

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
13 FEBRUARY 2008**

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

BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose to this report is to ask the Committee to scrutinise the performance information with regard to pupil attendance and school leaver destinations.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Educational Services Committee in terms of Section D1 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 the information contained in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Further to the report approved at Educational Services Committee on 6 October 2004 (para. 9 of the minute refers), information is now provided in line with the timetable set out at Appendix 1 of that report. Furthermore, a report updating this performance information was approved at Educational Services Committee on 8 February 2006 (para. 13 of the minute refers).

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

The contents of this report are in accord with the Working Principles of the Corporate Development Plan.

(b) 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 notes the contents of this report.

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Background Papers:
Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Education & Social Services Committee/
13 February 2008/Public Performance Reporting - Attendance
and Absence/Destination of Leavers

APPENDIX 1**FEBRUARY 2008 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION****Pupil Attendance at Moray Primary and Secondary Schools 2006/07**

Attendance at Moray Primary Schools' slightly increased in 2006/07 remaining above the national average. Moray has fallen below our comparator authorities average, which has seen an unusual 0.4% increase, having remained static since 2004/05. In Moray, attendance since 2004/05 has decreased by 0.1% but has remained relatively consistent over that period. Both national and comparator authorities averages have increased this year having remained static since 2004/05.

Attendance at Moray Secondary Schools, when comparing results with 2005/06, has significantly decreased by 1%, perhaps explained by a 0.9% increase in authorised absence during the same period. Following further scrutiny of results and discussions with officers, incorrect coding of study leave within one secondary school has adversely affected 2006/07 published figures. Accepting the 2006/07 results as published, Moray remains above the national average but below comparator authorities average. The service is confident that there would be a positive change in its position against comparator authorities when taking into account the coding error.

The level of unauthorised absences in Moray Primary Schools has increased by 0.1% to 0.6% in 2006/07, but remains below national and comparator authorities average levels, a position maintained over the past three years.

The level of unauthorised absences in Moray Secondary Schools has increased from last year by 0.1% to 2.7%, remaining above our comparator authorities average of 2.5% and the national average of 2%.

The Attendance and Absence Policy has recently been reviewed and is out for consultation and will be the subject of a report to the Education and Social Services Committee in April. 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.

School Leaver Destinations 2006/07

There has been a 2% decrease in the number of leavers entering full-time higher education in Moray from 2005/06. This decrease may represent some pupils choice for a more vocational based course as evidenced by the 1% increase in the number of leavers entering full time further education in 2006/07.

The percentage of leavers entering full time higher education has remained below that of our comparators and the national average over the past 3 years. However, it

should be noted that Morays' 2% decrease was a position mirrored in our comparator authorities average, where the national average remained static.

The percentage of leavers entering full time further education has increased by 1% to 24% and is above the national average and equals that to our comparator authorities average.

The Moray level of leavers entering employment has increased by 2% to 35%, remaining significantly greater than that of our comparator authorities and the national average levels for the past three years.

In Moray, the percentage of school leavers that are unemployed and either seeking or not seeking employment or training (recorded as other known destinations) has increased by 2% to 14% from 2005/06 against decreasing results in comparator authorities and national averages during the same period.

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.
- There may be strong local tradition for pupils either to stay on at school or to leave school as early as possible, affecting the numbers who stay on long enough to gain the necessary entrance qualifications for higher education. This may even vary from school to school.
- 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.