

Respondee information form

Please complete the details below and attach it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately:

Name: Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in children's Learning

Address: 40 Roma Cheyne 12 MacTaggart Road, Cumbernauld G67 1JL

Title of consultation: **MAKING THE DIFFERENCE - INVOLVING PARENTS BETTER IN SCHOOLS**

1. Are you responding as:

- an individual?
- on behalf of a group or organisation?

2a. INDIVIDUALS:

Do you agree to your response being made public (in SE library and/or on SE website)?

- Yes
- No

2b. **Where confidentiality is not requested**, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (**please tick one** of the following boxes)

- Yes, make my response, name and address all available
- Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address
- Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

2c. ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

Your name and address as respondees **will be** made available to the public (in the SE library and/or on SE website). Are you content for your response to be made available also?

- Yes
- No

3. SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

We will share your response internally with other SE policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

- Yes
- No

Scottish Network for Parental Involvement
in Children's Learning



*Scottish Network for Parental Involvement
in
Children's Learning*

SUBMISSION

on

**Making the Difference
Improving Parental Involvement
in Schools**

3rd June 2005

For Further Information contact
 Maureen Beath, Secretary - 01592 414633
 Rona Cheyne, Convener -
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Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children’s Learning



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children’s Learning (SNPICL) is a national organisation of profession staff involved in working with parents in support of their children’s learning.

1.2 SNPICL represents a wide range of views and professional experience in working with parents. Our membership is drawn from local authorities, the voluntary sector and other interested national bodies throughout Scotland.

1.3 The work of our members, especially in areas of deprivation, focuses on enabling and empowering parents to engage in their children’s learning experiences in school and in the wider community.

1.4 The SNPICL believes that the opportunity for involvement of all parents is important if we want to impact on the learning and behaviour of young people at home, at school and in the community.

1.5 For many parents their own negative experiences at school are a major barrier to their involvement in the life of the schools.

2. OUR VIEWS

While SNPICL welcomes the draft **SCOTTISH SCHOOLS (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) BILL** as

- ❖ *an indication of the Scottish Executive’s desire to listen and hear the views of parents throughout Scotland and*
- ❖ *an indication that the Scottish Executive is sincere in its desire to involve parents in their children’s school education who have previously not shown an interest or felt unable to participate,*

we submit that the Draft Bill be considered as a basis for a wide and frank discussion about the role of parents in schools and **not a document ready for legislation.**

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

3. PRESENT POSITION (4)

3.1 School Boards may not be inclusive to all parents and excludes parents due to the legal formality required to be a member.
SNPICL has doubts that Parent Forums, as laid down in the draft Bill, will be more effective in representing all parents.

3.2 School Boards have power and credibility within councils but SNPICL is not convinced Parent Forums will have the same credibility and power. The powers of the Parents Forum are not sufficiently delineated within the draft Bill.

3.3 School boards include Head Teachers so there is a formal mechanism for bringing staff and parents together.
The head teacher's role on Parents Forum should not be optional. **(13)**

3.4 School boards provide links to Local Authority decision making processes through **local councillors** involvement.
There are no clear pathways or structures to link the parent forums to the local authority within the draft Bill. **(13)**

3.5 Community representatives make an invaluable contribution to the school boards. The Community needs to be represented on Parent Forums especially in rural and isolated areas. Collaborative working is considered to be the most effective.

3.6 An example of a **successful flexible system** within the present structure is different types of constituted parent groups who work with school boards and/or other community partners. (eg. in Clackmannanshire)

4. GENERAL COMMENTS

4.1 SNPICL finds the **language** of the Bill is woolly and not clearly articulated (see 7d1)

4.2 Increased flexibility may encourage more parents to be involved. **(4)**

4.3 Increased flexibility may incur the loss of the "management" role of school boards **(4)**

4.4 Increased flexibility may lead to the loss of parents who are prepared to be involved at representative level (eg school board personnel, PTA) at the moment without increasing the parental involvement of the Parents traditionally not involved.**(3.2) (4)**

4.5 SNPICL supports the view that the Parent Forum should report the views of parents in the school on any matters which are of interest or concern to them. (15)

(0)= SNPICL Submission References (()) = draft Bill References
(()) = Draft Bill Questions from internet

5.0 SUPPORT & FUNCTION of PARENTS’ FORUMS (as in Draft Bill)

5.1 The SNPICL supports the view that without the infrastructures in place, to support workers, teachers and head teachers to engage with parents, the forums will not truly reflect the schools community and be effective.

5.2 Parental Involvement and Parental Representation are presently merged and confused within the draft Bill. Both require different strategies and resources to be implemented effectively. (3.1 & Discussion paper Scottish Consumer Council)

5.3 SNPICL suggests that a model constitution developed nationally for parent forums would be more effective than each education authority providing their own. There are concerns within the Network that quality of support will be compromised if wide diversity of models develops. (3.4)

5.4 SNPICL believes that Parent forums will require professional support especially in areas of deprivation to fulfil the functions as laid down in the Draft Bill. (7)

5.5 SNPICL believes Time, Resources and Financial Commitment are required to build skills, through community engagement, for Parental Involvement, a function outlined in the Bill. (7)

5.6 SNPICL believes Parent Forums require local and national representation, not evident within the draft Bill. Possible links are suggested in Appendix A.

5.7 SNPICL believes a National Monitoring System is required (see Appendix A2)

5.8 SNPICL believes Accommodation for Parent Forums must be provided (parent rooms, community lounge, crèche facilities etc. important in any new builds)

5.9 SNPICL believes there are Resource implications, especially in the functions concerning parental involvement, which have not been clearly addressed in the draft Bill.

6.0 MEMBERSHIP OF PARENTS FORUM (10)

6.1 SNPICL believes “Parent” should include a child’s significant adult i.e carer, social worker, foster carer

6.2 SNPICL believes Parents Forum should include all parents, inclusively.

6.3 SNPICL believes Parents should be in the majority

6.4 SNPICL believes there is a need for community involvement in the parent forums issues regarding rural and isolated communities would indicate that all in the Community should be Included. (3.5 & Appendix A)

6.5 SNPICL believes Head teachers should be involved in the Parents Forum. (13)

(0)= SNPICL Submission References (()) = draft Bill References
(()) = Draft Bill Questions from internet

Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children's Learning



7. CONCLUSION

The Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children's Learning identified several possible **models** during our discussions which could be further debated.

MODEL EXAMPLES

7.1 School Boards continue and develop in partnership with other parent groups and community partners as in Clackmannanshire. (3.6)

7.2 Parents Forums develop based loosely on the Draft Bill model but with

- **consideration of the points raised in sections 3, 4 & 6 of this paper**
- **added powers and resources (5.1 – 5.9)**
- **with structures in place both locally and nationally (Appendix A1 & 2)**
- **with the inclusion of a national monitoring system. (Appendix A2)**

7.3 Parent Forums established as independent and representative of all parents, recruited from outside as well as within the school system. (Possible model see discussion paper Scottish Consumer Council)

The Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children's Learning welcomes the opportunity to submit this paper as our contribution to the debate on the draft **SCOTTISH SCHOOLS (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) BILL**.

The Scottish Network for Parental Involvement in Children's Learning believes more debate is necessary before any legislative change is made.

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SUBMISSION

Appendix A

3rd June 2005

For Further Information contact

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Rona Cheyne, Convener -

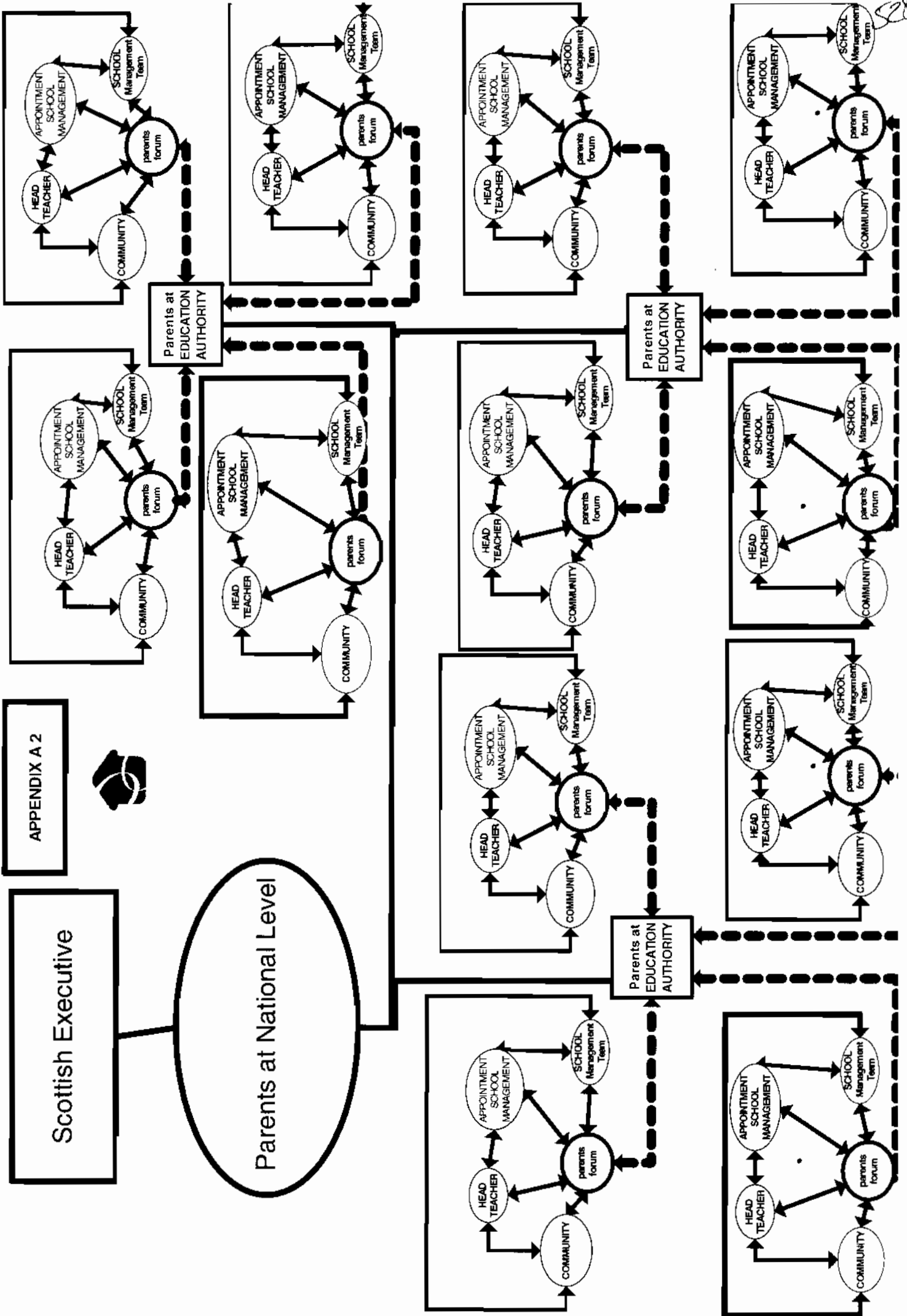
r.cheyne@blueyonder.co.uk

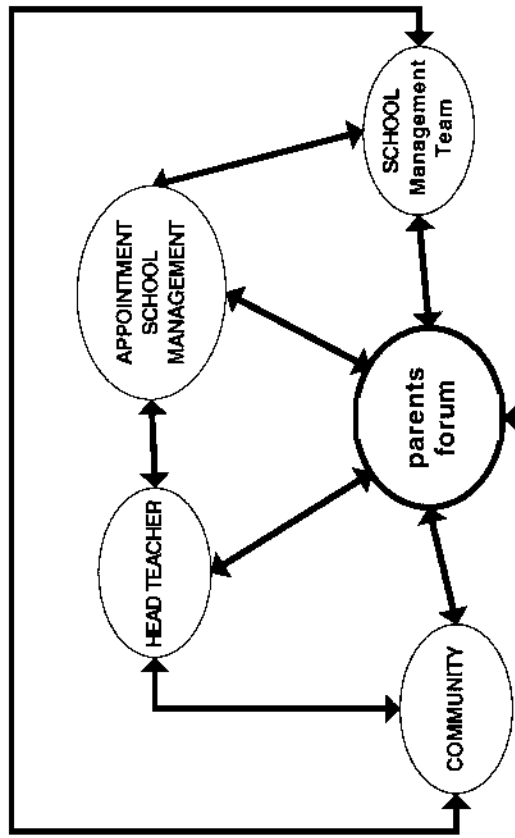
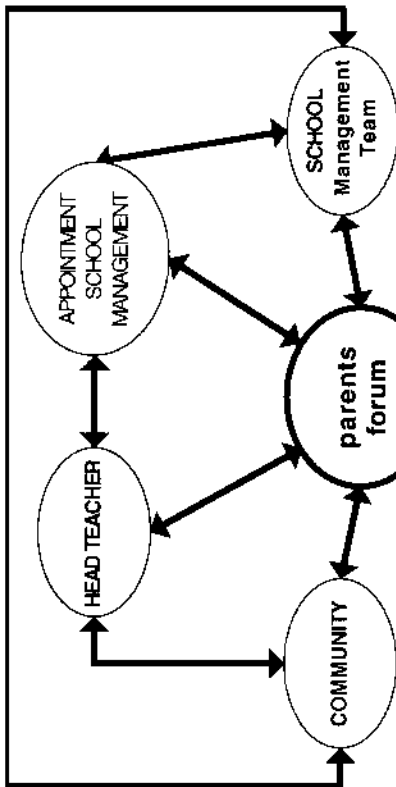
APPENDIX A 2



Scottish Executive

Parents at National Level





APPENDIX A1

Parents at EDUCATION AUTHORITY

