

12 September 2008

**Educational**

Sir, – West Lothian Council's annual report, recently delivered to every household, makes interesting reading.

Its first five pages are devoted to education with tables showing attainment levels of pupils in the 5-14 age group, at standard grade and at higher grades; improving pre-school and primary education; promoting community learning, health, physical activity and participation in sport; and delivering cultural entitlement. All this has cost the council £158m on revenue expenditure and £19m on capital items. How lucky our young folk are.

It makes me weep to think of the 73 million young people around the world who do not get any schooling and of the 37 million of these unlucky enough to live in a conflict zone.

It may seem reasonable from a cold, remote, logical viewpoint to go along with the UK government's policy of directing just 16 per cent of its education aid to war-torn countries despite the numbers suggesting it should be over 50 per cent. But education is a basic human right and some way must be found for those unfortunate 37 million to get their fair share. Without education, conflict will continue and those affected will remain in abject poverty.

I am glad to see that council plans for next year, in the education section, include “sustaining other international links.” Think locally (and count our blessings), act globally.

– Yours etc.,

**William Ross**

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