

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 4 FEBRUARY 2003

NATIONAL PRIORITIES ACTION FUND

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** To seek approval for outline expenditure plans for the National Priorities Action Fund 2003/2004 and subsequent years.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Members will recall that at its meeting of 28 May 2002 the Education Committee approved plans for expenditure under the National Priorities Action Fund (NPAF). The NPAF replaced the Excellence Fund for Schools and is a less bureaucratic way of financing educational developments linked to national priorities. This source of funding is therefore one of the principal ways of delivering the Authority's Service Improvement Plan.

- 2.2** On 9 December 2002 the Scottish Executive issued a letter to Authorities explaining the proposals for the National Priorities Action Fund (NPAF) for 2003-2004 and the two following years. The arrangements under NPAF assume that certain areas of expenditure that were handled under the Excellence Fund are now administered through GAE. For this reason the Scottish Executive gives a clear statement of sums allocated through GAE to projects such as Early Intervention, Class Size reduction, Classroom and Assistants.

- 2.3** The NPAF establishes 5 action areas within the National Priorities:

- school in the community
- social justice issues
- discipline, including strategies for improving behaviour and the ethos of the school
- school infrastructure
- health promotion

The health promotion theme is subject to a separate set of funding arrangements at national level, and is therefore not directly included in school –based funding arrangements.

3. FUNDING ALLOCATION

3.1 The allocation of funds to East Ayrshire are:

Table 1: Allocation of Funds Under NPAF

		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
School in the Community	New Community School Pilot	£200,000		
	New Community School Roll-Out	£288,000	£433,200	£577,600
Social Justice	Inclusion	£481,870	£602,337	£602,337
	Support for Teachers	£226,140	£226,140	£226,140
	Study Support	£250,533	£300,640	£300,640
Discipline and Ethos	Alternatives to Exclusion	£274,778	£274,778	£274,778
	Support for Parents	£199,839	£199,839	£199,839
School Infrastructure	National Grid for Learning	£463,294	£463,294	£463,294
New National Qualifications	New National Qualifications	£120,484	£120,484	£120,484
TOTAL		£2,505,738	£2,620,712	£2,765,112

3.2 Additionally, funds allocated through GAE are:

Table 2: Allocation of Funds through GAE

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Early Intervention	£323,537	£323,537	£323,537
Classroom Assistants*	£1,228,554	£1,228,554	£1,228,554
Class Size Reduction	£288,747	£288,747	£288,747
TOTAL	£1,840,838	£1,840,838	£1,840,838

*See para 3.3 below.

3.3 The Scottish Executive letter indicates that the amount available for Classroom Assistants is being reviewed and the final allocation has to be confirmed.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The allocation of funds is through the Departmental Service Improvement Plan that was reported to Committee on 17 September 2002. This in turn builds on the programmes initiated under the Excellence Fund for Schools which was reported to the same meeting. It is proposed that these projects and areas for development should be continued under these funding arrangements for the financial year 2003-04, and subsequent years. Members are asked however to not two specific points of interest highlighted in paragraph 4.2 below.

- 4.2** Under the inclusion programme it will be necessary to support the establishment of the Doon Academy special educational needs approved by Committee on 12 November 2002. Similarly the equalisation of the school week will require funding support from the inclusion programme. This was agreed by Committee also on 12 November 2002.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The NPAF will allow the Authority to deliver the improvements outlined in its annual statement of improvement objectives and in key areas of legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The distribution of finances between programmes is described in detail in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. Clearly, for the effective delivery of the range of initiatives that have been demonstrated to be of worth over the last few years it will be important to maintain the funding pattern that has existed hitherto with the support of the Education Committee.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members :

- (i) note the distribution of funds related to the National Priorities Action Fund;
- (ii) agree that the present programmes funded under the National Priorities Action Fund should continue;
- (iii) request that the Director of Educational and Social Services provide future reports on any significant changes related to NPAF;
- (iv) note the areas of development funded through GAE and agree that these areas of provision should be maintained at current levels; and
- (v) otherwise note the contents of this report

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

GRS/GRS
19 January 2003

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. National Priorities Action Fund, Education Committee Report, 28 May 2002
2. Service Improvement Plan, Education Committee Report, 17 September 2002
3. Excellence Fund For Schools Annual Report, Education Committee Report 17 September 2002
4. The results of the consultation on the proposals to open a base for children with special educational needs at Doon Academy, Dalmellington, Education Committee Report, 12 November 2002
5. Length of School Week in Special Schools and Units, Education Committee Report, 12 November 2002

Implementation Officer: Graham Short