

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 18 DECEMBER 2009**

**LISTENING TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS  
PUPILS 2009**

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

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise Governance and Scrutiny of the views of primary and secondary school pupils following a survey carried out in June 2009.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Section 5 (1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, Education authority's annual statement of improvement objectives, places a requirement on the education authority to consult with and seek the views of "such bodies as appear to the authority to be representative of teachers and parents within their area and of persons, other than teachers, who are employed in schools within that area and after giving children, young people and such other persons within that area as appear to the authority to have an interest in the matter an opportunity to make their views known" regarding the quality of the education provision made on their behalf, and thereafter prepare and publish a statement setting objectives.
- 2.2 The outcome of these views is used to inform the statement of improvement objectives set out annually by Educational Services. Views sought locally by individual educational establishments are also used to inform pre-school and school improvement plans. Following publication of the Act the authority gathered the views of children and young people directly from schools who carried out these local surveys.
- 2.3 The Quality Improvement Team, as part of the process for the Inspection of the Education Function of Local Authorities (INEA2) pilot in 2005, issued a stakeholder survey to every pupil in the authority to seek their views on their perceptions of the quality of provision they received. It was decided after the results for 2005 were published that the stakeholder evaluations, at authority level, would become a biennial exercise. In subsequent years samples of pupils have been selected and in June 2009 surveys were reissued to gather the views of Primary 4 and Primary 7 pupils as well as S1 and S3 pupils within secondary schools.

- 2.4 This report summarises the results from the pupil survey at both primary and secondary level. The survey issued this year is identical to that used in previous years to allow for simple benchmarking and comparison.
- 2.5 Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with a range of statements using a four point scale. The results have been collated and are set out in Appendices 1 – 4.
- 2.6 The survey was issued to a sample of pupils and the following confidence levels and intervals should be noted:

Primary Responses:

Confidence level – 95%

Confidence interval – 2.5%

Secondary Responses:

Confidence level – 95%

Confidence interval – 4.4%

The confidence level and interval indicate the level to which we can assume that the responses of the sample represent the population as a whole. For example 57.4% of primary pupils “strongly agree” that they “...enjoy being at this school”. The confidence level and confidence interval indicate that we can be **95%** certain that the percentage of pupils who “strongly agree” will fall somewhere within the range **54.9%** to **59.9%** if we were to ask every primary pupil in the authority.

### 3. PUPILS' VIEWS

#### 3.1 Primary Pupil Survey

Respondents were asked to rate a selection of statements using a four point scale; “strongly agree”, “agree”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”.

The total number of responses was 1265 in 2009, an increase of 313 responses from the previous survey of 952 pupils.

Responses from primary pupils remain overwhelmingly positive. The breakdown of individual questions is available at **Appendix 1**. As an overall summary of the results the following headlines have been identified:

Almost all (over 90%) pupils agree that:

- Teachers explain things clearly
- At least one teacher knows me well
- Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work
- Teachers help me when I am stuck
- Teachers tell me when I have done something well
- My school is welcoming and makes me feel included

- Teachers listen to what I say
- I know what to do at school if I am upset
- Pupils have a say in deciding how to make the school better
- The school helps me keep fit and active
- Teachers expect me to work as hard as I can
- I get on well with other pupils
- I feel safe and well looked after in the school
- My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved
- Teachers encourage me to take responsibility for my learning
- The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy
- I enjoy being at this school

Most (75% to 90%) pupils agree that:

- Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies
- All pupils are treated fairly in the school
- If I am upset, the school is good at helping sort things out

The responses received this year are similar to the responses collated previously. The largest increase in positive opinion was 2.8% for the question “All pupils are treated fairly in the school”. The largest increase in negative opinion was 0.8% for the question “Teachers tell me when I have done something well”. A detailed comparison of previous results can be found at **Appendix 2**.

### 3.2 Secondary Pupil Survey

Again respondents were asked to rate a selection of statements using a four point scale; “strongly agree”, “agree”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”. The total number of responses was 489 an increase of 31 responses from the previous survey of 458 pupils.

Responses from secondary pupils remain strongly positive. The breakdown of individual questions is available at **Appendix 3**. As an overall summary of the results the following headlines have been identified:

Almost all (over 90%) pupils agree that:

- Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability
- I get on well with other pupils
- The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy
- At least one teacher knows me well
- Teachers help me when I am having difficulties
- I know what to do at school if there is something that worries me
- Teachers explain things clearly

Most (75% to 90%) pupils agree that:

- Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work
- Teachers tell me when I have done something well
- I get about the right amount of homework
- I feel safe and secure in the school
- My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved
- Teachers check my homework
- Teachers listen to what I say
- If there is something that worries me, the school is good at helping sort things out

The majority of pupils (50% to 74%) agree that:

- Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies
- All pupils are treated fairly in the school
- Pupils have a say in deciding how to improve the school
- The behaviour of pupils in school is good
- I enjoy being at this school

Responses received this year are, on average, more positive than responses previously collated with all but one question showing a positive variance on previous results. The largest shift in positive opinion was recorded for the questions:

- “Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies”: increase of 12% points to 73%
- “All pupils are treated fairly in the school”: increase of 12% points to 64.8%
- “If there is something that worries me, the school is good at helping sort things out”: increase of 11.3% points to 80.8%
- “The behaviour of pupils in school is good”: increase of 10.8% points to 60.7%
- “Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work”: increase of 10.2% points to 87.1%

A detailed comparison of previous results can be found at **Appendix 4**.

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

Nil

#### **5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

NIL

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

These survey results of the views of pupils in primary and secondary schools in East Ayrshire are in indication of the extent to which Educational Services contribute to the themes of Promoting Community Learning and Improving Opportunities.

**8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the strongly positive views of primary and secondary pupils in East Ayrshire schools;
- (ii) invite the Executive Director to continue to provide similar reports on pupils' views on a biennial basis;
- (iii) invite the Executive Director to include a set of questions related to the support pupils receive from ancillary staff in the next pupil questionnaire;
- (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham R Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services  
24 November 2009

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, Tel: (01563) 576017 or Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools Tel: (01563) 576126.

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER**

Kenneth McKinlay, Principal, Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 555650

## Appendix 1 – Primary Pupils Summary

|    | Question Title  | Strongly Agree |          |          | Agree |          |          | Disagree |          |          | Strongly Disagree |          |          |
|----|---|----------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|
|    |   | 2009           | Previous | Variance | 2009  | Previous | Variance | 2009     | Previous | Variance | 2009              | Previous | Variance |
| 1  | Teachers explain things clearly                             | 51.5           | 49.9     | 1.6      | 46.9  | 47.8     | -0.9     | 1.4      | 1.9      | -0.5     | 0.2               | 0.3      | -0.1     |
| 2  | Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies        | 39.8           | 38.8     | 1.0      | 46.2  | 44.6     | 1.6      | 11.3     | 12.6     | -1.3     | 2.5               | 4.0      | -1.5     |
| 3  | At least one teacher knows me well                          | 72.8           | 71.5     | 1.3      | 21.5  | 23.2     | -1.7     | 3.3      | 3.3      | 0.0      | 1.4               | 2.1      | -0.7     |
| 4  | Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work           | 52.3           | 49.2     | 3.1      | 42.4  | 45.1     | -2.7     | 3.9      | 4.6      | -0.7     | 0.5               | 1.2      | -0.7     |
| 5  | Teachers help me when I am stuck                            | 63.0           | 57.7     | 5.3      | 34.8  | 39.2     | -4.4     | 1.7      | 2.2      | -0.5     | 0.3               | 1.0      | -0.7     |
| 6  | Teachers tell me when I have done something well            | 62.1           | 63.0     | -0.9     | 34.8  | 35.2     | -0.4     | 2.1      | 1.6      | 0.5      | 0.5               | 0.2      | 0.3      |
| 7  | My school is welcoming and makes me feel included           | 54.2           | 57.6     | -3.4     | 39.4  | 36.3     | 3.1      | 4.4      | 4.5      | -0.1     | 1.3               | 1.6      | -0.3     |
| 8  | Teachers listen to what I say                               | 50.7           | 47.6     | 3.1      | 43.9  | 45.2     | -1.3     | 4.3      | 5.5      | -1.2     | 0.9               | 1.7      | -0.8     |
| 9  | I know what to do at school if I am upset                   | 55.7           | 56.9     | -1.2     | 36.6  | 33.7     | 2.9      | 5.1      | 6.3      | -1.2     | 1.9               | 3.1      | -1.2     |
| 10 | All pupils are treated fairly in the school                 | 49.0           | 47.7     | 1.3      | 38.3  | 37.0     | 1.3      | 9.5      | 11.0     | -1.5     | 2.5               | 4.3      | -1.8     |
| 11 | Pupils have a say in deciding how to make the school better | 57.2           | 61.5     | -4.3     | 37.8  | 33.4     | 4.4      | 3.4      | 3.4      | 0.0      | 1.3               | 1.7      | -0.4     |
| 12 | The school helps me keep fit and active                     | 65.1           | 67.9     | -2.8     | 30.7  | 28.4     | 2.3      | 3.4      | 2.7      | 0.7      | 0.5               | 0.9      | -0.4     |

|    | Question Title  | Strongly Agree |          |          | Agree |          |          | Disagree |          |          | Strongly Disagree |          |          |
|----|---|----------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|
|    |   | 2009           | Previous | Variance | 2009  | Previous | Variance | 2009     | Previous | Variance | 2009              | Previous | Variance |
| 13 | Teachers expect me to work as hard as I can                             | 78.4           | 78.5     | -0.1     | 19.5  | 20.3     | -0.8     | 1.3      | 0.7      | 0.6      | 0.3               | 0.4      | -0.1     |
| 14 | If I am upset, the school is good at helping sort things out            | 46.7           | 43.7     | 3.0      | 43.1  | 44.6     | -1.5     | 7.0      | 9.5      | -2.5     | 2.0               | 2.2      | -0.2     |
| 15 | I get on well with other pupils   | 53.4           | 57.6     | -4.2     | 38.7  | 34.9     | 3.8      | 5.0      | 4.8      | 0.2      | 1.7               | 2.6      | -0.9     |
| 16 | I feel safe and well looked after in the school                         | 62.3           | 60.1     | 2.2      | 33.3  | 35.1     | -1.8     | 3.1      | 3.7      | -0.6     | 0.6               | 1.1      | -0.5     |
| 17 | My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved | 61.9           | 61.2     | 0.7      | 34.9  | 34.1     | 0.8      | 2.2      | 3.9      | -1.7     | 0.4               | 0.7      | -0.3     |
| 18 | Teachers encourage me to take responsibility for my learning            | 64.4           | 63.3     | 1.1      | 32.0  | 33.4     | -1.4     | 2.1      | 2.6      | -0.5     | 0.7               | 0.7      | 0.0      |
| 19 | The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy                     | 80.5           | 82.4     | -1.9     | 18.0  | 16.2     | 1.8      | 0.7      | 0.8      | -0.1     | 0.5               | 0.5      | 0.0      |
| 20 | I enjoy being at this school  | 57.4           | 56.6     | 0.8      | 33.0  | 31.8     | 1.2      | 5.2      | 5.5      | -0.3     | 3.8               | 6.1      | -2.3     |

## Appendix 2 – Primary – Positive/Negative

|     | Question Title  | Positive |          |          | Negative |          |          |
|-----|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|     |   | 2008/09  | Previous | Variance | 2008/09  | Previous | Variance |
|     |   |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Q1  | Teachers explain things clearly   | 98.3     | 97.8     | 0.5      | 1.6      | 2.2      | -0.6     |
| Q2  | Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies                    | 86.0     | 83.4     | 2.6      | 13.8     | 16.6     | -2.8     |
| Q3  | At least one teacher knows me well                                      | 94.3     | 94.6     | -0.3     | 4.7      | 5.4      | -0.7     |
| Q4  | Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work                       | 94.6     | 94.3     | 0.3      | 4.3      | 5.7      | -1.4     |
| Q5  | Teachers help me when I am stuck  | 97.8     | 96.8     | 1.0      | 2.0      | 3.2      | -1.2     |
| Q6  | Teachers tell me when I have done something well                        | 96.8     | 98.2     | -1.4     | 2.6      | 1.8      | 0.8      |
| Q7  | My school is welcoming and makes me feel included                       | 93.6     | 93.9     | -0.3     | 5.8      | 6.1      | -0.3     |
| Q8  | Teachers listen to what I say   | 94.5     | 92.8     | 1.7      | 5.2      | 7.2      | -2.0     |
| Q9  | I know what to do at school if I am upset.                              | 92.3     | 90.6     | 1.7      | 7.0      | 9.4      | -2.4     |
| Q10 | All pupils are treated fairly in the school                             | 87.4     | 84.6     | 2.8      | 12.0     | 15.4     | -3.4     |
| Q11 | Pupils have a say in deciding how to make the school better             | 94.9     | 94.9     | 0.0      | 4.7      | 5.1      | -0.4     |
| Q12 | The school helps me keep fit and active                                 | 95.8     | 96.3     | -0.5     | 3.9      | 3.7      | 0.2      |
| Q13 | Teachers expect me to work as hard as I can                             | 97.9     | 98.8     | -0.9     | 1.6      | 1.2      | 0.4      |
| Q14 | If I am upset, the school is good at helping sort things out            | 89.8     | 88.3     | 1.5      | 9.0      | 11.7     | -2.7     |
| Q15 | I get on well with other pupils   | 92.0     | 92.5     | -0.5     | 6.7      | 7.5      | -0.8     |
| Q16 | I feel safe and well looked after in the school                         | 95.6     | 95.3     | 0.3      | 3.7      | 4.7      | -1.0     |
| Q17 | My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved | 96.8     | 95.4     | 1.4      | 2.6      | 4.6      | -2.0     |
| Q18 | Teachers encourage me to take responsibility for my learning            | 96.4     | 96.6     | -0.2     | 2.8      | 3.4      | -0.6     |
| Q19 | The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy                     | 98.5     | 98.6     | -0.1     | 1.2      | 1.4      | -0.2     |
| Q20 | I enjoy being at this school  | 90.4     | 88.4     | 2.0      | 9.0      | 11.6     | -2.6     |

### Appendix 3 – Secondary Pupils Summary

|    | Question Title  | Strongly Agree |          |          | Agree |          |          | Disagree |          |          | Strongly Disagree |          |          |
|----|---|----------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|
|    |   | 2009           | Previous | Variance | 2009  | Previous | Variance | 2009     | Previous | Variance | 2009              | Previous | Variance |
| 1  | Teachers explain things clearly                                   | 16.4           | 10.7     | 5.7      | 74.0  | 72.4     | 1.6      | 8.4      | 14.7     | -6.3     | 1.2               | 2.2      | -1.0     |
| 2  | Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies              | 17.6           | 12.9     | 4.7      | 55.4  | 48.1     | 7.3      | 19.2     | 28.1     | -8.9     | 5.3               | 10.9     | -5.6     |
| 3  | At least one teacher knows me well                                | 58.3           | 44.9     | 13.4     | 34.8  | 39.9     | -5.1     | 6.1      | 13.9     | -7.8     | 0.8               | 1.3      | -0.5     |
| 4  | Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work                 | 30.3           | 18.9     | 11.4     | 56.9  | 58.0     | -1.1     | 11.2     | 18.7     | -7.5     | 1.4               | 4.4      | -3.0     |
| 5  | Teachers help me when I am having difficulties                    | 31.1           | 25.7     | 5.4      | 59.5  | 62.5     | -3.0     | 8.0      | 10.1     | -2.1     | 1.0               | 1.8      | -0.8     |
| 6  | Teachers tell me when I have done something well                  | 35.4           | 27.8     | 7.6      | 51.9  | 54.0     | -2.1     | 11.2     | 16.3     | -5.1     | 1.0               | 2.0      | -1.0     |
| 7  | I get about the right amount of homework                          | 30.7           | 30.1     | 0.6      | 50.3  | 45.2     | 5.1      | 12.9     | 15.1     | -2.2     | 5.3               | 9.6      | -4.3     |
| 8  | Teachers listen to what I say                                     | 24.7           | 16.0     | 8.7      | 58.3  | 58.0     | 0.3      | 12.7     | 19.7     | -7.0     | 3.9               | 6.3      | -2.4     |
| 9  | I know what to do at school if there is something that worries me | 33.1           | 34.8     | -1.7     | 57.5  | 49.2     | 8.3      | 7.8      | 12.9     | -5.1     | 1.6               | 3.1      | -1.5     |
| 10 | All pupils are treated fairly in the school                       | 21.1           | 12.7     | 8.4      | 43.8  | 40.1     | 3.7      | 25.6     | 32.0     | -6.4     | 9.4               | 15.1     | -5.7     |
| 11 | Pupils have a say in deciding how to improve the school           | 20.7           | 18.1     | 2.6      | 50.7  | 45.7     | 5.0      | 22.5     | 27.2     | -4.7     | 5.9               | 9.1      | -3.2     |
| 12 | The behaviour of pupils in school is good                         | 7.0            | 7.0      | 0.0      | 53.8  | 42.9     | 10.9     | 30.9     | 36.7     | -5.8     | 7.4               | 13.4     | -6.0     |

|    | Question Title   | Strongly Agree |          |          | Agree |          |          | Disagree |          |          | Strongly Disagree |          |          |
|----|--|----------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|----------|
|    |  | 2009           | Previous | Variance | 2009  | Previous | Variance | 2009     | Previous | Variance | 2009              | Previous | Variance |
| 13 | Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability                                 | 51.7           | 54.4     | -2.7     | 44.8  | 43.0     | 1.8      | 2.5      | 2.2      | 0.3      | 0.6               | 0.4      | 0.2      |
| 14 | If there is something that worries me, the school is good at helping sort things out | 20.2           | 16.6     | 3.6      | 60.5  | 52.9     | 7.6      | 15.5     | 23.5     | -8.0     | 3.1               | 7.1      | -4.0     |
| 15 | I get on well with other pupils  | 48.5           | 51.7     | -3.2     | 48.1  | 42.8     | 5.3      | 2.9      | 4.1      | -1.2     | 0.4               | 1.3      | -0.9     |
| 16 | I feel safe and secure in the school   | 29.7           | 24.4     | 5.3      | 54.8  | 57.0     | -2.2     | 12.9     | 13.4     | -0.5     | 2.5               | 5.1      | -2.6     |
| 17 | My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved              | 29.4           | 24.6     | 4.8      | 56.4  | 53.7     | 2.7      | 10.8     | 17.7     | -6.9     | 2.5               | 4.0      | -1.5     |
| 18 | Teachers check my homework   | 35.8           | 30.4     | 5.4      | 52.4  | 56.7     | -4.3     | 9.2      | 11.2     | -2.0     | 1.8               | 1.8      | 0.0      |
| 19 | The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy                                  | 44.2           | 43.3     | 0.9      | 49.3  | 43.3     | 6.0      | 4.9      | 9.9      | -5.0     | 1.4               | 3.5      | -2.1     |
| 20 | I enjoy being at this school   | 22.5           | 19.7     | 2.8      | 51.7  | 52.0     | -0.3     | 14.3     | 15.5     | -1.2     | 10.4              | 12.8     | -2.4     |

## Appendix 4 – Secondary – Positive/Negative

|     | Question Title   | Positive |          |          | Negative |          |          |
|-----|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|     |  | 2008/09  | Previous | Variance | 2008/09  | Previous | Variance |
|     |  |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Q1  | Teachers explain things clearly  | 90.4     | 83.1     | 7.3      | 9.6      | 16.9     | -7.3     |
| Q2  | Staff in the school are good at dealing with bullies                                 | 73.0     | 61.0     | 12.0     | 24.5     | 39.0     | -14.5    |
| Q3  | At least one teacher knows me well   | 93.0     | 84.8     | 8.2      | 7.0      | 15.2     | -8.2     |
| Q4  | Teachers tell me how I am getting on with my work                                    | 87.1     | 76.9     | 10.2     | 12.7     | 23.1     | -10.4    |
| Q5  | Teachers help me when I am having difficulties                                       | 90.6     | 88.2     | 2.4      | 9.0      | 11.9     | -2.9     |
| Q6  | Teachers tell me when I have done something well                                     | 87.3     | 81.8     | 5.5      | 12.3     | 18.3     | -6.0     |
| Q7  | I get about the right amount of homework   | 81.0     | 75.3     | 5.7      | 18.2     | 24.7     | -6.5     |
| Q8  | Teachers listen to what I say  | 83.0     | 74.0     | 9.0      | 16.6     | 26.0     | -9.4     |
| Q9  | I know what to do at school if there is something that worries me                    | 90.6     | 84.0     | 6.6      | 9.4      | 16.0     | -6.6     |
| Q10 | All pupils are treated fairly in the school  | 64.8     | 52.8     | 12.0     | 35.0     | 47.1     | -12.1    |
| Q11 | Pupils have a say in deciding how to improve the school                              | 71.4     | 63.8     | 7.6      | 28.4     | 36.3     | -7.9     |
| Q12 | The behaviour of pupils in school is good  | 60.7     | 49.9     | 10.8     | 38.2     | 50.1     | -11.9    |
| Q13 | Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability                                 | 96.5     | 97.4     | -0.9     | 3.1      | 2.6      | 0.5      |
| Q14 | If there is something that worries me, the school is good at helping sort things out | 80.8     | 69.5     | 11.3     | 18.6     | 30.6     | -12.0    |
| Q15 | I get on well with other pupils  | 96.5     | 94.5     | 2.0      | 3.3      | 5.4      | -2.1     |
| Q16 | I feel safe and secure in the school   | 84.5     | 81.4     | 3.1      | 15.3     | 18.5     | -3.2     |
| Q17 | My teachers are good at letting me know how my learning can be improved              | 85.9     | 78.3     | 7.6      | 13.3     | 21.7     | -8.4     |
| Q18 | Teachers check my homework   | 88.1     | 87.1     | 1.0      | 11.0     | 13.0     | -2.0     |
| Q19 | The school helps me to keep myself safe and healthy                                  | 93.5     | 86.6     | 6.9      | 6.3      | 13.4     | -7.1     |
| Q20 | I enjoy being at this school   | 74.2     | 71.7     | 2.5      | 24.7     | 28.3     | -3.6     |