

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2000

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for the use of a statement to inform the educational aims of schools as a basis of a review of school aims.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The introduction of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act, 2000 has produced a new emphasis on the rights of the child. It is important that in its policies and procedures, due acknowledgement is given to this right.

3. WHAT THE ACT SAYS

- 3.1 Section 2 (1) of the new Act states:

"Where school education is provided to a child or young person by, or by virtue of arrangements made, or entered into, by, an education authority it shall be the duty of the authority to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential".

- 3.2 This is a development from the former position where under the Education (Scotland) Act, 1980 the duty was for education authorities "to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education and further education". The difference is that the new Act very much directs attention to the individual child and their rights rather than a general provision.

4. SIGNIFICANCE TO SCHOOLS

- 4.1 All schools should have a set of educational aims. This is a matter of good practice rather than the law. Traditionally, schools have always been free to develop their own aims, ideally in a spirit of partnership and consultation. No-one would wish to move from this position. However, there is also a clear need to ensure that the new legal emphasis is being observed.

- 4.2** It is therefore proposed that as a matter of authority policy, schools should have regard to the conditions set in Section 2(1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act, 2000.
- 4.3** In practice this means that schools would audit their current set of aims ensuring that the following ideas are observed:
- that the development of personality, talents, mental and physical abilities are considered
 - that in one form or another the concept of "fullest potential" is recognised
 - that these ideas are capable of being applied at the level of the individual child.
- 4.4** It is thought that for most establishments this will mean that their present set of aims will be adequate. Presently, most schools in their aims also recognise that education is about "the whole child" rather than the development of a single talent or group of talents, skills or competencies. The view of the working group that is taking forward the new Act as approved by Committee at its meeting of 19 September 2000 was that it was indeed this education of the "whole child" that was important and that this should be formally recognised.
- 4.5** The use of these aims will be important in the production of school handbooks and development plans.
- 4.6** The working group also recognised that the educational concepts that lie behind the view expressed in paragraph 4.2 would require to be described in more detail in the policies of the authority with regard to the curriculum, curriculum planning and learning and teaching.

5. POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** Nil

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) approve the use of Section 2(1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 as a basis of a review of school aims;
- (ii) agree to support headteachers and authority officers who use the concept of the "whole child" as a basis for educational planning;
- (iii) ask the Director of Educational and Social Services to provide future reports on the curriculum, curricular planning and learning and teaching; and
- (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Education

GRS/GRS
27 October 2000

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, Education Committee, 19 September 2000

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: GRAHAM SHORT

AGENDA