

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 13 JUNE 2017**

**CHANGES TO STANDARDS IN SCOTLAND'S SCHOOLS ACT 2000**

**REPORT BY PAULINE STEPHEN, CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER**

**ABSTRACT**

This report provides details of changes to the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act, 2000. The amendments to the act place three new requirements on Education Authorities:

- To reduce inequalities of educational outcomes experienced by pupils
- To achieve the strategic priorities contained within the National Improvement Framework
- The introduction of new annual and reporting duties

This report seeks approval for the development and implementation of new annual planning and reporting processes in order to comply with the new statutory guidance.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- (i) Instructs the Chief Education Officer, to ensure that an Education Authority Annual Plan in line statutory guidance contained within Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000, as amended by the Education Scotland Act, 2016, is published annually.
- (ii) Requests the Chief Education Officer to present this plan to Committee for scrutiny prior to publication.
- (iii) Requests that the first plan will be presented to Committee in August 2017.
- (iv) Instructs the Chief Education Officer to ensure that an evaluation report on progress with the Education Authority Annual Plan, is published annually.
- (v) Requests the Chief Education Officer to present this report to Committee for scrutiny prior to publication.
- (vi) Requests that the first annual report will be presented to Committee in August 2018.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/CORPORATE PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Our children and young people are confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens
- Individuals and families are involved in decisions which affect them
- We have improved the health and wellbeing of our people and inequalities are reduced

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Standards in Scotland Schools Act, 2000 already places clear and well established duties on Education Authorities. Existing and maintaining requirements are:

- Where education authorities are providing education, they must do so in a way which ensures it is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential
- An education authority shall endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them and they shall exercise their functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education

3.2 This Act has recently been amended and introduces new duties:

- Section 3B: imposes duties on education authorities which are designed to promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Section 3D: imposes a duty on education authorities, in discharging their duty under section 3(2) of the 2000 Act (to secure improvement in the quality of school education) to do so with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework.
- Sections 3F, 3H and 6: impose duties on education authorities in relation to annual planning and reporting; and annual school improvement planning.

3.3 The Children and Learning Service and Angus Schools are already engaging in improvement activity which is consistent with the strategic priorities outlined in the National Improvement Framework. These four strategic priorities are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

### 4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Chief Education Officer is working with senior officers and school leaders to ensure that the three amendments detailed in para 3.2 are implemented by August 2017. There is a focus on developing and implementing Annual Education Plans and Annual Reports.

4.2 The **Annual Plan** must set out:

- Steps proposed to reduce inequalities of outcome for pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Steps proposed to comply with authorities' duty to consult with and advise the persons specified in section 3B when making decisions of a strategic nature about the carrying out of their school education functions:
  - (a) Head teachers within Angus Schools
  - (b) Children and Young people within Angus Schools
  - (c) Parents of children and young people within Angus Schools
  - (d) The representatives of trade unions which are representative of the teaching staff within Angus Schools

- (e) Voluntary organisations as the Authority thinks appropriate
- (f) Any other persons the authority thinks appropriate.

- Steps to ensure that the Education Authority delivers the four priorities contained within the National Improvement Framework.
- Any educational benefits the authorities consider will result from taking all of these steps

The plan must be published before the 12 month planning period commences. The planning period dates will be prescribed in regulations brought forward by the Scottish Ministers in 2017 and are likely to be 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

#### 4.3 The **Annual Report** must set out

- Steps taken to reduce inequalities of outcome for pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage
- Steps taken to comply with Authority's duty to consult and advise those persons specified in 4.2
- Steps taken to overtake the four priorities contained within the National Improvement Framework and any resulting educational benefits for children and young people.
- Any educational benefits the authorities consider will result from the taking of these actions.

The report must be published as soon as is reasonably practicable following the end of the planning period.

## 5. **Proposals**

### 5.1 It is proposed that:

- An Education Plan is prepared annually for August Committee
- This plan is published on the 1<sup>st</sup> September each year
- The first Annual Education Plan is presented to Committee on 17th August 2017
- An Education Report is prepared annually for August Committee
- This report is published on the 1st September each year
- The first Annual Education Report is presented to Committee in August 2018

## 6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Standards in Scotland School Act 2000, amended 2016:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/03/4559>