

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 13 SEPTEMBER 2005

SCHOOL/COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP - ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL AND KILMARNOCK COLLEGE

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform the Education Committee of the Authority's relationship with Kilmarnock College, its joint activities and plans for future developments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** All of East Ayrshire secondary and some special schools have developed close ties and working arrangements with Kilmarnock College. Pupils from third year to sixth year have accessed a wide variety of college courses to complement school provision, including a range of practical and vocational programmes. These have been partly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). Considerable strengthening of individual school links with Kilmarnock College has been experienced.
- 2.2** Schools have also accessed specific courses for appropriate cohorts of pupils, for example, Kilmarnock Academy has enabled third and fourth year pupils to study two-year courses with a vocational slant.
- 2.3** The Scottish Executive's plans for future developments - Lifelong Partners – Scotland's Schools and Colleges building the foundations of a lifelong learning society - A Strategy for Partnership and A Guide for Schools, Colleges and Local Authorities (Scottish Executive: 12 May 2005) now provides a framework for further expansion and good practice. Many of the arrangements suggested in the strategy are already in place between the authority and Kilmarnock College, including formal partnership working, agreed protocols, joint staff training and in-service, and progressively widening opportunities for pupils of all abilities to access appropriate courses to complement their school curriculum.
- 2.4** Such courses underline East Ayrshire's commitment to curriculum flexibility, enrich pupils' educational experiences, ease their transition from school to further learning training and employment, and widen their opportunities for progression. The new Scottish Qualification Authority "Skills for Work" courses are also being piloted this session by pupils from three secondary schools via Kilmarnock College.

3 CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1** A joint agreement between the authority and Kilmarnock College detailing its purpose, the role of the College, the role of schools, the role of the Local Authority and the responsibilities of the partners is being finalised. The current School Link Programme provides a wide variety of courses for secondary school pupils within the authority. There are 28 classes with 339 student places being taken by 265 pupils.
- 3.2** Individual schools, including Loudoun Academy (enterprise), Grange Academy (Scottish Progression Award - Engineering) and Doon Academy (Schools of Ambition; Engineering and Childcare) have accessed appropriate courses and programmes to enhance curricular flexibility and provide courses relevant to pupils' needs. An SQA course in "Skills for Work in Early Education and Childcare" is being piloted this year with pupils from James Hamilton, Kilmarnock and Stewarton Academies. A successful Languages /Tourism project with the authority, Kilmarnock College and Prestwick Airport ran between September and December 2004. This has been evaluated and will form the basis of future developments with the airport.
- 3.3** College students studying courses in Child Care and Sports Development undertake placements in some of the schools and pre-5 establishments within the authority.

4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1** The School Link Programme will continue to be expanded, bearing in mind the proposed increase in pupil numbers attending FE Colleges from 2006. The Skills for Work pilot will be carefully evaluated and, if successful, may be expanded into other areas such as Construction, Sport and Recreation, and Financial Services. Stewarton, Doon and Cumnock Academies are currently exploring innovative ways to bring College and schools into closer co-operative working.
- 4.2** From 2006, educational psychologists will be catering for young people in the 0-24 years age range and this will entail them working more closely with Kilmarnock College in the future. Other activities relating to curriculum flexibility and vocational education are actively encouraged and supported by the authority.
- 4.3** In recent months the preparations being made to reopen Glaisnock House as a Centre for Creativity, including enterprise, have made significant progress. When the centre is again open, East Ayrshire pupils will benefit considerably from greatly enhanced opportunities to pursue well structured curricular provision. Their potential and skills in enterprise, creativity and vocational education will develop. Already key staff from Kilmarnock College, along with East Ayrshire colleagues drawn from schools, quality improvement and enterprise in education, are meeting to devise appropriate curricular pathways and guidance. Our support is necessary to ensure relevant and effective delivery. To contribute to this initiative it is proposed that £36,851, which is

the balance of a European grant acquired by Kilmarnock College for the school link project, be transferred to the Glaisnock initiative with the clear focus on assisting in the development of what is strongly emerging as an innovative local resource for young people in school and beyond.

5 LEGAL/POLICY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** There may be a need to consider further any legal and/or financial implications during the implementation period of the strategy.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1** It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the progress being made in working with Kilmarnock College
- (ii) endorse the move to strengthen curricular flexibility in schools
- (iii) encourage the strengthening of links with Kilmarnock College
- (iv) welcome the progress being made in the Glaisnock House project
- (v) agree to allocate £36,851 to the Glaisnock project with the specific aim of assisting the development of the centre
- (vi) otherwise, note the contents of this report:

John Mulgrew
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMc/DF/MR
15 August 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Building the Foundations of A LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY. A Review of Collaboration between schools and Further Education Colleges in Scotland. Report of School/College Conference Monday 20 October 2003 (Scottish Executive 2004).
- 2 Building the Foundations of A LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY. A Review of Collaboration between schools and Further Education Colleges in Scotland. Summary of Consultation Paper (Scottish Executive, February 2004).
- 3 Building the Foundations of A LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY. The Experience of Motherwell College and Local Schools (Scottish Executive, February 2004).
- 4 Building the Foundations of A LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY. School/College Review: School Pupils' Views (Scottish Executive 2004).

- 5 Building the Foundations of a LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY. A Review of Collaboration between Schools and Further Education Colleges in Scotland: Interim Report (Scottish Executive, December 2004)
- 6 “LIFELONG PARTNERS: SCOTLAND’S SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS OF A LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY – A Strategy for Partnership” and “A Guide for Schools, Colleges and Local Authorities”
7. Education Committee Paper - 22 March 2005 - Response To Interim Report Regarding “Building The Foundations Of A Lifelong Learning Society: A Review Of Collaboration Between Schools And Further Education Colleges In Scotland.”

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