

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 01 MAY 2009

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT FOR 2008

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Elected Members of the on-line publication of the Standards and Quality Report for the Department of Educational and Social Services for 2008.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 placed a requirement on Education Authorities to publish annually a report on the standards and quality of provision as measured against the Department's Annual Statement of Local Improvement Objectives
- 2.2 Initial Standards and Quality Reports reflected the performance of mainstream education services only. However, since 2004 the Report has encompassed the work of all of the services within the Department and records activity in Education Services, Social Work Services, Early Years Services, Community Learning and Development Services and in Facilities Management.
- 2.3 Over the years the various reports have evolved to describe performance against comparator authorities and national averages using quantitative performance measures as well as quality indicators. Most recently the reports have been written in such a way as to highlight the impact that the services have on children, young people and their families, the services staff and on the wider community. They have always been in traditional hard copy format. East Ayrshire continues to be one of the few authorities that produces such a report for Social Services.

3. HEADLINE MESSAGES

3.1 EARLY YEARS

Strengths:

- The quality of experiences for children and young people who access early education and childcare services across the sectors has been enhanced through staff accessing continuous professional development opportunities and gaining formal and recognised qualifications.
- The importance of Early Education and Childcare to the economic infrastructure is recognised by the inclusion of a specific aim and aspiration within the Improving Opportunities theme of the Community Plan 2007-2011.
- Nurseries continue to be at the heart of their local communities. Inspection reports routinely highlighted very positive aspects of nursery life within their local community.

Areas for Improvement:

- Implement the outcomes of the National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce which recommends that services be led by professionals with a Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework level 9 qualification i.e. ordinary degree or work-based equivalent.

3.2 SCHOOL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- More detailed information on pupils' attainment and achievement is being shared at transition stages, nursery to primary and primary to secondary, enabling teachers to make appropriate arrangements for continuity of learning.
- A multi agency integrated process of planning, and review is available to all children identified as having additional support needs, subject to child protection investigation or looked after by the authority.
- Health promotion coordinators have participated in developing and designing healthy initiatives supported by health professionals, parents and the wider community to enhance health and well-being as a key element of Curriculum for Excellence.

Areas for Improvement:

- Continue to focus on raising attainment in upper primary and early stages of secondary.

3.3 COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Strengths:

- A Children and Young People's Representative Forum was established at the same time as a redefinition of local Youth Forums.
- A new service brochure was introduced which outlined the various community based learning opportunities available for young people and adults across East Ayrshire.
- 132 voluntary organisations were given support by the Community Learning & Development service in 2008.

Areas for Improvement:

- The service will support the implementation of the new HMLe Inspection Framework of Learning Communities across the authority.

3.4 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Strengths:

- The schools catering service continues to perform well with a range of creative approaches including the extension of the Food For Life pilot to 40 schools, the implementation of the innovative Get Stuck in Scheme and the APSE Award winning Therapeutic Catering Approach in Hillside Special School.
- Onsite retained its Investors In People (IIP) accreditation with all Cleaning Supervisors achieving the Institute of Learning Management (ILM) qualification in team leading, and catering managers undertaking Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) intermediate food hygiene training.
- The FM Service has extended a range of services across the Council and developed new services at Dumfries House, Stewarton Area Centre, Strathclyde Police at Blairfield Farm and Galston Primary.

Areas for improvement:

- With the introduction of stricter nutritional regulations in August 2009 there will be a renewed focus to improve the uptake of school meals in secondary schools.

3.5 SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

Strengths:

- A focus on outcomes within Community Care services has enabled a progressive shift in the balance of care towards supporting individuals in community based rather than institutionally based settings.
- Children and Families services provide a range of services and supports to ensure that our most vulnerable children have the care and protection they need.
- In a survey of individuals receiving services from the Criminal Justice Social Work team, 83% thought that their contact with the team helped reduce their offending.

Area for Improvement:

- We will develop and implement an improvement action plan as follow up to the SWIA Performance Inspection of Social Work Services.

4. PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT

4.1 In previous years The Standards and Quality Report was printed at some considerable cost for distribution to our stakeholders. In 2007 the report was made available on-line with a one page “flier” for widespread distribution indicating the website addresses where the reports can be accessed. Committee agreed that future Reports would be accessible in the same way.

4.2 The various service reports are available on:

www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/ess/ess-publications.asp
www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/ess/socialwork/sw-publications.asp
 and on the Elected Members’ portal.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The priorities of the Department of Educational and Social Services are explicitly cross-referred and contribute to the delivery of all aspects of the Community Plan.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Nil

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- (i) note the positive progress made by the various services within the Department of Educational and Social Services against previous performance;
- (ii) invite the Executive Director to continue to report to Committee on an annual basis; and
- (iii) otherwise note the content of the report.

Graham Short
Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)

17 April 2009

Members requiring further information should contact Kenneth McKinlay, Principal: Quality Improvement, (01563-55650).

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - NIL

Implementation Officer: Kenneth McKinlay, Principal Quality Improvement.