

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2000

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on the progress of the Early Intervention Programme within the Department of Educational and Social Services.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Early Intervention is a national initiative, aimed at raising standards of literacy and numeracy in the early years of primary school. The Initiative was funded initially for a 3 year period by Scottish Office Education and Industry Department with contributions from East Ayrshire Council during this period. This initiative has now been extended by the Scottish Executive Education Department and is fully funded for a further 2 years through the Excellence Fund for Schools.

3. UPDATE OF PROGRESS

3.1 ESTABLISHED INITIATIVES AND OUTCOMES

- 3.1.1 All pre-school and primary establishments have been active in their implementation of East Ayrshire Early Intervention strategies. These strategies include:
- the implementation of a skills profile for all four year olds;
 - early identification procedures in all primary one classes for children educationally 'at risk';
 - early literacy and numeracy initiatives in both pre-school and primary establishments.
- 3.1.2 A successful programme of staff development in early literacy and numeracy has been provided for all staff in pre-school establishments and primaries 1 and 2.
- 3.1.3 A broad range of resources, including computer software, to support staff development and Early Intervention initiatives has been distributed to all participating establishments.

3.2 SUCCESS INDICATORS

3.2.1 The Early Intervention Initiative has been extremely successful in involving an increased number of parents in supporting early learning in East Ayrshire. During session 1999/2000 a total of 1938 parents were involved in various projects, workshops and meetings relating to Early Intervention initiatives, such as Story Bags, Paired Reading and Paired Maths. This is an increase of 300% on the total for the previous session.

3.2.2 Children are regularly asked their opinions on the books or games used in Early Intervention projects. This has allowed identification and ongoing use of the most popular and successful resources.

3.2.3 National test results in East Ayrshire have shown substantial improvements in reading, writing and maths attainment since the initiative began in 1997. The table below provides an overview.

Table A Increase in National Testing Attainment Since Session 1997/8

<u>SUBJECT</u>	Average Percentage of P1-3 Reaching Level A or B		Difference
	Session 1997/1998	Session 1999/2000	
READING	32.1	39.6	7.5
WRITING	21.5	32.3	10.8
MATHS	40.7	52.7	12

The above shows:

- an increase of 19% in the number of children in Primaries 1-3 attaining either level A or B in reading;
- a percentage increase of 34% in writing;
- an increase in attainment in maths of 23%.

In 1997, prior to Early Intervention, East Ayrshire had encouraging levels of attainment in reading, writing and maths. However, the Early Intervention Initiative has provided significant improvements across the authority.

3.3 ONGOING INITIATIVES

3.3.1 As part of the Excellence Fund extension of Early Intervention the following initiatives are ongoing;

- the skills profile has been extended for three year olds ('Skills Profile Children 3 to 5') in all East Ayrshire pre-school establishments and partner providers;
- language translation of the 'Skills Profile Children 3 to 5' is underway to meet the needs of minority groups;
- the data from transition grids of all primary one classes are being analysed to establish educationally 'at risk' indicators for schools.

3.3.2 Evaluation of the impact of guidelines to support nursery to primary transition is currently taking place.

3.3.3 A consolidation programme of staff development for all pre-5, primary 1 and 2, and peripatetic staff is underway. Staff from pre-school private and voluntary sector partner providers will also be included in this programme. This will be extended to meet the needs of Primary 3 staff, thus completing a programme of in-service training for staff supporting children ages 0-8 years.

3.3.4 Resources to support specific parental projects such as Curiosity Kits and Story Bags will be provided over the next session. Close collaboration between the Network Learning Support team and Early Intervention team has resulted in the production of an Early Years Language Development pack for use in schools. There is also ongoing use of software systems to assist support planning for pupils with special needs.

3.3.5 The support structure of the Early Intervention team has been adjusted to reflect a shift of emphasis to supporting specific classroom organisation and methodology from primaries 1 to 3. This will involve the Early Intervention team being involved in increased direct interactive teaching initiatives within schools.

4. FUTURE PROPOSALS

4.1 The following Early Intervention Initiatives will be developed over the next stage of the programme:

- a series of handbooks of good practice will be developed for use by staff in pre-school and early stages primary
- systems, policies and practices to optimise continuity and tracking of pupils in primary schools will be developed
- training materials, including support videos, will be prepared for use by staff in pre-school, partner provider and primary establishments

4.2 The rolling programme of staff development will continue to consolidate knowledge of new staff, and to progress Early Intervention strategies into primary three and beyond. Similarly, resources will be identified to support the extension of Early Intervention in literacy and numeracy within these stages.

4.3 The Early Intervention Initiative intends to develop a focus for establishing storytelling within communities, drawing on local skills and resources and using a variety of techniques. Collaboration with Library Services is proposed, and current East Ayrshire resources will also be utilised.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All financial requirements will be met with the existing Early Intervention budget.

6. LEGAL/ IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee:

- (i) invite the Director to continue to monitor progress of the Early Intervention Programme and report back in due course; and
- (ii) otherwise, note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

HMcG/NG
3 November 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Education (Community) Sub-Committee – 6 May 1997:
Early Identification and Intervention.

Report to Education Committee – 28 August 1997:
Early Identification and Intervention.

Report to Education Committee – 16 April 1998:
Early Identification and Intervention.

Report to Education Committee – 1 June 1999:
Early Identification and Intervention.

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Schools, Tel: (01563) 576118; Hilary MacGillivray, Early Intervention Co-ordinator; Muriel Reid, Grace Scott, Quality Development Officers, Tel: (01563) 555650 or Jean Kerr, Psychological Service, Tel: (01563) 55640.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: GRAHAM SHORT, HEAD OF SCHOOLS

AGENDA