

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE -8 JUNE 2000

NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR SCHOOLS -CONSULTATION PROCESS LISTENING TO OUR YOUNG STUDENTS

Report by Director of Education

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Elected Members of a proposal to establish focus groups of young people to consult on the National Priorities for Schools.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Raising standards in Scotland's schools for the benefit of all Scotland's children and young people is the number one objective of the Scottish Executive. To achieve this objective and to ensure excellence throughout our school system, every school must be a centre of continuous improvement where schools, teachers and children themselves take responsibility for improvement. , working in an environment of support and challenge from their education authority.
- 2.2 In March 2000 the Minister for Children and Education published "Improving our Schools -a Consultation on National Priorities for Schools Education in Scotland". The paper seeks views on the national priorities for the school system in Scotland. These priorities will form an essential part of the framework for continuous improvement in schools under the provision of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Bill which is at present being considered by Parliament.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Ministers wish to consult widely on the new framework. They wish to hear the views of parents, teachers, employers, pupils and others with an interest in school education on the following areas:

Outcomes

What are the key outcomes that the Scottish Executive, local authorities and schools should be working together to achieve in order to realise the potential of each and every child in Scotland?

Inputs

What inputs are most significant in delivering the Key Outcomes for education?

Action Areas

Are there particular Key Areas of concern where action is necessary to ensure improvement?

Measure of Performance

How can national priorities be assessed and measured so that improvement can be demonstrated?

4. CONSULTATION IN EAST AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS

- 4.1** It is proposed to establish a number of focus groups of young people to discuss the National Priorities so as to provide not only a forum for their contribution, but to extend the democratic process and provide feedback to the Scottish Executive that is founded on the views of all the stakeholders in the education system in East Ayrshire.
- 4.2** Secondary Schools already involve young people in Student Councils through structures of class representatives and key subjects such as Modern Studies provide opportunities for young people to engage in the debate surrounding a wide range of contemporary issues in society. Feedback from these groups will further contribute to the response to the consultation in East Ayrshire.

5. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE

- 5.1** Responses to the consultation paper are sought by 31 August 2000.

6. FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Nil.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** In due course, National Priorities will impinge on policy and practice related to Quality Management and to Monitoring and Evaluation of the work of schools in East Ayrshire.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) approve the proposal to establish focus groups of young people (ii) invite the Director to submit the response of East Ayrshire to the Consultation exercise, and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Education

KMcK/TC
25 May 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Improving Our Schools -A Consultation on National Priorities for Schools Education in Scotland.

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Bill

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Depute Director of Education Tel: (01563) 576089 or Kenneth McKinlay, Principal, Quality Development Tel: (01563) 555650.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: GRAHAM SHORT

AGENDA