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| 3 February 2011 | | ITEM 5 |
| Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee | | |
| Progress report on Primary School Standards | | |
| Report of: Christina Pumfrey, Strategic Leader, School Improvement, Learning and Skills | | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Non-key | |
| Accountable Head of Service: Carmel Littleton | | |
| Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Director of Children's Services | | |
| This report is public | | |
| Purpose of Report: to provide an update on Progress in Primary School Standards | | |

Comment [sj]: PLEASE CLICK THIS BOX ONCE and enter the date of the meeting (in font 16, not capitals)

Comment [sj]: Please leave this for completion by Democratic Services

Comment [sj]: PLEASE CLICK THIS BOX ONCE and enter the name of the Committee you are reporting to (in font 16, not capitals)

Comment [sj]: PLEASE CLICK THIS BOX ONCE and enter the title of your report (in font 16 and in capitals) - Cabinet

Comment [a j]: Please enter the name and job title of the person who will be presenting the report

Comment [sj]: Please enter details of any Wards and Communities affected by the report. If this section is not

Comment [sj]: Yes/No/Not Applicable – a 'Key Decision' is generally one affecting more than 2 wards or above 650,000

Comment [sj]: Please state the Head of Service's name and job title

Comment [sj]: Please state Director's name and job title

Comment [sj]: State whether your report is Public or Exempt. If Exempt (i.e. not to be given to the public or discussed in

Comment [sj]: Briefly set out the purpose of your report

Comment [sj]: Please provide a summary of the key points in your report

Comment [sj]: The recommendations should be set out in bold in the form of the decision that the decision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Targeted support for primary schools has been developed further to ensure significant improvement in key schools which are underperforming;
- The restructured School Improvement Team will develop an increasingly collaborative approach to improve standards through a cluster model approach with schools
- Intervention strategies to increase progress and attainment in all years are embedded and positive impact can be seen;
- Standards in Early Years outcomes show significant improvement.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee note the progress made in respect of Primary School Standards and recommend officers to consider the following:

- 1.1 The refreshed Children and Young People's Plan maintains the priority and support to ensure that primary school standards improve to reach national averages within two years.**
- 1.2 Support for key schools is continued and further increased;**

- 1.3 **A strategy to ensure Quality First Teaching is developed to improve outcomes for all children.**
- 1.4 **Strengthening leadership and governance remains a priority area of activity**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Primary School standards is a key issue for the Local Authority. Outcomes at Key Stage One and Two have remained below the national average consistently and the gap has not been narrowed, despite significant improvement in secondary schools standards over the same time.
- 2.2 Primary School standards is a priority for challenge and support as the Local Authority strives to ensure that standards in the 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.
- 2.3 A report titled “Achieving and sustaining Excellence: Standards in the Early Years, Primary and Secondary Phases in 2010” presented to the Overview and Scrutiny on 26 October 2010 gave the current outcomes for pupils in primary schools.
- 2.4 This report presents an update on progress and activities focused on raising primary school standards.

3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

3.1 Background to Current LA Support/Interventions to Raise Standards

- 3.1.1 Schools continue to be monitored by School Improvement Partners (SIPs) and LA officers who at present are attached to specific schools. The data team are working very closely with School Improvement to monitor progress and outcomes for all pupils.
- 3.1.2 The restructure currently underway in the School Improvement Team will see a move to ensuring that there is closer working within a locality (cluster) between a group of schools and a School Improvement Officer (SIO). This close and focused work will ensure that schools which require support can work more closely in collaboration with the SIO, other schools, and where needed, the intensive support team. “Quality First Teaching” – high quality teaching which is recognised through a national approach - will be a central focus of the work to ensure that children are well taught from the outset. This will see a gradual decrease in the need for significant and prolonged interventions for many pupils and achieve better age-related outcomes at each key stage.

Comment [s]: You should briefly explain why the report is on the agenda - See para. 5.3 and 5.4 of the report writing guidelines.

Comment [s]: Other headings may be appropriate. The report should outline the reasoning that leads to its recommendations and **must** include:

1. a brief summary of options considered;
2. consultation outcomes
3. a risk assessment.
4. Whether the responsible cabinet members have been consulted/contributed to the report (NB professional and political advice must be clearly distinguished)

- See para.5.5 of the report writing guidelines.

3.2 Primary School Targeted Support

- 3.2.1 A key strategy to secure improved outcomes at Key Stage 2 (age 11) in May 2011 when year 6 pupils are assessed by SATs tests has been developed by the Strategic Lead for School Improvement. Six primary schools have been targeted through data analysis which shows that these schools have significant numbers of pupils who, with additional teaching, can achieve at the expected benchmark of level 4 in both English and Mathematics. These schools include Shaw Primary, Stifford Clays Junior, Little Thurrock Primary, Purfleet Primary, East Tilbury Junior and St Thomas Primary.
- 3.2.2 These schools have been offered and have accepted additional 1-2-1 tuition places to boost outcomes in year 6.
- 3.2.3 Each school has been allocated a national strategies consultant who is working directly with groups of children for two or three times a week to boost progress towards level 4.
- 3.2.4 Early analysis of Autumn term data indicates that pupil progress is accelerated and these key schools are on track to meet their targets.

3.3 Future Developments for Intensive Support in Schools

The Strategic Lead for School Improvement is currently developing an intensive support team who will work as a team in schools requiring a coherent and intensive support package. The team will be deployed in specific, identified schools for a time limited basis, for example six weeks, to work in partnership with the senior leadership team across all areas of the school to effect rapid change in the quality of learning and teaching. This team will be operational from April 2011.

- 3.3.1 In addition, development of a Directory of *Excellent Practice* is underway which will identify where outstanding aspects of school practice exist and will note the capacity of particular schools to offer support to other schools. This is a key strategy to ensure that an “intelligent accountability” sees schools working more closely together to develop standards. It is being developed in partnership with schools,
- 3.4 **Intervention programmes to Narrow the Gap**
A number of activities are in progress to improve the attainment of pupils who are not achieving at expected levels in English and Maths. Details of these programmes and outcomes can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.4.1 A number of national programmes to support and enhance progress are now fully embedded and are showing significant impact. This includes **1-2-1 tuition** in targeted schools where there has been a very high take up of opportunities tuition offered and the scheme has already demonstrated rapid improvement in English and Maths in years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

- 3.4.2 Sixty-nine children in Thurrock have taken part in a programme called **Numbers Count** during 2009 – 2010, with a further 19 taking part this term (Spring 2011). Results show outstanding impact. On average, children made 14 months progress after receiving (on average) forty-one x 30 minute lessons over a 12-week period.
- 3.4.3 Six targeted schools are taking part in the **Every Child a Reader** programme for year 1 pupils. This programme is for pupils at the very earliest stages of reading who have no recordable reading age. This year Dilkes, St Marys, Woodside and Chafford Hundred Campus Primary are continuing with their involvement from last year and two new schools Manor Infants and Deneholm have joined this year. Results from this programme are excellent and most pupils will have caught up with their peers by the end of their involvement.
- 3.4.4 To tackle the issues identified in underperformance in writing six schools are taking part in the **Every Child a Writer** programme which provides intensive training for teachers in improving writing in years 3 and 4 through the support and leadership of nationally recognised specialists in this area of teaching. Additional 1-2-1 tuition is provided for identified pupils as part of this programme.). There are six schools involved in the programme: Abbots Hall, St Thomas, Benyon, Purfleet, Holy Cross and Little Thurrock.
- 3.4.5 The LA will ‘capture’ the good practice from these programmes so that it can be shared with other schools in the future. The scope of the projects will be widened to maximise impact across more schools and pupils.

3.5. Update on progress - Early Years

- 3.5.1 Targeted support by the School Improvement Early Years team and School Improvement Officers working in schools and settings has seen a significant increase the percentage of children achieving 78pts with 6+ points in Communication Language and Literacy (CLL) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED).
- 3.5.2 The percentage of Early Years Ofsted judgements **being** “good” or “outstanding” has increased significantly:

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| April 2009 | 42.9% |
| April 2010 | 60% (an increase of 17.1%) |
| October 2010 | 62.2% |

- 3.5.2 The quality of providers in early years settings and child minders has been a focus for development. LA officers have trained 1784 practitioners from 224 settings from Sept 09 to July 10. EYFS leaders’ forums and managers’ forum for settings have been established thus raising the quality of provision.
- 3.5.3 Practice has been established to use nationally accredited materials called *Progress Matters* for tracking children’s progress which is already impacting in schools and settings. This is evidenced in School Improvement Partners visit notes.

3.5.4 Every Child A Talker (ECAT) a national programme, has focused on effective communication of expectation and outcomes to settings, matching early language training and support to identified needs. Monitoring of the impact has shown a significant reduction of children at risk in pre-schools in listening and attention (14%) speech, sounds and talk (23%), understanding of language (17%) and social skills (22%).

3.5.5 *Future Developments*

A new team of 3 Early Education Improvement Officers will be appointed in the CEF restructure and this team will work directly to the School Improvement Manager within the localities (clusters). This dedicated team will challenge and support schools and settings to embed good practice and secure successful outcomes above the national average within two years.

3.6 **School Leadership – Update on Progress**

3.6.1 The stability of school leadership has varied across school sectors during the last three years. In secondary and special schools there have been few changes in leadership with just one school with a long-term interim headship arrangement. In primary schools there has been a very different picture. In April 2010 there were 28% of primary headships filled by temporary headship arrangements. This figure has reduced considerably to 18% in January 2011. One of these temporary arrangements is due to a long term sickness absence and in the other schools, governors have made the strategic decision to delay making an appointment because of the implications of the LA capital strategy programme. The LA has been proactive in ensuring that temporary headship arrangements can provide strong leadership through brokering executive headteachers from within Thurrock and securing experienced interim headteachers externally.

3.6.2 There continues to be a low number of applicants to primary school headships, however applications since April 2010 have been of a good calibre. As a result four new primary headteachers started in September 2010 and of these three were experienced headteachers and one has benefited from being seconded as a temporary headteacher in a primary school. There are far more applicants for secondary headships and two schools recently were able to appoint from a strong field. There is an increasing number of female applicants to primary schools. No primary headship posts attracted any black or minority ethnic candidates or people with disabilities and this is an area to address through the borough's leadership strategy. However, in the secondary phase this is not the case and a black, female candidate was successfully appointed this term.

3.6.3 In April 2010 the proportion of schools with leadership judged to be good or better was 37% in primary schools, 70% in secondary and 100% in special schools. In January 2010 the proportion remained high in secondary and special schools and had increased to 43% in primary schools. This is a result of the increased stability in leadership that is in place.

3.6.4 As part of the strategy to develop the quality of school leadership currently supporting nine experienced and highly successful headteachers are currently being supported to undertake national training to become Local Leaders of Education. These colleagues have a proven track record in supporting others and will play a key role in providing support for less successful schools.

3.6.5 There are six deputy headteachers who have already achieved the National Professional Qualification for Headship and are actively seeking headship. They are taking part in a targeted support programme to help them achieve headship in the near future. In addition, we are working closely with deputy headteachers who have a clear interest in headship and are considering applying for NPQH.

There has been a programme to raise governors' awareness of new models of school leadership and organisation. As a result many governing bodies are now taking an active approach to succession planning and seeking advice about possible models.

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

4.1 Children's services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 October 10, report entitled "Achieving and sustaining Excellence: Standards in the Early Years, Primary and Secondary Phases in 2010"

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

5.1 None noted

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Yannick Stupples-Whyley**
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YStupples-Whyley@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications within the report.

6.2 Legal

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

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comment [j]: This should include any consultation with Ward Members and Shadow Portfolio Holders, as well as any public or statutory consultation

Comment [a]: Please refer to Section 5.7 of the Report Writing Guidelines

Comment [sj]: This section should always be completed – if they are dealt with fully in another part of the report, they also need a brief cross reference here. The names and job titles of the officers providing the implications should be provided in full – see Guideline 6.1 and please note Democratic Services Deadlines and ensure that officers providing implications are given 5 clear working days to work on the report. Authors can write implications but they must be signed off by the appropriate officers

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.2

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.3

6.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
 Telephone and email: 01375 652472
SDealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The Council has a statutory duty set out under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services. The refreshed Children and Young People’s Plan provides a key mechanism targeting support at groups that are harder to reach, such as Thurrock’s BME and traveller communities. This is a positive move in reducing attainment inequalities. The report highlights the issue of leadership in schools, and this can also be effectively supported by training for governors in the area of equality. The stronger links in existing plans for example the vision outlined in the CYP Plan and the statutory duties around race, gender and disability equality will create a greater focus on ways to tackle inequalities for many children and young people.

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

None noted

7. **CONCLUSION**

There are reliable indicators that targeted schools are improving their performance against national indicators. This must continue and school senior leadership teams held to account for performance. A number of proven interventions are being used to raise standards in literacy and numeracy in schools which are below national levels of attainment. There is evidence that leadership in primary schools in improving but this remains a clear priority for further action.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

- Achieving and sustaining Excellence: Standards in the Early Years, Primary and Secondary Phases in 2010 – report to Children’s services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 October 2010.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Appendix 1: Further Information on Targeted Interventions.

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Comment [sj]: See Guideline 6.4

Comment [sj]: This should inform the recommendations in the report

Comment [sj]: See Guideline 8. If any Papers are to be placed in the Members room that relate to this report, you should also list them here

Comment [sj]: List the Appendices referred to in the Report

Comment [sj]: Insert the full contact details of the author of the report