

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 OCTOBER 2008**

#### **ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT 2008**

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

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise Elected Members of the overall attainment and achievement in East Ayrshire schools in session 2007-2008.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Each year the Scottish Executive publishes the results obtained in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations to schools and education authorities. It is no longer the practice, nationally, to publish figures on performance on a school-by-school basis in the format that became known as 'League Tables'. There is, however, still a requirement for authorities to make available to parents the results for individual schools. This is done principally through school handbooks and the compilation of information for parents of P7 pupils moving to secondary school.
- 2.2 In recent years the nature of the provision of courses in our schools has shifted to recognise that formal academic studies are only part of the provision that schools should provide for young people. The changing emphasis is being driven by a Curriculum for Excellence focusing on skills for learning, skills for work and skills for life. As a result the curriculum has become more flexible by providing vocational based college courses, Princes Trust XL courses, ASDAN Awards and Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, among others. Much work has been done in partnership with Ayr and Kilmarnock Colleges to provide courses to better meet the needs of many young people.
- 2.3 It is anticipated that this increased provision of vocational and other courses will have an impact on the more traditional aspects of reporting attainment as pupils are given the opportunity to reduce the number of formal academic SQA qualification which they undertake. This flexibility, which is explicitly allowed in national curricular guidelines and encouraged by HMIE, also means that the type of benchmarking against comparator authorities and national averages now does not have the usefulness it once did. (See Section 5.9 below)

### **3. ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

- 3.1 Summary tables of attainment results are provided in section 4. Wider achievement in vocational, and other, college courses are provided in section 5.

3.2 The figures in section 4 are presented as a percentage of the relevant S4 roll. This is to enable some level of comparison to be made. Use of the S4 roll means that the effects of differing staying on rates to S5 and S6 is removed.

3.3 In the past, figures were presented on a straightforward basis of performance in Standard Grades and Higher Grades. With the introduction the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) performance is reported against the following levels:

- Level 7: Advanced Higher at A-C: CSYS at A-C
- Level 6: Higher at A-C
- Level 5: Intermediate 2 at A-C: Standard Grade at 1-2
- Level 4: Intermediate 1 at A-C: Standard Grade at 3-4
- Level 3: Access 3 Cluster: Standard Grade at 5-6

3.4 The data presented in this paper is pre-appeal. Success in appeals will further improve the results in due course.

**4. ATTAINMENT**

4.1 The Scottish Qualifications Authority has concluded that “overall attainment in Scottish Schools in 2007/08 was broadly similar to the levels attained in previous years”. This statement can also be applied to attainment within East Ayrshire which is either consistent with similar years or down slightly, but not significantly.

4.2 The percentage of pupils achieving English and Maths at Standard Grade level has moved from 90% in 2007 to 89% in 2008, and is just below the comparator average.

	Eng & Maths by the end of S6				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>89</b>
Family Average	91	90	90	91	92
National	91	90	91	92	91

4.3 The percentage of pupils achieving 5 Standard Grades at SCQF Level 3 has remained steady at 89%, and is below the comparator average.

	5+ Awards at SCQF Level 3				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>
Family Average	91	90	90	91	91
National	91	90	91	91	90

- 4.4 The percentage of pupils achieving 5 Standard Grades at SCQF Level 4 has decreased from 73% in 2007 to 70% in 2008, and is below the comparator average..

	5+ Awards at SCQF Level 4				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>70</b>
Family Average	73	73	74	72	74
National	77	76	77	75	76

- 4.5 The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 remains consistent at 28%, but is below the comparator average.

	5+ Awards at SCQF Level 5				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>
Family Average	30	30	31	29	30
National	35	34	35	33	34

- 4.6 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving at least one Higher Grade broadly consistent with previous years at 35%, and is above the comparator average.

	1+ Awards at SCQF Level 6				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>
Family Average	34	34	34	34	33
National	39	39	38	38	38

- 4.7 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving three Higher Grades or more has decreased from 19% in 2007 to 17% in 2008, and is in line with the comparator average.

	3+ Awards at SCQF Level 6				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>
Family Average	18	18	17	18	18
National	23	23	22	22	22

- 4.8 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving five Higher Grades or more has decreased from 8% in 2007 to 7% in 2008.

	5+ Awards at SCQF Level 6				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
East Ayrshire	8	8	8	8	7
Family Average	7	7	7	7	7
National	9	10	10	9	10

4.9 Individual school performance data is available on the Member' Information Portal.

## 5.1 WIDER ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 Over the course of 2007/08, and as the result of extensive curriculum flexibility, 416 pupils from schools in East Ayrshire attended Kilmarnock College to undertake a range of vocational courses.

5.2 The proportion of pupils attending college represents a quarter of the S4 roll, which has increased dramatically over the last three years.

5.3 Whilst at college the pupils from East Ayrshire undertake a selection of courses including:

- Childcare
- Construction and Engineering
- Early education and Childcare (In1 & Int2)
- Hairdressing
- SPA Engineering
- School Link Programme
- Winter Leavers.

5.4 As part of these courses the 416 pupils completed over 1,448 individual units including:

- Outdoor activities
- Leadership
- Team Building
- Motor Vehicle Maintenance
- Metal Work
- Information Technology
- Numeracy
- Engineering
- Construction.

5.5 Over the course of the academic year 65% of course units were passed by pupils from East Ayrshire.

5.6 Ayr College provides courses in:

- Construction
- Hospitality
- Digital Media

- Introduction to Care.

Forty two young people attend courses in Cumnock Community College.

5.7 In addition,

- 10 young people have taken part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- 113 have successfully completed the Prince's Trust XL Programme
- 66 have completed ASDAN Awards
- 30 received Millennium Volunteering Awards
- 62 received East Ayrshire Youth Achievement Awards
- 10 took part in National Young Quality Scot Awards.

5.8 Overall, 1784 young people have taken part in work based vocational courses or training, 1146 of whom received certificates and 1075 had the opportunity to undertake a work experience placement.

5.9 As a result of the changing balance between formal academic attainment and vocational based skills for work courses, a more useful indicator for the delivery of educational services is the destination of schools leavers. The most up to date information demonstrates a significant rise in positive destinations from 78% in 2005/06 to 85% in 2006/07. Recent statistics from the Scottish Government highlight East Ayrshire Council as having the largest decline in negative destinations in Scotland, i.e. those young people not in education, employment or training, an achievement due, in part, to the continued development of curriculum flexibility. The table below highlights this significant fall in negative destinations (from 20% in 2005/06 to 12% in 2006/07) and the rise in young people in employment or in further education. This reflects the impact of a range of intervention and support strategies implemented during this period.

		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Full-time higher education (%)	East Ayrshire	28	31	30	25	26
	Scotland	31	29	31	30	30
Full-time further education (%)	East Ayrshire	22	22	21	23	28
	Scotland	21	21	21	23	23
Training (%)	East Ayrshire	7	6	9	9	7
	Scotland	5	5	5	5	5
Employment (%)	East Ayrshire	19	19	19	21	24
	Scotland	23	25	27	26	28
Other known destinations (%)	East Ayrshire	21	20	19	20	12
	Scotland	16	16	13	13	11
Destination unknown (%)	East Ayrshire	3	2	2	2	1
	Scotland	4	4	3	2	1

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 Performance in most SCQF levels has decreased slightly this year but remains within normal acceptable fluctuations. This should be viewed within the context of increasing numbers of pupils undertaking more appropriate vocational based skills for work and personal development courses
- 6.2 This information, detailed breakdown of figures by individual schools, and other information will be used by the Quality Improvement Team to support head teachers and subject departments to further improve performance for next and subsequent years.
- 6.3 These figures will be of interest to young people and parents. They will therefore be discussed with the Student Councils and representative parents' groups including Parent Councils.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding the results in the background information of this report, it remains the aim of the Department and individual schools to ensure that the maximum number of young people achieve the highest grades possible within the SCQF framework.

## **7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None.

## **8. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 None.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Governance and Scrutiny Committee:-
- (i) note the overall performance of young people in East Ayrshire schools;
  - (ii) encourage the provision of appropriate vocational courses in partnership with Ayr and Kilmarnock Colleges; and
  - (iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

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**10 October 2008**

### **List of Background Papers**

None

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER:** Kenneth McKinlay, Principal: Quality Improvement