

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 16 SEPTEMBER 2003

### ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

#### Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the Education Committee of additional resources allocated through the Assessment is for Learning Programme.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 20 September 2001 the Minister for Education, Mr Jack McConnell, took part in a debate on assessment in the Scottish Parliament, *Effective Assessment for Scotland's Schools*. The Minister set out his response to the consultation on Review of Assessment in Pre-school and 5-14. The main points he made were as follows:

- Assessment is important for all involved in education. It should be designed to improve learning and achievement. Scotland needs a coherent and effective system of assessment that is clearly focused on promoting progress and learning. A new system should build on existing good practice rather than impose radical change.
- Effective assessment is at the heart of good learning and teaching and best professional practice. Teachers are best placed to take responsibility for assessment of pupils' progress and achievements and we would continue to rely on their professionalism to deliver effective assessment.
- Information about assessment needs to be used effectively and promptly to inform action. It should be available to parents and others. The Scottish Executive will continue to publish information about performance, analyse it, and use the results in partnership with stakeholders.
- There are currently many different approaches to recording assessment information and reporting to parents. These approaches need to be brought together into a single system that makes information clear and easy to understand.

- 2.2 The Assessment is for Learning (AifL) programme was established in 2002 having three broad aims:

- Develop one unified system of recording and reporting, the Personal Learning Plan (PLP), which will bring together the current PLP, Progress Files, transition records and Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs)
- Bring together current arrangements for assessment, including the Assessment of Achievement Programme, National Tests and the annual 5-14 Survey of Attainment

- Provide extensive staff development and support through its project-based approach.

### **3. PROJECTS**

- 3.1** There are 10 projects in the AifL programme. East Ayrshire has to date been involved in two - Projects 1 and 9, and is in the early stages of development to support the Gaelic medium element of Project 10 which focuses heavily on pupils with additional support needs.

#### Project 1 : Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment

To investigate effective classroom approaches to formative assessment and produce guidance for schools and teachers about assessment policies and practice to raise attainment. Formative assessment is used to assist teachers in managing the progress of children's learning. It is therefore used during teaching programmes rather than at the end.

- Auchinleck and Kilmarnock Academies participated in this project. Two members of staff in each school implemented formative teaching approaches. Case studies have been produced by both schools.

#### Project 9 : Reporting to Parents and Others

To link reporting to the Personal Learning Plan framework and propose a common format for reports. Additional outcomes for this project include guidance for teachers on ways of working with parents, guidance for parents on the assessment process, and exemplars of good practice (such as video).

- St Joseph's Academy, St John's Primary and St Matthew's are currently involved in implementing approaches to reporting to parents.

### **4. FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION AND DISSEMINATION**

- 4.1** In order to further implement the programme and disseminate good practice an action plan has been submitted to, and accepted by, the Scottish Executive detailing how the AifL Project will be developed during 2003-2004. The plan also addresses issues already identified in Projects 1 and 9. Other projects which will impact on learning and teaching in East Ayrshire:

#### Project 2 : Personal Learning Plans

To draw together existing work on Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) and other existing records and design a single recording framework.

#### Project 6 : New National Assessments

To create an online 'bank' of assessment materials, based on Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) tests and tasks, to replace the current National Tests.

#### Project 10 : Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Additional Support Needs

To ensure that all the projects in the programme are inclusive of pupils with the whole range of educational and social needs.

## **5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** Nil

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** The SEED grant to the Authority in support of the implementation phase is £43,500 to be phased as follows:

£34,400 in August 2003  
£19,100 in December 2003

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1** Members of the Education Committee are invited to:

- i) welcome the additional funding allocated from the AifL Programme; and
- ii) otherwise, note the content of the report

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational and Social Services

CMcC/MR  
25/08/03

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Service : Quality Improvement, Tel: (01563) 576089

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER : GRAHAM SHORT**