

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
17 FEBRUARY 2010**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING – ATTENDANCE AND  
ABSENCE / DESTINATION OF LEAVERS**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to notify the Committee of performance information with regard to school attendance and absence and destination of school leavers 2008/09 following publication of the Scottish Government Statistical Notice on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Children and Young People's Services Committee in terms of Section D(1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee scrutinises and notes the information contained in Appendices 1 to 4.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Further to the report approved at the Educational Services Committee on 9 August 2006, performance information is reported to Committee following publication of a series of Scottish Government statistics notices throughout the year allowing comparisons with national and comparator authority average levels.

**4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan**

The report addresses information relevant to departmental responsibilities for actions in the Single Outcome Agreement National Outcome 3, Local Priority 5 – Attainment & Achievement and also contributes to "Smarter" Community Planning Strategic groups.

**(a) Policy and Legal**

None

**(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

None

**(d) Consultations**

This report has been circulated to Senior Officers in Educational Services who are in agreement with the contents.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 That the Committee scrutinises and notes the contents of this report.**

Author of Report:	Richard Donald, Head of Educational Support Services
Background Papers:	
Ref:	DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services Committee/17 February 2010/Public Performance Reporting - Attendance and Absence/Destination of Leavers

**PERFORMANCE INFORMATION****Attendance and Absence in Scottish Schools 2008/09.**

The following information summarises the Scottish Government Statistical Notice which was published on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009 on the results of the latest annual attendance and absence survey for 2008/09.

Attendance at Moray Primary Schools' increased by 0.5% to 95.9% in 2008/09 and remains above the national average of 95.4%. Moray is now also above the average of our comparator authorities' of 95.8%. In Moray, attendance since 2005/06 has increased by 0.4% but has remained relatively consistent over that period. The national average has increase slightly this year, by 0.3% and comparator authorities' average has remained the same as last year, but both have slightly increased since 2005/06.

Attendance at Moray Secondary Schools' increased by 0.7% to 92.5% in 2008/09 remaining above the national average of 91.5% and moving above our comparator authorities' average. In Moray, attendance since 2005/06 had remained static until this year where there has been a noticeable increase. Both national and comparator authorities' averages have increased since 2005/06.

The Scottish Government Publication reports these records are affected by ongoing differences in recording procedures across local authorities. Comparisons between authorities will therefore be affected by these differences in recording and it should not be stated that other authorities necessarily have, for example, worse sickness or truancy rates. Due to these ongoing concerns over the quality and consistency in the recording of the reasons for absence, the information on absence has been amalgamated so that only overall absence rates have been published.

This year, the Scottish Government has undertaken a joint piece of work with local authorities to highlight the issue of variability in how some schools and local authorities are recording absence. The focus of this work has been to improve the consistency of the use of default settings to report initial absence which may have lead to inaccuracies in recording and reporting previously - it is expected that improvements identified will be evidenced in the 2009/10 publication of these data

The level of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence in Moray Primary Schools, at 4.1% is better than the national average of 4.5%, and better than our comparator authorities' average of 4.2%. The level of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence in Moray Secondary Schools, at 7.5% is better than the national average of 8.5%, and also better than our comparator authorities' average of 8.0%.

The Council still collect data against both categories of absence and this is presented alongside attendance levels by school in Appendix 3 for information. Educational Services publish guidance related to school attendance. The guidance is addressing school non-attendance through a process of supported early intervention. Moreover, the service continues to assist and encourage schools in applying the policy guidance rigorously in order to improve the information recorded and employ preventative actions whenever necessary.

## **Destinations of Leavers from Scottish Schools 2007/08**

The following information summarises the Scottish Government Statistical Notice which was published on November 24, 2009 on destinations of leavers from Scottish Schools during 2008/09, this is the first publication of school leavers destinations which reflects the effects of the current recession. Fewer labour market opportunities might be expected to lead to greater demand for places in Higher and Further Education, or indeed to increased numbers of pupils staying on at school, and to lower proportions entering employment. Figures for 2008/09 bear these expectations out, with the proportion of leavers entering Higher or Further Education reaching it's highest level in the years for which comparable figures are available, and the proportion entering employment reaching its lowest level.

In Moray, 30% of school leaver destinations in 2008/09 were to full time higher education, 5.1% above the previous year's result but remaining below the national average of 35% and our comparator authorities' average of 34.5%, both of which increased during 2008/09.

In Moray, the percentage of leavers entering full time further education has remained the same at 26% and is slightly below the national and our comparator authorities' averages of 27%.

The Moray level of leavers entering employment has decreased by 6% to 31%, remaining significantly greater than that of our comparator authorities' average of 22% and the national average of 18%. This decreasing trend in Moray follows that of the national and comparator authorities' average trend, but this decrease may be explained by the large increase in school leavers in the area entering higher education during 2008/09.

In Moray, the percentage of school leavers that are unemployed and either seeking or not seeking employment or training in 2008/09 has increased by 2% to 12%, below the national average of 13% but the same as our comparator authorities' average.

When comparing Moray leavers information to that of our comparator authorities and national levels, consideration should be given to the following –

- The destination of leavers from individual Education Authorities may depend partly on location. For example, in many rural and island areas, young people have to travel long distances or live away from home in order to take up courses in higher or further education.
- Economic factors may affect the availability of employment in the local area. A major construction project or the opening of an industrial enterprise may present many new opportunities. Equally, lack of local employment may encourage leavers towards further education or training.
- Fluctuations in the figures from year to year are likely. For example, differences in the proportion of leavers proceeding to higher education may derive from the ability of pupils in a particular year group.
- The overall improvement in attainment being seen in Moray secondary schools may be a factor to the number entering higher education.