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## ABSTRACT

Improving literacy skills is fundamental to providing all children with the best possible opportunities to become successful and self-fulfilled at school, at work, and in the community. Developing the skills of reading and writing helps children to achieve and communicate a greater understanding of the subjects within the school curriculum. The Scottish Executive is committed to raising standards of educational attainment in every school and for every student, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy. To assist education authorities and schools with this work, the Scottish Executive has developed national statements for Scottish schools on improving standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy in schools. These statements provide an overview of the current position and raise awareness of the areas for future action. They are: national advice given as a result of the findings and recommendations in official reports, surveys, research, and initiatives undertaken in relation to literacy and numeracy; and the key elements of a national strategy for literacy and numeracy that have been introduced and pressed as a result of the White Paper "Targeting Excellence Modernising Scotland's Schools." This literacy statement contains the following: Introduction; Part 1: Pre-School Education; Part 2: School Education; Part 3: Post-School and Community Initiatives; and Part 4: Conclusion. Contains a 26-item bibliography. (NKA)

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## National Statement for Improving Attainment in Literacy in Schools

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# INTRODUCTION

1. Improving literacy skills is fundamental to providing all children with the best possible opportunities to become successful and self-fulfilled at school, at work and in the community. Developing the skills of reading and writing helps children to achieve and communicate a greater understanding of the subjects within the school curriculum. In working life, good levels of communication skills are increasingly required by employers in many professions from banking, retailing and tourism to engineering, computing and electronics.
2. Improving literacy skills also enables children to access a wider range of sources of information from traditional media such as books and newspapers to the new media of the Internet and CD-ROMS. This access offers them the chance to develop a greater understanding of the major social, political and cultural issues of our nation and our world. It also provides them with the opportunity to explore the vast range of literature, both fiction and non-fiction, produced over the centuries.
3. The Scottish Executive is committed to raising standards of educational attainment in every school and for every pupil, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy. The "Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000" takes forward this commitment by establishing new duties and rights in respect of education and a new framework for improvement. It gives every child a right to education directed towards the development of their personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to enable them to realise their full potential. The Act also places duties on Scottish Ministers and local authorities to promote improvement.
4. Section 4 of the Act required Ministers to make an order setting out national priorities in educational objectives for school education provided in Scotland. One of the five national priorities is:

"to raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results".

However, the improvement of literacy skills will also make a vital contribution to achieving the following three national priorities:

"to promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages";

"to work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society";

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“to equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition”.

- 5 Education authorities will publish annual statements of local improvement objectives showing how the national priorities will be implemented locally and will be required to report each year on their success. Schools will be required to have a School Development Plan – linked to the local authority’s statement of objectives – prepared following local consultation and will also report annually on progress against the plan.
- 6 To assist education authorities and schools with this work, the Scottish Executive has developed national statements for Scottish schools on improving standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy in schools. The national statements provide an overview of the current position and raise awareness of the areas for future action. In doing so, they draw on and set out the various elements already in the system. These are:
  - › national advice given as a result of the findings and recommendations in official reports, surveys, research and initiatives undertaken in relation to literacy and numeracy;
  - › the key elements of a national strategy for literacy and numeracy that have been introduced and progressed as a result of the White Paper “Targeting Excellence: Modernising Scotland’s Schools”, namely:
    - › expanding the Early Intervention Programme which seeks to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy in the early stages of primary school to provide total funding of £56 million over five years from 1997/98 to 2001/02;
    - › developing a framework for setting targets in primary and secondary schools to raise the level of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in line with the national benchmarks for attainment in these subjects in the 5-14 curriculum in primary and secondary school;
    - › £12 million over three years from 1999/00 to 2001/02 provided by the Excellence Fund to support in-service training of teachers within the 5-14 curriculum with a particular emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy in the P6 to S2 stages;

- £15 million over three years from 1999/00 to 2001/02 provided by the Excellence Fund to support family literacy schemes and the provision of home-link teachers to help parents to become more involved in their children's learning;
- new guidelines for initial teacher education emphasising that the training of teachers must take particular account of the need to improve literacy and numeracy. A Ministerial Strategy Committee on Continuous Professional Development will ensure that CPD builds on ITE in a coherent way;
- the "Review of Assessment in Pre-school and 5-14", which proposed the creation of a single, coherent national system of assessment and reporting. Responses to consultation broadly supported the proposal, through improvement and development of existing arrangements, rather than through radical change.

7 This national statement is not intended to create an additional burden for the staff involved in developing pupils' literacy skills. The document aims to assist their work by providing a coherent, consistent and progressive analysis of the current position and most effective future action.

8 Although this document is focused on improving standards of attainment in literacy in school education, it is crucial to consider this issue in relation to pre-school education and post-school provision. The national statement is therefore divided as follows: Part 1 – Pre-school education; Part 2 – School education (covering 5-14, Standard Grade and National Qualifications); Part 3 – Post-school and Community initiatives (covering adult literacy skills and the Scottish Executive's Home Reading Initiative). The Scottish Executive hopes that this document will assist in promoting understanding, links and co-operation between the different sectors of education involved in developing and promoting literacy skills.

9 This national statement, whilst recognising the important contribution that appropriate learning and teaching activities centred on listening and talking can make to promoting children's literacy skills, focuses on initiatives to improve attainment in reading and writing. The interpretation of literacy that will be adopted for the purposes of this document is the capacity:

- to read with understanding a range of texts, presented through different media, and to reflect on the ideas and information that they contain;

# INTRODUCTION

» to write for a range of purposes in order to express ideas, opinions and feelings clearly;

» to communicate effectively in order that individuals are able to interact positively with others, make decisions, resolve problems, and enrich their lives through further learning, participate in fulfilling employment and contribute effectively as members of the community.

**10** This document is concerned with the promotion and development of literacy skills in the English language. However, the Scottish Executive values the promotion and development of literacy skills in indigenous and minority ethnic languages and details of work taking place in these areas is contained in Part 2.



# 1 | Pre-school Education

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PART 1  
PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION  
Target  
Pre-School Curriculum  
Future Work

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## Target

- 1 The Scottish Executive is on target to deliver its commitment in "Working Together for Scotland: A Programme for Government" that all 3 and 4 year olds, whose parents want one, will have access to a free part-time place by 2002. All 4 year olds now have access to a free part-time pre-school education place as well as 80% of all 3 year olds whose parents wish one. The Scottish Executive also provides specific grant funding of £300,000 per annum for Gaelic-medium pre-school education. In 2000/01 there were 410 children in 34 Gaelic-medium nurseries.

## Pre-School Curriculum

- 2 Pre-school education develops children's skills in enquiry and independent thinking and encourages their self-esteem and confidence, essential for future stages of education. Advice on the curriculum framework for pre-school education is contained in the publication "A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 to 5". The publication emphasises the important role of pre-school education in children's acquisition and development of literacy skills:

"Children should be encouraged to develop an enthusiasm for stories and books by hearing wonderful stories and rhymes, by re-telling familiar stories, by browsing through books together and by using them to find interesting information. As well as realising that reading can unlock the meaning from print, children should also be encouraged to develop a curiosity about words, how they sound, the patterns within words and how they are composed.

In order to help children experience and understand the purposes of writing, there should be opportunities for them to experiment with their own drawings, "mark-making" and written communication using suitable writing materials such as pens, pencils, crayons, paint and chalk. Writing is a way in which ideas and thoughts can be exchanged. For younger children this can be expressed through drawings, "mark-making" and in the exchange of drawings, cards and messages".

- 3 Examples of activities to promote literacy skills include:
  - ◇ demonstrating to children the recording of their own names through letters and sounds and linking this to other objects with the same initial letter;
  - ◇ demonstrating the link between sound/text and the layout of books through the use of nursery rhymes and songs printed in "Big Book" form;

- development of class lending libraries and storybags to encourage children to become familiar with books and use them with parents/carers at home;
- encouraging children to create their own stories with pictures and re-tell them to friends and adults or into a tape recorder;
- creating opportunities for children to role-play a favourite story to develop understanding and sequence.

4

It is important that staff working with young children should allow them to experiment with sounds in music and stories and play with patterns in drawing and print. Children should not be expected to use inappropriate materials for their stage of development but be encouraged to develop their curiosity and enjoyment of literacy within the context of carefully developed play situations.

5

The Early Intervention Programme, although mainly focused on school education, has also encompassed pre-school education: mostly through promoting greater co-operative working between pre-school and school education. Initiatives include:

- promoting a shared understanding of “A Curriculum Framework for Children 3-5” and relevant key aspects of national 5-14 curriculum guidelines;
- improving continuity in children’s learning by, for example, developing a model transition record of children’s progress from pre-school to primary;
- increasing opportunities for joint training, group meetings, exchange of information and visits between pre-school and P1 staff to improve the transfer arrangements for children and parents;
- extending the use of home-school link teachers to liaise between parents, pre-school and primary school.

### Future Work

6

The Development Officer appointed to work with education authorities in supporting the national statement will seek to build upon this work by including pre-school education within their remit – particularly in relation to promoting and developing links and collaboration between pre-school and school education.

7. An initiative undertaken by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations will cover pre-school education. It is planned to distribute the materials during 2002.
8. The Scottish Executive will be launching a Home Reading Initiative which will include children in pre-school education.
9. The Assessment Development Programme is designed to ensure more effective assessment arrangements including better sharing of information on pupil progress between pre-school, primary and secondary sectors. Two CD-ROMS have been made available to provide guidance and assistance on aspects of assessment: "Progress with Purpose" dealing with transition from pre-school to P1 and "Reading the Reader" on early years literacy.



## 2 | School Education

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## Introduction

- 1 The school curriculum in Scotland is non-statutory with the main responsibility for its management and delivery resting with education authorities and headteachers or, in the case of independent schools, the boards of governors and headteachers. However, broad guidance and advice is produced by SEED and other bodies such as Learning and Teaching Scotland, HM Inspectorate of Education and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. This seeks to ensure that the curriculum secures breadth, balance, continuity and progression for all pupils.
- 2 The framework for the school curriculum can be divided into three broad areas: the 5-14 curriculum, Standard Grade (generally covering ages 14-16) and National Qualifications (generally covering ages 17-18). The national statement follows this structure though it should be stressed that the development of literacy skills within school education is a continuous progressive process.
- 3 Part 2 of the national statement also contains sections on the role of information and communications technology in promoting pupils' literacy skills, initiatives in initial teacher education and continuous professional development to improve pupils' literacy skills and education for work and enterprise.

## The 5-14 Curriculum

### Attainment Levels

- 4 National 5-14 guidelines outline the knowledge, skills and attainment targets at six broad levels (A-F) of development in pupils' schooling from age 5-14. The levels are defined as follows:
  - A should be attainable in the course of P1-P3 by almost all pupils;
  - B should be attainable by some pupils in P3 or even earlier, but certainly by most in P4;
  - C should be attainable in the course of P4-P6 by most pupils;
  - D should be attainable by some pupils in P5-P6 or even earlier, but certainly by most in P7;
  - E should be attainable by some pupils in P7-S1, but certainly by most in S2;
  - F should be attainable in part by some pupils, and completed by a few pupils, in the course of P7-S2.

- 5 The Scottish Executive has set out a long-term strategy for tackling poverty and injustice in the document, "Social Justice ... A Scotland Where Everyone Matters". Enabling every child to reach their full educational potential is a crucial element in ensuring that Scotland is a socially just society. The Scottish Executive has therefore set a social justice milestone of "increasing the proportion of our children who attain the appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Primary 2 and Primary 7". Details of the additional support provided to education authorities and schools to help achieve this milestone is contained in the sections below on the Early Intervention Programme and other strands of the Excellence Fund and National Priorities Action Fund.
- 6 The National Survey of 5-14 Attainment Levels assesses the number of pupils achieving appropriate levels for P3, P4, P6 and P7 in publicly-funded primary schools. The Survey indicates that the overall figures for Scotland for attainment in reading for these stages were 72.8% in 1998/99, 76.4% in 1999/00 and 79.8% in 2000/01. In writing, the figures were 60.0% in 1998/99, 66.4% in 1999/00 and 70.3% in 2000/01.
- 7 The survey also indicates that the overall figures for Scotland for attainment in reading at S2 was 44.5% in 1998/99, 53.1% in 1999/00 and 56.4% in 2000/01. In writing, the figures were 38.0% in 1998/99, 43.5% in 1999/00 and 45.9% in 2000/01.
- 8 Although the figures show that there has been a continuing upward rise in attainment over recent years, large numbers of children, particularly in secondary schools, are still not reaching the appropriate levels of attainment in the 5-14 curriculum. The remainder of this section outlines the advice, guidance and support available for promoting literacy within the 5-14 curriculum.

### **National Advice**

#### **National 5-14 Guidelines**

- 9 National 5-14 guidelines for English Language provides advice on four aspects of language development: listening, talking, reading and writing. As previously noted, this national statement, while recognising the important contribution that appropriate learning and teaching activities centred on listening and talking can make to promoting children's literacy skills, focuses on initiatives to improve attainment in reading and writing. The national 5-14 guidelines for English Language sets out the following purposes for developing pupils' skills in reading and writing:



## Reading

- to obtain information and respond appropriately;
- to appreciate the feelings of others;
- to reflect upon ideas, experiences and opinions;
- to gain imaginative and aesthetic pleasure.

## Writing

- to convey information;
- to express feelings;
- to order, clarify, record and reflect on ideas, experiences and opinions;
- to give imaginative and aesthetic pleasure.

10

These purposes have been integrated into clear, coherent and progressive attainment targets for each level of the 5-14 curriculum. The overall outcome of achieving the attainment targets is that for reading – pupils will be able to find and handle information for a range of purposes, and will read, on occasion, aloud. They will also be able to enjoy and respond to a variety of texts and, in so doing, achieve an awareness of genre and knowledge about language. For writing – pupils will be able to write in three modes (personal, functional i.e. informative and imaginative) and to convey meaning in language appropriate to audience and purpose. In so doing, they will pay careful attention to punctuation and structure, spelling, handwriting and presentation and acquire knowledge about language.

11

The recommended minimum time allocations for languages within the 5-14 curriculum (which includes the four purposes within English Language – listening, talking, reading and writing – and, from no later than P6, studying a modern language) is 20%. Children's literacy skills can of course be developed through activities in other curricular areas such as environmental studies and expressive arts. Schools also have a maximum 20% flexibility time that they can use, if they wish, to develop pupils' literacy skills.

## HMIE Reports

### Reading

12

The advice and support contained in national 5-14 guidelines is supplemented and extended by HM Inspectorate of Education reports. "Improving Reading at the Early Stages 5-14" identifies the following key factors in raising standards of attainment in reading:

- » High expectations for all pupils. Schools should promote an ethos of high achievement in reading, set high targets for the school as a whole and for particular class reading groups and monitor progress towards these targets carefully;
- » Good, well organised teaching of reading. Schools should ensure that reading materials are well matched to pupils' reading levels and to their need to develop skills in reading for information and enjoyment. Schools should also ensure that sufficient support time and quality teaching time i.e. time free from interruptions is provided for reading groups. Teaching practice should be reviewed to ensure that reading is taught effectively in every class;
- » Careful assessment of pupils' progress and reading standards. Schools should keep careful track of pupils' progress in reading using assessment evidence and national tests. They should also ensure that the allocation of pupils to reading groups is kept under review, monitor reading standards and identify those pupils requiring additional support;
- » Effective support for pupils where they have particular needs in reading. Schools should provide support for learning to read at an early stage before difficulties become established. They should also ensure that sound assessment evidence is used in identifying, diagnosing and monitoring pupils' progress and that the approaches used are carefully matched to the needs of individuals or small groups of pupils;
- » A consistent and effective whole-school approach, led and supported by management. Every school should have a policy for reading which achieves a clear, shared understanding by staff on all aspects of teaching and learning including involvement of learning support and other staff, parents and the use of accommodation and resources. School management should support implementation of the policy by identifying and organising staff development activities and monitoring pupils' progress;
- » Effective involvement of parents in supporting children's progress in reading. Schools should explain to parents their approaches to teaching reading and support parents in helping their children to learn to read. Part 3 of this national statement provides details of a new Scottish Executive initiative to promote home reading.

13 “Improving Reading at the Early Stages 5-14” also contains examples of good practice in promoting pupils’ reading skills. These include discussing with pupils events and characters of the texts being read – relating these to pupils’ own experiences or, where necessary, explaining the context when this is outwith pupils’ own experiences. Pupils should also be encouraged to talk about their favourite parts of stories or characters. The use of short phonic lessons is also recommended e.g. emphasising initial letter sounds and recalling or comparing words with similar sounds in the text, looking at the endings of words and finding words which rhyme. The HMI report, “Standards and Quality in Primary and Secondary Schools, 1998-2001”, suggested that some pupils needed to develop their skills in reading for information. Schools should therefore ensure that pupils receive good opportunities to undertake exercises in reading for information from a wide range of texts including newspapers, encyclopaedias and atlases.

14 Advice and guidance on developing pupils’ reading skills throughout the 5-14 curriculum is available in the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) publication, “Taking a Closer Look at Reading”. With specific reference to raising attainment in reading in S1/S2, the HMIE report, “Standards and Quality in Secondary Schools 1994-1997: English” identifies the key factors as the provision of greater opportunities for close reading to enable pupils to develop their skills in analysis of meaning, language awareness and appreciation of the writer’s craft. Pupils should also receive more encouragement to read for pleasure. This could be achieved through facilitating opportunities for pupils to speak to classmates about their out-of-school reading, stimulating pupils to establish informal book clubs or reading groups; organising class visits to the local library and arranging author visits to schools through the Scottish Book Trust’s “Writers in Scotland Scheme”.

### Writing

15 With regard to promoting and developing writing skills, the HMIE report, “Improving Writing 5-14”, emphasises that, despite recent developments in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), there is a continuing need for pupils to cultivate traditional writing skills. The advent of new technology provides pupils with a greater range of options for developing writing styles (e.g. e-mail, web pages) but does not displace the need to acquire skills and experience in more traditional forms of writing. The HMIE report, “Standards and Quality in Primary and Secondary Schools, 1998-2001”, noted that in more than half of the 500 primary schools surveyed for the report, pupils needed to develop their ideas at greater length and extend their skills in different types of writing.

16: "Improving Writing 5-14" identifies the following key factors in raising attainment in writing:

- recognise and act on the key principles of effective writing in the three modes of personal, functional (informative) and imaginative writing;
- plan and implement a comprehensive writing curriculum including clear progression targets for pupils, provision of genuine, engaging purposes for writing, developing awareness of, and skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and providing direct interactive teaching of the qualities expected and strategies for acquiring skills in writing;
- create and nurture a writing culture including publication of examples of pupils' work in classroom/school display areas or in the form of "books" exchanged between different classes within the school;
- develop high expectations of the quality of pupils' writing, including clarity of thought and expression and accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar;
- consistently engage pupils in a process of writing involving thinking and planning, using and adapting the plan through drafting, evaluating and discussing where changes can most effectively be made and preparing for publication through ensuring technical accuracy and effective presentation.

17 The report also stresses the importance of providing opportunities for promoting and developing effective writing across different areas of the curriculum. Examples of good practice include, in environmental studies, production of reports and accounts of experience in observing animals and plants and, in expressive arts, essays demonstrating appreciation of an artist's techniques. The report draws attention to the need to ensure that S1/S2 pupils in particular receive appropriate teaching and learning in writing in curricular areas beyond that of language. Suitable tasks could include extended writing activities in which the pupil "re-tells" ideas and events in their own words as a means of thinking through and clarifying their personal grasp of them. Further advice and guidance on developing effective writing skills throughout the 5-14 curriculum is contained in the SCRE publication, "Taking a Closer Look at Writing".

## Results of AAP Survey on English Language Skills

- 18 The Fifth Survey of English Language carried out in 1998 and published by the Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) in 2000 assesses performance in reading and writing skills based on the guidance contained in national guidelines for English Language in the 5-14 curriculum. The survey involved a sample of 7000 pupils in P4, P7 and S2.

### Reading

- 19 The researchers found that reading performance at P4 and S2 improved slightly in comparison to the previous survey in 1995. Performance at P7 remained stable. In reading tasks, both P4 and P7 pupils demonstrated an understanding of the main ideas from the text although difficulties arose when an answer required re-reading or checking of the text. Pupils seemed to prefer attempting to rely on memory rather than demonstrating the necessary application to re-read the appropriate section of the text. Similarly, in S2, pupils were usually able to grasp the main ideas and any subsidiary ideas central to the text. Some pupils, however, were less confident in using close reading skills to look for details, inferences and evidence of the writer's craft within the text. Some pupils also appeared to read superficially, especially with dense and detailed texts, without taking the time to translate words into meaning.

### Writing

- 20 In writing, performance at P7 and S1 improved while that at P4 remained stable. Girls seemed to perform significantly better than boys in most assessment tasks undertaken at P4, P7 and S2. At P4, pupils appeared to enjoy writing in all three modes of functional, personal and imaginative. However, some pupils experienced difficulty in planning for functional writing and, for all three modes, proficiency in technical skills such as spelling and punctuation varied extremely widely. Similarly at P7, some pupils failed to recognise the need for planning functional writing including such strategies as basic introductory and concluding sentences. Many pupils also lacked proficiency in spelling and punctuation. This failing was also apparent at S2. Many S2 pupils also found difficulty in functional writing in finding the appropriate writing style e.g. using a conversational rather than formal tone in report writing. And remaining focused on the purpose and intended audience for the writing task.

### Fostering of Links and Co-operation Between Primary and Secondary Schools

- 21 The HMIE report, "Achieving Success in S1/S2", noted that, in a review of the implementation of 5-14 guidelines by Northern College of Education, 63% of secondary school English teachers reported that they preferred to rely on their own judgements at the start of S1 rather than take account of information provided by primary schools. The HMIE report "Standards and Quality in Primary and Secondary Schools, 1998-2001" also highlighted weaknesses in S1/S2 through secondary schools taking insufficient account of pupils' primary school experience and advice in national 5-14 guidelines.
- 22 It is essential to ensuring that pupils receive a continuous and progressive educational experience that secondary education builds on pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. The transfer of robust and reliable information on pupil attainment (including results of national tests in reading and writing) between primary and secondary is an important factor in achieving this objective. SEED has already made available to education authorities and schools on an informal basis a model transition document – the Primary Achievement Summary Sheet. The issue of transference of assessment information between pre-school, primary and secondary sectors is being considered as part of the Assessment Development Programme.
- 23 In addition, education authorities used funds provided by the Excellence Fund to encourage the development of greater links and collaborative working between primary and secondary schools. The Scottish Executive will be hosting a seminar for education authorities and school representatives. The aim will be to consider the most effective means of exchanging information, professional expertise on best practice and learning and teaching support for literacy and numeracy developed as a result of the Excellence Fund and new National Priorities Action Fund. Cultivating greater collaborative working between different educational sectors will be one of the main issues for discussion.

### Broad Band Setting

- 24 "Achieving Success in S1/S2" recommends that schools consider the use of broad-band setting to form classes for English Language. This grouping would provide a good basis for more effective direct interactive teaching of reading and writing skills. However, schools should ensure that classes are set on the basis of prior attainment rather than presumed general ability. It is also important to ensure that sufficient flexibility exists to transfer pupils between groupings. And that every grouping works towards the same outcomes albeit at varying rates.

### **National Advice on Teaching and Learning of Literacy to Pupils for whom English is not a First Language**

- 25 The 5-14 guidelines for English Language contains guidance and advice on the teaching and learning of literacy to pupils for whom English is not a first language. The guidelines note that the school and the pupil must work together towards early achievement of the targets in English. However, the overall ability of learners should not be judged solely by their command of English which may, by necessity, be incomplete. Support for pupils in the learning of English may be available from bilingual teachers or teachers of English as a second language. Bilingual parents and other adults from the local community may also be able to assist in developing pupils' literacy skills in English.

### **National Advice on Teaching and Learning of Literacy to Pupils with Language and Communication Problems**

- 26 The HMIE report, "The Education of Pupils with Language and Communication Disorders", contains advice and guidance on good practice for teaching children with these particular learning difficulties. Examples include the use of colour-coding systems for teaching grammatical properties of words and the use of tape recorders and computers to allow pupils to produce their own stories or records of events.
- 27 The Scottish Executive has provided funding to Learning and Teaching Scotland to publish and distribute a CD-ROM to enable P1, P2 and P3 teachers to research and implement a synthetic phonics programme and follow it up appropriately as pupils move through these stages of primary education.

#### **Future work**

- 28 The Scottish Executive will be continuing to assist education authorities and schools to improve attainment in literacy in the 5-14 curriculum through the following initiatives:

#### **Development Officers**

- 29 The Scottish Executive will be appointing Development Officers for a three-year period to work with education authorities in supporting the national statements on literacy and numeracy. The Development Officers will provide overarching, focused and subject specific advice on matters such as improving the literacy and numeracy skills of children experiencing social injustice, quality assurance, staff training and development, pre-school/primary/secondary liaison, parental involvement and implementation of national advice.

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- 30 The Development Officers will be particularly concerned in working with education authorities to review current provision against the national statements and identifying where and how improvements might be made. Education authorities would have the option of using this advice in the preparation of their improvement plans linked to the national priorities framework.
- 31 The Development Officer for literacy will focus on the following specific issues:
- provision of advice to the Scottish Executive on the development of course materials and other learning and teaching support to raise attainment in literacy within the 5-14 curriculum particularly amongst those pupils experiencing social injustice;
  - provision of advice and guidance to education authorities to promote and develop literacy skills in the early years of secondary school;
  - provision of advice and guidance to education authorities to improve the performance of boys relative to girls in attainment in literacy;
  - provision of recommendations to the Scottish Executive to ensure that Standard Grade courses in English Language provide specific competences in literacy;
  - contribute to monitoring good practice in improving progression routes from S1/S2 English Language courses through S3/S4 provision and into S5/S6. This will include schools which have taken advantage of the relaxation of age and stage restrictions for Standard Grade and Higher and the potential use of National Qualification units and courses in S3/S4;
  - provision of assistance in the production of a comprehensive resource directory and database of ICT materials relating to the development of literacy skills that will be placed on the National Grid for Learning;
  - provision of recommendations to the Scottish Executive over the provision of training and other support within the CPD framework to promote the teaching of literacy skills;
  - provision of assistance in implementing Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative.



- 32 In addition to education authorities, the Development Officer will consult with a wide range of interests including HMIE, Learning and Teaching Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Teacher Education Institutions, teacher and parent representatives and Ministerial Strategy Group on Continuing Professional Development to take forward these issues over the period of their appointment.

### **National Priorities Improvement Framework**

- 33 As noted in the Introduction to this document, the first national priority for school education is to “raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results”. To assist in achieving this objective, schools are to be asked to set their own targets for 2005 for 5-14 attainment levels for the combined P3, P4, P6, P7 rolls and for S2 pupils. Education authorities will challenge and support schools to set realistic but stretching targets. The Scottish Executive will provide schools and education authorities with benchmarking data to help them establish local targets. The emphasis will be on securing improvement and the Scottish Executive will also offer guidance and support on possible strategies for raising standards through the National Priorities Support Team, based at Learning and Teaching Scotland. And through an interactive website (<http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk>).

### **Staff Development**

- 34 SEED has undertaken an initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations within the 3-14 curriculum, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses. The principles and framework take account of curriculum and assessment guidance and support for pre-school, 5-14 and 14-18; the latest research and experience gained to date in Scotland from transition records, AAP, 5-14 National Tests in Reading, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses as well as considering current practice in other English-speaking countries. It is planned to distribute the resulting materials to schools during 2002. This work will be supported by the Learning and Teaching Scotland publication “Thinking about Reading”.
- 35 A separate SEED initiative has developed guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school. The materials are designed for teachers to raise pupils’ knowledge and awareness of the nature, function and variety of language structures. Initial guidance and support materials were issued in September 2001 with an associated CD-ROM distributed in December 2001.

### Thinking about Reading

- 36 Learning and Teaching Scotland will be issuing "Thinking about Reading" as part of its multi-media series 5-14 Teacher Support. "Thinking about Reading" will examine a range of strategies to support the teaching and assessment of reading in the 5-14 curriculum with particular emphasis on the implications beyond P3 and sustaining the gains made through the Scottish Executive's Early Intervention Programme. "Thinking about Reading" will be available in early Summer 2002.

### Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative

- 37 The Scottish Executive will be launching a Home Reading Initiative.

### The Early Intervention Programme

#### Background

- 38 In 1996 the Task Force on Underachievement in Scottish Schools recommended that education authorities should give priority to the development and introduction of early intervention schemes designed to improve basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The Task Force also recommended that the then Scottish Office should support local authority expenditure on early intervention by means of a specific grant.
- 39 As a result of these recommendations, the Early Intervention Programme (EIP) was launched in June 1997 as a three-year programme aimed at improving attainment in reading, writing and numeracy in P1 and P2. Funding of £20 million was provided by the then Scottish Office. In 1998, EIP became one of the strands within the Scottish Office's new Excellence Fund. The Programme was extended from three to five years (1997/98-2001/02) and received an additional £36 million bringing total Scottish Office funding to £56 million. Education authorities have contributed an additional £4 million to the initiative.
- 40 Education authorities were invited to submit proposals for the implementation of EIP in their own areas. This flexibility enabled education authorities to develop initiatives that reflected local needs and priorities. This has stimulated a variety of approaches to raising attainment in literacy and numeracy including recruitment of additional staff, purchase of new books and equipment and development of home-school links.
- 41 The following examples give an indication of the range of projects being undertaken to improve literacy skills:

- participation by nursery and primary school staff in early literacy seminars;
- in-service training for classroom staff on issues such as promoting early reading, emergent writing, improving children's motor skills and utilising play activities in early literacy;
- purchase of new teaching materials including "Big Books", story sacks and rhyme and pattern books;
- introduction of "buddy" system of peer-tutored paired reading whereby older pupils (P6 and P7) work with P1-P3 children on developing their literacy skills;
- workshop sessions for parents in schools and other public venues on the most effective means of developing their children's literacy skills;
- the production of information leaflets for parents on promoting their children's literacy through such techniques as paired reading and encouraging emergent writing;
- establishment of a "reader reward" scheme to encourage young readers and family reading by collecting vouchers from local libraries which can be exchanged for a book token at a local bookshop.

### Evaluation

42

HMIE surveyed the operation of EIP in education authorities and schools and in 1999 published a report, "Early Intervention 1997-98", focusing on best practice as a means of raising standards in literacy. Forty schools across 11 local authorities were surveyed for the report. The report concluded that, although EIP is taking place alongside a number of other initiatives designed to raise attainment in literacy and therefore it is not possible to isolate the specific impact of the Programme, there were encouraging signs of improvement in the schools inspected. Overall attainment in P1 and P2 was judged to be good or very good in over 80% of schools visited.

43

There was also evidence of an improvement in teaching and learning methods. In relation to reading, this included:

- ensuring that uninterrupted time was set aside for teaching reading and hearing pupils read;

- teachers' plans set out clearly what was to be taught on a weekly basis;
- the teaching of phonics was well planned and ensured a good pace of learning;
- giving particular attention to developing pupils' phonological awareness.

44 In relation to writing, good practice included:

- provision of a range of listening and talking activities to extend pupils' oral language in support of writing activities;
- well-targeted support materials including the use of word banks, picture dictionaries, sentence makers and class story walls to help pupils extend their vocabulary, knowledge of spelling and the structure of sentences;
- effective questioning, discussion and support to pupils in structuring written work including making close links between the teaching of phonics and teaching of spelling;
- maintaining a good pace of work and providing regular, interesting and worthwhile writing tasks.

45 A combined team of researchers from Moray House Institute of Education and KPMG Chartered Accountants was also commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness of EIP on a national basis. The evaluation considered which particular approaches represented the best value for money, the impact of the programme on pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy and stakeholders' perceptions of the broader impact of early intervention.

46 The researchers published their final report in June 2001. They concluded that EIP has had an enormous impact on many schools in Scotland. The findings of the research study suggested that overall attainment rose, particularly in literacy. On average, however, the gap between the socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged remains. The evidence is that the increase in reading attainment was greater for the most disadvantaged pupils in those local authorities where a policy was adopted of focusing the available resources on fewer of their schools.

47 The researchers also concluded that teachers who were involved in EIP with P1 and P2 pupils enjoyed renewed confidence and increased enthusiasm and remain broadly convinced of the efficacy of the Programme. A culture of mutual learning,

particularly around literacy, was in evidence across the country. The majority of early stages teachers surveyed by the researchers were more enthusiastic about their teaching and more confident in themselves as teachers. They were more aware of the research background to their teaching and derived great satisfaction from the achievements and enjoyment of the children in their classes. This was true despite the fact that the schools in which they were teaching were challenging, with a high proportion of children from disadvantaged circumstances. There was also a clear consensus that having a nursery nurse or classroom assistant in P1 and P2 classes was enormously beneficial and a good deal of job satisfaction was reported by those staff. However, the researchers noted that there are grounds for examining the organisational challenge that additional staff and consequent new working practices presented.

48

The researchers also reported changes in learning and teaching practices. More phonics-based approaches to reading were taking place. A more learner-centred approach to writing with the emphasis on "emergent writing" was noted. The researchers concluded that it is difficult at a national level to be certain of the particular effects of these changes. Some local authorities attributed attainment success to a specific approach to learning and teaching such as the role of synthetic phonics. Others were convinced that the mix of provision made possible under EIP (staff development, additional staff, home-school links, a more research-based curriculum and focused methods of teaching) was the significant factor. However, the researchers also reported that, although teachers were on the whole confident that pupils were enjoying their learning, there was also widespread concern that there was now too little play and opportunity for self-directed learning in the early stages of primary school.

49

The general rise in attainment is making a positive contribution to achieving the Scottish Executive's Social Justice milestone of "increasing the proportion of our children who attain the appropriate levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Primary 2 and Primary 7".

### **Other Excellence Fund Initiatives**

50

The Excellence Fund also provided £12 million over the three years from 1999/00 to 2001/02 to support in-service training and development of teachers to implement the 5-14 curriculum in schools: particularly in relation to literacy, numeracy, science and technology. Initiatives undertaken by education authorities in relation to literacy include provision of support for teachers in assessing writing to develop greater consistency in the use of National Test writing criteria, ensuring a comprehensive writing curriculum between primary and secondary schools and developing intensive reading programmes for S1 pupils.

- 51 Although the other strands of the Excellence Fund did not have improvement of literacy skills as their main focus of activity, they have had a beneficial influence on this area of education through such factors as reducing class sizes, providing additional classroom assistants, developing the National Grid for Learning and supporting initiatives to address truancy and exclusion. In addition, New Community Schools, with the support of the Excellence Fund, aim to help children overcome barriers to learning and stimulate positive development. New Community Schools focus on the provision of integrated services – family support, family learning and health improvement – which address the needs of vulnerable children and their families through quick and focused intervention. Assistance from the Excellence Fund was also provided for study support schemes and initiatives to assist parents to participate in their children's learning. Funding for these programmes will continue under the new National Priorities Action Fund.
- 52 The Inclusion Programme provided £19 million over the two years to April 2002 to support education authorities to include children with special educational needs (SEN) within mainstream educational provision. The Programme supported projects that improve access to information technology for pupils with learning difficulties; provide learning and teaching support materials to assist in delivering programmes for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and severe developmental needs and employ additional teaching and auxiliary staff to support SEN pupils within mainstream provision. Funding will continue under the new National Priorities Action Fund.
- Future work*
- 53 As the Excellence Fund for Schools completed its three-year programme at the end of March 2002 the Scottish Executive conducted a review of the Fund. As part of that review, and to continue supporting the Government's key commitment to raising standards in schools, it was decided that the Excellence Fund would be replaced by a new National Priorities Action Fund. Under the new Fund education authorities will continue to receive funding similar to that allocated in 2001/02 with £13 million being allocated to local authorities to use, if they wish to do so, for promoting early literacy and numeracy and £4 million to support implementation of the 5-14 curriculum.
- 54 The Scottish Executive will host a seminar for education authorities and school representatives. The aim will be to consider the most effective means of exchanging information, professional expertise on best practice and learning and teaching support for literacy and numeracy developed as a result of the Excellence Fund and new National Priorities Action Fund. The issue of developing greater collaborative working between different educational sectors will be one of the main issues for discussion.

## Assessment Arrangements

- 55 National tests in reading, writing and mathematics within the 5-14 curriculum were introduced in 1993. The tests are intended to assist teachers in assessing how pupils are progressing in these subjects. The test results are also used in reporting on pupils' performance to parents. Aggregated results are used by schools as part of the information provided to SEED in the National Survey of 5-14 Attainment Levels to establish progress in attainment at both local authority and national level. Since 1989 the national Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) has surveyed the attainment of a sample of Scottish pupils in different aspects of reading and writing in more detail, every three years, and has reported on progression from stage to stage and changes in attainment over time.
- 56 The test is taken when a teacher considers that a pupil has completed work at one attainment level (A-F) and is ready to move onto the next. Tests are made up of individual units (two units in reading and writing and four units in mathematics) and pupils generally take around 25 minutes to complete each unit. The tests are undertaken as a normal part of classroom routine and no pupils should take more than two units in one day. It is a fundamental principle of the 5-14 curriculum that the national tests should not be about passing or failing but confirming pupils' progress. If pupils do not perform as well in the test as expected, the teacher will use the test result to work with the pupil to address any difficulty. The pupil will be re-tested, using a different test after 12 weeks.
- 57 The current arrangements for national tests and a range of other issues relating to assessment in pre-school and within the 5-14 curriculum was considered by HMIE in their report, "Review of Assessment in Pre-School and 5-14" published in 1999. The options for change set out in the report were the subject of a public consultation exercise. The responses received were analysed by the University of Glasgow and results published in the report, "Improving Assessment in Scotland". Respondents supported the proposal to create a single, coherent national system of assessment and reporting, with provision for local flexibility, through improvement and development of existing arrangements rather than through radical change. They emphasised the need for professional support for teachers.

## Future Work

- 58 Following the consultation exercise, an Assessment Action Group has been established and is overseeing an Assessment Development Programme, with the aim of providing a single, coherent national system of assessment, record-keeping and reporting that builds on current good practice. Work currently being undertaken within the programme includes the development of a single, straightforward system of record-keeping, based on the Personal Learning Plan that is currently being

piloted in New Community Schools. The programme will also create a single web-based bank of “new generation” quality-assured assessments to replace National Tests, derived from the current tests and AAP assessments, that can be used by teachers to confirm their judgements.

- 59 Two CD-ROMS have also been made available to provide guidance and assistance on aspects of assessment “Progress with Purpose” dealing with transition from pre-school to P1 and “Reading the Reader” on early years literacy.



## Standard Grade

### Social Justice Milestones

60 The Scottish Executive report, "Social Justice ... A Scotland Where Everyone Matters" which set out a long-term strategy for tackling poverty and injustice set the following milestones in relation to Standard Grade:

- all young people leaving local authority care will have achieved at least English Language and Mathematics Standard Grades;
- the poorest-performing 20% of pupils, in terms of Standard Grade achievement will be brought closer to the performance of all pupils.

61 The provision of resources from the Excellence Fund for study support and the other elements of the Scottish Executive's literacy and numeracy strategies are assisting education authorities and schools to achieve these milestones.

### National Advice

62 The HMIE report, "Effective Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools: English", defined the key purposes of reading in Standard Grade English Language courses as follows:

- to gain overall impression/gist of a text;
- to obtain particular information from a text;
- to evaluate the writer's attitudes, assumptions and arguments;
- to appreciate the writer's craft;
- to enjoy and obtain enrichment from a text.

The key purposes of writing are defined as:

- to convey information;
- to deploy ideas, expound, argue and evaluate;
- to describe personal experience, express feelings and reactions;
- to employ specific literary forms (e.g. short story, letter, poem).

- 63 Reading and writing also form part of the specified core skill of communication. The publication "Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages" notes that all subjects and courses have a particular contribution to make to the development of core skills. Valuable contributions to promoting the key purposes of reading and writing within the core skill of communication can therefore be made beyond Standard Grade English Language courses. Curriculum areas such as Modern Languages, Social and Environmental Studies, Scientific Studies and Applications and Creative and Aesthetic Activities can all assist by introducing pupils to a broad range of written texts in different styles of language and genre and encouraging pupils to undertake a variety of writing tasks.
- 64 Examples of activities could include, in physics and chemistry, examining the reporting of scientific principles and projects in professional journals, non-fiction books and popular newspapers. And encouraging pupils to write their own reports taking into account the different information needs of scientifically-literate and more general audiences. In history, pupils can be encouraged to compare and contrast the presentation of historical events by poets, dramatists and novelists with its treatment by historians. In art and music, pupils could be encouraged through regular writing tasks to analyse the structure, subject and effect of particular artworks or musical compositions. The HMIE report, "Effective Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools: English" recommends that schools develop an overall policy for promoting competence in spelling embracing all subject departments. This could usefully be extended to cover grammar and punctuation.
- 65 The HMIE report, "Standards and Quality in Secondary Schools 1994-1997: English", identifies the strengths of very good Standard Grade English Language courses as follows:
- » pupils made sustained, independent comment on demanding literary texts and used detailed analysis of the writer's craft to support personal responses and evaluations;
  - » in responding to close-reading questions, pupils showed awareness of how structure of argument, word choice and syntax contributed to the meaning of a passage and to effective communication;» in writing and in oral presentation, pupils showed maturity of thought, good organisation of ideas, a command of language and confident personal style;
  - » in discussion, pupils demonstrated insight into the text or topic and skill in responding to others and contributing to group dynamic.

66: HMIE also identified some weaknesses in the present situation. These include:

- the need to improve integration of the technical aspects of literary analysis with a broader appreciation of literary qualities in texts;
- using analytical skills to go beyond the obvious main ideas and “re-telling the story”;
- improving thinking and research as preparation for writing of all kinds;
- improving expression, punctuation and presentation of writing;
- developing sustained talk for both oral presentations and discussions;
- stimulating pupils to undertake independent reading and the habit of reading widely for pleasure.

67 For 1999 to 2001, an average of 93.9% of S4 pupils nationally achieved an award at least at Foundation level in Standard Grade (or equivalent) English Language. (This figure covers publicly-funded schools.) This figure is extremely encouraging. However, success in Standard Grade English Language courses, particularly at Foundation/General level, does not guarantee specific competencies in reading and writing. The level of award will be determined by the use of a cut-off score and in any examination it will be possible to achieve this score in a variety of ways. Candidates with the same level of award might therefore have quite different abilities in specific literacy skills. The Development Officer appointed to support this national statement will consider this issue in conjunction with HMIE, local authorities and educational practitioners and make recommendations to the Scottish Executive.

### **OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)**

68 The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) assesses the reading (and mathematical and scientific literacy) of 15-year-old students nearing the end of compulsory education. The performance of students in 32 countries was measured in 2000. Results indicate that Scotland ranked sixth highest in reading literacy. However, female students achieved much higher ratings than their male equivalents – in Scotland the gender difference was 30 points on the reading literacy scale used in the survey.

### Future Work

- 69 To assist in securing further improvement at Standard Grade, secondary schools will set their own targets for 2005 in relation to the % of the original S4 cohort who, by the end of S6, have attained Standard Grades at level 3 or better in English Language. Local authorities will challenge and support schools to set realistic but stretching targets for Standard Grades. The Scottish Executive will provide schools and local authorities with benchmarking data to help them establish local targets. The Scottish Executive will also offer guidance and support on possible strategies for raising standards through the National Priorities Support Team, based at Learning and Teaching Scotland, and through an interactive website (<http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk>).
- 70 The Scottish Executive will also be assisting education authorities and schools to further improve attainment in literacy in S3/S4 through the following initiatives:
- SEED initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations within the 3-14 curriculum, Standard Grade and National Qualifications;
  - a separate SEED initiative to develop guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school;
  - Development Officer to advise on issue of guaranteeing specific competencies in Standard Grade courses and assist in monitoring good practice in improving progression routes from S1/S2 English Language courses through S3/S4 provision and into S5/S6.

### National Qualifications

#### National Advice

- 71 In the post-compulsory school stages of S5/S6, most pupils will be pursuing courses of a more specialised nature related to personal interest, future employment or entry to further or higher education. However, guidance contained in the publication "Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages" notes that opportunities will exist for pupils to have their attainment in specified core skills, including literacy, recognised through the national certification process. Schools should therefore take account of pupils' previous attainment in these skills and ensure that individual programmes of study enable pupils to continue the development of core skills to the highest appropriate level, keeping in mind their value in the process of lifelong learning and as entry qualifications for future courses or careers.

- 72 The number and percentage of S5 and S6 pupils achieving National Qualifications in English Language at the various levels of award in 2000 are shown in the below table.

	Intermediate 1	Intermediate 2	Higher <sup>(3)</sup>	Advanced Higher	CSYS
S5 Number of passes	1891	7857	13,996	-	-
% of S4 roll <sup>(1)</sup>	3.2	13.3	23.6	-	-
S6 Number of passes	142	900	3566	302	812
% of S4 roll <sup>(2)</sup>	0.2	1.5	6.1	0.5	1.4

<sup>(1)</sup> Percentage of S4 roll in the previous year.

<sup>(2)</sup> Percentage of S4 roll 2 years' previous.

<sup>(3)</sup> Higher Qualifications are the combined results of National Qualifications Highers and SCE Higher Grades.

- 73 The literacy skills included at any level of National Qualifications courses in English Language cover reading, writing and oral communication. Students are given experience of both literature and non-fiction reading to obtain information and to evaluate writers' points of view in a range of texts. Students are formally assessed in both types of reading.

- 74 Courses also require students to develop their writing skills in, for example, personal expression and reflection, reporting and evaluating information, persuasion and argument and imaginative writing. One piece of writing is formally assessed internally (on a pass/fail basis) and one (possibly, but not necessarily, the same piece) is currently included in a folio sent for external assessment to contribute to the student's overall grade for the subject. Tasks requiring students to produce written responses to literature, though designed principally to assess their knowledge and understanding of texts, also include a requirement to write accurately and correctly (as does the specialist study of literature or language).

- 75 The courses currently include a half-unit focusing on the development of either group discussion, oral presentation or critical listening skills and one of these is formally assessed. This assessment contributes to both achievement of the units of the course and the overall grade as the mark is included in the folio sent to the external examiners.

- 76 Recently announced changes to the structure of National Qualifications English Language courses at all levels (except Advanced Higher) may change the practical emphasis on communication core skills from 2001/02 when it is expected that they will be implemented by SQA. These changes, which are being made in response to

teachers' concerns about assessment workload, significantly reduce the number of assessment tasks. In particular, the half unit dedicated to oral communication is removed, though an option remains for students to be assessed on their personal study task orally, rather than in writing.

**77** The other significant change is the abolition of the folio of internal work sent for external assessment (comprising writing, specialist study and oral assessment mark). Although writing and personal study will continue to be internally assessed to guarantee minimum achievement of the criteria for the units, they will no longer contribute to students' overall grade. Given these changes, it will be extremely important for teachers to ensure that the reduction in assessment workload leads to more opportunities to develop both writing and communication.

**78** The strengths of very good courses have been identified as:

- thorough and well-balanced attention to all aspects of English specified in the National Qualifications syllabuses;
- providing students with a rich experience of literature;
- good integration of course elements;
- careful planning of units and courses to ensure progressive challenges and achievement of attainment;
- motivating and stimulating texts, topics and tasks;
- agreed departmental arrangements to ensure a consistent language experience in all classes and appropriate freedom for teachers to take account of the needs of their pupils;
- explicit account being taken of pupils' previous work in English Language and of the skills required for the next stage of their school career;
- purposeful investigative work leading to the skills of note-making and reading to write or speak.

**79** Common weaknesses in National Qualifications courses include:

- minimal coverage of internal and external assessment arrangements, reducing the range of literature studied and the amount of practice in both extended writing and oral communication;

- imbalance in time allocations and study requirements for different aspects of the course;
- application of internal assessment too early, before students have had adequate opportunity to develop the abilities to be assessed.

### **Future Work**

80 The Scottish Executive will be assisting education authorities and schools to further improve attainment in literacy in S5/S6 through the following initiatives:

- SEED initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations within the 3-14 curriculum, Standard Grade and National Qualifications;
- a separate SEED initiative to develop guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school;
- Development Officer to assist in monitoring good practice in improving progression routes from S1/S2 English Language courses through S3/S4 provision and into S5/S6.

### **Role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in Promoting Literacy**

#### **National Grid for Learning**

81 The National Grid for Learning (<http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk>) programme is designed to ensure that the educational benefits of modern information and communications technology (ICT) are available to all sectors of education.

82 Three essential and equally important components underpin the NGfL concept. These are Infrastructure, Training and Content. Building the appropriate infrastructure is all about ensuring that institutions are appropriately networked and securely and safely connected to the Internet with adequate computer access for all users. This encompasses a great deal of technical work but also the development of policies and guidance. Training is about ensuring that ICT users have the appropriate knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude of mind. Without this, ICT can never be successfully integrated into everyday educational activity. And, lastly, none of the preceding can be put to best use if the new technology does not offer access to a wide range of content valued by both teacher and learner.

- 83 A range of learning and teaching support for literacy is already available or being currently developed on the NGfL. These include:
- on-line version of “Storybook Website” which supports literacy for the early years through the use of online games;
  - an on-line resource for primary schools on life in Viking times, “Sagas and Sums”, which focus developing literacy (and numeracy) skills;
  - the Scottish Virtual Teacher’s Centre holds a number of ICT resources focusing on literacy and is linked to other websites with literacy content. Resources include “Thinking Together”, “Wordmaster” and a link to the Association for Scottish Literacy Studies;
  - “SCETNET English and Communications” are designed to exemplify how schools can use the Internet to enhance learning and develop practical skills. This resource is appropriate for use in Intermediate 2 and Higher courses;
  - part-funding for the BBC Scotland Standard Grade Support “Bitesize” series, an on-line revision resource created by BBC Education, which includes revision materials and an on-line teachers’ facility for Standard Grade English Language.

### **National Guidance and Advice on the Use of ICT as a Teaching and Learning Tool**

84 National 5-14 curriculum guidelines for ICT notes that ICT offers the education community one of the most potentially powerful learning tools available. Not only can computers support learning across the whole curriculum but communication networks also provide learners with fast and searchable access to vast amounts of information. In addition to this, ICT supports a wide range of broader educational objectives including independent learning, collaboration with others and communication skills.

85 The guidelines and associated guides for teachers and managers contain examples of the ways in which ICT can promote pupils’ literacy skills. These include using e-mail to develop contacts with school pupils in different countries (including researching and writing reports on various aspects of life in Scotland), collecting and publishing material on a school website. And using the Internet to compare and contrast the reporting of current events in different national newspapers. The HMIE report, “Using ICT in Learning and Teaching”, also provides examples of good practice in the use of ICT in the teaching and learning of literacy in both primary and secondary school.



### **Future Work**

- 86 As a result of the National Grid for Learning and other initiatives, local authorities have been preparing their own guidance and support materials to assist schools in the use of ICT in relation to literacy. Many commercial packages are also being produced. The Development Officer for literacy will discuss with local authorities, Learning and Teaching Scotland and business organisations the production of a comprehensive resource directory and database of ICT materials relating to the development of literacy skills to be placed on the NGfL.
- 87 This national statement on improving literacy in schools will be placed on the NGfL and updated and expanded as necessary.

### **Education for Work and Enterprise**

- 88 The Education for Work and Enterprise agenda supports what can often be a difficult transition of young people from education to the world of work. It provides opportunities for a range of activities such as learning through work-related contexts, career education, school enterprise projects and work placements for both teachers and pupils. Learning is supported through the development of the core skills as well as encouraging personal qualities such as self-motivation, initiative and responsibility. The pupil entitlement to Education for Work, identified by HMIE, includes the core skills which, in turn, include literacy and numeracy.
- 89 Education for Work programmes also provide insights into the demands and expectations of working life. The aim is to increase pupils' motivation and awareness of the importance of high attainment. If pupils can clearly see the greater purpose to their learning, they are more likely to succeed. Specific activities – in particular enterprise education – are highly regarded by teachers as providing pupils with opportunities to display high levels of attainment.

### **Future Work**

- 90 A new initiative to promote enterprise education in primary schools – the Schools Enterprise Programme – was launched in September 2001 and represents a step change in the level of enterprise activity undertaken by primary schools. It will ensure that all primary pupils have exposure to at least two enterprise activities in their time in primary education.
- 91 In addition, research is being conducted into the learning gains from Education for Work programmes in primary and secondary schools. The results of this research is expected to be available later this year.

- 92 In September 2001, Ministers announced a review of Education for Work and Enterprise. The Review will assess the effectiveness of Education for Work activities in preparing young people for the world of work and examine the scope for improvement of these activities. A report is expected by Summer 2002.

### **Development of Literacy Skills in Indigenous and Minority Ethnic Languages**

#### **5-14 Curriculum**

- 93 This national statement is concerned with the promotion and development of literacy skills in the English language. However, the Scottish Executive values the promotion and development of literacy skills in Scots, Gaelic and minority ethnic languages.
- 94 "The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000" places a general duty on education authorities and schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. Specific duties to support the general duty relating to certain key bodies, including schools and education authorities, also came into force in 2002.
- 95 National guidelines for English Language in the 5-14 curriculum emphasises that schools should create an ethos and generate a curriculum which will recognise languages other than English and lead pupils to enjoy and benefit from the varied languages and cultures within the community. The guidelines recommend that schools and teachers undertake the following action to promote and develop literacy skills in indigenous and minority ethnic languages:
- foster respect for and interest in each pupil's mother tongue and its literature, whether English, Scots, Gaelic, Urdu, Punjabi, Cantonese or any other;
  - develop general language awareness skills and attitudes in all pupils at an early age as a foundation for the later systematic learning of particular languages;
  - develop, as far as resources allow, each pupil's proficiency in the written and spoken forms of any language, in addition to English, thought by parents to be important in the pupil's community;
  - create awareness of bias and prejudice and challenge these in pupils' own use of language and in the language used by others.

- 96 Provision is being made for pupils to be taught in Gaelic, the indigenous Celtic language of Scotland. The "Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000" places a duty on education authorities to report what their plans are for improving Gaelic-medium education. The Scottish Executive is providing £2.8 million in specific grant to education authorities for Gaelic-medium education, principally in primary education. In session 2000/01 there were some 1,860 pupils in Gaelic-medium education in 60 primary schools.
- 97 In Gaelic-medium classes children may achieve their early literacy skills in the Gaelic language and only begin to acquire skills in English once they have achieved level A or better in all four outcomes (listening, talking, reading, writing). The expectation is that Gaelic-medium pupils will have broadly equal competence in Gaelic and English by the end of P7, i.e. in two languages, not just one. Gaelic-medium teachers use exactly the same techniques as their English-medium colleagues in developing early literacy. Pupils also experience an immersion phase in Gaelic language in order to reinforce the language they bring from home or to let them learn Gaelic from scratch in the early stages.
- 98 Advice on developing pupils' literacy skills in the Gaelic language is contained in national 5-14 guidelines for Gaelic. Advice and guidance is also available on the use of Gaelic as a medium for teaching other areas of the curriculum. In addition, the Scottish Executive has funded the production of support materials for use in the learning and teaching of Gaelic and in Gaelic-medium education.
- 99 The success of these approaches has been amply documented: most recently in "Interchange 62" and the report, "The Attainments of Pupils receiving Gaelic-medium Primary Education in Scotland", published by Scottish CILT on behalf of SEED.

### Post-14 School Education

- 100 In the later stages of school education, opportunities exist for pupils to undertake Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses in Gaelic.
- 101 In relation to the learning and teaching of Scots, the HMI report "Effective Teaching and Learning in Scottish Secondary Schools: English" recommends that teachers make use of high quality texts written in Scots and the vernacular of Scottish regions in English Language courses at all stages of secondary school. Examples of works that could usefully be used in this context, with appropriate regard to year stage, maturity and level of difficulty, include the poetry of Dunbar, Burns and Fergusson, the fiction of Lewis Grassie Gibbon and the drama of Sir David Lindsay.

- 102 In relation to the promotion of minority ethnic community languages in the post-14 stages, the principles outlined in paragraph 2 remain applicable for learning and teaching at these stages of school education. In addition, there are opportunities for pupils to undertake a Standard Grade course in Urdu. The Scottish Qualifications Authority is also currently developing an examination in Urdu at Higher Grade.

### **Continuing Professional Development of Teachers**

- 103 The recent teachers' agreement, "A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century", introduced the requirement that teachers undertake an additional contractual 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) per annum. In addition to the general mandatory CPD, a professional development programme will be developed for those teachers wishing to pursue the new qualification-based Chartered Teacher route.

- 104 A Ministerial Strategy Committee has been established to oversee the development and implementation of a national strategy and framework for teachers' CPD and is charged with ensuring that the strategy reflects the national priorities for school education. Any framework will, however, be driven by teachers' individual needs and school, local and national priorities. It will provide a basis for developing teachers' skills in generic as well as subject specific areas and will address the issue of improving standards of numeracy as appropriate. The framework will ensure that teachers are kept continuously up to date and can respond to key developments in their subject(s) and the curriculum as a whole.

- 105 The framework for Chartered Teacher status is being developed by a consortium led by Arthur Andersen in partnership with the Universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde. The Ministerial Strategy Committee will monitor the work of the consortium. Development of a CPD framework is currently in the early stages and will be dependent on consultation with all main stakeholders.

- 106 HMIE reports such as "Improving Reading at the Early Stages 5-14, Improving Writing 5-14" and "Standards and Quality in Secondary Schools 1994-1997: English", while highlighting examples of good practice across the profession, also point to a need to improve the insight and quality of teaching of individual teachers. Weaknesses identified in primary and secondary schools include:

- poor conception of teaching aims for reading and writing;
- tendency to accept uncritically available resources and the activities they offer;
- low expectations of pupils' abilities and potential.

### Future Work

- 107 In the light of these findings, the Development Officer taking forward the national statement on literacy will consult with the Ministerial Strategy Group, Teacher Education Institutions, education authorities and other stakeholders on the provision of training and other support within the CPD framework to promote the learning and teaching of literacy skills.

### Initial Teacher Education

- 108 New guidelines for courses of initial teacher education (ITE) were published in 1998 and came into effect in August 1999. The guidelines set out Scottish Ministers' policy on the content, nature and duration of courses leading to a teaching qualification for the primary and secondary sectors. The guidelines have been widely welcomed by the education community. Within the guidelines, the list of competences which newly qualified teachers are expected to have acquired includes the requirement that the teacher must be able (whether at pre-school, primary or secondary level) to play his or her full part in developing pupils' skills in literacy (and numeracy).

- 109 Specifically, for courses leading to the primary teaching qualification, the guidelines state that new teachers must be able to teach English Language (and Mathematics) at all levels, ranging from the introduction of early literacy (and numeracy) skills to level F in the 5-14 curriculum.

- 110 For courses leading to a teaching qualification in a secondary subject, the guidelines state that the course must prepare the student to be able to identify and meet pupils' needs in English Language (and mathematical) aspects of their subject(s).

- 111 The Scottish Executive has now developed benchmark standards for ITE, incorporating the competences from the guidelines and also benchmark information on academic standards. The "Standard for Initial Teacher Education in Scotland" was published in February 2001 and is a key reference for the collaborative review of ITE, the purpose of which is to maintain and improve the standard of ITE. HMIE has also recently published a report, "Preparing for Literacy", focusing on the preparation of student teachers to teach reading and writing from pre-school to S2.

### Future Work

- 112 A pilot of collaborative review is taking place in academic session 2001/02. The main round of collaborative review covering all Higher Education Institutions providing ITE will take place in a four-year cycle from 2002/06.



### 3 | Post-school and Community Initiatives

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PART 3

POST-SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Introduction	1
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## Introduction

1 This national statement is focused on improving attainment in literacy skills within school education. However, it is crucial to recognise the valuable contribution that parents, carers and community organisations can make to improving children's literacy skills. The Scottish Executive publication "How Can Parents Help Their Children's Learning?" provides a range of general advice and examples of good practice to assist parents, carers, teachers and pupils to work together to help pupils become better learners.

2 Some parents and carers may, however, be insecure in their own literacy skills. It is important that those in this position do not feel isolated, helpless or embarrassed but can acquire the knowledge and confidence to access support. It may be useful in this context to consider the broader issue of adult literacy. The 1997 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) measured the following three dimensions of literacy (and numeracy) skills:

**Prose literacy** – the knowledge and skills required to understand and to use information from texts such as newspaper articles and passages of fiction;

**Document literacy** – the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats such as timetables, graphs charts and forms;

**Quantitative literacy** – the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetical operations, either alone or sequentially, to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as calculating savings on items advertised in a sale or working out the interest required to achieve a desired return on an investment.

Each of these dimensions was measured on a continuous scale ranging from 0-500 but results were usually presented by grouping the scores into five literacy levels with Level 1 representing the lowest ability level and Level 5 the highest. People at the lowest level demonstrated a poor ability to deal with a wide range of tasks.

3 Results derived from the Survey imply that 800,000 adults in Scotland, of which 520,000 are employed, have low literacy (and numeracy) skills. In addition, specific life changes such as a new job or promotion, leaving care for a more independent lifestyle, parenthood or retirement may make new demands on literacy skills. The pace of societal change, organisation change, or the growing momentum in technological advances, can also increase pressure on skills acquired some time in the past. The resulting impact on adults is a diminished quality of life, where promotion and career progression, participation in democracy and community life, health, housing and personal relationships are all adversely affected.



### Scottish Executive Adult Literacy Team

4 In June 2000, the Adult Literacy Team was established to provide a focus for the development of national policy and strategy on adult literacy and numeracy. The Team's report, "Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland", was published in July 2001.

5 The report highlights the need to improve the nature, extent, quality and range of services offered to literacy (and numeracy) learners and that action should focus on priority groups identified as:

- people with limited initial education, particularly young adults;
- unemployed people and workers facing redundancy;
- people with English as a second or additional language;
- people who live in disadvantaged areas;
- workers in low-skilled jobs;
- people on low incomes;
- people with health problems and disabilities.

6 Recommendations within the report have been based on findings from wide-ranging research including household, employer and workforce surveys. The recommendations include:

- national leadership and effective local action with a national strategy overseen by Ministers and co-ordinated within the Scottish Executive; Communities Scotland acting as a development centre to support adult literacy (and numeracy) initiatives and a lead role for Community Learning Strategies;
- a quality learning experience with a major effort to engage a broad range of people in workplaces and communities and development of provision relevant to learners' lives; a commitment to individual learning plans and specialised guidance and assessment; a new adult literacy (and numeracy) curriculum framework; recognition and accreditation of progress through the development of Progress File and the core skills framework; strong emphasis on the role of ICT;
- development of the system of delivering support with the quality of provision reviewed against the best practice guidance contained within the Scottish Executive/City of Edinburgh Council document, "Literacies in the Community:

Good Practice Framework”; a national training programme to raise expertise amongst literacy (and numeracy) practitioners; continuous research and development of the strategy and establishment of a Research Advisory Group;

- » promoting awareness through pathfinder projects to test new ways of delivering the strategy and developing the skills of learners.

### **Future Work**

- 7 Funding of £22.5 million will be provided over the three years from 2001/02 to take forward the Team’s recommendations and meet the national target set out in the report of helping 80,000 adults over this period. Community Learning and Development is one way of improving adult literacy (and numeracy) skills. £18.5 million of this amount is being distributed through local authorities to Community Learning Strategy Partnerships to help 33,000 new adult learners and provide a wide range of new and improved learning opportunities in a variety of settings. Family literacy is an excellent example of effective lifelong learning. Parents and carers learn how to help their children develop their skills, while improving their own abilities. Lifelong learning initiatives such as this are vital to grounding literacy (and numeracy) programmes in the daily lives of adults and communities.

### **Community Learning and Development**

- 8 The role of community learning and development will be crucial in promoting literacy skills amongst adults. EID Circular 4/99, “Community Education”, set out guidance to local authorities on the development of community learning strategies and plans, to be produced in association with communities and the range of organisations (including the voluntary sector) which offer educational opportunities to them. The circular advocates the development of council-wide community learning strategies. And more local community learning plans based on rigorous analysis of communities’ learning needs. It highlights the following work as being at the heart of community learning:
- » development of core skills, including adult literacy, numeracy, use of ICT, problem-solving and working together;
  - » engagement with young people to help them experience positive development – whether they are of school age or beyond. This applies particularly to those at transition stages who are, or who are at risk of becoming, alienated from society, whose educational experience has left them dissatisfied or whose lifestyle makes them vulnerable;

- educational support to individuals, families, people with disabilities, interest groups and communities endeavouring to improve the quality of their lives;
- promotion of lifelong learning and healthier, more positive lifestyles within the context of community and voluntary activities.

9 The first community learning strategies have been forwarded to the Scottish Executive. Authorities are now working on their Community Learning Plans. Authorities are obliged to forward to the Scottish Executive each October reports on progress. All the documents will be available publicly from local authorities when they are finalised.

### **Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative**

10 Encouraging a love of books and reading and cultivating the use of literacy skills within the home are key means by which parents can assist their children to improve their capabilities in literacy. Parents and carers already undertake such activities as reading aloud to young children and introducing them to a range of written texts from storybooks and comics to newspapers, dictionaries, atlases and encyclopaedias.

11 Many pre-school centres and schools assist parents in developing effective home reading activities. Examples of this work includes:

- explaining carefully the approach that the pre-school/school centre will take to developing children's reading skills and the most effective way that parents can assist this process;
- making available to parents/carers and children books, storybooks and other reading material;
- arranging introductory visits to local libraries;
- helping parents and carers to arrange reading groups for their children.

12 The HMIE publication "Improving Reading at the Early Stages 5-14" contains further information and advice on work that pre-school centres and schools can undertake to promote home reading. The Scottish Executive publication "How Can Parents Help Their Children's Learning?" provides a range of general advice and examples of good practice to assist parents, carers, teachers and pupils to work together to help pupils become better learners.

13 The Scottish Executive wishes to build upon this work by launching a Home Reading initiative. The initiative will assist parents and carers in undertaking home reading activities to ensure that children have the best possible start in their educational careers and continue to participate in and enjoy home reading activities as they progress through school. The initiative will be concentrated in the first instance on promoting home reading amongst parents and carers with children aged 0-8: particularly those with boys in this age range living in areas of the country experiencing social injustice.

14 Detailed announcements of each of the strands of the initiative will take place throughout 2002 and beyond.



## 4 | Conclusion

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PART 4

CONCLUSION

Summary of Future Work

1

Development Officers

1

Excellence Fund for Schools/National Priorities Action Fund

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National Priorities Improvement Framework

3

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Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative

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Comments and Suggestions

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### Summary of Future Work

- 1 This national statement has sought to provide an overview of the current position in relation to improving pupils' attainment in literacy skills in schools. It has summarised the current national advice available to education authorities and schools and the range of initiatives being carried out by the Scottish Executive in this area of education. The document has also outlined the future action being taken by the Scottish Executive. This can be summarised as follows:

### Development Officers

- 2 Development Officers will be appointed for a three-year period to work with education authorities in supporting the national statements on literacy and numeracy. They will provide overarching, focused and subject specific advice on matters such as improving the literacy and numeracy skills of children experiencing social injustice, quality assurance, staff training and development, pre-school/primary/secondary liaison, parental involvement and implementation of national advice.
- 3 The Development Officers will be particularly concerned in working with education authorities to review current provision against the national statements and identifying where and how improvements might be made. Education authorities would have the option of using this advice in the preparation of their improvement plans linked to the national priorities framework.
- 4 The Development Officer for literacy will focus on the following specific issues:
  - › provision of advice to the Scottish Executive on the development of course materials and other learning and teaching support to raise attainment in literacy within the 5-14 curriculum particularly amongst those pupils experiencing social injustice;
  - › provision of advice and guidance to education authorities to promote and develop literacy skills in the early years of secondary school;
  - › provision of advice and guidance to education authorities to improve the performance of boys relative to girls in attainment in literacy;
  - › provision of recommendations to the Scottish Executive to ensure that Standard Grade courses in English Language provide specific competences in literacy;

- contribute to monitoring good practice in improving progression routes from S1/S2 English Language courses through S3/S4 provision and into S5/S6. This will include schools which have taken advantage of the relaxation of age and stage restrictions for Standard Grade and Higher and the potential use of National Qualification units and courses in S3/S4;
- provision of assistance in the production of a comprehensive resource directory and database of ICT materials relating to the development of literacy skills that will be placed on the National Grid for Learning;
- provision of recommendations to the Scottish Executive over the provision of training and other support within the CPD framework to promote the teaching of literacy skills;
- provision of assistance in implementing Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative.

5 In addition to education authorities, the Development Officer will consult with a wide range of interests including HMIE, Learning and Teaching Scotland, Scottish Qualification Authority, Teacher Education Institutions, teacher and parent representatives and Ministerial Strategy Group on Continuing Professional Development to take forward these issues over the period of their appointment.

6 The Development Officer for literacy will be in contact with education authorities and other agencies to take forward work on this national statement. However, if there are any specific issues within the Development Officer's remit that readers of this document believe should be addressed then comments should be addressed in writing to:

The Development Officer – National Statement on Improving Literacy in Schools  
Qualifications, Assessment and Curriculum Division  
Area 2A  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

#### **Excellence Fund for Schools/National Priorities Action Fund**

7 The Scottish Executive will host a seminar for education authorities and school representatives. The aim will be to consider the most effective means of exchanging information, professional expertise on best practice and learning and teaching support for literacy and numeracy within the 5-14 curriculum resulting from the resources provided by the Excellence Fund and new National Priorities Action Fund. The issue of developing greater collaborative working between different educational sectors will be one of the main issues for discussion.



## National Priorities Improvement Framework

- 8 The first national priority for school education is to “raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results”. To assist in achieving this objective, schools are to be asked to set their own targets for 2005 for 5-14 attainment levels for the combined P3, P4, P6, P7 rolls and for S2 pupils. Secondary schools will also set their own targets for 2005 at Standard Grade. The targets will relate to the % of the original S4 cohort who, by the end of S6, have attained Standard Grades at level 3 or better in English Language. Education authorities will challenge and support schools to set realistic but stretching targets. The Scottish Executive will provide schools and education authorities with benchmarking data to help them establish local targets. The Scottish Executive will also offer guidance and support on possible strategies for raising standards through the National Priorities Support Team, based at Learning and Teaching Scotland, and through an interactive website (<http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk>).

## Staff Development

- 9 SEED has undertaken an initiative to provide a set of common principles and framework for assessing reading skills in classroom assessment, tests and examinations within the 3-14 curriculum, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses. The principles and framework take account of curriculum and assessment guidance and support for pre-school, 5-14 and 14-18; the latest research and experience gained to date in Scotland from transition records, AAP, 5-14 National Tests in Reading, Standard Grade and National Qualifications courses as well as considering current practice in other English-speaking countries. It is planned to distribute the resulting materials to schools during 2002. This work will be supported by the Learning and Teaching Scotland publication “Thinking about Reading”.
- 10 A separate SEED project has developed guidance and support materials on effective teaching of knowledge about language for teachers of English and Modern Languages in primary and secondary school. The materials are designed for teachers to raise pupils’ knowledge and awareness of the nature, function and variety of language structures. Initial guidance and support materials were issued in September 2001 with an associated CD-ROM distributed in December 2001.

### Scottish Executive Home Reading Initiative

11. The Scottish Executive will be launching an initiative aimed at promoting home reading. The initiative will assist parents and carers in undertaking home reading activities to ensure that children have the best possible start in their educational careers and continue to participate in and enjoy home reading activities as they progress through school. The initiative will be concentrated in the first instance on promoting home reading amongst parents and carers with children aged 0-8: particularly those with boys in this age range living in areas of the country experiencing social injustice. Detailed announcements of each of the strands of the campaign will take place throughout 2002 and beyond.

### Comments and Suggestions

12. An electronic copy of this national statement will be placed on the Scottish Virtual Teachers' Centre within the National Grid for Learning (<http://www.ngflscotland.gov.uk>) and updated and expanded as necessary. There will also be a facility for teachers and other interested parties to post comments and suggestions on the contents of the national statement and provide information on initiatives to promote literacy skills taking place within their own school or education authority that they would wish to publicise more widely.

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