

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 7 NOVEMBER 2006

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY EXAM RESULTS 2006

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise Elected Members of the overall East Ayrshire performance in the 2006 diet of examinations.

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.

3. INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

- 3.1** Summary tables of results are provided in section 4.
- 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 are 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.
- 3.5** Elected Members are particularly asked to note that the introduction of the flexible curriculum, for example, the Prince's Trust Excel programme where pupils take part in a wider range of activities within the curriculum to better meet their needs, means that it is increasingly difficult to meaningfully interpret

trends and comparisons, especially at SCQF levels 3 and 4. In addition some 400 pupils take part in college link courses together with school-based subjects. The Scottish Executive is currently consulting on how best to recognise the wider achievements and alternative accreditation models that are not currently accounted for in the traditional qualifications frameworks.

4. THE RESULTS – S4 AND S5

4.1 Nationally, 2006 has shown an overall decline in pass rates at Standard Grade and Higher level. The Scottish Qualifications Authority has concluded that performance is operating under normal “annual fluctuations”. This fluctuation in attainment is evident within East Ayrshire.

4.2 The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 has remained steady at 31%

	5+ Level 5 (end of S4)				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Clackmannanshire	22	25	27	31	27
Falkirk	26	30	28	29	31
North Ayrshire	30	29	29	31	29
North Lanarkshire	28	28	30	27	29
West Lothian	33	33	36	33	35
Family Average	29	29	30	30	30
East Ayrshire	35	31	32	31	31
National	34	34	35	34	34

4.3 Attainment is above the comparator family average for the fifth year in a row.

4.4 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving at least one Higher Grade has decreased from 36% in 2005 to 33% in 2006.

	1+ Level 6				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Clackmannanshire	34	30	31	29	37
Falkirk	36	32	36	33	34
North Ayrshire	34	33	31	32	34
North Lanarkshire	35	34	34	35	32
West Lothian	35	36	36	37	34
Family Average	35	34	34	33	33
East Ayrshire	35	38	37	36	33
National	39	39	39	38	38

4.5 Attainment is in line with the comparator family average.

4.6 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving three Higher Grades or more has decreased from 19% in 2005 to 17% in 2006.

	3+ Level 6				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Clackmannanshire	18	15	15	17	20
Falkirk	17	16	19	16	18
North Ayrshire	20	17	18	18	18
North Lanarkshire	18	18	17	19	15
West Lothian	20	21	21	21	18
Family Average	18	18	18	18	17
East Ayrshire	20	22	21	19	18
National	23	23	23	22	21

4.7 Attainment is above the comparator family average for the fifth year in a row.

4.8 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving five Higher Grades or more has remained steady at 8% and is consistent over the last five years.

	5+ Level 6				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Clackmannanshire	5	5	4	7	9
Falkirk	7	7	8	6	7
North Ayrshire	9	7	8	7	8
North Lanarkshire	6	7	6	7	6
West Lothian	7	9	9	8	8
Family Average	7	7	7	7	7
East Ayrshire	8	10	8	8	8
National	9	10	9	10	9

4.9 The percentage of pupils in East Ayrshire achieving five Higher Grades or more has remained steady at 8% and is consistent over the last five years.

4.10 East Ayrshire continues the trend evident throughout the reporting period of performing better than the family average for the comparator authorities.

5. THE RESULTS – NATIONAL PRIORITY INDICATORS

5.1 The National Priorities indicators measure the percentage of pupils who achieved SCQF levels by the end of S6.

5.2 The data for 2006 indicates that East Ayrshire is performing in line, or above the national average in a number of national priority indicators:

- 92% of pupils leave school at the end of S6 with five or more awards at SCQF Level 3. The national average is 91%.
- 80% of pupils leave school at the end of S6 with five or more awards at SCQF Level 4. The national average is 79%.

- 92% of pupils leave school at the end of S6 with five or more awards at SCQF Level 3. The national average is 91%.

5.3 The results for 2006 do highlight some areas for improvement. The percentage of S6 pupils achieving three or more awards at SCQF 6 is below the national average by 2% and has remained consistent at 28%.

5.4 Male candidates in East Ayrshire in 2006 have performed better than the comparator authorities and in line with the national average. The decline reported nationally and within the comparator authorities is not evident in East Ayrshire.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 East Ayrshire continues to demonstrate strong national priority performance and remains either above, or in line with the national average.

6.2 Male candidates have continued to show improvement in performance at Higher Grade level despite of a national decline.

6.3 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 year.

6.4 These figures will be of interest to young people and parents. They will therefore be discussed with the Pupil Council and representative parents' groups including school boards.

7. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS Nil

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS Nil

9. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This paper demonstrates the Department's contribution to Promoting Community Learning and Improving Opportunities.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- (i) note the continuing strong performance against the comparator authorities
- (ii) invite the Executive Director to continue to pursue the Department's agenda designing to raise attainment and achievement
- (iii) seek annual reports on attainment
- (iv) otherwise note the contents of the report.

Graham Short
Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)

KMcK/MR
13/10/06

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Kenneth McKinlay, Principal Quality Improvement (Tel: 01563 555650)

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