

Action on Ethos

Working with Parents

This case study describes the process of developing a collaborative education strategy in Ferguslie Park in Paisley.

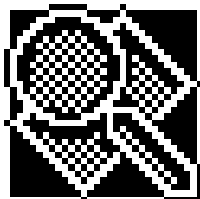
The strategy 'Education and New Life' evolved through a process of intensive consultation with parents, pupils and staff in all branches of the education service.

Through the establishment of collaborative working groups, an extremely practical document emerged which pledged action on a number of key issues.

A development plan was then put in place which progressed key issues over an initial three year timescale.



For any queries please contact:
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The Primary and Secondary Schools serving Ferguslie Park—

Castlehead High School

Merksworth High School (network contact see back page)

St. Mirins High School

Craiglea Primary School

Ferguslie Park Primary School

St. Fergus Primary School

1 Background

In March 1988, the Government published "New Life for Urban Scotland" which announced major initiatives in four of Scotland's peripheral housing estates. Ferguslie Park in Paisley was one of those designated areas.

A partnership group led by the Scottish Office and drawing its membership from the public sector, the private sector and the local community, developed a strategy to evolve over 10 years. The orientation of the overall strategy is economic and five core issues were initially identified: training, employment and enterprise development; poverty; housing; the environment; and image.

Subsequently, the Partnership recognised education as a vital means of underpinning the whole regeneration process and it was included as one of the core objectives of the initiative. Plans were immediately put into action to develop an education strategy which would serve the needs of the area.

2 The Education Strategy

The education strategy which emerged in 1992 was a practical action plan which included a range of initiatives and involved all branches of the education service in partnership with the community and the private sector. Consultation was a vital ingredient in the process of developing the strategy and has continued to be a priority as the strategy has been implemented.

Historically, many young people from Ferguslie Park have, for a variety of reasons, had some difficulty in achieving their maximum potential through education and highlighted below are some examples of how this situation has been addressed, to the extent that recent statistics are showing marked increases in attendance, attainment at standard grade level and in positive post-school destinations.

Operating within the policy of Strathclyde Regional Council's Social Strategy, the education department discriminated positively towards Ferguslie Park and directed available resources to the area. Examples of this include:

- Seconded Area Education Officer
- Supported study
- High Technology Centre

High Technology Centre

Merksworth High School was the subject of key education committee decision to provide resources for specialist courses in technology, business, languages, the performing arts and special educational needs. The purpose of this redevelopment was to locate within one convenient centre a range of state of the art

Notes

equipment and specialist courses, which could be accessed by young people from a wide area.

(Due to local Government reorganisation budget constraints, this facility is to be phased out during 1996-98).

Through the structure of an education sub group (see diagram), comprehensive consultation on education brought to light the following key areas for action. These form the basis of the education strategy :

- attendance/truancy
- bullying
- consultation with young people
- primary-secondary transfer
- post- 16 education and support
- pre-5 education
- staff development
- consultation and communication.

Diagram: Education sub-group

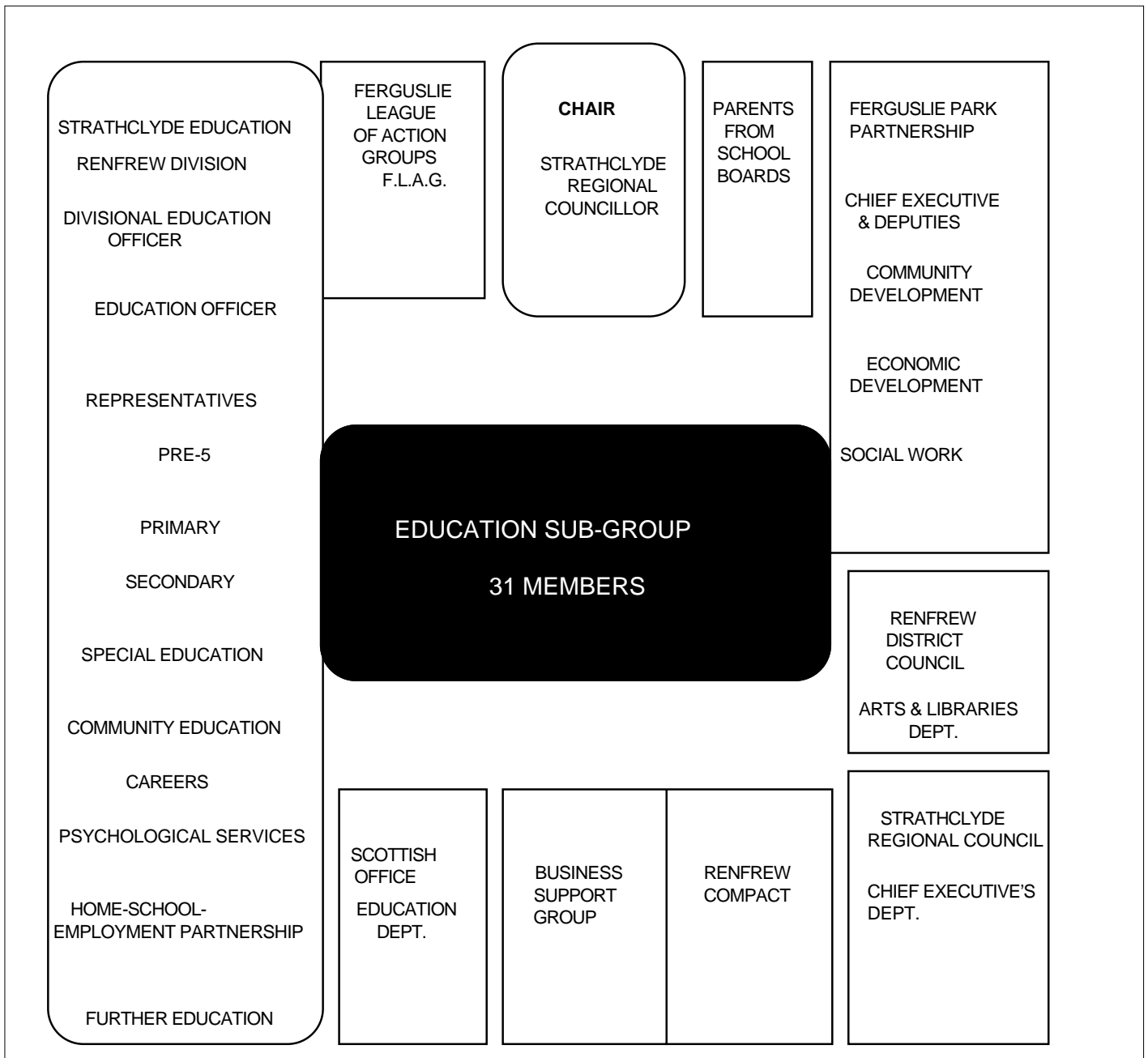


DIAGRAM A

(APT attendance S1-S4 (1990-95) has improved in every year group by as much as 12.7%.

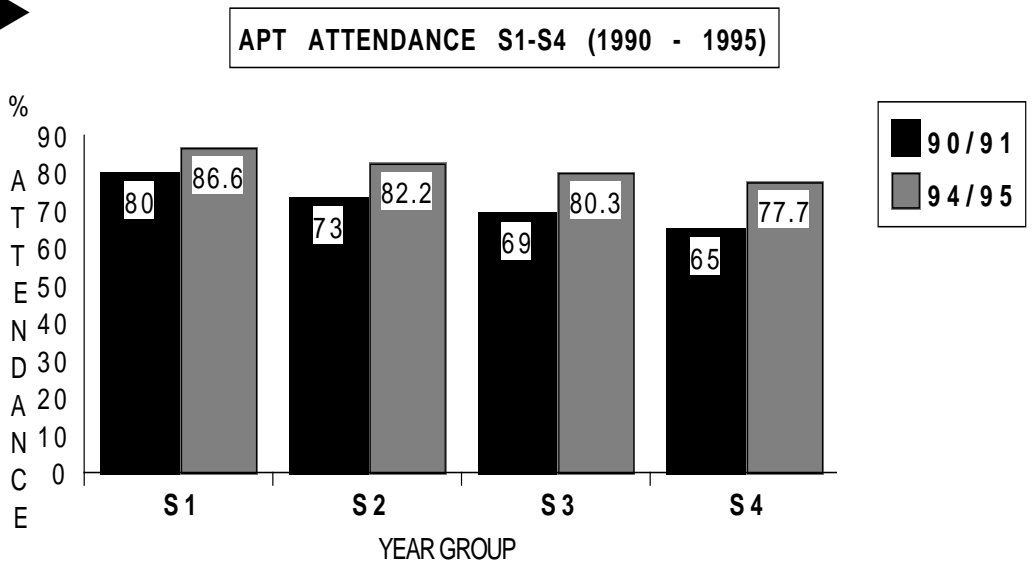
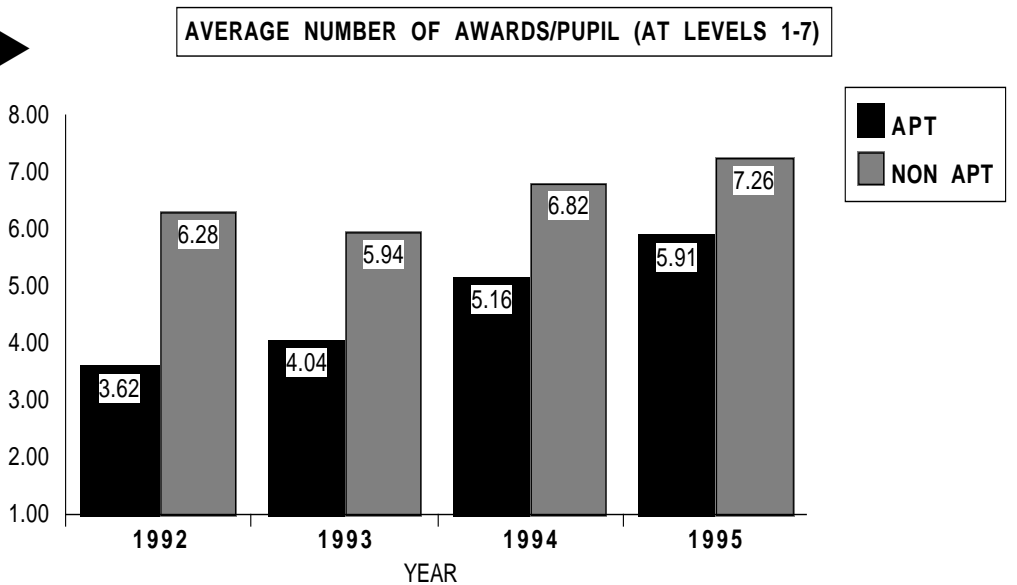


Diagram B

(Average number of awards/pupil) highlights the improvements in the number of awards gained per pupil.



Merksworth High School
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 Paisley
 PA3 2NG
 0141 887 5141
 Headteacher: Alasdair A. Macdonald
 Project contact: Ann Houston

Other HSEP initiatives include groupwork, attendance support, exam support, school leavers courses and pre-5/P7 transition programmes. A separate copy of the mid-term evaluation of the HSEP carried out by the Quality in Education Unit at Jordanhill is available from the project base in Merksworth High School.

Recent statistics have highlighted the fact that steady gains are being made with regard to attendance and attainment.

- Over a five year period from 1990-1995
- attendance has consistently improved in the S1-S4 year groups - by as much as 12.7% in S4. (diagram a)
- The average number of awards gained at levels 1-7 has improved from 3.7 to 5.9 (diagram b)

There is no doubt that one of the keys to the success of this strategy has been the partnership between parents, teachers and pupils.

However, the continuing gap between APT and Non-APT pupils at level 1-3 awards ensures that complacency does not set in. A number of strategies have been developed to address this issue which include mentoring and a project for able student support.



Case Study - Number 6

Schools serving Ferguslie Park