

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	1 February 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Consultation on Requirements for Providing Information for Parents and Carers about their Child's School ("The School Handbook")
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise on the Scottish Government's Consultation on the Requirements for Providing Information for Parents and Carers about their Child's School ("The School Handbook").

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the Executive Director (Education Resources), in consultation with the Chair of the Education Resources Committee, agrees a response on behalf of the Council to the consultation on the requirements for providing information for parents and carers about their child's school for submission to the Scottish Government by the closing date of 14 March 2011; and
- (2) that the arrangements for the Council to host a National Consultation Workshop in partnership with the Scottish Government for parents from throughout Lanarkshire and beyond on 7 February 2011 be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Scottish Government in November 2010 published a public consultation on the Requirements for Providing Information for Parents and Carers about their Child's School ("The School Handbook"). The requirements are outlined in the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 1982 and any subsequent legislation. This requires education authorities throughout schools to make this information available in different formats including "The School Handbook", leaflets or a school website. The Regulations currently cover information such as transport facilities, school meal provision, post school destinations, attainment and achievement information in national qualifications and additional support for learning.
- 3.2. The change in Scottish education for young people aged 3-18 as a result of Curriculum for Excellence – includes changes to the curriculum itself and to assessment and national qualifications – suggests that the current requirements for the school handbook need to be updated and refreshed to ensure that information provided is more relevant and helpful for parents.

- 3.3. Current legislation intimates that schools are required to prepare their handbooks each year by 15 December and to make this information to parents and carers in time for the enrolment of infant beginners that normally takes place in January. In addition, schools make their handbook available to parents and carers and to others with an interest in finding out more about the school, the curriculum and the range of activities and programmes that it may offer.
- 3.4. In South Lanarkshire, Education Resources each year provides schools with handbook guidelines to reflect national and local priorities and in support of the Council's vision, Education Resources' Purpose Statement and a range of information associated with learning and teaching.
- 3.5. As well as providing information to parents and carers at the time of enrolment, some schools have moved towards making their handbook available through their website and copies are normally made available in local libraries.
- 3.6. The Scottish Government in setting out the consultation has asked the National Parent Forum to take a role in engaging with parents and carers on what information they would like to see in the proposed refreshed handbook.
- 3.7. Schools and Parent Councils have been invited to participate in the consultation and it is proposed that the Executive Director (Education Resources), in consultation with the Chair, be authorised to prepare a submission in response to the consultation prior to the closing date of 14 March 2011. Parents and Parent Councils are also encouraged to complete on an individual basis the on-line consultation survey form.
- 3.8. South Lanarkshire Council, Education Resources has also agreed to host a Pan Lanarkshire consultation event for parents in partnership with the Scottish Government, and the National Parent Forum on Monday, 7 February 2011 (7pm Council Offices, Hamilton).
- 3.9. An invitation will be extended to all Parent Councils to attend this engagement event.

4. Employee Implications

- 4.1. None

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. None

6. Other Implications

- 6.1. There are no significant risks to the Council in terms of the recommendations contained within this report.

7. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 7.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 7.2. Consultation will be undertaken as outlined in section 3 of the report.

Larry Forde
Executive Director (Education Resources)

13 January 2011

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Improvement Themes

- Raising Educational Attainment for All

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

- Consultation – survey form (on-line)
- Public Consultation on Requirements for Providing Information for Parents and Carers about their Child's School ("The School Handbook")

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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