

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2006

PROGRESS REPORT ON SCHOOL/AUTHORITY COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Education Committee of the Authority's relationship with Further Education Colleges, their joint activities and plans for future developments.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 All of East Ayrshire secondary and some special schools continue to develop closer ties and working arrangements with Kilmarnock College and Ayr College. Links are also being established with James Watt College, Kilwinning, and the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchincruive. The colleges and Authority aim to provide effective coordination of their activities and opportunities. Pupils from S3-S6 have already accessed a wide variety of college courses to complement school provision, including a range of practical and vocational programmes.
- 2.2 Individual schools have also accessed specific courses for appropriate cohorts of pupils, including year two piloting of SQA-accredited Skills for Work courses in Care, Construction and Engineering, and Hairdressing, and some Higher and Advanced Higher courses.
- 2.3 Many of the arrangements in the Scottish Executive's "Lifelong Partners: Scotland's Schools and Colleges Building the Foundations of a Lifelong Learning Society." 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 This provision is intended to develop the employability of young people by improved attendance, attainment and achievements. The programmes underline East Ayrshire's commitment to provide curriculum flexibility, enrich pupils' educational experiences, ease their transition from school to further learning training and employment, and widen their opportunities for progression.
- 2.5 The authority is striving to reduce the numbers of pupils who leave school who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

3 CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1** A joint agreement between the authority and Kilmarnock College details its purpose, the role of the College, the role of schools, the role of the Local Authority and the overall role of the partners. This formal agreement is reviewed on an annual basis. The authority's schools have co-ordinated some senior school timetabling arrangements to facilitate joint working and delivery.
- 3.2** The current School Link Programme provides a wide variety of courses for over four hundred pupil places on a part time basis. Certificated courses include Construction and Engineering, Childcare, Hairdressing, PC Passport/European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), Enterprise, and a Scottish Progression Award in Engineering. Non-certificated courses include landscaping, preparation for ECDL, metalwork, healthy living, hairdressing, motor vehicle, motor vehicle recycling, painting and decorating, and introduction to childcare.
- 3.3** Some under-16 year-olds can access college courses on a full-time basis if certain strict criteria are met, and subject to approval by the department.
- 3.4** Individual schools, including Loudoun Academy (enterprise), Grange Academy Scottish Progression Award (engineering), Doon (School of Ambition), Kilmarnock and Stewarton Academies have accessed appropriate courses and programmes to enhance curricular flexibility and provide courses relevant to pupils' needs. Doon Academy has a dedicated part of its campus specifically for Kilmarnock College courses in Care and Engineering.
- 3.5** A joint in-service programme for key Kilmarnock College and school staff will take place at Glaisnock House in October 2006, to work together on the shared curriculum experience for our young people.
- 3.6** A number of pupils (approximately 35) will attend Ayr College on a part-time basis. This is similar to the Kilmarnock College programmes outlined in section 3.2.

4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1** The Skills for Work pilot will be carefully evaluated and, if successful, may be expanded into other areas such as Rural Skills, Sport and Recreation, and Financial Services.
- 4.2** Kilmarnock College and the authority are exploring innovative ways to deliver work experience for a wide range of pupils. Ayr College and the authority will work together to produce a stronger partnership, to enable school-college arrangements and transitions to run smoothly.
- 4.3** Glaisnock House has undergone considerable refurbishment and now provides in-service courses on a non-residential basis. It is intended to provide residential courses when refurbishment is completed.

4.4 Other activities relating to curriculum flexibility and vocational education are actively encouraged and supported by the authority. These include engaging more closely with The Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based Sector (LANTRA), to encourage pupils to consider the wide range of land-based vocational courses including horticulture, agriculture, and green-keeping, which could be delivered locally.

5. LEGAL/POLICY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are likely to be financial implications once the full extent of partnership expenditure is explored and agreed and subject to further developments from Scottish Executive. There may also be a need to consider further any legal and/or financial implications during the implementation period of the strategy.

6. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These activities contribute directly to the themes of "Promoting Community Learning" and "Improving Opportunities".

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the progress in partnership with Kilmarnock College
- (ii) note the progress in partnership with other FE Colleges, and
- (iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JMcC/EO'N
1 September 2006

APPENDIX 1

Agreement for the Provision made for School pupils by Kilmarnock College.

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). Building the Foundations of a LIFELONG LEARNING SOCIETY.
5. 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. School/College Partnership. Education Committee paper 15 September 2005

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