

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE : 14 SEPTEMBER 2004**

### **PERFORMANCE OF EAST AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS IN 5-14 NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS**

#### **Report by Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To advise Members of the performance of East Ayrshire Schools in 5-14 National Assessments

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** National Assessments in 5-14 are used by teachers in Scottish schools to confirm their judgements, based on the evidence of work the pupils have done in class. They cover levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessments are based on the attainment outcomes set out in the relevant 5-14 national guidelines. 5-14 was not designed as a means of certifying pupil attainment nor of comparing schools or year groups. There remains, however, a legitimate interest in monitoring this area of attainment.

- 2.2** In September 2003 the Minister for Education issued a 'Consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting 3-14' seeking views on proposals on changes in the way assessment is organised and managed in pre-school, primary schools and S1-S2. These were:

- replacing reports with annual progress plans
- replacing national tests with a national assessment bank
- measuring improvements in overall attainment through a Scottish Survey of Achievement rather than relying on the annual 5-14 survey of attainment.

An evaluation of responses is being collated and analysed. The outcome of the consultation is expected over the next few months.

#### **3. PERFORMANCE IN EAST AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS**

- 3.1** Pupils are expected to attain 5-14 levels of performance by the following stages:

Level A by P3 )

Level B by P4 ) for public reporting purposes their attainments are

Level C by P6 ) aggregated for overall performance in primary school

Level D by P7 )

Level E by S2

**3.2** Primary school performance over the last 5 years is as follows:

<b>READING</b>					
	1999/2000 %	2000/2001 %	2001/2002 %	2002/2003 %	2003/2004 %
East Ayrshire	75	78	77	77	78
National	77	80	81	81	Not available
<b>WRITING</b>					
East Ayrshire	65	70	70	71	71
National	67	70	72	74	Not available
<b>MATHEMATICS</b>					
East Ayrshire	77	81	78	79	80
National	78	79	80	80	Not available

**3.3** Secondary School performance over the last 5 years is as follows:

<b>READING</b>					
	1999/2000 %	2000/2001 %	2001/2002 %	2002/2003 %	2003/2004 %
East Ayrshire	50	54	58	56	65
National	53	56	59	61	Not available
<b>WRITING</b>					
East Ayrshire	38	42	46	49	50
National	44	46	50	51	Not available
<b>MATHEMATICS</b>					
East Ayrshire	56	62	62	61	62
National	41	51	54	54	Not available

**3.4** In all areas of 5-14 attainment East Ayrshire schools have shown a positive trend over the last 5 years. While in reading and writing, East Ayrshire is performing a percentage point or two below the national average, the very strong performance in maths, especially in the secondary schools, is most encouraging. Within the primary and secondary schools there are individual establishments where performance is significantly better than the national average.

**3.5** Free school meal entitlement (FME) is an accepted indicator of social disadvantage and with it the difficulties that may be brought to the learning of children and young people.

Comparative FME% are shown below:

	2000/2001 %	2001/2002 %	2002/2003 %
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOLS</b>			
East Ayrshire	23.3	22.5	21.9
National	20.8	20.3	20.2
<b>SECONDARY SCHOOLS</b>			
East Ayrshire	18.0	17.5	17.3
National	16.7	15.9	16.0

(Note: National data for 2003/2004 is not available.)

East Ayrshire has higher levels of FME than the national average. Statistically, it would therefore be expected that this level of disadvantage would be reflected in attainment figures. Educational research shows however, that where there are high expectations of young people and a focus on improving learning and teaching, this will be reflected in improved results. The aim remains therefore to ensure that all young people achieve their potential irrespective of social disadvantage.

- 3.6** Individual school attainment data is analysed to provide information regarding performance at all stages throughout the primary and secondary stages of education. This provides details of the number and percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels, those failing to reach the expected level for the stage they are in and the number and percentage of pupils attaining higher levels. These levels for more able pupils, and those requiring additional support in their learning, allow schools to target resources to better meet the needs of all pupils. The schools management information system (SEEMIS) provides a pupil performance tracking mechanism whereby schools record the dates and levels of achievement at each stage, set targets and predict performance for individual pupils. This provides the detailed background performance monitoring and analysis which allows schools to set overall targets for 5-14 attainment, and is therefore one of the key strategies in raising attainment.
- 3.7** The information yielded in these exercises is used by the authority's quality improvement team in the regular monitoring visits to schools and to facilitate discussions on attainment. Headteachers are given feedback on the levels of attainment in their school together with benchmarking information. The attainment levels are also used to inform evaluations of progress in other policy areas such as looked after children, disability and race equality.

#### **4. LEGAL/POLICY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1** It is recommended that Members:

- i) invite the Executive Director to continue to report annually on 5-14 attainment; and
- ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew  
Executive Director (Educational and Social Services)

GRS/MM  
28 August 2004

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Service: Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 576089 or Kenneth McKinlay, Principal: Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 555650

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER : GRAHAM SHORT**