

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE**

**21 May 2009**

**Standards and Quality Report 2008 - 09**  
**Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members, Parent Councils and other stakeholders with an overview of the progress which the ECS Service has made in achieving its outcomes and improving the Standard and Quality of Education Provision.

The report is structured around the current ECS Service Plan which has implemented its commitments under Strengthening the Highlands, the Programme of the Highland Council 2009 – 11.

In respect of the Service Plan and Service and school self-evaluation, it covers the period from the last report in May 2008 up to the present. The section on attainment of schools relates primarily to school session 2007/08.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Education Act 2000, places on the Education Authority a statutory responsibility to provide education which realises the potential of all pupils and requires Authorities to challenge and support educational establishments to improve the quality of education provision.

Headteachers and other establishment managers have a delegated responsibility to discharge this statutory responsibility for pupils. They are challenged and supported in this process by the Quality Improvement Team who have a key responsibility in collaboration with all managers to discharge the statutory duty in order to continuously improve the quality of service provision.

1.2 There have been regular reports on progress through the Quarterly Reporting Format and through the reporting on outcomes in For Highlands Children 2. This report draws on some of the key messages in these reports without duplicating what has already been submitted.

1.3 All parts of the service, including schools and pre-school centres have been engaged in self evaluation. Schools in particular have this year adopted a simplified method of building Standards and Quality Profiles, producing Standards and Quality reports to Parents and agreeing Improvement Plans as a strategic guide for the school's development.

1.4 The Inspection processes in Schools and Community Learning and Development has been simplified around a small set of core Quality Indicators. Care Commission inspection and reporting remains separate and distinct in the Early Years sector.

**2. Service Plan Improvement Themes**

2.1 Progress on the Service Plan Improvement themes of:

- Care in the Community

- A Clean Environment
- A Skilled and Confident Highlands
- Arts, Heritage, Culture and Sport
- Gaelic Language
- Improved transport and Connectivity
- Children and Young People

Are reported on under the appropriate headings and are structured around our aims, successes and challenges. Each area is also illustrated with examples of good practice.

2.2 Also reported is the ECS service contribution to the Administration Corporate objectives for the Highland Council.

2.3 The development priorities within the Service Plan have set out the current agenda for schools and establishments to build continuous improvement. These developments are supported through a number of development priorities which include:

- implementing the Curriculum for Excellence
- ICT development,
- the Highland Literacy Project
- Additional Support Needs,
- Learning and Teaching and
- Assessment is for Learning.

The significant successes in Arts, Sport, Culture, Environment and Sustainability have enriched the learning experiences of our young people and the capacity of our communities.

2.4 Determined to Succeed and Vocational Learning have been well established within the overall framework of a Curriculum for Excellence. These have contributed to the More Choices, More Chances support for young people.

### **3. Core Self - evaluation**

3.1 Self Evaluation is the cornerstone of the service knowing itself, valuing its successes and identifying areas for improvement. In order to do this effectively, the service has developed an evaluation suite of quality indicators based on the two HMIE publications: *Quality Management in Education 2* and *A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators*.

3.2 The service has identified a set of core quality indicators and has developed a set of evaluative statements based on the evidence from a number of sources.

3.3 The first quality indicator evaluated is that of *Improvements in Performance* where the evidence has been reviewed and the agreed evaluation is summarised in this report.

3.4 The next set of core indicators relate to the impact of the service, on:

- Children and Young People
- Parents, Carers and Families
- Staff
- The Local and Wider Community

- 3.5 The final set of core indicators relate to the management and leadership of the service and evaluate our success in:
- Delivering the ECS services
  - Vision Values and aims
  - Developing people and partnerships
  - Leadership of change and improvement

#### **4. Performance Data**

- 4.1 The first part of the performance data presents a set of graphs of attainment in the 5-14 areas of reading, writing and mathematics in Primary and secondary schools. This is followed by attainment graphs for national qualifications in secondary school. The graphs are accompanied by an appropriate commentary. Further performance data is included dealing with specific areas in relation to For Highlands Children and Gaelic.
- 4.2 The second part of the performance data relates to school and Learning Community Self evaluation of core quality indicators together with HMle evaluations.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 It is recommended that members:-
- a) note and comment on the Standards and Quality Report
  - b) agree the action proposed to seek further improvement in the key identified areas of the report
  - c) agree copies of the Standards and Quality Report be distributed to Parent Councils, schools and libraries and that the report be placed on the council's website for information.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 21 April 2009

Author: Tony McCulloch, Quality Assurance & Development Manager

Ref: HF/TMcC

Background Papers: ECS Standards and Quality Report 2009