

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE – 5 SEPTEMBER 2000

#### HEARTSTART

#### Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval for the Heartstart initiative in East Ayrshire schools.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting of 16 March 2000 the Education Committee approved a Strategic Plan for the Education department covering 2000-2003. Within that plan account was taken of the seven outcomes identified as priorities by the Council, one of which was Better Health. The Strategic Plan also identified that "Reducing Risk" should be an area of activity to which educational services could contribute.
- 2.2 It is well known that in comparison to Europe, the United Kingdom, and the rest of Scotland, the former Strathclyde area does not score well on a number of health indicators. According to Heartstart approximately 1 in 3 males and 1 in 4 females in the West of Scotland will die from a heart-related illness. Cardiac arrest is also associated with a number of scenarios which would lead to accidental death, drowning and electrocution being obvious examples. It is estimated that if victims of heart failure were given immediate first aid by someone with even a simple training in resuscitation that the chances of survival are doubled. This view is supported by a study performed in Maastricht in 1998.

#### 3. THE HEARTSTART PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The Heartstart programme is designed to increase the numbers of the population who have been trained in basic resuscitation methods. Heartstart is an initiative co-ordinated by the British Heart Foundation to promote and develop Emergency Life Support (ELS) training. It is a collaboration with many key groups, including the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, the Chief Executive of which states:

*"Pupils can save lives. Local Authorities will wish to give careful consideration to policy development that will result in pupils acquiring the basic skills necessary for them to be able to carry out emergency life support. Opportunities exist for the integration of emergency life support skills within the curriculum at various stages in primary and secondary schools, using the inter-agency approach outlined in this [the Heartstart] strategy document."*

**3.2** Emergency Life Support is defined by Heartstart as being the essential actions needed to maintain life in an emergency, including:

- assessment and initial management of anyone who is unconscious
- treating a suspected heart attack casualty
- treating an unconscious person who is breathing
- performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- dealing with choking
- dealing with serious bleeding
- expired air respiration (kiss of life)

These actions are deemed to make the difference between life and death for a victim. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is the most important technique which requires no specialist medical knowledge.

**3.3** The application and success of this strategy however depends on there being enough people trained in ELS and CPR techniques. In practice, this can be achieved only through the active involvement of schools. There would however, within the overall concept, be no barrier to Community Education being a participant in the strategy

**3.4** Heartstart have devised a modular programme that is organised in such a way that suitable training can be provided for children of all ages from 5-14. Indeed, supplementary materials have been prepared that complement existing mainline 5-14 curricular materials. Upon completion of the modules there would be short revision at regular intervals. CPR is taught specifically to children at age 10-11

#### **4. HOW HEARTSTART WOULD WORK IN EAST AYRSHIRE**

**4.1** The programme would be supervised by the Heartstart base in Ayrshire Central Hospital with additional support from the School Nursing Service of the Primary Healthcare Trust. The aim would be to train all pupils in ELS techniques. However participation in the programme would be a decision left to headteachers in order to ensure consistency with development planning priorities. Each school must apply individually for affiliation to the programme so that Heartstart can provide public liability and personal accident insurance for instructors.

**4.2** Heartstart will provide training for teachers. Under a new development in the programme they will be able to provide funding for staff cover enabling the release of staff. In any event, cover for staff release would be a justifiable expense under the Excellence Fund 5-14 element. A resource pack is also be provided. This is mainly in the form of written material and a number of manikins. Allocated to cluster groups of schools.

**4.3** In order to approach what will be a substantial training programme, co-ordination will be essential at Authority level. This will be done through the Quality Development Team. A number of primary and secondary schools have already opted into the programme on a pilot basis and this has proved to be highly

successful. It is unlikely however that Heartstart themselves have the capacity to enable all schools to be put through the programme in Year 1. A three year programme is more realistic. The aim however would be to train all P6 and P7 pupils as soon as possible.

## **6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** Participation by schools in the Heartstart programme offers a significant opportunity for the Education Service to make a direct and practical contribution to the strategic aims of the Council.
- 6.2** Participants (both staff and pupils) will receive a certificate of attendance rather than competence and will therefore not be qualified as such. In other words, their status in relation to the law will remain unchanged, and indemnity is therefore not an issue.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** Any costs associated with this scheme will be met by a grant from Heartstart, or from existing resources delegated to schools. Such costs are anticipated to be small.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) approve the participation of East Ayrshire schools in the Heartstart scheme;
- (ii) agree that Heartstart should be actively promoted to schools; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational & Social Services

GRS/DL  
7 August 2000

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Schools (01563-576089).

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. A Strategic Plan for the Education Department 2000-2003

**Implementation Officer: Graham Short**

**AGENDA**