

Auchinleck Academy Standards & Quality Report

Session 2003/2004

This is our fifth Standards and Quality Report. It takes account of the range of educational provision within Auchinleck Academy as we enter the new session of 2003/2004. The report documents our progress to pre-determined targets and describes various achievements of our students across all yeargroups during the year. It is intended to be wide ranging in nature and both descriptive and analytical in approach. Above all else it is intended as a useful document for parents.

From 1996-2003 the focus within Auchinleck Academy has very much been on raising standards across all levels of service provision. I am sure parents will be aware of the dividends of this process. In essence it is about systematically reviewing our achievements against the yardstick of performance taken from the HMI document "How Good is our School?" 2002 Revision. This asks a number of searching questions, notably:

How well are pupils performing?
How effective is the school?
How well is the school managed and led?
What are the school's key strengths?
What are the main points for action?

This report is an honest appraisal of the state of progress and service delivery within Auchinleck Academy. It is wide ranging and is based on data produced from quality assurance, SQA results and analysis of parental and pupil responses to questionnaires.

As stated the process is driven by this year's "How Good is Our School?" and takes account of the following key areas:

- 1. The curriculum*
- 2. Attainment*
- 3. Learning and teaching*
- 4. Support for pupils*
- 5. Ethos*
- 6. Resources*
- 7. Management, leadership and Quality Assurance*

Auchinleck Academy has developed into a very successful institution. The staff of the Academy welcome the opportunity to demonstrate in detail the nature of that success and provide light on the way forward in the sessions ahead.

The collective aim of this establishment is to focus on developing a quality improvement framework that will deliver the highest quality of educational provision with outstanding levels of attainment at each and every stage of the school. The report documents in detail how we deliver this broad aim and our capacity for sustaining it.

Colin MacLean
Head Teacher

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Auchinleck Academy serves a wide community within East Ayrshire. The roll was 1076 in September 2003 and the staffing complement is 75.47 FTE. Increases in pupil numbers will result in additional staffing in each of the next 2 sessions. However this year represents an end of the period of rapid growth. Further increases in numbers are likely over the period 2004-2008 but will be less marked.

AIMS

To promote a culture of quality and achievement which provides a real challenge to all our students irrespective of race, cultural diversity, gender, disability or social background and to provide them with the appropriate level of support to satisfy their aspirations.

To foster an inclusive ethos which genuinely values all our students and in so doing promotes both learning and personal effectiveness. Particular account is taken of disability, additional support needs and personal circumstances.

To create a meaningful and working partnership with parents, associated primaries and the community which focuses on providing support for children.

To manage our resources, whether human, financial or material, in such a way as to meet the needs of the developing curriculum.

KEY SCHOOL PRIORITIES

The improvement plans in recent years shared many common themes. This is perfectly understandable as the development programme can only be successfully delivered over the long term. Short term initiatives seldom deliver sustainable improvements in performance. The 2003/2004 Improvement Plan provides a focus for the following initiatives:

- *A major review of writing*
- *The delivery of ICT across the curriculum including the formulation of a whole school policy*
- *The review of our Homework Policy*
- *A major initiative to enhance performance at National Qualification Higher Grade*
- *The production of audit tools to allow principal teachers to summarise practice relative to HGIOS themes*

- *The revision of school practice in line with our policy on Race Equality and Cultural Diversity*

As already indicated our improvement plans are evolutionary in scope with a number of common themes from the previous year including

- *ICT across the curriculum*
- *Ongoing responses to our Education for Work policy*
- *A re-inforcement of and departmental responses to writing across the curriculum*
- *The improvement in attainment in the senior school*

EVIDENCE

The concept of quality assurance is now well established in Auchinleck Academy. The programme was phased in over a 3 year cycle and became fully operational in 2000. The process took full account of the document “How Good is Our School?” and was modified in 2002 to take account of the revised guidelines.

In April 2002 all staff took part in a HGIOS (“How Good is Our School?”) review based on the new quality indicators which measured our performance across the 7 already outlined broad themes. The information gathered will be used for development work across the whole school and key items figure in both the 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 plans.

During the course of session members of the Senior Management Team visited classes to assess progress with the key theme learning and teaching in S1 and S2. The programme will be extended in 2003/04 to include ICT across the curriculum.

Principal Teachers also play an important role in monitoring quality across departments. Visits to view teaching, monitoring of homework and of teachers planners, sampling pupils’ work and opinions, reviewing progress with improvement plan goals and producing attainment data across all yeargroups are all significant parts of the process. Ultimately the main input will come from individual staff through the structured programme of self-evaluation.

In August and September 2002 a full parental survey was conducted to assess views on key aspects of school leadership.

Surveys and questionnaires have been used in previous sessions but this is the first time that such an in-depth analysis of the parental partnership has been attempted. The results were made available to both staff and parents.

Our students also have an important role to play in both decision taking and quality assurance. Regular minuted meetings of the yeargroup councils take place and our young people are now involved in such key issues as improvement planning, financial management and identification of priorities. A number of our senior students are also involved in the East Ayrshire Authority student council and are consulted on key issues by the Director of Education and Chair of the Education Committee.

1. **THE CURRICULUM**

The curriculum within Auchinleck Academy takes account of the national guidelines and its structure provides breadth, balance and progression. The programmes of study in English and Mathematics have been commended by the Inspectorate and for the fourth session students in S1 + 2 receive 5 periods of each subject. This focus on increasing standards of numeracy and literacy is producing dramatic improvements. Reading was a key initiative in 2001/2002 and writing from 2002. This impacts on both English and the wider curriculum. NOF* funding has also established an after-school reading club for S1 in session 2002/2003 and in 2003/2004 has been extended to encompass both S1 +2. Two meetings are scheduled after school on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3.30 – 5.00 p.m. The review of the management structure following the McCrone agreement has led to the creation of a Transitional Principal Teacher of Literacy to take the initiative(s) forward.

The 5-14 programme has developed very effectively within the school and we now have both a full curriculum and reporting system to parents. There is also full National Testing in English and Mathematics. This is used as a benchmark for target setting in S1 + 2. Increases in the levels of attainment in both reading and writing and Mathematics are quite marked.

All departments are continuing to build in genuine rigour and challenge for all students in the junior school. Extensive support is provided for students by the Support for Learning department which also provides a consultancy service for Principal Teachers as they develop courses. Regular analysis of attainment in the early years is carried out by Depute Head Teachers who draft reports to both the Senior Management Team and Principal Teachers. Target setting in IEPs* was introduced in 2001 and a review undertaken by the Principal Teacher. The Support for Learning policy was thoroughly reviewed in 2002/2003 to take account of legislative changes, particularly the inclusion agenda.

The Environmental Studies programme has progressed satisfactorily with further development work coming on stream in Science and ICT.

**NOF – New Opportunities Fund*

**IEPs – Individual Education Plans*

In S1 Music was provided with an additional period at the expense of computing. To make sure that there will be no shortfall in the delivery of the ICT strands across the curriculum, a full audit has been carried out.

Information technology is now being widely applied across the curriculum in both a planned and progressive way with PCs being distributed to all departments. Full Labs are now being used in – Computing Studies 4, Business Studies – 2, Library – 1. The “Classroom of the Future” is now established in the Modern Languages department and provides 28 i-Macs, wireless technology and video conferencing. In Mathematics, English and Art and Design mini facilities have also been introduced.

The appointment of a Principal Teacher of Guidance with the responsibility for Religious and Moral Education, plus the addition of a specialist teachers within this area has resulted in a full 5-14 structure and considerable development work in the middle and senior school. We now offer Standard Grade Religious Studies and for the fourth year Philosophy in years 5 and 6.

In the Expressive Arts high standards continue to be maintained in Music, Art & Design and PE. The Art department has established an excellent and award winning web-site and the new ICT facility is being used extensively.

The middle school option sheet provides for an 8 Standard Grade format. In 1999/2000 the SEB short courses were discontinued to allow for increased provision in both English and Maths.

In the senior school we offered a full range of Higher/Intermediate 2/Intermediate 1 courses. A good range of Advanced Highers are now running in English, Mathematics, History, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Art & Design, Accounting and Finance, Administration, Music, French and Graphic Communication.

Numbers in most subjects have been increasing and 30 passes were achieved in 2003.

2. **ATTAINMENT**

(a) **5-14**

In 5-14 terms recent progress in national testing has been excellent. In 2003 60% of S2 passed the Level E reading test. In writing the comparable figure was 41.9% again ahead of the target. However, it should be noted that in 1999 only 11% achieved a Level E pass. The use of new approaches to writing in the English department has produced very considerable increases in performance across both S1 + 2. The new methodologies will continue to produce dividends in writing and we can look forward to further improvements in national test results.

In Mathematics 60% of S2 have passed the appropriate tests at E or F level. That figure is 9% down on the previous year which was exceptional by any yardstick. This simply reflects the ability profile of the yeargroup.

The Support for Learning department has also made excellent progress with special needs pupils in years 1 and 2. 37 individuals are operating IEP's and 14 have a record of needs. The reduction in the number of support auxiliaries from 5 to 4 in August 2003 has, however, caused considerable difficulties.

The SQA results in the middle school were also very satisfactory with 4/5 targets being overtaken.

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>Target</i>
<i>% of students achieving 5+ awards at 1-2</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>28%</i>
<i>% of students achieving 5+ awards at 1-4</i>	<i>86%</i>	<i>72%</i>
<i>% of students achieving 5+ awards at 1-6</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>91%</i>
<i>% of students achieving a pass in English at 1-6</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>92%</i>
<i>% of students achieving a pass in Maths at 1-6</i>	<i>99%</i>	<i>91.4%</i>

These results represented a considerable improvement over the previous year. In 2003 boys outperformed girls at Standard Grade. This is in part due to the strategies that have been employed to address under-achievement in boys.

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
<i>% of students achieving 5+ awards at 1-2</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>% of students achieving 5+ awards at 1-4</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>85%</i>

It is, however, important to take a long term view over the next 4-5 sessions. It is far too early to conclude that the issue has been resolved.

In S5 performance was very considerably improved at both 3+ and 5+ Higher Levels with many instances of outstanding individual achievement.

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>Target</i>
<i>% of yeargroup who achieved 5 Highers (measured against the yeargroup size in September of fourth year)</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>6.0%</i>
<i>% of yeargroup who achieved 3 or more Highers</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>13.0%</i>

The gender gap was quite considerable as can be seen in the following table.

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
<i>% of yeargroup achieving 1+ Highers</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>43%</i>
<i>% of yeargroup achieving 3+ Highers</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>19%</i>
<i>% of yeargroup achieving 5+ Highers</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>9%</i>

The National Qualification courses provide for the entire ability range. It was very encouraging to note the successes of many of our students at both Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 levels.

	A	B	C	Fail
Intermediate 2	58 (34)*	85 (46)*	50 (31)*	52 (57)*
Intermediate 1	26 (22)*	15 (19)*	13 (21)*	9 (18)*

The performance in S6 was very good at Higher, Intermediate 1 and 2 levels. Results in Advanced Higher increased from 18 to 30 with good passes in Art & Design, Biology, Chemistry, French, History, Information Systems, Mathematics, Music and Physics.

(b) Progress with Attendance

Since the introduction of our whole school policy in 1999 attendance has been a priority issue for the school.

In 2002/2003 the overall level of attendance was 90% which compares favourably with both the national average and the corresponding figure for East Ayrshire Secondary schools. However, the figure is slightly poorer than the previous year when 90.8% attendance was achieved.

	Target Attendance	2002/2003
S1	93%	93%
S2	92%	91%
S3	90%	89%
S4	90%	88%
S5	90%	86%
S6	90%	96%

On attendance matters it is always important to be vigilant. Parents continue to be supportive and we appreciate that level of backing. The guidance team will continue to pursue the issue. The S4 and S5 attendance figures indicate a disproportionate level of absence and this is surprising given the considerable improvements in attainment in SQA exams in both yeargroups.

3 **LEARNING AND TEACHING**

The quality of learning and teaching is crucial in delivering high standards of attainment. The staff have a very strong commitment to the achievement of ever higher standards through the process of self-evaluation. Principal Teachers also produce clear guidelines to staff on a number of important areas:

* 2002 Awards

Homework
Appropriate use of assessment
Lesson presentation
Pace of Learning
Range and appropriateness of teaching approaches

Time is made available at departmental meetings to discuss these themes and both the Senior Management Team and Principal Teachers visit classrooms to assess progress.

The promotion of success and high standards of attainment is very much a feature of assemblies, and, of course, the Prizegiving. Staff make use of letters of commendation and certificates are issued by the guidance staff.

Senior managers also take the opportunity to visit classrooms and observe good practice. During the last session the main theme was learning and teaching in S1 and S2. Information and Communication Technology will also provide a focus for classroom visits. Recent improvement plans provided for further growth in respect of :

- * ***the Classroom of the Future.***
- * ***further development of the Library as an ICT facility***
- * ***greater internet access across the whole school through the extension of our network***
- * ***mini lab facilities in English, Art & Design and Mathematics***
- * ***enhanced technology provision in Science***

As already stated the monitoring of ICT across the curriculum will be added to our Quality Assurance System. The great majority of the staff have undergone NOF training within the school to further enhance both their skills and awareness.

Given the increased level of staff competence in ICT delivery a decision was taken to remove the S1 course in computing in 2003/2004 and deliver it across the curriculum. A full audit of the 5-14 strands was carried out in September 2003 with a view to further development work.

In order to meet pupil needs an extensive support network is in place. Course material at all levels is differentiated and is often framed with the advice from staff within the Support for Learning Department. Setting is also used in Maths, English and French. Gender is also an improvement priority. Departments opt for different approaches to enhance boys attainment. In Mathematics single sex classes are being tried in the middle school whereas in English the boy/girl seating arrangement is preferred. Other developments to meet pupils needs include the implementation of individualised educational programmes, improved P7/S1 liaison and joint planning through the Support for Learning link person.

Assessment and reporting are subject to ongoing review. In S1/2 there is full 5-14 reporting with national testing in English and Maths. The next steps approach has been adopted and pastoral interviews introduced to discuss progress.

In May 2002 an S3 computerised report was successfully implemented using the PISYS system. The SEEMIS Click n'Go system has, however, produced more than its fair share of problems and much of our impetus in respect of reporting has been lost. We will however continue to improve the quality of the existing reporting system to parents including a high quality School Handbook and Newslines. Targeting of parents whose children are experiencing difficulty has become a normal precursor to a parents' evening. There is also a provision for a parental response sheet with the report. The school website www.auchinleckacademy.e-ayr.sch.uk went on line in September 2003 and opens up tremendous possibilities of ongoing dialogue with parents. This will be the focus for further development work in the session(s) ahead.

4. **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS**

The school has an excellent system of pastoral care with promoted guidance staff providing for the emotional, physical and social needs of individual pupils. The PSE programme has been extensively re-structured to take account of the achievement culture ethos that has been established. As well as this, PSE slots are regularly used to consult with pupils on key issues such as new school policies.

Recently we issued questionnaires to a sample of all yeargroups to evaluate how well we, as guidance staff, are doing our job. As a result of that, changes are being introduced this session regarding, for example, rewards activities, study programmes etc.

To further support pupils, we are working towards the introduction of Individual Learning Plans for all. This year, all first and second year pupils will be issued with their own Individual Learning Plan (agreed with them) and will regularly assess progress towards agreed targets in their PSE classes. In future we hope to expand the scheme to include other yeargroups next year.

The support and monitoring of our Looked After and Accommodated children has been a key feature of our support for pupils over the last session. We have organised a special Support Base for them including ICT facilities and a quiet area for study or meeting with support staff. These pupils are allowed to access their base during any non-contact time and the ICT facility gives them easy access to careers programmes etc. in order to plan future pathways. To continue this support for these pupils, we prepare a Personal Education Plan for all Looked After and Accommodated Children to support them in both education and welfare issues within Auchinleck Academy.

Curricular and vocational guidance has adjusted to the demands of the developing curriculum. For example, the introduction of Plan-IT and Progress and Targ-It to introduce students to the new Higher Still programme has been a considerable success. Students are independently able to access these key programmes. This has greatly facilitated the options choice programme in the senior school complemented by regular access to the Careers Officer, Industrial Visits and so on. A further development this year has been the introduction of ICT slots to S1/S2 classes (via PSE) so that they too can access careers information and programmes which will facilitate their future options choices.

On the management side the guidance staff meet together with the Senior Depute Head Teacher on a regular basis. A particular focus of discussion recently has been the possible changeover from a horizontal to a vertical guidance system. Parents will be kept informed of any changes being made.

Supported Study is a significant feature of our achievement culture. This is targeted at specific subject teaching so that pupils 'sign up' for the extra classes they wish to attend between 3.30 and 5 p.m.. The programme runs from October to April and is targeted at pupils in S4-S6. As well as this, a mentoring scheme has been in place for S4 and S5 pupils who are failing to achieve their potential. Such pupils are identified early on and are linked to a mentor who charts their progress and who is available to offer advice and encouragement. This is part of our Target Setting programme which, this session, will also operate in S1 and S2 via the Individual Learning Plans.

On the pastoral side, the development of Circle Time has been a priority in our Guidance Improvement Plan this year. This is a programme which develops self-esteem and respect for others via interactive discussion and special projects to support other pupils. One of the guidance staff is a Circle Time trainer and she has trained other guidance staff over the session. A feature of Circle Time is the training of senior pupils to assist P7/S1 pupils in their transition from primary to secondary – e.g. being available to listen to concerns, offering advice on where to get help etc.

The Support for Learning department plays a very significant role in curriculum development and supporting young people within most departments. Staff are involved in liaison work with subject teachers in developing appropriate materials and methodology. Co-operative teaching also takes place in a wide variety of subjects and effective individualised programmes of work are now embedded into school life.

An important part in cross curricular initiatives has been played by Support for Learning staff e.g. the reading and writing initiatives over the last two sessions. During session 2002/2003 the Principal Teacher prepared a successful bid for NOF funding for a new reading initiative which is being rolled out over 3 academic sessions. This will play a key part in raising both standards of literacy and attainment in the first 2 years.

In August 2002 Support for Learning staff issued detailed information on recent legislative changes concerning special educational needs. This provided a launching pad for a thorough review of the school's Support for Learning policy. Existing provision for children with special educational needs is regularly monitored but it was felt that further changes required further refinement.

Close liaison takes place with linked primaries and the School Psychologist within the Learning Partnership to ensure an appropriate placement for children with special needs. However, the provision of appropriate curricula is an ongoing process across years 1-6 and involves, for example, Access provision in the middle school. This applies to Maths, English, Home Economics, RE, Computing Studies and Administration.

The school also enjoys close links with other agencies within and outwith the Learning Partnership. These services work very effectively to support students in school.

5. **ETHOS**

For some considerable time Auchinleck Academy has been able to demonstrate a very supportive ethos. However, during the period of the last 6 years significant progress has been made in establishing an ethos of both attainment and achievement. This has involved significantly raising pupil and staff expectations. There is a definite focus on achievement and attendance. Principal Teachers meet with the Headteacher on an individual basis three times a year and analyse the progress and performance of students at 5-14 levels and in Standard and National qualifications.

Target setting is widely used throughout the school and produced significant dividends in the 2003 Standard Grade examinations. Attendance data is also carefully monitored by Principal Teachers of Guidance who report to the Headteacher on a weekly basis. Staff are informed of progress relative to targets. A key priority of the present improvement plan concerns the raising of attainment in S5 Higher grade. A new structure of pupil support has been introduced involving mentor meetings, supported study and thinking skills workshops. A special parents evening has also been scheduled.

Staff have high expectations of student behaviour and commitment. The disciplinary policy is applied uniformly throughout the school and appropriate sanctions used. A rewards scheme has been a part of our ethos for many years and it has promoted a more positive student attitude to behaviour. Progressive changes have been made to the scheme to maintain the impetus.

The school ethos is not simply about providing support. It must promote student commitment and focus on the work ethic. The last five improvement plans have been very successful in promoting the significance of attainment, good attendance and commitment to study. This is at the core of our school. School dress has also been an issue. Complete adherence to the dress code is a measure of student identification with the establishment and also of the very strong school-parental partnership that has been created.

The School Board is very active and meets on a regular basis. Parent representatives have been keen to be involved in the life of the school and are consulted on all development work. The Attendance initiative was a joint venture with the School Board and the Homework Committee which reported in 1998 included a parental representative. The promotion of enterprise education across the school in 1999/2000 and also 2000/2001 has involved board members in mock interviews and organising a range of high profile speakers for seniors. In 2002 there were significant changes in board personnel and a new chairperson. The Board has become more proactive and is involved in all aspects of school life. In 2003 it was agreed that the school captains would attend the monthly meetings. With increases in the school roll the membership of the Board has similarly increased with 6 parents scheduled to be involved.

Students are consulted on a regular basis through the student councils which cover all yeargroups. They are encouraged to take on extra responsibility and have proved very adept at organising events like the Burns Supper, Red Nose Day, School Prom, etc. The Achievers International Group have also organised a visit from our link school in Georgia during 1999 and 2001. In 2000 18 students and 5 staff visited the United States. In 2002/2003 a link was developed with a Norwegian school. More recently the Achievers group had an end of term visit to London.

Students are involved in all aspects of school life and provide interesting perspectives. Examples of recent consultation with pupils included questionnaires on PSE courses, Higher Still courses and access to ICT across all yeargroups. The councils meet regularly and are now formally consulted on all financial and improvement plan matters. Meetings are appropriately minuted. A number of senior students are also involved in regular meetings with both the Chair of the Education Committee and Director to discuss strategic matters.

Much has been done to improve the school environment including the complete re-decoration of the foyer area and an ongoing refurbishment programme. Additional funding has allowed us to complete a corridor repainting programme in the main block. The school has been the subject of much recent refurbishment including a swimming pool upgrade, new changing rooms, replacement rooves in both the practical and main block, a new technology room in Home Economics and, of course, the exciting high tech Classroom of the Future in Modern Languages. In October 2003 the lower dining hall will undergo an extensive refurbishment and a complete re-roofing will be completed. Investment of this sort is much appreciated and can only help in raising students' self-esteem.

6. **RESOURCES**

Auchinleck Academy has generous accommodation and facilities. Most departments have a staff base and very satisfactory teaching facilities. Concerns about water intrusion in the main building and practical blocks have been dealt with. A programme of roof replacement is now almost complete with only the Assembly Hall remaining outstanding.

The PE complex has undergone a programme of refurbishment. The pool has been repainted and a new air handling unit installed. The boys' and girls' changing rooms have been fitted out to a very high standard and work has also been done to the other 2 facilities adjacent to the gymnasium. A PE staff base has been set up in a former shower area. A number of windows do not close properly and glass replacement is a concern. The main block corridors were repainted 2 sessions ago and it is hoped that a similar process can be undertaken in the practical block.

A considerable sum of £658,000 has been set aside to cover capital works on the building over session 2003-2006. This will start to address some serious concerns.

Throughout the past 5 sessions a furniture refurbishment programme has been undertaken. This will be an ongoing process. All resources are catalogued and updated on an ongoing basis. A Depute Head Teacher assumes responsibility for the accuracy of the inventory.

ICT provision has been of a high order. With considerable Scottish Executive support over the last 3 years there has been a massive expansion in the numbers of new PCs in use within classrooms. Forty machines have been placed in Computing Studies with a similar number in Business Studies. The Library has also been fitted out with 20 PCs and this facility is open to all staff. Other departments have received individual PCs and will continue to be supported with the technology through a phased programme agreed during previous sessions. A large slice of the ICT budget was used in 2002 to complete the network throughout the school. We now have something in the region of 219 PCs on line. The Classroom of the Future is fully operational and mini IT facilities have been developed in both Art & Design, English and Mathematics. A small IT base has been established on the ground floor for Looked After and Accommodated Children. In 2003 the school web site was introduced and its interactive nature will provide tremendous possibilities for greater parental consultation across a wide range of issues.

Accommodation is reviewed on an annual basis. We are experiencing a very tight situation in the Music department with a clear and urgent need to relocate the Social Work Department.

All promoted staff have e-mail addresses. This will be extended to all teachers by the end of the session. A similar process is underway for students.

The Staff Development and Review policy is in operation and takes full account of McCrone and the 35 hours continued professional development.

The School Fund and the devolved finances are monitored by staff committees. Virements have been carried out at regular intervals to benefit all departments in the school. The AFO* provides ongoing financial updates for both the Head Teacher and the responsible Depute Head Teacher and matters are discussed at a formal scheduled meeting. Principal Teachers are also consulted and student councils involved prior to decision taking.

* AFO - *Administrative and Finance Officer*

7. **MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

During the course of the last 5 and a half years we, as a school, have accepted our responsibility for evaluating all aspects of our work. We believe in rigorous self evaluation and are of the opinion that this will bring about steady and sustainable improvements in standards. It was not, of course, possible to introduce a new structure of Quality Assurance overnight. The programme was phased in over 3 sessions and became fully operational in 2000. All staff are involved in self-evaluation and Principal Teachers carry out thorough reviews including 5-14, Standard and Higher grade performance analysis. The Senior Management Team undertake classroom observation with particular themes e.g. during 2001/2002 the focus was on boys' under-achievement and education for work. In 2002/2003 we concentrated on learning and teaching in S1 and 2. In 2003/2004 this theme will be continued and the ICT dimension added.

In August 2002 the staff were involved in a full audit of provision using 'How Good is Our School?' 2002 edition. The information gathered is used for further development work and the production of this and subsequent reports.

Parents are also involved in the quality process. A full leadership audit was carried out in September 2002 using a sample of 150 parents. The results were extremely encouraging and indicated strong support for both the direction and quality of service provided.

The aims of the school were reviewed by all the staff in Easter 2002. It was felt that greater account should be taken of the inclusion agenda. Our second aim was appropriately modified.

The key features of our drive for quality are as follows:-

- 1. The School Improvement Plan drives the work of the school at both whole school and departmental level.***
- 2. The Improvement Plan is agreed by all staff and consideration is taken of the views of students, parents and the School Board.***
- 3. Regular reviews of progress are carried out. For example each Principal Teacher will attend a review meeting with the Head Teacher and Senior Management Team link in June, September and February to discuss the extent of progress to agreed targets.***
- 4. Each member of the Senior Management Team is linked to subject departments and is expected to liaise and work closely with all staff involved.***

5. *SQA results are thoroughly analysed and individual departmental reviews utilised to set targets for the coming sessions.*
6. *Performance at 5-14 level is examined particularly relative to national testing figures in both English and Mathematics. Other Principal Teachers produce a thorough analysis of performance across each yeargroup.*
7. *Attendance figures for S1-6 are monitored by the Head Teacher. Principal teachers of guidance maintain logs and inform the Head Teacher of progress on a weekly basis.*
8. *Full provision is made for consultation – weekly SMT meeting, departmental and Principal Teachers meetings also there are regular guidance or special interest/development meetings.*
9. *All staff take part in a Staff Development and Review meeting to set both professional and personal targets.*
10. *Full use is made of audit particularly relative to the Improvement Plan. In April, at the end of the development cycle students, staff, parents and members of the School Board will be canvassed on their views as to how successful the school has been on achieving its targets for the session.*
11. *The development of a full range of whole school policies on key issues – attendance, anti-bullying, discipline, guidance, homework, staff development and review, probationers, special educational needs, learning and teaching, etc.*

In August 2003 the management structure of the school was extensively revised in line with the McCrone report. A number of posts were removed including Senior Teachers, Assistant Principals and Assistant Heads. The promoted post structure is flatter and hopefully more efficient. It is made up of Headteacher, 5 Deputes, including one vacancy and 21 Principal Teachers. There is now greater flexibility for cross curricular themes being addressed. A post of Principal Teacher of Enterprise in Education is likely to be created in 2004 and a similar post in literacy at a later date.

8.

<i>OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</i>

Education for Work has been an important theme during for the last 3 sessions. Our aim was to integrate this initiative into the curriculum in a progressive way. Last session the focus was on S3 and S4. This year the process continues into S5 and 6. In September – October 2002 all S1 students undertook an enterprise day organised by Business Studies and support staff. Mini-enterprise companies are also operating in years 3 and 4 and on-line packages are being used with the students. In S4 the enterprise group are studying 4 x 10hr units, again on-line, and will receive a National Qualification

Intermediate 1 award on completion. The Achievers group functions in S6 and in 2002/2003 had a link school in Norway. The Achievers programme has been operating very successfully for 4 years. Groups of Americans visited the Academy in 1999 and 2001 with our students reciprocating in 2000. Students have also been active in languages with 3 involved in work experience in Joué lès Tours and another visiting the European Parliament in Strasbourg. A further link has been established with schools in Dresden and 2 students visited the area in 2002. The Classroom of The Future will promote further activity. Auchinleck Academy was accorded international status last year in a presentation by the Chair of the Education Committee

S5/6 students took part in Enterprise Ayrshire's Business Dynamics days and 2 other individuals are involved in work shadowing organised by the Ayrshire Institute of Management.

The PE Department has experienced a very successful year in a variety of activities.

In Badminton the senior team won the Ayrshire Quaich and came third in the Scottish Quaich. Lynne Macmillan and Laura Hood won the Scottish U-16's girls doubles.

In Football the U-16's won both the Kilmarnock and the Ayrshire Cups, while the U-13's won the Kilmarnock & District League and the Kilmarnock Cup. Individual honours were bestowed upon Jamie McCaig who represented Ayrshire U-18's, winning the Scottish Cup, and Peter Logan who represented Ayrshire U-15's. The Girls' Football team reached the National Finals which were played at Hampden Park. Having come through three preliminary rounds they narrowly missed out on a trip to Barcelona.

The Ski Club continues to thrive with another successful trip to Aviemore enjoyed by 40+ pupils. In Easter 2004 the club will be travelling to Pila in Italy for 6 days skiing.

Once again the junior dance group produced a high standard of performance in the East Ayrshire Showcase.

This coming session the PE Department will be offering a number of activities for pupils to participate in after school and at lunchtimes. For girls: basketball, hockey, netball, football, volleyball and badminton. For boys: football, basketball, volleyball and badminton.

The PE department has also introduced Sports Councils in S1 + 2.

The introduction of a School Sports Coordinator since 2001 has seen an increasing number of opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting activities:

- hosted East Ayrshire basketball tournament
- inter-class competitions
- new biathlon (swimming and running) competition
- links with Cumnock Rugby Club
- primary girls football festival
- special games, Inverclyde

- visit from Scottish Ballet, workshop
- junior rugby 7's at KRFC
- senior rugby 7's at Marr College

Proposals for 2003/4

- Physical Activities Buddies Programme (PhABs)
- Junior Sports Leader Programme (JSL)
- Adventure clubs programme
- Martial Arts/Self Defence
- Life Saving

The Art & Design department was featured in the July edition of the 'Times Educational Supplement'. They were commended for excellent practice in integrating information computing technology into the Art curriculum.

Mr McMillan co-ordinated the 2nd phase of Scottish Opera's 'Ring Cycle Project' involving pupils in theatre visits and specialist workshops, which were filmed by the TV Programme – 'Artery'.

Fourth year art pupils were featured in the 'Easy Ayrshire Schools Art Exhibition' held in the Dick Institute in Kilmarnock.

Second Year pupils are currently involved in a European art competition designing logos for 'The Year of Sport 2004'. Two senior pupils were successful in the Kilmarnock Photography Club Competition.

Open day visits to Glasgow School of Art were held for senior art pupils, and all S6 art pupils participated in GSA's 'GOALS' project introducing them to careers in Art. 3 successfully gained entry to art colleges.

In musical terms, pupils have been exposed to a wide variety of successful projects:

the continuing Scottish Chamber Orchestra Project which culminated in a workshop followed by a Concert in the Grand Hall Kilmarnock – forty pupils from our Senior School attended

Scottish Opera's "Ring Cycle" Project involved music students in entertaining and informative workshops, with a visit to a performance of part of one the Operas in the Theatre Royal in Glasgow

a large numbers of pupils were involved in both the Christmas and the Summer Concerts, with senior pupils being involved in the managing and producing of the Christmas Concert

the Senior Vocal Group performed to a high standard at the Palace Theatre in the East Ayrshire Schools Concert in May

Extra-curricular activities continue to be well supported and next session the lunchtime activities will include Senior Choir, Junior Choir, Staff Choir for Christmas, Rock Group rehearsals and Open Door for any pupils who wish to use Music Department facilities.

The Brass Band continues to make excellent progress with our now established brass instructor/bandmaster. They are very active within the community and have taken part in a series of major events including the Showcases and other prestigious concerts. The Pipe Band continue to act as excellent ambassadors for the school at various events.

The Support for Learning department secured funding from NOF to establish an after school book club – The Bookworm Club. This club was open to all members of S1 and proved to be a tremendous success with a large, loyal membership each week. Events included – authors' visits from Anne Donovan, Catherine MacPhail, Alison Prince and John Rodie; two trips to Ottakar's Bookstore in Ayr and three editions of the Club Magazine being published.

The Club is running again this year, open to S2 on Mondays and S1 on Wednesdays. It is hoped these will be as successful as 2002-3.

The Science department has extended its world of work initiative during this year with very successful visits from "It's in Your Genes" Road show, "The Leaf Factory" and the ever-popular "Zoolab". In addition, Chuck Lloyd, an astronaut administrator from NASA, spoke to S4 on topics ranging from the work of NASA and its involvement in the International Space Station, to on a more mundane level, how astronauts cope with gravity! The department hopes to continue expanding its access to the huge variety of employment opportunities available to science students.

Again all second year pupils were presented for the Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate. The successful candidates (78% of the year) were presented with their certificates by Mr George Mair Environmental Health and Food Safety Officer for East Ayrshire during Food Safety Awareness week in June.

Fifth and Sixth year students are participating in the Grants Foods Challenge. This initiative is a venture sponsored by Grants Foods (Galston), Careers Scotland and the Scottish Food & Drink Federation. The students are required to create a tinned foodstuff with the relevant marketing presentation for judging in December. If successful the product may be manufactured by Grants Foods.

In the June of 2003 the history department organised a visit for 60 S1 pupils to Stirling Castle and the Wallace National Monument in Stirling.

The Stirling Castle component formed the largest part of the visit.

The purpose of the trip was to enhance, highlight and ultimately consolidate the S1 course. The themes studied by pupils included the Scottish Wars of Independence and an investigation on attacking and defending castles. The pupils were able to see the significance of Stirling Castle to the wars of independence and the battlefield of the Battle of Stirling Bridge. Moreover, it enabled them to experience at first hand the structure and features of castle defences plus castle life for the investigating skills area of the course.

The Wallace monument visit allowed the pupils to take in the audio visual story of Wallace and study certain artefacts that are alleged to have been handled and or owned by the man himself.

The pupils appeared to have benefited and enjoyed the experience, particularly the visit to the castle. They were able to understand much more clearly certain aspects of the course and castle structures/features. Therefore, it may be said that the trip had the effect of developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and investigating skills.

In the early part of June 2003, the present S4 Standard Grade Geography pupils visited Glasgow to allow them to witness, at first hand, the different land use zones which are present in a city. This involved a visit in the morning to areas as diverse as Newton Mearns, Thornliebank and the new Gorbals, where pupils could see for themselves the differences in housing and the locations of industrial estates. Appreciating the reasons for the existence of such zones within a city, is an integral part of the S-grade Geography course. A visit to George Square allowed them to study the congestion problems for traffic in a large city, as well as the way in which high land values have led to an upward, as opposed to outward, development of buildings. In the afternoon the pupils were taken to the Greenock-Port Glasgow area to experience industrial changes along the river Clyde. This provided ample evidence of the ways in which industry is changing and the repercussions of such changes on the employment and social structure of old industrial areas. This also allowed teaching in context of Education for Work. The geographical location of the IBM plant in Greenock also provided a contrast to the river-side locations of the former and remaining shipyards along the Clyde.

The final part, of a very busy day, involved observation of the structure of commuter settlements and holiday resorts along the coast between Wemyss Bay and Ardrossan.

9. ***THE WAY FORWARD***

The most significant aim of this establishment is to significantly raise standards of both attainment and achievement across all yeargroups and to secure better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results. There is also a considerable junior school focus in terms of improving standards of literacy and numeracy.

To allow this to happen an ethos of achievement has been put in place which deliberately attempts to enhance the teaching and learning environment and so promote student motivation. Parents also have an important role to play in this process and every attempt

is made to involve them and, of course, the students in decision making. Ultimately the school aims to equip our young people with the appropriate core skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to benefit from the technological society.

In 2003/2004 the achievement agenda will be taken forward as follows:

1. The effective delivery of ICT across the curriculum
2. The application of the World of Work to the curriculum
3. The improvement in performance of students taking National Qualifications in S5
4. The introduction of a major initiative in writing across the curriculum
5. The review of practice in terms of race equality and cultural diversity
6. The evaluation of our Homework Policy

Parents will judge the success or otherwise of Auchinleck Academy, by the quality of service delivered to our students. We are confident, as a staff, that we are achieving our goals.

Colin MacLean
Head Teacher

*The following whole school policies support your child in his/her educational and personal and social development within this school.

Please contact the school office if you would like a copy of any of these documents sent out to you.

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| - Attendance Policy | - Discipline and Referrals |
| - Education for Work Policy | - Excursion Policy |
| - Homework Policy | - Health & Safety |
| - Anti-Bullying Policy | - ICT |
| - Support for Learning | - Staff Development & Review |
| - Education Support Base | - Managing Health Care |
| - Race Equality & Cultural Diversity | - Misuse of Drugs |
| - Assessment and Reporting | |

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