



SCOTTISH COUNCIL of INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (SCIS)

PRESS STATEMENT : 11 December 2006

OSCR Rolling Review : pilot programme announced

As OSCR prepares to begin its programme of pilot reviews, SCIS continues to take the view that independent schools are well-placed to comply with the test of charitable status under the new Charities legislation.

The position with independent schools is that:

- all schools meet the charitable purpose of 'the advancement of education'
- independent schools are deeply committed to the advancement of education
- schools have a long tradition of charitable giving and of service to the community
- it is legitimate for a charity to charge fees, provided that the level of fees can be justified
- no school, or individual in a school, makes a personal gain or profit; any surplus that is made is for the sole benefit of the school
- education in the independent sector is accessible to a wide range of families (e.g. to those who make sacrifices, to parents who are both working, to single parents etc), the teaching expertise is widely shared (e.g. through student teacher placements, probationers, markers, writers etc) and the facilities are widely shared with the local community, voluntary groups and national organisations
- widened access is provided in terms of scholarships and bursaries; independent schools educate pupils from a broad spectrum of social and economic backgrounds and continue to work towards increasing the funding support available

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The Director of SCIS, Judith Sischy, says:

"Independent schools are a positive benefit to Scottish education. They offer parents a choice, provide a high standard of education, enrich their local communities and make a significant contribution to the education system in Scotland, attracting pupils from a wide range of social backgrounds.

As a sector we educate over 31,000 pupils, which saves the public purse an estimated £155 million a year. Add to this the funds distributed in scholarships and bursaries (est £12.5 million a year) and the independent sector actually saves the country over 35 times as much as it receives in financial benefits (est at £4.5 million a year).

The schools also have a commitment to serve their local communities and their country. They foster a keen sense of citizenship and encourage voluntary activities from the earliest age. They make a sizeable commitment to the education, economy and social fabric of Scotland. "

11 December 2006

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