

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 6 FEBRUARY 2001

DESTINATIONS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To describe to Members the recent trends in the destinations of school leavers.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the Scottish Executive produces information on the destinations of school leavers. Traditionally this has been in the form of a booklet in the "Better Information for Parents" series published widely by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI). In this academic session there has been a change, with the information circulated as a Statistical Bulletin of the Scottish Executive. This new method of publication is aimed at the professional audience rather than parents.
- 2.2 Members will recall that leavers destinations have been reported in the past to Committee, and that it is a feature of these statistics that they are more challenging to interpret than other educational data.

3. DESTINATIONS OF LEAVERS 1999 - 2000

- 3.1 A copy of the full report is available in the Members' Library.
- 3.2 Nationally, for the first time over half of the young people who left publicly funded schools continued into full-time further or higher education.
- 3.3 The relevant figures are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Destinations of School Leavers

	Percentage of School Leavers					
	Scotland			East Ayrshire		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Full-time higher education	30	31	31	30	29	33
Full-time further education	19	18	19	13	13	19
Training	10	8	7	19	16	11
Employment	26	26	26	18	20	20
Other destinations	13	14	13	16	17	16
Unknown	3	3	3	2	3	2

3.4 The main features of the figures shown in Table 1 are:

- For full time higher education, the East Ayrshire position is comparable to, but slightly above the national picture.
- For full time further education there has been a significant change in 1999-00 with a markedly higher proportion of East Ayrshire young people accessing this provision. This brings East Ayrshire to a comparable position with Scotland.
- Taken together in 1999-2000, 52% of East Ayrshire children entered higher or further education, echoing the national position. As with Scotland as a whole, this is the first year that over half of young people left school into full-time tertiary education.
- Relatively fewer young people are entering training although there are more young people taking up training opportunities in East Ayrshire than nationally.
- The position of young people entering employment, other destinations or whose destination is unknown is stable.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 This improvement in the position of young people entering tertiary education is welcome, but must at this stage be treated cautiously. Since this trend represents a general improvement in the prospective qualifications of the future work force then it is a positive development. Hopefully, this will also prove to be attractive to employers in the area.

4.2 The overall rise in numbers of young people entering higher education is perhaps a reflection of the improvements in school-based attainment that have been reported to the Committee on a number of occasions. It is, however, also a sign that young people are taking advantage of the opportunities arising from their own improved qualifications.

4.3 Improvements in the uptake of further education placements is a product of the excellent and effective relationship that has developed between the Authority, schools and the local colleges. This is apparent through liaison meetings, school-link courses, shared staff development and joint involvement in various initiatives.

4.4 The change in training placements is probably a consequence of the changes described at paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3.

4.5 The presentation and analysis of these figures is part of the Department of Educational and Social Services approach to Best Value and the Quality Management in Education framework.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) agree that this report is remitted to the Best Value Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

GRS/DL
8 January 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Schools, Tel: (01563) 576089.

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AGENDA