five apprentices who were close to their End Point Assessment. Four completed by the end of October 2023 and all passed within their planned end date. One apprentice failed but had been on long term sick leave.

- End of July 2023 a two day CPD programme was held for all tutors, content related to improvements identified at inspection and by senior leaders. Follow up session was held in October 2023 for tutors to showcase improved practice as a result of the training.
- Regular CPD sessions planned from September 2023 for curriculum staff – no classes were run on Monday afternoon to ensure attendance at training.
- In a planned restructure of the Business Support Teams a new role of Team Leader Quality & Exams was created and in post from 1 August 2023. This post supports the Assistant Principal with the coordination and administration tasks involved in the quality assurance/improvement tasks that are ongoing through the academic year.
- Vacant curriculum posts have now been filled.
- The college is a member of the Federation of Inspection Nominees and they provided support with the Quality Improvement Plan ensuring it was robust and sufficiently addressed the areas for improvement at inspection. The college's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) includes all improvements identified at inspection and actions needed to address these.
- An Ofsted Inspector with many years' experience as a senior leader in Adult Community Learning provided three days support to the Quality team and tutors in October and November. This included class visits, feedback to tutors and feedback on the college's SAR (Self Assessment Report). In January 2024 they will carry out a "mock Ofsted monitoring visit".
- The Local Skills Improvement Plan Director from the Essex Chamber of Commerce worked with the Programme Managers to ensure curriculum planning addresses priority areas in Essex and local skills gaps.
- The Principal reached out to the FE Commissioners for additional support in making improvements and the first visit is planned for January 2024.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Head of Finance, Children Services

Funding Streams Adult Education Budget	1/8/23 – 31/7/24
Adult Skills	£544,704
Community Learning	£705,513
Free courses for jobs – level 3	£109,418
Advanced Learner Loans	£8,962 (includes £1658 bursary)
Total	£1,368,597

These funding streams are received from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) are grant funded and ring fenced for the provision of adult education. Apart from a nominal amount of fee income from learners this constitutes the college's income for all expenditure.

Thurrock Adult Community college is the Borough's lead provider for Multiply funding, a DfE initiative that runs from 1 October 2022 – 31 March 2025

Multiply	
1/10/22 – 31/3/23	£346,144 (£40,137 clawback)
1/4/23 – 31/3/24	£399,397
1/4/24 – 31/3/25	£399,397

4.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Nicola Monerville**
Principal Safeguarding solicitor, Children, Adults and Education – LBB

The Committee is not required to make any decisions about which legal comments are needed. There are, therefore, no further legal comments.

4.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities
Adults, Housing and Health

The college provides a range of additional learning support options to enable access for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. The college learner population reflects the population of Thurrock. An increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers are attending ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses to support them to integrate into the local community and gain employment.

There is no gap in achievement rates for learners receiving learning support or from different ethnic backgrounds.

The college also provides help with travel costs, course fees, childcare fees and loans laptops to learners who are unemployed or on a low income. The college celebrates various events throughout the year to celebrate diversity and promote equality.

5. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

1. Ofsted Inspection Report June 2023



Appendix 1 - Ofsted
Report June 23.pdf

2. Implementation Plan 2023-2024



Appendix 2
Implementation Plan.c

3. Accountability Agreement 2023-2024



Appendix 3 -
Accountability Agreeen

4. Adult Community Education Briefing Note



Appendix 4 - Adult
Community Educator

Report Author Contact Details:

Keeley Donati

Acting Principal Thurrock Adult Community College

Keeley.Donati@thurrock.gov.uk

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**Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2023/24**

Dates of Meetings: 15 June 2023, 12 September 2023, 16 November 2023, 16 January 2024, 12 March 2024

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member	Description of Report
15 June 2023			
Terms of Reference	Democratic Services	Officers	
Youth Cabinet Update	Angela Surrey	Standing Item	
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board: Progress Update on Peer Review and Case Review – Action Plans	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item/ Members	
Statutory Duties Report - Children's Social Care	Janet Simon	Officers	
Statutory Duties Report – Education	Michele Lucas	Officers	

Children's Social Care Performance – Quarter 4 2022-23	Janet Simon	Chair	
Fees and Charges Report			
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item	
12 September 2023			
Youth Cabinet Update	Angela Surrey	Standing Item	
2022/23 Annual Complaints and Representations Report – Children's Social Care	Lee Henley	Officers	
Fostering Recruitment Update	Janet Simon	Members	
Family Hubs / Start for Life Update	Clare Moore	Officers	
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board: Progress Update on Peer Review and Case Review – Action Plans	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item	

Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item	
16 November 2023			
Youth Cabinet Update	Angela Surrey	Standing Item	
Children's Social Care Performance Quarter 1	Janet Simon	Officers	
Fees and Charges Pricing Strategy 2023-24	Kelly McMillan	Officer	
Update on Aveley & Orsett Heath Schools	Michele Lucas		
Update on Adult Community College			
Update on Stable Homes Built on Love			
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item	
Childrens Transport contract re-procurement 2024	Sarah Williams		

Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item	
16 January 2024			
Youth Cabinet Update	Angela Surrey	Standing Item	
RAAC Update	Sarah Williams		
Educational Attainment Data 2022/23	Michele Lucas		
Thurrock Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment Report 2023	Michele Lucas		
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item	
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing item	
12 March 2024			
Youth Cabinet Update Report	Angela Surrey	Standing Item	
Overview of Responsibilities of			

Portfolio holder for Education			
Overview of Responsibilities of Portfolio holder for Children's Services			
Children's Obesity			
Update from Working Group on Mental Health			
Update from Working Group on Health Living (Childhood Obesity)			
Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Partnership Board	Priscilla Bruce-Annan	Standing Item	
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item	

Updated: Jan 2024

Clerk: Rhiannon Whiteley

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