

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 11 NOVEMBER 2003

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members of the Education Committee on progress in the development of international activities and links.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2001, the department undertook a wide consultation process on the topic of International Education. Part of the consultation involved a conference which was attended by over two hundred students, teachers and colleagues from link authorities in Northern Ireland and France. Following this consultation, priorities were identified for the development of International Education in the authority's schools.
- 2.2 A departmental policy and a plan for the development of International Education were devised by East Ayrshire's International Group, which consists of staff representing all educational sectors. The plan identified a number of key priorities and a summary of the progress to date is outlined below.

3. PROGRESS REPORT

- 3.1 Significant progress has been made in implementing the plan and the key priorities. Young people within the authority have been provided with increased opportunities to take part in international activities, whether based in their own school or taking part in a study visit overseas. There have also been an increased number of overseas visitors to the authority and this has also allowed schools to develop additional international links. Some of the key activities are outlined below.
- 3.2 One of the key priorities was to extend existing links in line with Council policy and priorities, prioritising the development of links for Early Years and Special Needs establishments.

A significant number of activities have developed from existing and new links - work experience opportunities for S5/6 students continued to develop with France and Germany; the second leg of a Scottish-German Summer Camp for S3-S5 students was held in August 2003; arts events involved young people from

the USA, Norway and Germany as well as East Ayrshire; Partners in Excellence involved secondary students in visits to the European Parliament and immersion weekends; links were set up between pre-school, primary, secondary and special establishments in East Ayrshire and establishments in Germany, Norway and the USA.

- 3.3** Another key priority was to ensure that schools and Education staff were aware of, and were encouraged to access, external funding opportunities (eg. through the Socrates and Grundtvig programmes) for in-service training, collaborative projects, mobility opportunities for teachers and pupils.

Particular success has been achieved in involving pupils in a range of activities - East Ayrshire was one of 9 partners in an international project on special needs, school management and ICT ; six schools (Annanhill PS, Auchinleck Academy, Grange Academy, Stewarton Academy, Cairnhill PS and Park School) were involved in Comenius-type projects; professional development opportunities were offered via international study visits to a number of countries in order for teachers to enhance their expertise.

- 3.4** The above two paragraphs have highlighted a number of the opportunities available to pupils and staff within East Ayrshire. A further recognition of the authority's contribution to the development of international education is that the national initiative entitled "How Good Is Our School at International Education" will be launched by HMIE at a conference in East Ayrshire in November 2003.

4. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** Nil

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The initiatives and activities on international education have been funded in a variety of manners – via the Scottish Executive under the Languages Innovation Funding or the National Priorities Action Fund or Funding to Support Language Learning and Teaching; via the European union SOCRATES project funding.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1** It is recommended that members of the Education Committee:
- (i) Note the continued development of international education within East Ayrshire establishments.
 - (ii) Continue to encourage the development of international activities and links.
 - (iii) Otherwise note the contents of the report.

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

JMc/EO'N
24/10/03

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. East Ayrshire International Education Policy.
2. East Ayrshire International Education Action Plan.

Members requiring further information should contact Jean Nisbet, Quality Improvement Officer (01563) 55613 or Kenneth McKinlay, Principal, Quality Improvement (01563) 555650.

Implementation Officer: John McCarney, Head of Service: Schools Support