

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 5 FEBRUARY 2002

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DISCIPLINE TASK GROUP

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Members of an additional allocation of resources by the Scottish Executive in support of the report “Better Behaviour – Better Learning”.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the report of the Ministerial Action Group “Better Behaviour – Better Learning” a joint action plan has been issued. This document is a collaboration between the Scottish Executive, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW). Copies of both the original report and the Action Plan are available in the Members’ Library.
- 2.2 In summary both documents are aimed at addressing the issue of pupil discipline. The original report was the result of a wide-ranging consultation, and was disseminated on a large scale to schools. The issue of pupil discipline is central to the process of education and is a matter of perennial concern and review by teachers, head teachers and education authorities alike.

3. THE ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 The Action Plan was published in December 2001. It is designed to co-ordinate the work of the Scottish Executive, local authorities and schools. As such it should be seen within the overall framework of National Priorities and Local Improvement Objectives reported to the Education Committee on 13 November 2001.
- 3.2 A summary of the Action Plan is provided at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Action Plan has been supported by an allocation of additional funds by the Scottish Executive nationally.

£3.0M has been allocated for policy review
£10.0M for the creation of pupil support bases

The funding means that the share that has come to East Ayrshire is:

£74,924 for policy review and planning
£249,745 for pupil support bases

- 3.4 It should be noted that the original report specifically outlined the Framework for Intervention project in East Ayrshire as an example of good practice. A further sum of £10,000 has been allocated to support this project.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The Framework for Intervention programme is summarised was reported to Committee in April 2001. It is developed from the concept of directly supporting class teachers. To deliver this project requires staff development of school behaviour co-ordinators (BeCos), and an element of staff cover to allow them to discharge their responsibilities. A BeCo requires to be an acknowledged and successful practitioner who can support colleagues. The allocation of Scottish Executive funding will allow the FFI project to be developed in all East Ayrshire schools.

4.2 The funds for policy and planning are intended to be spent on issues such as:

- school-based development of policies for pupil care, welfare, discipline and positive behaviour
- authority based advice on matters such as pupil care, welfare and discipline
- consultation with pupils, teachers, parents/carers in order to agree a dress code for children and young people
- authority guidance and advice regarding levels of intervention in disciplinary matters in classrooms and public areas of the school
- school-based formal mechanisms for pupils to regularly share their views with teachers and participate in decision making
- schools to provide opportunities for senior pupils to take responsibility for buddying

In East Ayrshire, there are already well developed policies and practices in these areas. A number of seminars have already been held to cover the issues envisaged by the Scottish Executive. The Authority's statement of Improvement Objectives approved by committee on 13 November 2001 includes direct reference to the encouragement of self discipline in pupils. It is therefore proposed that 10% of the available funds for policy and planning should be used to develop this aspect of the Authority's policy base. The remaining 90% of this element will be devolved directly to schools through delegated budgets based on school roll.

4.3 The Scottish Executive wishes the funds allocated under the heading "Pupil Support Bases" to be used for the following purposes:

- in-class support and support outwith the normal classroom environment
- adaptation of existing school buildings

The need for the provision of specific support bases is variable across the Authority. Some schools have already established such bases within their own development plans. For others, a behaviour support base would not sit well with their existing accommodation plans. It is therefore neither possible, nor desirable to impose a uniform solution. It is proposed therefore to distribute funds to cluster groups for management at this level. Working on the assumption that establishment of such bases is not roll-dependent, funds will be distributed on a flat-rate scale to clusters according to £20,000 per cluster for secondary schools, with the remainder allocated to primary schools. Head teachers, in consultation with staff will be free to purchase:

- Additional furniture and fittings.
- Textbooks, published learning programmes.

- Assessment tools.
- Learning resources including flexible learning resources.
- Computers and supporting software.
- Minor adaptations to accommodation.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The money will be allocated within the guidelines given by the Scottish Executive.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) agree this approach to the promotion of the aims set out in the Discipline Task Group Action Plan,
- (ii) agree to further support the Framework for Intervention initiative; and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

GS/DL
21 January 2002

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Better Behaviour – Better Learning: A Joint Action Plan, Scottish Executive
2. Framework for Intervention, Education Committee, 3 April 2001.

Implementation Officer: Graham Short

AGENDA