

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2003

EXAMINATION RESULTS 2003

Report by Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Members of the overall performance in the 2003 diet of examinations.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the Scottish Executive publish the results obtained in the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) examinations to schools and education authorities. It is no longer the practice, nationally, to publish figures on performance on a school-by-school basis in the format that became known as “League Tables”. There is, however, still a requirement for authorities to make available to parents the results for individual schools. This is done principally through school handbooks and in the compilation of information for parents of P7 pupils moving to secondary school.

3. INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

- 3.1 A summary table of results has been provided by the Quality Improvement Team.
- 3.2 The figures at paragraph 4.1 are presented as a percentage of the relevant S4 roll. This is to enable some level of comparison to be made. Use of the S4 roll means that the effects of differing staying on rates to S5 and S6 is removed.
- 3.3 In the past, figures were presented on a straightforward basis of performance in Standard Grades and Highers. Now, the introduction of new levels of courses under Higher Still has meant that a different approach has to be taken. This approach suggests that different types of examination are equivalent known as the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF):
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|----------|--|
| Level 7: | Advanced Higher at A-C; CSYS at A-C |
| Level 6: | Higher at A-C |
| Level 5: | Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2 (credit) |
| Level 4: | Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4 (general) |
| Level 3: | Access 3 Cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6 (foundation) |
- 3.4 Success in appeals will further improve the results.

4. THE RESULTS

- 4.1** Overall, the results for 2003 show improvements when compared to those obtained in the year 2000. In some areas the rate of improvement is highly significant. Members will recall that the results obtained by young people attending East Ayrshire schools reflected improvements over previous years. When comparison is made between 2003 and 2002 the rate of improvement has in most areas been maintained or is better. Some of the main features are:

At S4 (mainly Standard Grades)

Improvement in 5+ passes at Level 4 (5% up compared to 2000, 2% up compared to 2002).

Improvement in 5+ passes at Level 3 (3% up compared to 2000, 1% up compared to 2002).

Improvement in English at Level 3 or better (1% up compared to 2000 and 2003)

Improvement in mathematics at Level 3 or better (3% up compared to 2000 and same as 2003)

At S5 (Highers)

1+ passes (6% up compared to 2000, 3% up compared to 2002).

3+ passes (1% up compared to 2000, 2% up compared to 2002).

Improvement in 5+ passes (3% up compared to 2000, 2% up compared to 2001).

- 4.2** East Ayrshire has shown improvement in a number of areas of performance at both S5 and S4 stages.
- 4.3** The position in relation to Scotland as a whole or to the other authorities in East Ayrshire's benchmarking family of Clackmannan, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Inverclyde and North Lanarkshire is not yet known. Last year East Ayrshire's performance best in class or equal best in class in all areas of comparison. Since this year's results are better than last year's there is every reason to be optimistic about the comparative information.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1** There is again justification this year for recognising that the performance of East Ayrshire's young people in public examinations has shown significant improvement compared to previous years. The improvements at Higher Grade are particularly significant. Headteachers are reporting that candidates were particularly successful in Higher English, thereby going against the national trend where there was a well publicised fall in levels of attainment.

- 5.2** This information, detailed breakdown of figures by individual schools and other information will be used by the Quality Improvement Team to support head teachers and subject departments to further improve performance for next year.
- 5.3** These figures will be of interest to young people and parents. They will therefore be discussed with the Pupil Council and representative parents' groups including school boards.
- 5.4** It would appear from these figures that the educational maintenance allowance also, now, having a beneficial effect on attainment.

6. POLICY/LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Nil

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1** It is recommended that Members :
- (i) ask the Director of Educational and Social Services to write to schools informing them of this analysis and congratulating them on the areas of improved attainment highlighted by this report;
 - (ii) ask the Director of Educational and Social Services to make arrangements for the discussion of this information at the Pupil Council and with parents including School Boards;
 - (iii) ask the Director of Educational and Social Services to draw attention of the Scottish Executive to these results in the context of the benefits of the educational maintenance allowance; and
 - (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report

John Mulgrew
Director of Educational and Social Services

GRS/GRS
31 August 2003

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Head of Schools, (01563-576089).

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Implementation Officer: Graham Short