

How are we doing?

Spring 2006



Welcome from the Leader and Chief Executive



Jim Harkins
Councillor Jim Harkins
Leader of the Council

Welcome to the latest edition of 'How are we doing?', the section of Renfrewshire magazine that lets you know how we are performing.

In this edition there is information on how well we performed in a number of our services in 2004 / 2005. We have also shown you how our performance compares to last year and how we compare to other councils in Scotland.

Every issue of 'How are we doing?' focuses on the performance of one of our main departments. In this issue, you can find out how our biggest department Education and Leisure, performed in 2004 / 2005.



Tom Scholes
Tom Scholes
Chief Executive

We hope that you enjoy reading 'How are we doing?'. However, we are always looking for ways to improve the information that we give you. If you would like to find out more about 'How are we doing?' or ways in which we can improve this section of the magazine, contact Tony McEwan in the Chief Executive's Department on 0141 840 3251 or e-mail him at tony.mcewan@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

What's new?

Good practice in housing

We were well represented at the recent Tenant Participation Advisory Service and Chartered Institute of Housing Good Practice in Participation Awards. Our tenant participation strategy won the Landlords' Participation Award and our project introducing new technology in sheltered housing was runner-up in the Participation in Supported Housing Award. As part of this project we installed computers in all of our sheltered housing complexes, provided residents with access to e-mail and the internet, and trained residents in how to use them.

Charter Mark

Since the last edition of 'How are we doing?' four of our services have been awarded a Charter Mark for the first time – our social work team in Renfrew, our community safety and neighbourhood wardens service, our internal audit service and the whole of our corporate services department. The Government awards Charter Marks to public services which can show that they provide excellent service for their customers.




A Charter Mark lasts for three years and then each service must show that they have improved their service before their Charter Mark can be renewed. The staff and pupils at Rashielea Primary School were successful in renewing their Charter Mark, as were our housing repair service, our libraries service and our economic development unit.

How well are we performing?













































We aim to be Scotland's top-performing council. Each year we compare our performance with other councils in a number of important areas.

Below is a list of performance indicators (areas of performance where we can make comparisons) that show how we performed in 2004 / 2005 compared to the previous year. We also show how some of the services we provide compare with other councils across Scotland.

The key to the symbols that we use is:

-  We performed better than last year, or we were one of the top 8 performing councils in this area.
-  We have not performed as well as we did in 2003 / 2004, or we are among the bottom 8 performing councils in this area last year.
-  Our performance did not change since the previous year or we were an average performing council for this service.

You can get more details on our performance indicators by contacting the corporate policy unit on 0141 840 3251. You can see the past three years' performance on our website www.renfrewshire.gov.uk.

| How we are doing in the following areas: | Were we better than last year? | Did we perform better or worse than other councils? |
|--|---|---|
| Fixing traffic lights within 48 hours of the problem being reported |  |  |
| Issuing building warrants within six days of receiving applications |  |  |
| How long it took to respond to a request for a completion certificate |  |  |
| Percentage of complaints dealt with within 14 days of the complaint being made |  |  |
| Dealing with complaints about noise within 14 days of the complaint being made |  |  |
| Collecting bulky rubbish within five days of being asked |  |  |
| Carrying out food hygiene inspections on time |  |  |
| Responding to urgent requests for pest control services within five days of being contacted |  |  |
| Running primary schools at 61% to 100% of their pupil capacity |  |  |
| How long it took to meet people's requests for library books |  |  |
| Encouraging people to use our indoor sports facilities such as badminton courts, gym halls and so on |  |  |
| Encouraging people to use our swimming pools |  |  |
| Renting out empty council houses within four weeks of them becoming empty |  |  |
| Completing sales of council houses within 26 weeks of agreeing to the sale |  |  |
| Providing care staff with the necessary qualifications in residential homes for children |  |  |
| Providing home care at weekends to people over the age of 65 who need it |  |  |
| Encouraging people to borrow books from our libraries |  |  |
| Encouraging people to use our learning centres and learning access points such as our libraries |  |  |
| Providing care staff with the necessary qualifications in care homes for elderly people |  |  |
| Percentage of elderly people in residential care homes who have their own room |  |  |
| Collecting Council Tax due for 2004 / 2005 |  |  |
| Correctly working out claims for Housing Benefit |  |  |
| Employing senior staff who are women |  |  |

How are we doing?

Our education and leisure services department provides a wide range of services, from early education for young children to museums and arts for all local residents. Our vision is a 'learning Renfrewshire' which helps people to fulfil their potential and contributes to the economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing of local communities. We are working hard to achieve our vision.

These are some of our goals and how we are working to achieve them.

- **Our children and young people will be well qualified, creative and prepared for adult life.**

Overall, the achievement of our school pupils has been good and sometimes has been very good.

Slightly fewer S4 pupils achieved level 3 standard grade or better in English and maths by the time they left school. Achievement in English went from 95% in 2004 to 94% in 2005. Over the same period, achievement in maths also dropped from 93% to 92%. Despite this, we compare well with similar councils and Scotland as a whole.

The percentage of pupils who achieved five or more level 1 or 2 standard grades or equivalent qualifications by the time they left school has dropped slightly this year. But you can see from the results below that we continue to compare well against our comparable 'family' authorities and authorities across all of Scotland.

Percentage of pupils who, by the end of S6, have gained five or more awards at SCQF level 5 (Standard grade 1 to 2) or better



Renfrewshire



National Average

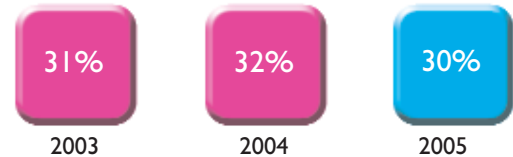


Family Average

The percentage of S4 pupils who achieved three or more Higher grades at A to C by the time they left school did not improve this year, but we did perform better than our family councils.



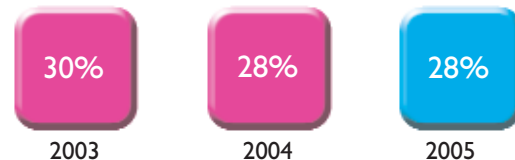
Percentage of the original S4 group who, by the end of S6, have gained three or more awards at SCQF level 6 (Higher grade A to C) or better



Renfrewshire



National Average



Family Average

- **Every child will benefit equally from education, and we will reduce inequalities between communities**

60% of young people in our care achieved SCQF level 3 (Standard grade 1 to 6) or above in English and maths in 2004 / 2005. This has risen significantly from 43% in 2003 / 2004. Our target for 2006 is 61%.

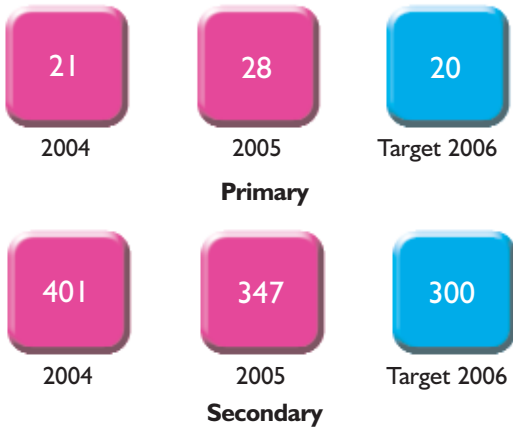
34% of our school leavers went on to higher education, which compares well to the national average of 31%.

We promoted greater choice in subjects at secondary schools by offering more vocational (work-based) education to young people, helping them learn the skills that prepare them for a job. We continued to use the Education for Work and Enterprise (Scottish Executive) initiatives in our schools, which we supported by introducing new ways of working in schools. We have used the Enterprise in Education guidelines to improve vocational education in schools.



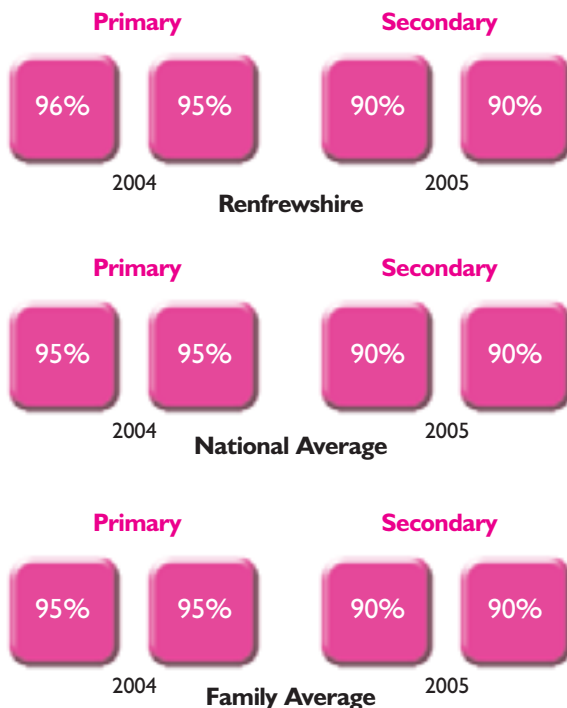
The number of pupils excluded from our secondary schools has continued to fall but in our primary schools there has been a slight increase. We plan to build on the progress that we have made over the past few years to reach our targets for 2006.

Number of days lost for every 1000 pupils because of exclusions



We have worked hard to maintain and improve young people's attendance at school. We have maintained our performance at secondary level but in the primary sector our performance has fallen slightly. Our performance is in line with neighbouring authorities and Scotland as a whole. We have set our 2006 target for attendance in primary schools at 96% and for secondary schools at 91%.

Average pupil attendance 2004-2005



- Our residents will be healthier, more active, and enjoy equal choice and opportunity.

Healthy Lifestyles Team

In response to your feedback, we recently put together a Healthy Lifestyles and Sport Team from other related teams and projects. This will allow us to deliver our services to you in a more coordinated way.

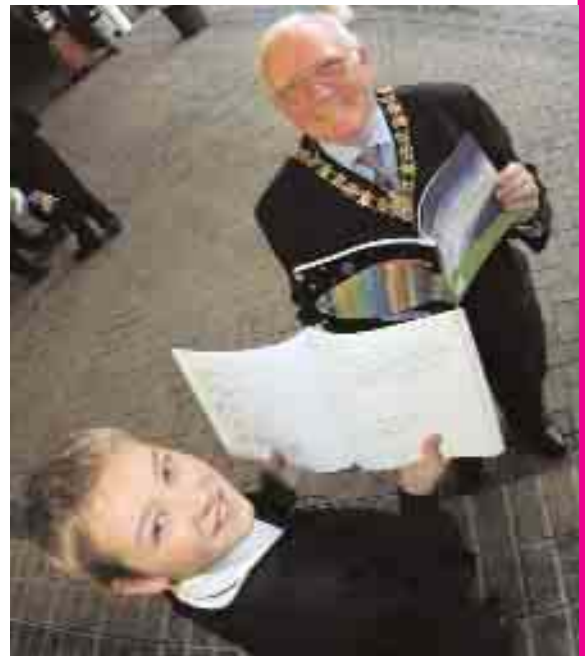
Sport and physical activity programmes

The New Opportunities Physical Education and Sport (NOPES) Team are responsible for two projects, Sports Matters and Sports Network. The Sports Matters project works with 5 to 16-year-olds in Renfrewshire who do not have the opportunity to take part in sport and other activities, and who we have identified as vulnerable. In the last year, young people taking part in the project have gained awards in snowboarding, skiing and kayaking.

The Sports Network project has set up athletics and badminton training centres for young people showing potential in these sports. The young people involved have been given top-class coaching and tuition as part of the project. The NOPES Team has also provided new opportunities for young people who need more support by running multi-sports clubs on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings in Renfrew sports centre, and during the week in all of our special schools.

Out of School Learning

Out of School Learning (OSL) helps children and young people to get extra support in libraries, museums, sports and arts. Children taking part in OSL will be performing 'Superheroes' at the Paisley Arts Centre during Easter 2006. During autumn 2006, look out for OSL's exciting new collection of children's creative writing available in all Renfrewshire libraries. Phone 0141 840 3822 to find out more.





Free fresh fruit

We continue to supply a free piece of fruit three days a week to pupils in primary 1 and primary 2 classes in all primary schools in Renfrewshire, and five days a week to all pupils from primary 1 to primary 7 in the social inclusion partnership areas and in special schools. We now supply free fruit to all of our nursery classes.

Active schools

Each school cluster has an active schools coordinator for primary and secondary schools. This gives all young people access to wide variety of opportunities to do sport and exercise within their own school and in the wider community.

Did you know?

Over 16,000 young people take part in leisure and cultural activities outside of school hours. We plan to increase this by 5% every year.

Renfrewshire School of Sport Education

Renfrewshire School of Sport Education gives senior pupils from our secondary schools an opportunity to develop their coaching skills and gain national qualifications and experience. Each student volunteered to provide coaching in a variety of sports in primary, secondary and special schools, as well as in the local community.



Livingplus

Over 400 people in Renfrewshire are taking part in Livingplus, a programme of activities designed to help them make healthier choices in life. GPs refer people to the programme and people receive a leisure card allowing them to go to courses in Renfrewshire Leisure facilities over 10 weeks for a reduced fee.

Did you know?

On average, each person in Renfrewshire visited our swimming pools more than three times a year. We aim to increase this figure every year.

- **Everyone will have the opportunity to continue learning throughout their life, and fewer people will be unemployed.**

We have taken steps to make sure that local people have more opportunities to use our leisure and cultural services. Our adult literacy and numeracy programme for Renfrewshire attracted 1,100 new adult learners this year, which was above our target of 1,050. There are also 293 local people using our online learning packages available in our libraries.

Our arts service, libraries service and museums service worked in different parts of Renfrewshire to encourage more people to use their services. Libraries have promoted their services on-line, for example, with on-line catalogues to let people know which books are available for lending. There were 976,144 visits to Renfrewshire libraries last year and our target for 2006 is to increase this to over one million visits.

More success for Eco-schools

The eco-schools project allows young people to get involved in managing the environment and sustainable development, balancing social, economic and environmental aims. 84% of Renfrewshire schools are now involved in the eco-schools project.

Each school works through the bronze and silver award schemes before gaining the green flag award:

- 36% of our schools have bronze awards – the national average is 24%
- 12% of our schools have silver awards – the national average is 12%
- 12% of our schools have green flag accreditations – the national average is 7%

Hillview Nursery School recently received its second green flag award, the first partnership nursery in Scotland to achieve this.

Charter Mark

Charter Mark is the Government's award that recognises excellence in public services. Charter Mark lasts for three years, so our services are continuously renewing their Charter Marks. Six of our services recently renewed their Charter Mark standard. These are:

- Libraries
- Museums and Art Galleries
- Trinity High School
- St Fergus' Primary School
- Rashielea Primary School
- Ralston Primary School

Our current programme means that we hope to gain 18 new Charter Marks across the education and leisure service before the end of the school year. This includes 14 of our schools and nurseries and four of our other services.

- **All our services will provide best value, and all customers will be satisfied.**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE, which is the Scottish Executive agency responsible for inspecting schools) and the Care Commission (the organisation which inspects Scottish care services) inspected 14 schools and nurseries last year. 97% of the schools were assessed as 'very good' or 'good' in every area, which was higher than our target for the year.

We have managed to improve our efficiency during the last year when dealing with your invoices and enquiries. We paid 91% of invoices within 30 days of receiving them during the last financial year, which was 4% higher than our target and an improvement on the previous year.

We also sorted out 91% of formal complaints within our timescale of 10 working days and acknowledged 97% of enquiries within three working days.

- **Our staff will feel valued and supported in their work**

We provided over 9,000 places on more than 500 different training courses for teachers and support staff (for example, classroom assistants) to support their development. The number of adults for every child in our schools continued to rise as we employed more classroom assistants.

We hold a Quality Awards ceremony every year where we celebrate how our employees have contributed to the service and the local community. This year we received more than 50 nominations from the public for the six award categories.

- **We will develop our service with our customers and partner organisations.**

We work with 38 private and voluntary sector nursery schools across Renfrewshire. We always welcome your views. Here's what some of you think:

'The service promotes a very positive image of Renfrewshire Council.'

'You provide an excellent nursery service'.

'You give all-round care to each child and its family.'

Most of our out-of-school care places are provided by voluntary or private-sector partners. There are currently 1,405 out-of-school care places. We aim to increase this to 1,445 places by the end of 2006.

We run our adult learners programme in partnership with Reid Kerr College. There are 116 classes available, including:

- Information & Communications Technology (ICT)
- Parenting
- Assertiveness
- Parents as Educators
- Communications

We hope that you will be able to assess our performance from 'How are we doing?' and other articles in this issue of Renfrewshire magazine. We aim to give you a balanced picture of what's going on in education and leisure services. If you think we have missed anything, or you would like more information, please phone us on 0141 842 5663 or e-mail us at els@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

How are
we doing?

