

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 1 JUNE 2011

### REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS: BUILDING THE CURRICULUM 5

#### Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of revised national guidance on reporting to parents and carers and seek its agreement to adopt the guidance as East Ayrshire Council's formal policy for reporting to parents and carers.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2010, *Building the Curriculum 5: a framework for assessment* (BtC5) was published. BtC5 included a commitment to provide further guidance on recognising achievement, profiles and reporting to parents. Guidance on reporting was first published on-line in June 2010. In December 2010, additional guidance on reporting was included in the integrated document BtC5: Recognising Achievement, Profiling and Reporting to make clear the close links between recognising achievement, profiles and reporting.
- 2.2 BtC5 describes the national expectations within which education authorities and establishments should develop policy and practice. It gives flexibility, within clear national expectations, on how to report on learners' progress, achievements and needs. It recognises that reporting comprises a range of activities (including written reports, children presenting their learning to parents, parents' consultation meetings and on-going oral discussions) and highlights the importance of learners' involvement in reflection and dialogue about their progress in order to promote ownership of learning and support the process of profiling their achievements.
- 2.3 BtC5 defines the two main purposes of reporting, as follows:
- to provide clear, positive and constructive feedback about children and young people's learning and progress, looking back on what has been achieved against standards and expectations;
  - to create an agenda for discussions between learners and those teaching and supporting them about their next steps in learning.
- 2.4 The key expectations are that reporting should:
- provide a clear, concise and recognisable picture of the individual learner.
  - be positive, constructive, fair and accessible.

- describe progress in curriculum areas (languages and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, health and wellbeing, expressive arts, religious and moral education, the sciences, social studies and technologies) in brief qualitative statements, noting particular strengths, areas for development and achievements in challenging aspects and in the application of learning.
- where appropriate, describe significant aspects of learners' progress and development needs which are the responsibility of all teachers (literacy across learning; numeracy across learning; health and wellbeing across learning, and skills for learning life and work).
- include information on the learner's achievement of curriculum levels (either in a part of a curriculum area such as reading, or in a whole curriculum area).
- include information on the learner's achievement in different contexts and settings, across curriculum areas, the life and ethos of the school and learning outwith the school, including in the wider community.
- describe the learner's attributes and capabilities, including attitude to learning and motivation.
- specify areas for development and next steps in learning.
- outline the nature of support being put in place to ensure each child or young person receives his/her entitlement to appropriate support and challenge to ensure he/she makes appropriate progress.
- signal any gaps in the learner's progress and ways parents can help.
- provide opportunities for the learner to contribute, including to comment on written reports, when possible.
- provide opportunities for parents to give their views on their child's progress, including through their responses to written reports.

2.5 East Ayrshire Council Department of Educational and Social Services established an Assessment, Recording and Reporting Steering Group in August 2010. The group's remit included the drafting of guidance on reporting on young people's progress within the Broad General Education in line with the national expectations in BtC5. Guidance and suggested reporting formats for primary and secondary schools were developed by working groups of senior staff (including head teachers and quality improvement officers) with the assistance of the CfE Co-ordinator.

2.6 The Guidance on Reporting attached in Appendices 1 and 2, which are available on the member's portal, is the result of this work. Throughout the development process (from October 2010 to February 2011) the guidance and suggested formats were made available to key stakeholders, including parents, teachers and head teachers, via a range of engagement activities, which included opportunities to comment and feed back to the groups. The

guidance thus builds on existing good practice within East Ayrshire, and has benefitted from the insights of stakeholder focus groups. The report has also been discussed with the Teachers' Unions at the Informal Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

- 2.7 After consultation with head teachers in January 2011, it was agreed that primary schools in East Ayrshire would have the option of adopting the East Ayrshire-developed format this session, with a view to trialling, and providing collated feedback (from learners, parents and carers and staff) to the working group on refinements needed to improve the report in session 2011-12. The majority of East Ayrshire primary schools have adopted the report format this session, and all are working within the guidance produced by the working groups. Trialling is taking place of a Word-based format and a Seemis-based format.
- 2.8 The secondary working group has engaged extensively with colleagues in secondary schools to write guidance and design a report format which meets their needs and satisfies the national requirements. The template designed by the working group cannot be reproduced within the Seemis system this session, but a "workaround" format (providing the same information) is available as an interim solution. Plans for Seemis to produce the East Ayrshire template are in progress for early next session.
- 2.9 Groups of senior staff in Special Education and Early Years establishments are addressing reporting within their sectors. The groups are benchmarking practice in relation to the East Ayrshire reporting guidance, identifying and sharing good practice, to ensure that planned developments are in line with national requirements.
- 2.10 The Guidance on Reporting to Parents and Carers outlines the essential requirements at local and national level. Templates are also offered to assist establishments in producing an end-of-session report for learners within the Broad General Education (in session 2010-11, learners from P1 to S1). In line with national policy, the formats of written reports may be decided locally. However, the reporting guidance (appendices 3 and 4, available to view on the member's portal) indicates the essential standard.
- 2.11 Appendices 1 and 2 have a level of repetition of narrative in each section. This is because if approved by Cabinet each sector will receive only the appropriate appendix.

### **3. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The adoption of the guidance as policy will deliver on priorities within the East Ayrshire Curriculum for Excellence Development Plan (2011-15) and impact on new and amended policies for education arising through the Development Plan.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 £73,000 has been allocated from Scottish Government to prepare education practitioners to assess and report effectively on Curriculum for Excellence (2010/11). Resources to support implementation of the new reporting policy can be met within this budget.

#### **5. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The report format will be made available on request, to assist understanding, in Braille, large print or recorded on to tape, and can be translated into Chinese, Punjabi, Urdu, Gaelic and Polish.

#### **6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The issues contained in this paper impact on the themes of the Community Plans: "Promoting Lifelong Learning" and "Improving Health and Wellbeing".

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (i) approve the adoption of the Reporting to Parents and Carers Guidelines as formal policy, and
  - (ii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham Short  
Executive Director of Educational And Social Services

AB/AS

10 May 2011

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Scottish Government Publication: Building the Curriculum (BTC) 5: A Framework for Assessment.

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