

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE : 4 FEBRUARY 2004

NATIONAL PRIORITIES BASELINE REPORT

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Elected Members of the publication of the National Priorities Baseline Report for East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Standards in Schools etc. Act (2000) established an improvement framework for Scottish schools and set out National Priorities designed to improve outcomes for pupils.
- 2.2 The National Priorities are:
1. Achievement and Attainment
To raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.
 2. Framework for Learning
To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning.
 3. Inclusion and Equality
To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser-used languages.
 4. Values and Citizenship
To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.
 5. Learning for Life
To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 In order to establish a framework within which improved outcomes for pupils can be demonstrated, the Scottish Executive is publishing a National Priorities Baseline Report setting out the position of each authority in 2002.

3.2 A copy of the section dealing with East Ayrshire has been provided in the Members' Information Point. The format of the report has been dictated by the Scottish Executive based on information provided by the Authority.

3.3 The overall position described in East Ayrshire is encouraging in relation to all measures. However, demanding targets for further improvement have been agreed with schools and will be closely monitored on a regular basis. Outcomes are presented in the Departmental Service Plan and targets are set through consultation in the formulation of the Departments Local Improvement Objectives and communicated to all establishments in the document "Priority to Improvement".

3.4 It is clearly difficult to measure all the outcomes of school education. However, the Scottish Executive's attempt to broaden the range of evaluation and to take in all aspects of a pupil's school experience rather than simply attainment is to be welcomed.

3.5 In summary the key points from the National Priorities Baseline Report are:-

- East Ayrshire can demonstrate a range of actions and results in all 5 of the National Priorities.
- Targets have been set to raise attainment in all areas of 5-14.
- Literacy and numeracy have been supported by deployment of resources and staff development.
- Results in national qualifications are comparable to, or better than, similar authorities.
- A range of initiatives have been developed to support the self discipline of pupils.
- There is a comprehensive approach to evaluation.
- Vulnerable children are supported
- A number of different approaches are being used to support disadvantaged children.
- Children are involved in decisions affecting their education.
- Provision for young people is enhanced using enterprise, the Arts, supported study and sports programmes.

4. CONSULTATION

The Scottish Executive consulted widely with authorities before publishing the baseline Report and is committed to further consultation as additional measures are developed.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL/POLICY

There are no legal, financial or policy implications arising from this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree to:

- i) note the position of East Ayrshire as reflected by National Priorities Baseline Report.
- ii) receive further reports of progress in addressing National Priorities on an annual basis
- iii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

KMcK/MR
09.12.03

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- i) Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Service: Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 576192

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER : GRAHAM SHORT