

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 24th OCTOBER 2005**

**REPORT ON: PROVISION OF OFFSITE EDUCATION**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 648-2005**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report proposes that offsite provision in Dundee should be reviewed, and that the decision should be taken, in principle, to establish one additional offsite centre.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- i. note the contents of this report;
- ii. approve the proposal to review offsite provision and establish one additional offsite centre; and
- iii. remit the Director of Education to bring a further report before the Education Committee, detailing the findings of a review and the nature of an additional centre, no later than January 2006.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The cost of this proposal will be met partly from the Education Department revenue budget, and partly from Scottish Executive monies issued to support the *Better Behaviour Better Learning* initiative.

## **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 These proposals will give this client group access to the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable them to play a full part in society.

## **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report will ensure provision of a service to those young persons unable to sustain their place in mainstream education, and at the same time help to address the right of the majority of young persons to education free from disruption and distraction.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND**

6.1 As far as possible the Education Department has always deployed a range of strategies in mainstream school to support pupils who display challenging

behaviour. These pupils' needs are identified at one of the authority's five Stages of Assessment & Intervention, along with appropriate intervention strategies.

6.2 However, the Education Department has always acknowledged the existence of some young people who present behaviour patterns of such a serious and extreme nature that their continued presence in mainstream school is no longer possible. Schools refer such cases to the Department's multi-agency Options Group for consideration of a place in offsite education.

6.3 Young persons accepted by the Options Group are placed in a specialised Resourced Location in a mainstream school, or in one of three offsite centres, or with one of two alternative providers, and follow individualised programmes with emphasis as appropriate on care and nurture, personal and social development, and academic and vocational studies. The table below summarises the options available:

Name of Provision	Type of Provision	Cost of Provision	No. of Pupils
Mossgiel Primary School	Resourced Location - P1 to P5	£135,000	16
Castlepark	Offsite Centre - P6/P7/S1/S2	£459,000	18
Balerno	Offsite Centre - S3/S4	£320,000	18
Connect Five	Offsite Centre - S3/S4	£294,000	18
Futures Programme	Joint alternative provision with Dundee College - pupils in final 6 months of compulsory education	£145,000	15
Course Ready	Alternative provision with Dundee College - pupils in final 6 months of compulsory education	nil	24
ERGO	Alternative provision with contracted provider - pupils in final 6 months of compulsory education	£105,000	16

6.4 These alternative placements have various indicators of success: very damaged and vulnerable young children able to move into mainstream education; greatly improved attendance rates; attainment of national qualifications; access to a place in Further Education; and access to a work placement.

6.5 Available data from the Stages of Assessment & Intervention and from referrals to the Options Group now make it clear that the number of children and young people displaying extremely challenging behaviour and requiring offsite places is increasing, to the point where current levels of provision are insufficient. There have been in recent times individual pupils where the case for offsite placement has been made and accepted, but for whom no place has been available.

## 7.0 PROPOSALS

7.1 Given the available evidence, this report proposes a review of offsite provision in Dundee in general, and specifically, in principle, the establishment of an additional offsite centre.

7.2 Detailed consideration needs to be given to the age range of pupils for whom an additional resource is required, the location of the centre, the management and staffing structure of the centre, and the nature of the curriculum and how it will be delivered. Such planning discussions will be held with Head Teachers, trades unions, and planning partners in the Council, and should be completed by the end of

2005 with a view to bringing a detailed report to Education Committee in January 2006.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), and Depute Chief Executive (Finance).

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None

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Director of Education

10th October 2005

JC/DD