

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15/02/2008

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE 2006/07

Report by Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To advise Governance and Scrutiny Committee Members of the pupil attendance and absence in East Ayrshire schools.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. On an annual basis the Scottish Government publishes the Attendance and Absence in Scottish Schools report. This document contains the results of the attendance and absence survey for 2006/07. Information relates to local authority and mainstream grant aided schools only.
- 2.2. This Governance & Scrutiny paper summarises the findings of the Scottish Government report in relation to East Ayrshire.

3. PERFORMANCE IN EAST AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS - ATTENDANCE

- 3.1. In East Ayrshire the overall rate of attendance remained consistent at 91.4 per cent. The overall Scottish rate of attendance was 93.3 per cent, slightly up from 93.1 per cent in 2005/06.
- 3.2. Nationally, the range in primary attendance rates varies between 88.3 per cent in Glasgow to 94.2 per cent in Aberdeen. East Ayrshire is placed ninth bottom if every authority is ranked.
- 3.3. When compared against similar local authorities East Ayrshire has the third highest attendance rate in the comparator family.

	% Attendance		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	92.0	92.0	0.0
Falkirk	90.9	91.8	0.9
North Ayrshire	90.7	90.6	-0.1
North Lanarkshire	90.5	90.5	0.0
West Lothian	92.5	92.1	0.4
East Ayrshire	91.4	91.4	0.0

- 3.4.** Nationally, the rate of attendance for primary schools has increased slightly from 95.0 in 2005/06 to 95.3 per cent in 2006/07.
- 3.5.** In East Ayrshire the overall primary attendance rate was 94.6 per cent up slightly from 94.5 per cent in 2005/06.
- 3.6.** Nationally, the range in primary attendance rates varies between 92.2 per cent in Glasgow to 96.1 per cent in East Dunbartonshire. East Ayrshire is placed eleventh bottom if every authority is ranked, or five ranks above what would be expected in terms of indices of social deprivation.
- 3.7.** When compared against similar local authorities East Ayrshire has the joint second highest attendance rate in the comparator family.

	% Attendance - Primary		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	94.3	94.6	0.3
Falkirk	94.5	95.1	0.6
North Ayrshire	94.0	94.1	0.1
North Lanarkshire	93.9	94.0	0.1
West Lothian	94.7	94.6	0.1
East Ayrshire	94.5	94.6	0.1

- 3.8.** Nationally, the rate of attendance for secondary schools has increased from 90.4 per cent in 2005/06 to 95.3 per cent in 2006/07.
- 3.9.** In East Ayrshire the overall secondary attendance rate was 87.2 per cent down slightly from 87.3 per cent in 2005/06.
- 3.10.** Nationally, the range in attendance rates varies between 82.3 per cent in Glasgow to 91.9 per cent in Shetland Islands. East Ayrshire is placed eighth bottom if every authority is ranked, a decline from tenth worse in 2005/06, or two ranks above what would be expected in terms of social deprivation.
- 3.11.** When compared against similar local authorities East Ayrshire is placed third in the comparator family.

	% Attendance - Secondary		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	88.5	88.3	-0.2
Falkirk	85.8	87.2	1.4
North Ayrshire	86.2	85.9	-0.3
North Lanarkshire	85.9	85.7	-0.2
West Lothian	89.2	88.4	-0.8
East Ayrshire	87.3	87.2	-0.1

- 3.12.** As in previous years, attendance at stages P1 to P7 was fairly stable, ranging from 95.5 per cent to 95.0 per cent. It then decreases steadily through to S4 (88.9 per cent), before increasing slightly in S5 and S6. Overall there was little difference in rates between boys and girls. However, boys did have noticeably better attendance rates from S4 to S6.
- 3.13.** Information regarding attendance at stage level for local authorities is not provided as part of the Scottish Executive Publication. However, information collated locally indicates that attendance at stages P1 and P7, like the national picture remains fairly stable, ranging from 94.4 per cent to 95.2 per cent. It then decreased steadily through to S4 (87.7 per cent), before increasing slightly in S5 and S6.

4. PERFORMANCE IN EAST AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS - ABSENCE

- 4.1.** The overall absence rate in East Ayrshire has remained consistent at 8.6%. The Scottish average is 6.9 per cent.
- 4.2.** East Ayrshire is placed in the middle of the comparator range (min: 7.8 and max: 9.4)

	% Overall Absence		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	8.0	8.0	0.0
Falkirk	9.1	8.2	-1.1
North Ayrshire	9.3	9.4	0.1
North Lanarkshire	9.5	9.5	0.0
West Lothian	7.5	7.9	0.4
East Ayrshire	8.6	8.6	0.0

- 4.3.** East Ayrshire has the ninth highest absence rate in Scotland, or four ranks better than would be expected in terms of social deprivation.
- 4.4.** Within the overall East Ayrshire absence rate of 8.6 per cent, 5.2 per cent of days were recorded as sickness although the rate has decreased from 5.6 in 2005/06.

	% Sickness		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	3.8	4.0	0.2
Falkirk	4.4	3.9	-0.5
North Ayrshire	-	0.2	-
North Lanarkshire	6.5	6.4	-0.1
West Lothian	3.8	3.7	-0.1
East Ayrshire	5.6	5.2	-0.4

	% Truancy		
	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Clackmannanshire	1.1	0.8	-0.3
Falkirk	1.2	0.6	-0.6
North Ayrshire	0.8	0.9	0.1
North Lanarkshire	0.6	0.7	0.1
West Lothian	0.8	0.9	0.1
East Ayrshire	0.4	0.4	0.0

- 4.5.** The second most commonly reported reason for absence in East Ayrshire continues to be “other authorised absence”, which accounted for 0.6 per cent of days. This category should only include lack of transport, weddings, bereavements, religious observances, sporting and cultural events not arranged by the school, and attendance at hearings.
- 4.6.** 0.4 per cent of days were lost in East Ayrshire due to truancy. This is consistent with 2005/06 and remains below both the national and comparator family average.

5. POLICY/LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Nil

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. This reported in linked to the following Community Planning Indicators:
- Promoting Community Learning
 - Improving Opportunities
 - Improving Community Safety

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Nil

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1. It is recommended that Members:

- invite the Executive Director to continue to report annually on attendance and absence; and
- otherwise note the contents of the report.

January 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

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