

6 March 2014	ITEM: 6
Corporate Parenting Committee	
Education Results for Looked After Children	
Report of: Keeley Pullen, Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Accountable Head of Service: Barbara Foster Head of Service, Care and Targeted Outcomes	
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services	
This report is Public	
Purpose of Report: To provide members of the Corporate Parenting Committee with an update on the educational outcomes of Looked After Children.	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines educational outcomes for Thurrock Looked After Children in 2012/13 and an analysis of the results.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 The members of the Corporate Parenting Committee are asked to note the educational outcomes for LAC in Key Stage 2 and 4 in 2012/13 and the measures in place for 2014/15 to further support the education of LAC.**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1** Department for Education figures published last year [March 2013] showed only 15% of looked-after children achieved five GCSEs at grades A* to C including Mathematics and English, compared with 59% nationally. The virtual schools system works by providing additional educational support to children, foster carers and schools. Since April 2013 there has not been a headteacher for Virtual School in Thurrock. An interim headteacher for the Virtual School has been working for 2 days per week since November 2013 and this person will be taking up this position full-time in June 2014.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

2012/13 Results – End of Key Stages 2 and 4

3.1 End of Key Stage 2 Results

Key Stage 2

Children in Key Stage 2 are aged 7-11 and are in year 3, 4, 5 and 6. Key Stage Two tests are taken at the end of year 6 before children leave to join a secondary school.

Due to the nature of the change to testing arrangements the following two table show historical data in Table 1 and in Table 2 – 2012/13 data.

Table 1 [Historical Data – provided in previous report]

ENGLISH	2010/11	2011/12
Cohort numbers	7	9
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	5	5
% Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	71.4%	55%
% all Thurrock children who achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	X	82.6%
National Data LAC at Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	53%	X
MATHS	2010/11	2011/12
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	5	5
% Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	71.4%	55%
% all Thurrock children who achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	X	82.9%
National Data LAC Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	52%	X

Table 2 2012/13 Attainment

ENGLISH	2012/13 In borough	2012/13 Out of borough	2012/13 Total
Cohort numbers	5	5	10
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling	3 60%	2 40%	5 50%
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Reading	4 80%	5 100%	9 90%
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ writing	2 40%	5 100%	7 70%
No Thurrock LAC achieving achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ in reading and writing combined	2 40%	5 100%	7 70%
No Thurrock LAC achieving achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ in all aspects of English combined	2 40%	2 40%	4 40%
% Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	Data info not known at time of compilation of report		
% all Thurrock children who achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ English	Data info not known at time of compilation of report		
National Data LAC at Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling	45%		
National Data LAC at Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Reading	63%		
National Data LAC at Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Writing	55%		
MATHS	2012/13 In borough	2012/13 Out of borough	2012/13 Total
No. Thurrock LAC achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	3 60%	5 100%	8 80%
% all Thurrock children who achieved Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	Data info not known at time of compilation of report		
National Data LAC at Key Stage 2 Level 4+ Maths	59%		

3.2 **Level 4**

This is the target level of attainment expected for a pupil at the end of Key Stage 2.

Analysis and Results and Cohort

3.3 **Key Stage 2 Level 4+ - Description of Indicator**

The above table shows the number of looked after children [LAC] who have been in care for at least one year who were in year 6 (Key Stage 2) in 2012/13. It shows the number who achieved at least level 4 and above in English and Maths and has been shown numerically according to number of pupils and as a percentage of that total. It has further been divided to show the differences between pupils placed in or out of borough schools and then as a complete total to make direct comparisons against a national and local figure.

3.4 **Analysis of Results and Cohort [based upon Level 4C+ attainment**

When making judgements it is worthy to note that the cohort of pupils analysed is small and therefore the % worth of each child increases which is illustrated in the table by numbers and percentages.

- The total number of LAC pupils achieving Level 4+ in reading was significantly above the national average figure in 2013 by 27%.
- The total number of LAC pupils achieving Level 4+ in writing was 15% above the national average figure in 2013.
- The total number of LAC pupils achieving Level 4+ in maths was 21% above the national average figure.
- Overall it could be judged that outcomes for LAC pupils in Thurrock compared to the national picture were good. Our aspiration is of course to make this better.
- The national expectation is that pupils must reach at least the expected level of progress which is two levels. Two levels progress from Key Stage 1 Attainment to Key Stage 2 were as follows.
 - Reading 89% of the cohort.
 - Writing 67% of the cohort.
 - Maths 67% of the cohort.
- The national floor target for this is 65% and LAC pupils in Thurrock have exceeded this target.
- There were 3 KS2 (all attending mainstream schools) and 6 KS4 children (all attending special, residential or alternative provision) eligible for a statement of educational needs or were attending a special school.

3.5 End of Key Stage 4 Results

Key Stage 4

Children complete Key Stage 4 in year 11 at the end of their secondary schooling. They are 15/16 years of age at this point.

Thurrock LAC GCSE 2010/11		Thurrock LAC GCSE 2011/12		Thurrock LAC GCSE 2012/13	National Data LAC 2012/13
Cohort	24	Cohort	22	20 18 pupils with results	
GCSE 5 A* – C (inc. E and M)	44%	GCSE 5 A* – C (inc. Eng. and Maths)	5%	5%	15%
GCSE 5 A* - C	X	GCSE 5 A* - C	32%	30%	37%
GCSE 5 A* - G	X	GCSE 5 A* - G	55%	No figure	No figure
Special school or Residential care	5	Special school / Residential care	9	6 pupils 30%	
UAS	3	UAS	5	3 pupils 4 20%	
Attended local schools	15	Attended local schools	7	9 pupils 45%	

3.6 **5A* - C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Mathematics**

This is the target level of attainment for a pupil at the end of Key Stage 4. From April 2009 local authorities report on the percentage of looked after children achieving 5 A*-C at GCSE (or equivalent) including English and mathematics.

3.7 **5 A* - C or equivalent (including English and Maths) LAC - Description of Indicator**

The number of looked after children who were in care for at least one year who were in year 11 and achieved the equivalent of at least 5 A*-C GCSEs, including English and mathematics (or equivalent) as a percentage of the total number of looked after children who were in care for at least one year who were in Year 11.

3.8 **Analysis of Results and Cohort**

- Whilst the percentage of LAC nationally who achieved 5 A* - C GCSEs (or equivalent) including Maths and English in 2012/13 was 15%, the percentage of Thurrock LAC who achieved 5 A* - C GCSEs (or equivalent) including Maths and English in 2012/13 was 5%. This is a consistent trend with Thurrock LAC from the previous year.
- Thurrock's three year trend as a dip in year on year LAC performance reflects:
 - The number of LAC who attended special school or residential care in 2012/13 – 30% of this cohort attended a Special School,

PRU or specialist residential care unit with an educational facility.

- There is a consistent trend with the number of LAC who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UAS) in 2012/13 – 20% are UAS and 22% the previous year.
 - The number of LAC who attended local Thurrock schools in 2012/13 was 45%. This figure has improved from last year's 32% of the cohort attending a local school which is a positive picture.
 - As stated above, the cohort of pupils is comparatively small which does account for figures seeming large as a percentage.
- 61% of Thurrock LAC who completed Year 11 last year are now attending college or some educational facility.
 - This figure has decreased from last year's reported figure of 82%. The Virtual School has now commissioned the services of a Post 16 Support Worker to Support LAC pupils for 2.5 days per week. Her permanent place of work, when not commissioned by Virtual Schools, is with the Diversity and Apprenticeships Team. The Post 16 Support Worker is involved with all pupils post 16 who are NEET to find them college or apprenticeship placements in order to reduce the figure of LAC pupils potentially at risk of permanently being NEET. She also provides tuition for those pupils who have not achieved their required grades.
 - One key change for the Virtual School is supporting UAS pupils as this figure is rising annually. Some of these pupils have very specific speech and language requirements and so the Virtual Schools team is working with Social Care and tuition services in order to support pupils in obtaining a college place once their English is of a standard to be accepted for a college place.

3.9 **New section**

- The previous Virtual Headteacher left the service in April 2013. This has meant that this area of Thurrock services has been working at below capacity since.
- Interim measures have been put into place.
- Grace Page has been the manager of the Virtual School.
- The Virtual School commissioned an external consultant Shelagh Cosgrow to work 1 day per week to Quality Assure Personal Education Plans and to ensure that compliance at all levels is being met.
- The Service is currently at 90% compliance and the quality of Personal Education Plans [PEP] is improving.
- A more cohesive database for recording contextual information of LAC pupils has been created and is being maintained on a weekly basis. This enables the service to track the LAC and monitor the completion of PEPs and the placement of the child into an educational facility.

- Since November 2013 Keeley Pullen has been working for two days per week as the Interim Virtual Headteacher and this arrangement will continue until June 2014 when she will then fill the post full-time.
- During this time Keeley Pullen has been contacting schools to gather a range of data about their Looked After Pupils, both placed in and out of borough. A school improvement plan has been created and the service is working to ensure that the correct range of information will be available for an OFSTED inspection team.
- The Virtual School Team is having a greater involvement with the School Improvement Team and Early Years to co-ordinate the level of support and challenge provided to schools in the Local Authority. By doing this we are addressing our commitment to ensuring that LAC attend a good or outstanding school or college.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 4.1 This information is required to update members in their role as Corporate Parents.

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

- 5.1 Not Applicable.

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

There are several Key School Priorities which the Virtual School is currently addressing in the academic year 2013/2014:

- The creation of an E-PEP system which can be accessed by all professionals and the children involved in the PEP process. The impact of this will be: more involvement from schools, foster carers, the pupil voice, social and the virtual schools team to ensure that the best provision is in place for the child/young person.
- The establishment of a cohesive and rigorous method for collection of data to incorporate attainment, progress information to ensure that educational provision and aspiring targets are matched to individual need. The impact of this will be: for Looked After Children to make at least expected progress relative to starting points in all Key Stages and to ensure that provision is made for those who are not reaching this target.
- The role of the corporate parent is enhanced through greater challenge to schools and colleges to ensure that they are providing the best possible education for these pupils.
- Levels of accountability are enhanced through careful tracking and monitoring of funding given to schools and colleges either through the Pupil Premium and/or Personal Education Allowances. The impact of

this will be to raise pupil attainment through the appropriation of funds to support their learning which will be measured using attainment data and qualitative data. This approach will also meet with the application of a best value approach to spending.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
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There are no specific financial implications arising from this report

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Chris Pickering**
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There are no specific legal implications arising from this report

7.3 Diversity and Equality

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Children who are looked after by the local authority are among the most disadvantaged. Educational achievement and progress is one of the ways in which the cycle of disadvantage might be broken.

The purpose of the service that supports education of Looked After Children (LAC) is to help to secure access to, and maximise progress in, their educational career.

LAC nationally significantly underachieve and whilst LAC children in Thurrock generally tend to outperform their LAC in other local authority areas, there is much still to do to raise standards of achievement and progress. Local authorities will have a firmer statutory role with the passage of the Children and Families Bill 2013 which is associated with greater levels of resource for LAC through the pupil premium. Councils will need to demonstrate greater levels of effectiveness in tracking the progress of looked after children and working with schools and carers to achieve rapid progress.

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

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

DfE: Outcomes for children looked by local authorities in England, as of 31st March 2013.

DfE: Statistical First Release 11th December 2013

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None

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