

To: EDUCATION (RESOURCES) SUB COMMITTEE	Subject: EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE 2004-2005, PERFORMANCE REVIEW
From: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION	
Date: 11 February 2005	Ref: MM//JL

Purpose of Report

This report reviews the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme for the period August to January 2005.

Recommendations

The education (resources) sub committee is recommended:

- (a) to note the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme
- (b) to request the submission of regular performance review reports to future meetings of the sub committee.



Members wishing further information about this report should contact:

Michael O'Neill, Director of Education, on 01236 812337 or
Murdo MacIver, Head of Service, on 01236 812269

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report by the Director of Education

1. Background

1.1 The phased national rollout of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) commenced in August 2004. In session 2004-2005 only those students born between 1 March 1988 and 28 February 1989 and who are in S4 or S5 are eligible to apply for an EMA

1.2 EMA is assessed on gross household income, on the following basis.

Table 1 – Income Bands & Weekly Payments

Gross Household Income	Amount of the EMA weekly payment
0 to £19,630	£30
£19,631 to £24,030	£20
£24,031 to £30,000	£10
Over £30,000	0

1.3 Students may also be entitled to receive 1 or 2 bonus payments of £150, dependant on when their eligibility for EMA support began. Bonuses will be paid provided that the students meet the terms set down in their Learning Agreement relating to progress, attainment and attendance.

1.4 To date, 1052 applications have been received. Although the EMA scheme is not yet fully implemented this is 122 applications greater than the total number of Higher School Bursary applications received in session 2003-2004. This increase was anticipated due to the higher income threshold at which EMA is paid.

1.5 A number of the applications received have been refused or cancelled. 2 applications have been refused because the students were not resident in the United Kingdom for the 3 years preceding the application. This is a Scottish Executive requirement. 27 applications have been cancelled because the students have left school or have indicated that they no longer wish to be considered for support. 6 applications have been refused because they are not eligible for an EMA payment on the age criteria.

1.6 Of the remaining 1017 applications, 823 letters of award have been processed. The results are detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2 – Awards Processed

Award	No award	£30 per week	£20 per week	£10 per week
No of students	11	594	86	132

1.7 A further 194 applications are yet to be processed because the students have not provided all of the necessary documentation.

2. Payments 2004 –2005

2.1 To date, a total of £363,130 has been paid to eligible EMA applicants.

2.2 Based on the current number of eligible applications, (and assuming that all students attain the 100% attendance requirement in each school week), the estimated expenditure on EMA weekly payments in the current financial year is £654,120. The estimated expenditure on bonus payments in the current financial year is £101,850 (assuming that all students adhere to their learning agreements relating to progress, attainment and attendance).

Table 3 shows a breakdown of projected expenditure at each weekly payment level and for full-year and 2-term applications.

Table 3 – Projected expenditure

Payment period	£30 per week	£20 per week	£10 per week
Full year (30 weeks)	527 = £474,300	71 = £42,600	81 = £24,300
2- term (12 weeks)	270 = £97,200	42 = £10,080	47 = £5,640
Total	£571,500	£52,680	£29,940

Attendance

3.1 In accordance with Scottish Executive guidelines, students must attain 100% attendance in any week in order to receive payment for that week. Absences due to illness will be taken into account when calculating attendance provided that the student submits a medical certificate or self-certification form to the school

3.2 Schools have responsibility for monitoring the attendance of EMA students. Provided the school is satisfied that the students have attained 100% attendance each week, payment of the award for that week will be authorised by the school using the EMA module in the SEEMIS registration system.

3.3 In order to establish the extent to which students have met the EMA requirements a sample survey was conducted.

Table 4 quantifies payments withheld from pupils at five selected schools. Table 5 gives a breakdown of why these payments were withheld. A total of 128 pupils in these schools have been awarded an EMA.

Table 4 – Number of payments withheld

No of weeks withheld	Pupils affected		Payments withheld			Total
	No	%	£10	£20	£30	
1	13	10	0	1	12	£380
2	10	8	1	1	8	£540
3	3	2	0	0	3	£270
7	2	1	0	0	2	£420
	28	22%	1	2	25	£1610

Table 5 – Reason payments withheld

No of weeks withheld	Attendance under 100%	Timekeeping	Exclusion
1	12	1	
2	9		1
3	2	1	
7	2		

4. **Recommendations**

The education (resources) sub committee is recommended to:

- (a) note the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme
- (b) request the submission of regular performance review reports to future meetings of the sub committee.