

<b>30 October 2013</b>		<b>ITEM 9</b>
<b>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>HEADLINE KEY STAGE RESULTS</b>		
<b>Report of:</b> Vivien Cutler, Strategic Lead, School Improvement, Learning & Skills		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> As below		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services		
<b>This report is public</b>		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> to provide an overview of standards across all phases in settings and schools based on provisional national tests and examination results for summer 2013.		

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1.1 That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the provisional outcomes of the summer 2013 tests and examinations and commends pupils, schools and parents/carers on their achievements.**
- 1.2 That the Committee considers how the draft Education Commission recommendations and existing strategies might best be deployed to raise achievement still further across all key stages, especially at Key Stage 2.**

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 2.1 Meeting the national average at all key stages has been a priority for the council for the past few years with the target of achieving outcomes in line with and beyond national at Key Stage 2, the priority for 2013.**
  - 2.1.1 As a result of intensive support and training for Early Years teaching and moderation in settings and schools, outcomes for Foundation Stage are above national, as are GCSE and individual subjects at Key Stage 1.**

2.1.2 The report presents provisional data, giving an overall picture of the performance of settings and schools in summer 2013. It is important to note that, with the publication of validated data later in the year, there could be minor changes. A full report that drills down into the data for different groups of pupils will be provided in the New Year.

### 3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

#### 3.1 Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5)

3.1.1 The mechanism for assessing the levels of development for 5 year olds has changed markedly from previous years so it is not possible to provide trend data as with other phases.

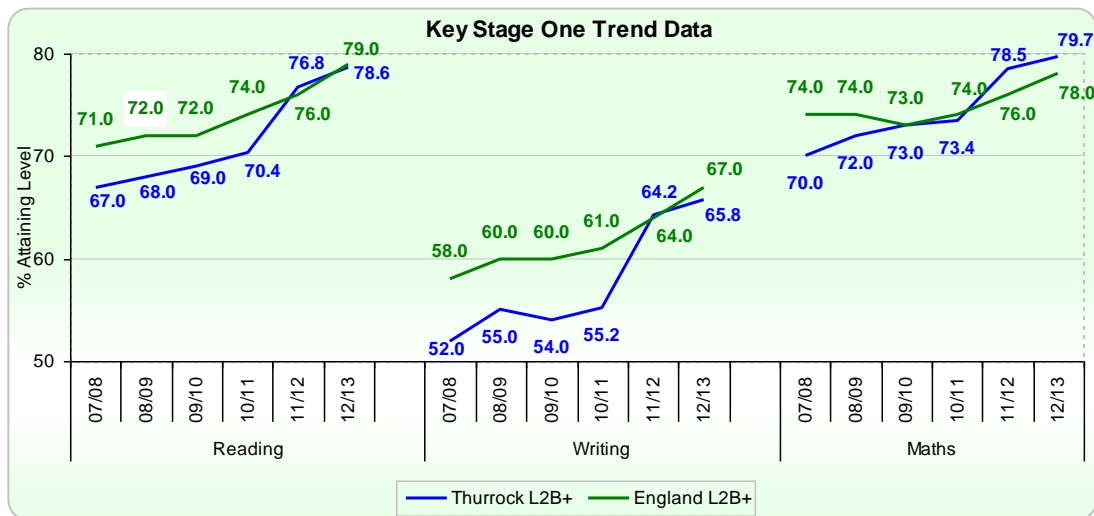
3.1.2 The Good Level of Development (GLD) replaces the previous measure of 78 points across all 6 areas of learning including 6 points in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL) and Personal, Social and Emotional development (PSE).

2012/13	GLD	Average Total Points
<b>Thurrock (All)</b>	53%	32.5
<b>- Boys</b>	43%	31.3
<b>- Girls</b>	64%	33.9
<b>National (Estimated)</b>	52%	33

3.1.3 To reach a percentage of children that make a good level of development, each child will be assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals; whether she/he meets the level, has not yet reached the level or exceeded it and points awarded accordingly in a range from a minimum of 17 to a maximum of 51. If a child meets every Early Learning Goal, she/he will receive 34 points.

3.1.4 The provisional result for Thurrock is very encouraging as it puts the borough scores above the national and above others in the East of England region that might have been expected to exceed Thurrock's performance. As referred to at 2.1.1, this is an outcome of significant investment in school improvement staff for this phase and expertise in training and supporting staff in schools and settings.

### 3.2 Key Stage 1 (age 7)

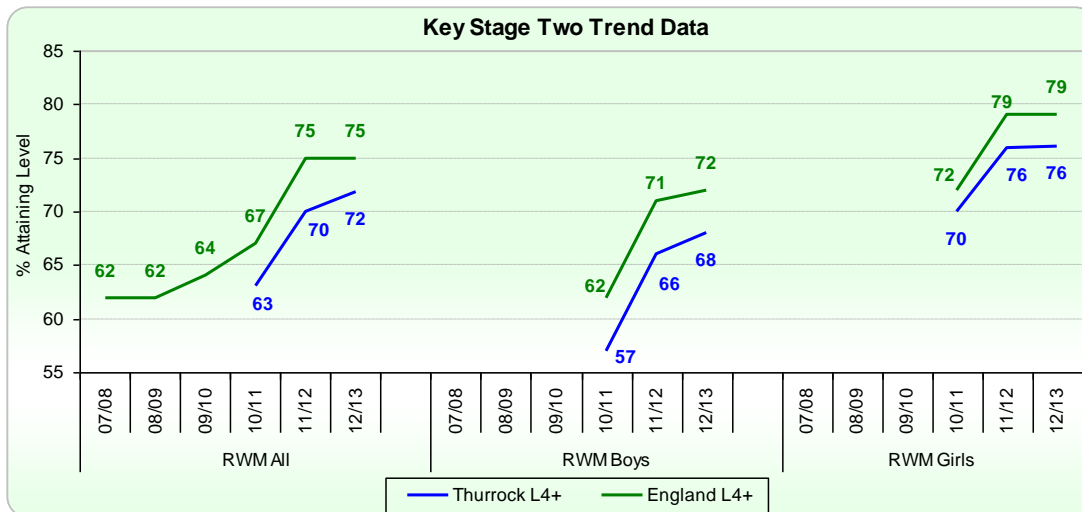


3.2.1 There has been no change to the benchmark measure for Key Stage 1 this year. Children are expected to achieve at least Level 2B+ in reading, writing and maths. Thurrock’s outcomes for reading are in line with national and on a three year upward trajectory. In writing, they are 1% below national but also on a three year upward trajectory and in maths they exceed the national figure for the second year running.

3.2.2 At all levels – 2+, 2B+ and 3+ – the majority of schools have demonstrated improvement. Where the gap with national persists is in the higher level, 3+, across all 3 subjects but most notably in reading.

3.2.3 This summer saw the second year of the Phonics check, undertaken at the end of Year 1. Thurrock children have made a significant leap to 72%, a 13% increase from 2012 and 2% above the estimate for the national result. This will help to underpin improvement in the standard of reading at the end of Key Stage 1 for the future.

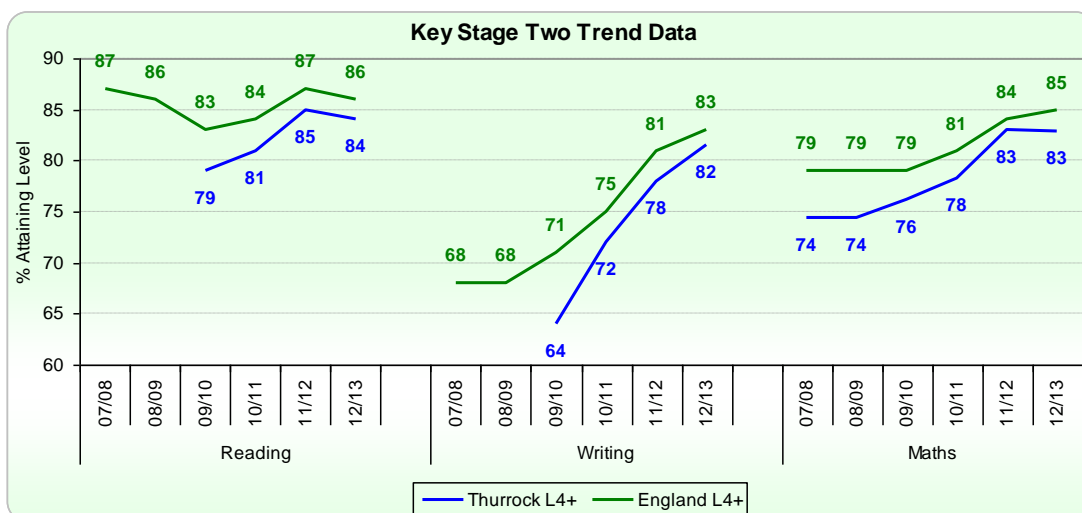
### 3.3 Key Stage Two (age 11)



3.3.1 As with the Early Years Foundation Stage, the benchmarked standard at the end of the key stage has changed since last year; instead of measuring the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4+ in English and maths combined, the scores are aggregated in reading, writing and maths.

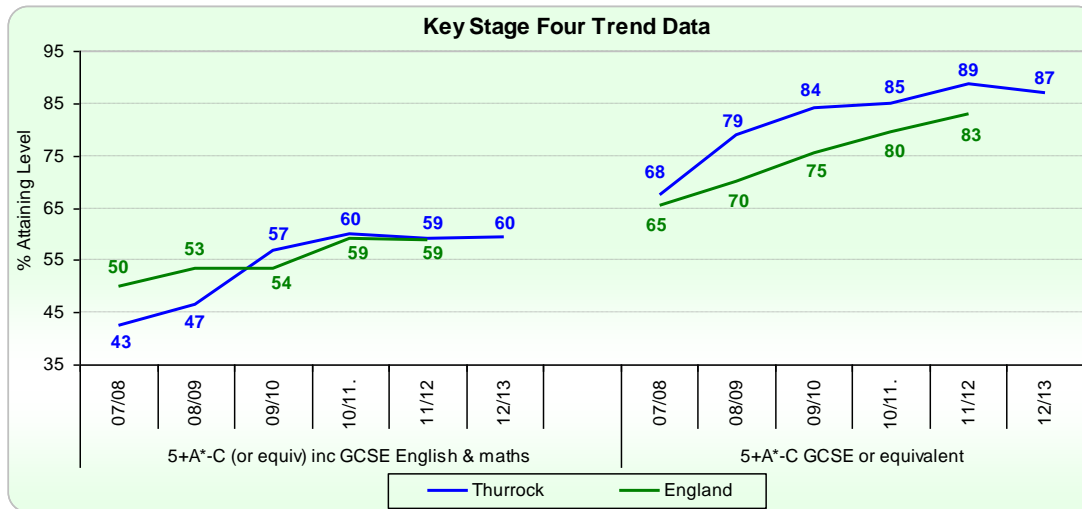
3.3.2 For the third year, there is an upward trend in combined subjects. The 2% improvement from last year exceeds the national rate and has closed the gap with national 3% from 5% last year. There is a need to improve Level 5+ performance across all 3 areas.

3.3.3 Boys' achievement has continued to improve, a welcome development, but the flat lining of girls' outcomes, particularly in reading, is a concern. There are significant gaps between boys and girls across all phases, some where the data seem counterintuitive. This will be a focus for further research and identification of good practice to share across all schools.



- 3.3.4 The graph above shows that the upward trajectory towards narrowing the gap with national continues, and at a faster rate than the country-wide rate, It is pleasing to note that writing – a key area of improvement focus for schools - has improved by 4%. While the three year trend is good, it is important to increase even further the rate of improvement, so that reading, writing and maths are all above average.
- 3.3.5 This year saw the introduction of a test for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. Thurrock schools' results were 2% below the national average. It is not clear as yet whether the results of this kind of test will be incorporated in the overall Key Stage 2 results in 2014.
- 3.3.6 Four schools, all now academies, are below the floor standard at Key Stage 2. Three of these remain below from last year to be joined by a new school. In two of the schools, staffing turbulence has been a key issue and this impacts to a degree at all levels in all phases.

### 3.4 Key Stage 4 (age 16)



- 3.4.1 Thurrock schools have managed to increase the percentage of students attaining the benchmark measure of 5A\*-C passes at GCSE including English and maths against a predicted fall in the national figure. There have now been two years of change to grade boundaries which have impacted significantly on the core subjects of English and maths. While fewer schools were subject to the impact of these this summer, it undoubtedly affected the overall figure. Pleasingly, one student at the PRU achieved the measure and we expect more to do so in the future.
- 3.4.2 There is a greater focus this year on the measure of 5A\*-C passes including English and maths at GCSE only i.e. without the equivalent vocational or applied exams. It is encouraging to note that Thurrock's rate increased by 3%. Another measure that is increasingly used to denote greater academic rigour is the percentage succeeding in achieving A\*-C passes in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects comprising English, maths, sciences, humanities and a modern or classical foreign language. Whatever the view of the breadth of that kind of curriculum offer, commendation is undoubtedly due for the 9% increase in students achieving the EBacc.
- 3.4.3 The range of results at Key Stage 4 is still too wide, spanning some 54 percentage points, although only one school is below the floor standard this year. To kick start a substantial and sustainable improvement across all schools, heads and principals have agreed to explore working with Essex and Southend schools in a regional 'families of schools' exercise that will give access to a wider spectrum of experience and expertise.

### 3.5 Key Stage 5 (post-16)

- 3.5.1 This is the first year that Level 3 results, both A level and vocational equivalents such as the BTEC Extended Diploma, have been reported in

Thurrock. In 2012, there was only one school sixth form with A level results to note. From this academic year there are now 5 centres, including the consortium representing 3 schools. Of these, 3 currently offer both A level and BTEC courses. All centres have signed up to the UCAS Progress website which allows students to view and compare courses and apply online. They are now experiencing external interest to boost their numbers.

- 3.5.2 The pass rate for BTEC averaged 99%, with a healthy representation of the higher grades. Two out of the three sixth forms with A level students achieved 100% pass rate and a creditable percentage of A\*-B grades.
- 3.5.3 In order to develop and share expertise amongst the sixth forms, a post-16 network has been set up. Links with its regional counterparts are being progressed to widen access to good practice both in pedagogy and enrichment activities.
- 3.5.4 A more detailed report on post 16 results will be presented when national and statistic neighbour comparisons are made available.

### **3.6 Looked After Children (LAC)**

- 3.6.1 At Key Stage 2, 40% achieved the benchmark measure of 2B+ for reading, writing and maths combined. This reflected almost exactly the proportion that did not have special educational needs or were being educated in a non-mainstream setting. At GCSE, one student from the cohort of 23 obtained 5A\*-C passes including English and maths. A number of post-16 students acquired qualifications, too, at colleges and in training.
- 3.6.2 Throughout the past year, it has become increasingly obvious that the system used for tracking the progress of LAC - and thus enabling Virtual School staff to commission appropriate intervention - has severe shortcomings. Following a tendering process, this will be replaced in the New Year by an interactive system used by many local authorities both large and small.
- 3.6.3 With the increase in funding for LAC via the Pupil Premium, a greater scrutiny of and support for schools' role in raising achievement for LAC is being undertaken. This will be a key tool in boosting the achievement of children who are looked after.

## **4 CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 4.1 The provisional results have been shared with headteachers and principals through Headteachers Briefing and comment invited. A second report, with validated data and more detail of the performance of different groups in each phase, will be presented to Overview and Scrutiny in the spring term.

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

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

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**  
 Telephone and email: **01375 652010**  
[sclark@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:sclark@thurrock.gov.uk)

There are no direct financial implications in this report.

### 6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
 Telephone and email: **07971316599**  
[Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk](mailto:Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.org.uk)

A duty is imposed on the Council by s13A of the Education Act (EA) 1996 duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential.

S22(3)(a) of the Children Act 1989 imposed a duty to as amended by section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on the Council to safeguard and promote the welfare of any child it looks after, and this includes a duty to promote their educational achievement.

### 6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**  
 Telephone and email: **01376 652472**  
[sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk)

There are no direct diversity and equality implications in this report. The spring term report will present more granulated data regarding the performance of key groups.

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

#### 6.4.1 RISKS

- 6.4.2 Schools, including academies, that do not meet the floor standard are at risk of inspection by Ofsted and intervention by the relevant accountable body.



6.4.3 A failure to raise standards will exacerbate recruitment and retention difficulties and make it harder for children and young people to reach age related expectations and to progress to further education, training and employment in the jobs that growth in the borough will generate.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

7.1.1 Pupils and those who support them in and beyond school are to be commended for the progress that has been made this year. It is important that the good progress in many areas is now built on to ensure that in every subject, at every age, improvement which outstrips the national standard is made. Forensic analysis of data to target support and extensive use of school-to-school mechanisms in addition to interventions by school improvement officers and external consultants has proved effective.

7.1.2 Where schools have found it more difficult to improve standards a number of contributory factors may be identified:

- continuing recruitment and retention issues at all levels
- the quality of leadership and of governance
- further changes to assessment regimes (although Early Years, with the greatest amount of change, is an area that has seen improvement)
- achieving a consistently high standard of teaching

7.1.3 In response, a number of strategies are already being adopted, such as working in partnership with and commissioning support from the Teaching Schools and engaging with more schools regionally in a systematic sharing of good practice. Support for governance has been given greater prominence with increased numbers of governors attending training leading to positive comments from Ofsted inspectors in reports.

7.1.4 It is anticipated that the Education Commission report will make several recommendations in addition to those outlined above. These include:

- helping to build and communicate a compelling case for change and a powerful vision for education across the community in Thurrock
- redefining the role of the local authority and agreeing with partners what change means in practice
- growing the role of schools themselves as the leaders in supporting other schools to improve

7.1.5 Further consultation will take place in order to maintain momentum from the Commission's work and put in place the recommendations adopted.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:**

- None

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:**

- None

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** Vivien Cutler

**Telephone:** 01375 652539

**E-mail:** [vcutler@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:vcutler@thurrock.gov.uk)