

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

23 JANUARY 2001

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUPILS AND PARENTS – FINALISED CONTENTS OF
PROPOSED LEAFLET

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report provides feedback to the Education Committee on the results of a recent consultation exercise, and seeks approval for the preparation and distribution of a leaflet for use by all Angus schools.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- a notes the consultation process which has taken place;
- b approves the contents of the Appendix to this Report as the basis for the preparation of an information leaflet to be used by all Angus schools; and
- c authorises me to have the proposed leaflet printed and copied in sufficient quantity for all schools to make use of it.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the Education Committee on 7 March 2000 when a draft statement on Rights and Responsibilities of Pupils and Parents was endorsed in principle as the basis of a consultation exercise.
- 2.2 The draft statement was sent to all School Boards and to all Head Teachers. It formed the basis of discussions within the Education Department Consultative Group, within individual School Boards, in staff meetings, and in meetings with School Board/Parental Representatives arranged by the Education Committee.
- 2.3 There was considerable support from staff and parents for this initiative, coupled with a recognition that the document produced (or any amended version of it) would have most benefit if it could be used as a catalyst to spark off constructive debate both with pupils and with parents. It seems clear that, to have any chance of success, a statement of this type requires to have the ownership of all the key stakeholders.
- 2.4 A number of very specific amendments were proposed to the original draft and these amendments have been built into the contents of the finalised version now reproduced in the Appendix to this Report.
- 2.5 As previously agreed by the Committee, the JCC (Teachers) discussed the final draft version of the attached statement which is now supported fully by the JCC (Teachers).

3 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 As can be seen from the opening paragraph of the Appendix, there is an intention to prepare a companion leaflet on Rights and Responsibilities of Staff. Work on preparing that statement is about to commence and it is hoped that work will be supported by the JCC (Teachers) and by the Education Department Consultative Group.
- 3.2 A number of respondents to the consultation exercise indicated support for the preparation of a simple leaflet encapsulating the proposed statement. This idea is believed to have considerable merit and the recommendation of this report is that a leaflet should now be prepared, with copies sent in bulk to individual schools to be used as each school believes it appropriate. In making this recommendation it is important to stress once again the importance of engaging all key stakeholders – staff, pupils and parents in a genuinely constructive debate about the issues which the statement raises with a view to reaching a shared understanding between individuals and groups.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 By adopting the enclosed statement, it is anticipated that the Education Committee will be endorsing models of good practice relating to all aspects of human rights relevant to pupils and parents.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 As indicated above, the proposed statement has been the subject of an extensive consultation exercise which has included the Education Department Consultative Group and the JCC (Teachers).
- 5.2 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration.

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

APPENDIX

JAA/CJ

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet has been compiled for the use of pupils, parents and staff in all Angus schools. It is intended to be used as a helpful reference source with a view to promoting better mutual understanding and shared expectations. A companion leaflet "Rights and Responsibilities of Staff" is also being prepared.

PUPILS

Pupils' Rights

Angus Council fully supports the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is committed to the rights of each child and young person:

- to be treated with respect by staff and other pupils
- to be provided with school education
- to be given the opportunity to develop her/his personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential
- to be consulted (in accordance with her/his age and stage of development) on decisions regarding future learning and on the development and review of the school code of conduct

Pupils' Responsibilities

To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to develop their full potential it should be the responsibility of each individual pupil:

- to show respect to others (eg to staff and to other pupils)
- to behave in accordance with the published school code of conduct
- to attend school unless there is a good reason for absence
- to be punctual in attendance at school and at individual classes
- to attend classes with whatever equipment is necessary
- to take care of school buildings and equipment
- to co-operate with staff to get as much benefit from school as possible

PARENTS

Parents' Rights

Angus Council fully supports the statutory rights of parents. We are committed to the rights of all parents of school pupils:

- to have access to information on the education being provided for their children
- to be given opportunities to discuss that provision with their children's teachers
- to be treated as partners in the educational process
- to be consulted on any decisions regarding their children's future learning and on the development and review of the school code of conduct

Parents' Responsibilities

Angus Council wants to work with parents to ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to develop their full potential. Our expectations are that, in order to fulfil their duty to educate their children, parents will wish:

- to ensure that their children attend school, as required by law
- to take an active interest in their children's education, and to support their children by discussing their progress with them
- to try to avoid taking family holidays during term time
- to encourage their children to get to school on time, and to take appropriate parental responsibility for the safety of their children in the journey to and from school
- to support their children and school staff in complying with the school code of conduct
- to support school staff in their efforts to deal fairly with all children
- to refrain from criticising school staff in front of children
- to help their children to see school-related issues from the point of view of other children and school staff

JAA/CJ
January 2001