

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE CABINET – 7 NOVEMBER 2007

### EXPANDING GLOBAL LINKS FOR SCHOOLS

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

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for developments in international links for schools in the Stewarton Learning Partnership.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 East Ayrshire schools enjoy a wide range of international links with France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Canada, the USA, China, Australia and Singapore. These links are furthered by visits to and from overseas partners and through eTwinning and other electronic contacts.

- 2.2 In school sessions 2005-6 and 2006-7, schools in the Stewarton Learning Partnership hosted a visiting teacher from Catalonia. The visits were funded partly by the Catalan Government and partly by East Ayrshire Council through funding provided by the Scottish Government. Pupils were involved in a comparative study of a town in Spain and their home town of Stewarton. They were also introduced to the Spanish language. Professional dialogue with staff was initiated comparing curricular areas and learning and teaching strategies of both countries. The headteacher of the Catalan visiting teacher spent one week in Lainshaw Primary School and expressed a wish to create further educational links.

- 2.3 The Stewarton schools are now ready to take forward this link. The schools, led by Lainshaw Primary School, wish to establish a series of educational projects with Catalan schools:

- to develop the global dimension in the curriculum through the exchange of information on aspects of culture
- to engage in professional dialogue with Spanish teachers comparing curriculum developments in Scotland and Spain
- to widen the range of languages available in the Partnership schools.

- 2.4 The benefits of this links include:

- the enhancement of pupils' awareness of Spanish culture
- opportunities for pupils to communicate in Spanish
- increased knowledge of and pride in their own Scottish culture among Stewarton pupils
- a new context provided for the development of media skills – for example, Lainshaw Primary School hopes to produce a promotional DVD of the school.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Funding to enhance this link is available from the British Council, the EU Comenius School Partnership Project and the Scottish Government's Modern Languages Development Funding.

### **4. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The expansion of global links will contribute directly to the promotion of the national "Homecoming" initiative scheduled for 2009.

### **5. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 These activities contribute to the themes of "Improving Opportunities" and "Promoting Community Learning."

### **6. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Nil

### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 It is recommended that Members approve the development of this link between the Stewarton learning Partnership and Catalonia and otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

KMcK/MR  
19 September 2007

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, tel: (01563) 576017.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER**

Kenneth McKinlay, Acting Head of Service: Schools