

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee/Panel:	Education Advisory Panel
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Title:	Early Years Foundation Stage Performance
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Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Tracey Sanders

Tel: 01962 813872 **Email:** tracey.sanders@hants.gov.uk

1 Purpose of Report:

- 1.1. To brief members of the panel about the progress of children within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and to highlight the actions being undertaken in 2010 – 2011.

2 Summary:

- 2.1. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data from all schools in Hampshire in 2010 indicated that:
 - Scores across areas of learning within the profile have generally increased by 2% when compared to 2009 data, with the greatest increase of 3.6% in linking letters and sounds and the smallest increase of 0.1% in creative development.
 - The threshold score has increased by 3% to 54% of children attaining 78 points plus 6 in Communication Language and Literacy (CLL) and 6 in Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED), which is drawing close to the national level of 56%, although remains below the average level for Hampshire's statistical neighbours with elements of the threshold score that are above the national level.
 - The equalities score shows a 2.8% reduction in the gap between the median score for all children and the mean of the bottom 20% to 29.7% (national 32.7%). This is the most significant reduction to date and is significantly lower than the national score of 32.7% and the majority of Hampshire's statistical neighbours.

- Only one mainstream school had no children reaching the threshold in 2010 compared to two schools in 2009, eight schools in 2008 and 17 schools in 2007
 - 9 districts have improved threshold scores in 2010 compared to 6 districts improving the threshold score in 2009
- 2.2. This progress has been supported by the implementation of a range of National Strategies programmes and a number of specific universal and targeted initiatives in Hampshire. In particular, work has taken place to strengthen the understanding of the pedagogy within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the importance of using EYFSP data to monitor and set targets for children's progress prior to and throughout year R. The EYFS remains a relatively new curriculum phase with the framework being launched in September 2008, and its implementation is beginning to demonstrate impact. A revised EYFS will be launched in September 2012.

3 Background and context:

- 3.1. The EYFS is a statutory framework guiding the provision for the learning and development and the welfare of all children aged 0-5. The framework is implemented in over 1,000 preschools, day nurseries, year R classes and by 2,400 childminders in Hampshire, and outcomes for children are measured using the EYFS profile at the end of year R in independent and mainstream schools. The profile is based on 117 judgements across a 9 point scale for 6 areas of learning and development:
- Communication Language and Literacy – CLL
 - Personal Social Economical and Developmental – PSED
 - Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy – PSRN
 - Physical Development – PD
 - Creative Development – CD
 - Knowledge and Understanding of the World – KUW.
- 3.2. A good level of attainment is judged to be 78 points plus 6 points in CLL and 6 points in PSED. This measure is referred to as the Local Authority threshold score and is judged to be a sound indication of children's readiness to access the KS1 curriculum. The local authority is also required to measure the achievement gap between the median score of all the children in Hampshire and the mean of the bottom 20% (the equalities score). There have been targets set by central government against the threshold and gap scores, but these will not be continued beyond 2010 – 2011. Additionally, the EYFS is under review and a new framework will be launched in 2012.

- 3.3. Outcomes for children within the EYFS are strongly linked with the quality of early years provision “The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE)” (2006) Sylva, K et al. All EYFS providers (like schools) are inspected by Ofsted on a three yearly basis and awarded a grading of Outstanding / Good / Satisfactory / Inadequate. Provision in Hampshire has a long history of being judged by Ofsted as good and outstanding, with 76% of childcare on non domestic premises being judged as good to outstanding by Ofsted in September 2010. This is 3% above the national average and within the top quartile of Hampshire’s statistical neighbours.
- 3.4. The EPPE research also demonstrates that outcomes for children are significantly linked to the qualification levels of staff. The qualification profile of the workforce in Hampshire is becoming more professional. In April 2010, 392 staff were awarded bursaries through the Sure Start Early Years Childcare Grant (SSEYCG) in Hampshire to successfully complete level 4 and foundation degree courses, compared to 78 in 2004; and 58 members of the workforce attained the early years professional status, compared to 6 in August 2008.
- 3.5. Finally, Children’s Centres are beginning to have an impact upon outcomes for children in Hampshire. Currently there are 81 Children’s Centres now operating across Hampshire, with 25 of these being full core offer centres delivering a range of services, including the work of children’s centre support teachers with early years education providers, children and families in areas of significant deprivation.

4 Overall Standards in 2010:

- 4.1. A 3% increase in the EYFS threshold measure represents a significant improvement upon the 2009 increase of 1% (see Appendix 1). It follows a continuing rising trend in the threshold score. Prior to 2008 the Foundation Stage Profile (FSP) results were volatile, reflecting the relatively early stage of the assessment process and the developing practitioner knowledge and understanding of delivering the EYFS. Moderation of EYFSP judgements in schools has greatly improved the evidence base for and shared understanding of EYFS judgements, following generous assessments in 2005. An assessment of Hampshire’s EYFS moderation process by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) in October 2010 described the process as robust with no support required. It is therefore considered that real improvements in outcomes for children are now being assessed. Nonetheless, the Hampshire threshold score falls below the national average and statistical neighbours (see Appendix 2). This in part reflects the stringent moderation processes in Hampshire, and may also be a result of a strategy which has targeted resources away from universal provision towards improving outcomes for vulnerable children.

- 4.2. Nine districts demonstrated improvements in the threshold score for children in year R in 2010 with the exception of Fareham, where children's threshold scores were 2% lower than 2009, and the New Forest, where children's scores were 1.9% lower. Nevertheless, children in Fareham attained above the county average. The New Forest threshold data is on a declining trend, having also reduced by 1.7% in 2009, and continues to place children below the county average.
- 4.3. The gap between the median of all children's scores and the mean of the bottom 20% reduced by 2.8% to 29.7% in 2010, which is greater when compared to the 1% reduction in 2009. The attainment gap for children in Hampshire is significantly lower than the national average and the majority of Hampshire's statistical neighbours (see Appendix 2).
- 4.4. Most districts reduced the gap except Fareham, where the gap increased it by 2.2%; and Winchester, where the gap increased by 1.7%, which also reflects last year's trend (see Appendix 3). It is encouraging that Gosport, Havant and Rushmoor all made significant reductions in the gap this year, reversing the trend established in 2009.
- 4.5. Work is underway with the local leadership teams to prioritise projects in areas where threshold and gap levels are of concern.
- 4.6. When considering the threshold data in more depth, it is possible to identify groups of children who are under performing and therefore enable support to be effectively targeted.
- 4.7. Boys continue to do less well when compared to girls' threshold scores, with 43.7% of boys reaching the threshold compared to 64% of girls (see Appendix 4). Both boys and girls have increased their threshold scores by 2.2% and 3.6% respectively and, within the district areas, there have been some significant reductions in the gender gap. The gap between the performance of girls and boys is reducing in linking letters and sounds, and dispositions and attitudes towards learning, and girls and boys do equally well in knowledge and understanding of the world. Writing and creative development continues to be a concern as these areas represent the largest gap in attainment of between 7% and 9% points respectively. The gender gap is smallest in Hart but particularly apparent in Winchester, East Hants and Rushmoor.
- 4.8. Ethnic minority group data indicates that White Asian, White Irish, Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian and Black African children attained threshold scores above the county average. However, other minority groups scored below the county average including Gypsy Roma children (where 34.6% achieved the threshold) and Traveller of Irish Heritage (where 12.5% achieved the threshold). The percent of children of Black African and White and Black Caribbean origin attaining scores above the county threshold has significantly improved from 2009 (see Appendix 5).

- 4.9. Children receiving free school meals are not achieving as well as their peers, with 32.5% attaining the threshold level. However, this is an improvement upon 28.5% of these children in 2009 (see Appendix 6). 35% of children in care attained the threshold level in 2010 which is a significant improvement upon 17.2% in 2009.
- 4.10. EYFSP 2010 data linked to children's centres is revealing encouraging results. Children from 57.5% of the children's centres attained threshold scores above the county average: 10% more than 2009. 7 of the 25 full core offer children's centres are represented in this group, with the majority of full core offer centres now showing an improving trend in the threshold scores for children in their catchment area. 45 cohorts of children from children's centres performed better in 2010, compared with 20 children's centre cohorts in 2009, indicating a positive shift in outcomes for children. Finally, when analysing EYFSP outcomes for children living in Super Output Areas, 2010 was the first time that the declining trend in attainment was reversed, with 4% more children gaining 6 points in CLL and 3% more children gaining 6 points in PSED than the previous year.

5 Specific strategies and programmes implemented in 2009 – 2010:

- 5.1. The gains in the threshold target reflect the impact of a number of universal initiatives:
- The Early Years Advisory Teachers (EYATs), Primary Phase Inspectors (PPIs) and School Improvement Partners (SIPs) have worked together to agree consistent messages about EYFS practice and assessment when working with schools.
 - The EYFSP data was a focus of SIP visits to schools in 2009/10 and schools report that they have made better use of the EYFSP data throughout year R to track children's progress and set targets. Where schools required support in EYFS assessment or practice, district managers have signposted schools to the EYAT for support. The EYAT used information from the Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS) SIMS database so that they could contextualise their work with schools.
 - Headteachers have attended briefing sessions on the use of data to inform planning of year R provision, and year R networks have been established to tailor make support for schools.
 - Moderation has focused upon CLL and knowledge and understating of the world. Feedback from headteachers has indicated a greater understanding of expectations for CLL attainment and how to promote children's CLL skills. Moderators report assessments have been more rigorous.
 - A headteacher conference focusing on the role of the key person in the EYFS took place in May 2010. This emphasised the importance of pastoral care, providing children with a secure basis for learning,

and ensuring planned learning opportunities to reflect their skills and interests.

- The self-evaluation (SE) toolkit is now in its third year of use in Private, Voluntary, Independent (PVI) settings and is proving influential in developing reflective practice and raising standards. Use of the toolkit will have improved learning and development for children in the 2009/10 Year R cohort.
- The early years advisory team has been implementing a system of Self-Evaluation Joint Annual Reviews (SEJAR). Results from the SEJAR have been compared to other business and inclusion indicators to form a Red Amber Green (RAG) judgement for settings. This has then determined support from a “team around the setting”, ensuring that support to the PVI sector has been better targeted with a very clear focus and been delivered by the appropriate lead professional.
- The EYFS training portfolio for 2009/2010 was determined by EYFSP and Ofsted data analysis, and included specific focus upon enabling environments, observational assessment, PSED, promoting boys’ learning, and working with parents. Bespoke training was also offered to settings of concern. Business support advice emphasised the importance of financial planning for continuous professional development (cpd).
- Qualification levels have continued to improve within the early years sector, with a growth in bursary support for foundation degrees and a reduction in funding requests for lower qualifications (NVQ 2 and 3). There has been a particular focus on cpd (leadership and management) and Ofsted judgements for leadership and management have increased by 3% since June 2009 from 64%, with 67% of settings judged to be good and outstanding in June 2010.

5.2. The reduction in the EYFS attainment gap reflects a number of initiatives:

- All training and support has emphasised strategies to facilitate boys’ learning and development, and ways to enable them to demonstrate attainment.
- The early years rights respect and responsibilities (RRR) programme continues to be implemented in areas of deprivation, with two settings now accredited by Unicef.
- The Communication, Language and Literacy Development (CLLD) programme has been implemented for a second year and in 2009/10 included nine schools in Gosport and one in Havant. This programme is carefully monitored and has successfully impacted upon the EYFS outcomes for the schools involved. Less intensive ‘letters and sounds’ training has been delivered to targeted schools and settings where outcomes have been poor.

- Work has been undertaken to support ethnic minority and traveller children and their families to access early years education, and for providers to personalise learning in partnership with the Ethnic Minority Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS).
 - There has been continued support and advice to build the capacity of settings and meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities.
 - Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Children in Care (CiC) have been promoted and the percentage of PEPs has risen from 30% in 2008 to 82% in 2010, following a change in the data sharing system and in the process for liaising with providers, ensuring work with CiC is planned appropriately and taking into account their widest needs.
- 5.3. Children's Centre Support Teachers (CCST) are now fully established in full core offer centres and have been working with children, families and childcare providers in the locality to offer tailor made support. This has specifically focussed upon the development of children's skills in CLL and PSED, and on how parents can support children in their development. The numbers of families engaged in children's centre activity has grown, and all phase I and II children's centres have received performance evaluations, with 68% achieving good and outstanding judgements, indicating that the broader community support for families is of high quality.

6 Actions for 2010 – 2011:

- 6.1. Activities currently being implemented in 2010 - 2011 build upon service delivery in 2009 - 10 and have been planned with colleagues within Children's Services and partner agencies. They include the:
- Realignment and associated restructuring of the EECU and CCS which will lead to better integration of vision, priorities and service delivery for young children and families.
 - Development of links between EYFS / Primary / Secondary educational strategy, including a joint analysis of EYFSP and primary data so that the early years and primary activities are aligned.
 - Developing a strategy to utilise best practice within schools and the PVI sector to raise outcomes for all children.
 - Specific focus of the work of Services for Young Children upon the progress of ethnic minority children, children in receipt of free schools meals, children in care and other vulnerable groups.
 - Tracking of children's progress being a requirement of the early years education grant agreement and the promotion of specific materials to be used by the PVI sector. This will help schools to receive more consistent data at school entry and plan more effectively for children's learning.

- Implementation of the new single funding formula which incentivises qualification levels.
- Continuing focus upon developing leadership and management in EYFS, including promotion of the leadership foundation degree for early years practitioners.
- Targeting of specific initiatives to localities based upon outcomes data. For example, work is underway to improve young children's speaking and listening skills in Havant, working with parents; PSED and supporting transitions is a focus in Gosport; and early phonics and assessment is a focus in the North and North East. The CLLD programme is being delivered in Eastleigh. The Every Child a Talker (ECaT) programme is being delivered in Rushmoor. The 2 year old pilot will continue to be delivered in the Havant and Gosport areas and introduced to the New Forest.
- Children's centre quality performance officers requiring Children's Centres leaders to account for how they are making provision for the most vulnerable children, and how they are specifically promoting social and communication skills.
- Enhanced focus on the home learning environment and parents as partners through provider training, support networks and links with home visiting services and parent development colleagues.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1. The EYFS data confirms that 2009 / 2010 has been the most successful year to date in outcomes for children in year R. Improved moderation and understanding of the assessment process suggests that assessments in 2009 / 2010 are likely to be the most robust. Alongside this, improved joint working between HIAS and EECU, better use of data to target support, increased knowledge and understanding of EYFS pedagogy amongst practitioners, and a strengthening of leadership and management in the PVI sector has led to the improvement in outcomes. However, Hampshire threshold data does not yet match national and statistical neighbour levels and there is more to be done in improving outcomes for all children, by utilising peer support within the EYFS sector.
- 7.2. Most significantly, the achievement gap between the most vulnerable children and the rest is reducing. The impact of Children's Centres continues to be demonstrated as their services become more established, and the implementation of evidence based CLL and PSED programmes in areas of deprivation has additionally contributed to a reduction in the achievement gap. It will be important to consolidate upon these effective strategies and target support, where needed, as efficiency measures take effect and resources reduce. The realignment of CCS with the EECU into Services for Young Children (SfYC)

presents a timely opportunity to achieve this, and outcomes for vulnerable children will remain a priority.

- 7.3. Much work remains to be done in establishing effective links with LCPs, so that commissioning of support to enhance the quality of early years education and targeting of family support is part of an overall strategy to improve outcomes for children. This includes strengthening links between the work of SfYC, Children's Services and the third sector ,so that support is streamlined and meets local priorities.
- 7.4. Finally, work is underway to identify relevant EYFS performance targets for 2011 and beyond, as the current local authority targets are removed.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?