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PUPIL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL AFFAIRS

by

EDWARD G. ARCHER M.A., M.Ed.

Submitted in candidacy for the degree of Master of Letters.

Department of Education : Faculty of Social Sciences  
University of Glasgow, March 1982

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
CONTENTS .. .. .	(i)-(iv)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .. .. .	(v)
PREFACE : A CAUTIONARY NOTE .. .. .	(vi)
SUMMARY .. .. .	(vii)-(viii)
1. INTRODUCTION .. .. .	
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH .. .. .	1
1.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD .. .. .	2
1.21 Purposes .. .. .	2
1.22 Methodology .. .. .	3
2. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION .. .. .	6
2.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	7
2.2 EDUCATIONAL THEORY .. .. .	7
2.3 POLICY .. .. .	8
2.4 THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE .. .. .	10
2.5 INVOLVEMENT .. .. .	11
2.6 AN AUTHORITY-BASED MODEL .. .. .	15
2.7 A DEMOCRATIC MODEL .. .. .	15
2.8 A TRAINING MODEL .. .. .	17
3. THE CONTEXT OF SCOTTISH EDUCATION .. .. .	19
4. SCHOOL INVESTIGATIONS .. .. .	27
4.1 CHOOSING THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS .. .. .	28
4.2 DISCUSSIONS WITH HEADTEACHERS .. .. .	29
4.3 DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER KEY PERSONNEL .. .. .	30
4.4 OBSERVATIONS OF COUNCIL MEETINGS .. .. .	30
4.5 STUDY OF DOCUMENTS .. .. .	31
4.6 WRITE-UP OF PUPIL COUNCIL ACTIVITIES .. .. .	31
4.7 EXTENT OF CONTACT .. .. .	31

	<u>PAGE</u>
4A. CASE STUDY SCHOOL A : AIRTH SCHOOL .. .. .	33
4A.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	34
4A.2 THE HEADTEACHER .. .. .	36
4A.3 MANAGEMENT POLICY .. .. .	37
4A.4 THE PUPIL SCHOOL COUNCILS .. .. .	38
(i) Origins .. .. .	38
(ii) Strategy for Implementation .. .. .	39
(iii) Form of Organisation .. .. .	39
4A.5 S1 YEAR COUNCIL .. .. .	40
4A.6 SECOND YEAR COUNCIL .. .. .	46
4A.7 THIRD YEAR COUNCIL .. .. .	50
4A.8 S4 AND S5/6 COUNCILS .. .. .	54
4A.9 THE FULL SCHOOL COUNCIL .. .. .	55
4A.10 INTERVIEW SCRIPT .. .. .	58
4B. CASE STUDY SCHOOL B : BRAE SCHOOL .. .. .	64
4B.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	65
4B.2 MANAGEMENT STYLE AND STRUCTURE .. .. .	66
4B.3 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUPIL COUNCIL .. .. .	68
4B.4 THE S2 AND S4 YEAR COUNCILS .. .. .	70
4B.5 THE PUPIL SCHOOL COUNCIL .. .. .	72
4B.6 ELECTIONS .. .. .	73
4B.7 THE UPPER SCHOOL COUNCIL (S5/6) .. .. .	76
4B.8 TELERECORDED INTERVIEW .. .. .	79
4B.9 LATER DEVELOPMENTS .. .. .	89
4C. CASE STUDY SCHOOL C : CROSS SCHOOL .. .. .	91
4C.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	92
4C.2 MANAGEMENT STYLE .. .. .	93
4C.3 ORIGIN OF PUPIL INVOLVEMENT .. .. .	93
4C.4 FORUMS .. .. .	94
4C.5 EARLY IMPRESSIONS .. .. .	94
4C.6 S1 FORUM .. .. .	95
4C.7 S2 FORUM .. .. .	97
4C.8 S3 FORUM .. .. .	98
4C.9 S4 AND S5 AND UPPER SCHOOL FORUMS .. .. .	100
4C.10 MINUTES OF S5 FORUM MEETING .. .. .	103
4C.11 A CHANGE OF DIRECTION .. .. .	105

	<u>PAGE</u>
4C.12 UPPER SCHOOL FORUM MEETINGS .. .. .	106
4C.13 STAFF AND PUPIL IMPRESSIONS .. .. .	108
4D. CASE STUDY SCHOOL D : DUKE HIGH SCHOOL .. .. .	112
4D.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	113
4D.2 MANAGEMENT .. .. .	114
4D.3 PUPIL COUNCIL DECISION .. .. .	114
4D.4 OBJECTIONS OF ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER (GUIDANCE)	116
4D.5 THE FILE RE-OPENED .. .. .	117
4D.6 INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL TEACHER OF CHEMISTRY ..	118
4E. CASE STUDY SCHOOL E : EAST SCHOOL .. .. .	123
4E.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	124
4E.2 MANAGEMENT .. .. .	125
4E.3 MATTERS DISCUSSED IN COUNCIL .. .. .	126
4E.4 PUPIL COUNCIL MEETINGS .. .. .	129
4E.5 COMMENTS .. .. .	132
4E.6 THE NEW HEADTEACHER .. .. .	133
4F. DISCUSSION OF CASE STUDY DATA .. .. .	135
5. MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES : MAKING PUPIL COUNCILS WORK .. ..	
CONTENTS .. .. .	141
5.1 BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE IDEA .. .. .	142
5.2 PUTTING THE IDEA FORWARD .. .. .	147
5.3 ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES .. .. .	150
5.4 ATTENTION TO DETAIL .. .. .	155
5.5 PUPIL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE .. .. .	159
5.6 ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS .. .. .	165
5.7 MEASURES OF SUCCESS .. .. .	170
6. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION .. .. .	174
6.1 INTRODUCTION .. .. .	175
6.2 RESEARCH STRATEGIES .. .. .	175
6.3 METHOD : CASE STUDY .. .. .	176
6.4 PUPIL INVOLVEMENT .. .. .	176
6.41 Traditional Prefect Systems .. .. .	176
6.42 Modified Prefect Systems .. .. .	181
6.43 Pupil Councils .. .. .	182

	<u>PAGE</u>
6.44 Management Guidelines .. .. .	184
6.45 Justifying Pupil Councils .. .. .	185
6.5 MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES .. .. .	186
6.6 FURTHER RESEARCH .. .. .	191
APPENDICES .. .. .	194
APPENDIX A LETTER TO HEADTEACHERS .. .. .	195
APPENDIX B LETTER TO HEADS OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS .. .. .	196
APPENDIX C PREFECTS: EXAMPLE ONE .. .. .	197
APPENDIX D PREFECTS: EXAMPLE TWO .. .. .	200
APPENDIX E PREFECTS: EXAMPLE THREE .. .. .	203
APPENDIX F PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE ONE .. .. .	205
APPENDIX G PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE TWO .. .. .	209
APPENDIX H PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE THREE .. .. .	210
APPENDIX J PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE FOUR .. .. .	212
APPENDIX K HEADTEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE .. .. .	215
APPENDIX L ANALYSIS OF ISSUES RAISED .. .. .	217
APPENDIX M PREFECTS: A PUPIL'S VIEW .. .. .	219
APPENDIX N SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION .. .. .	225
APPENDIX P THE GORDONSTOUN DOCUMENT .. .. .	229
BIBLIOGRAPHY .. .. .	232
NOTE ON ACCOMPANYING VIDEOTAPE .. .. .	235



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This enquiry would not have been possible without their help, nor without the help of many other Headteachers, staff and pupils in over 300 schools.

Even the Headteacher, whose opinions and cautionary remarks are expressed forcibly in the letter which follows, was not unhelpful.

Dear Mr. Archer,

I have your circular of June 1979 on the subject of "pupil-involvement in school" - an odd way of putting things, if I may say so! But I know what you mean.

I am enclosing a copy of the School Handbook - from which you will see that the has not changed since last I wrote you.

We have no "pupil council" in the school - frankly, I don't think we need one. is a route for opinion and suggestion to find its way to me : and, although I am wrong so in the things I decide, I am not wrong nearly as often as democracy is. And if you think arrogant, compare it with the record of some of our better-known democrats!!

We have prefects - chosen, not elected - whose remit is "service before self" - they work like beavers. Nobody hates them - and they make the wheels of the school go round. One day, I might think a pupil council could do it better - but I'll be an armchair theorist then, with nothing better to do than think up ideas to keep myself in a cushy job.

Sorry Ted - but I think its time the folk with the fancy ideas got into schools stay - and tried to make them work.

Yours sincerely,

P.S. This is not a confidential letter!!

school management. A survey approach is seen as impractical and inappropriate and an approach based on the study of selected cases is preferred.

The theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 refers to key concepts relating to pupil-centred education and to the notions of involvement and participation. Three models of pupil involvement are postulated, one being authority-based, the second rights-based and termed a 'democratic model', the third being needs-based and termed a 'training model'. These models are intended to help clarify some of the complexities of the situation, and they also provide a framework for the examination of practice in schools.

The extensive enquiries into practice in five selected schools where there are pupil councils are reported in detail in Chapter 3. The different origins, structures and procedures are identified and compared. Particular attention is paid to Headteacher roles, and to the roles of other staff in key positions, in trying to throw light on the nature of pupil involvement. The situations in these schools are examined in as much detail as possible in order to provide the basis for a set of guidelines for staff and pupils interested in establishing or improving pupil council arrangements. Material gathered from many other schools also provides content for the guidelines; these are set out in the seven sections which form Chapter 4.

The concluding discussion in Chapter 5 argues that the research has been successful in achieving its main purpose, that of generating a set of guidelines for those who are concerned in the

management of pupil involvement. It is further argued that traditional forms of involvement through prefect systems where they survive are not in tune with the present 'climate of thought'. Pupil councils, displaying something of both a 'training' and a 'democratic' model, are represented as essential to secondary schools today. The enquiry ends as it began, with a discussion of management in terms of the light which examples of pupil involvement might throw on management theory and practice.

Additional data and documentation are located in the appendices. There is also a bibliography of key works consulted during the enquiry.

Videotaped examples of several pupil councils in session in two schools, with a studio interview of one Headteacher and two pupil councillors, accompany this thesis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

The research was prompted by three interconnected sets of considerations, one autobiographical, the second ideological, the third, and most important, deriving from previous investigations.

The first relates to a long-standing personal and career interest, initially in organisations generally, later in school organisation in particular, and later still in the training of the organisers, namely the heads of educational institutions. During recent years, under the influence of new thinking, this has developed into an interest in the theory and practice of educational management and training.

The second springs from an awareness of the impact of progressive ideology, challenging the traditional view of knowledge, of the teaching/learning process itself, and of the school as an organisation. Progressive ideology rejects traditional structures and attacks hierarchy. 'It has been argued', writes Easthope (1975), 'that the school is characterised by hierarchies which are interlocked to form a 'hierarchical community' and that there are ideologies based on equity and ideologies based on egalitarianism which attack such a hierarchical conception of education'. How necessary and how viable are the proposed 'open' structures which, says Easthope, '. . . unlike bureaucracies, are in accord with the anti-hierarchical theme prevalent in society'?

The third embraces and extends the first two. Earlier research enquiries\* into the organisation of schools had led to further questions, questions which had to be re-stated later in terms appropriate to the 'new enlightenment', educational management. The view was abroad that schools needed managers and it was held that there was a dearth of

---

\* *M.Ed Thesis (1968)*

of these good managers in our schools, perhaps because of the authoritarian ethos of Scottish education.

Where there were by reputation\* good manager-headteachers, what singled them out? A number of features were suggested by the author's extensive experience and by analyses of good practice, two being prominent: firstly, there was structure, often complex, with procedures for policy-making, policy-implementation and feedback, in contrast to other situations known to the author where head and depute kept everything to themselves, muddling through at a low level of expertise, leaving others to do likewise in their departments and classrooms: secondly, the structure that had been established entailed a substantial degree of involvement and participation at various levels, from top management to probationer, sometimes including machinery to involve parents and even pupils, the last in the eyes of some being the ultimate challenge to the basic principles upon which the educational system has been built.

Thus, an enquiry into arrangements for involving pupils seemed worthwhile in itself. Furthermore, it might provide a window on the larger management scene in schools and on that trend towards participation which has been widely reported and advocated.

## 1.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

### 1.21 Purposes

The research plan entailed four things:-

- (i) to survey the ideas in the literature in order to identify and elucidate the main concepts, all relating to staff/pupil/parent participation, especially pupil participation, in school affairs.
- (ii) to conduct case studies, in as much detail as possible, of a selected number of different school situations where developments in pupil involvement were believed to have occurred.

\* These were headteachers who earned favourable comment from employers, the Inspectorate and the colleges. These were the heads who were usually invited to address courses and conferences.

- (iii) to gather illustrative materials and practical examples from other Scottish secondary schools where forms of pupil involvement existed.
- (iv) to develop a set of Guidelines for school management entitled, "Making Pupil Involvement Work".

## 1.22 Methodology

An approach employing survey methods was rejected as impractical and inappropriate. Clearly, there would be interest in the quantitative; in knowing what Scottish secondary Heads thought about pupil involvement in school affairs; in knowing how many schools had prefect systems or pupil councils or both, and in determining if there was evidence of a shift from one towards the other. However, limitations of resources made the construction and administration of a questionnaire extremely difficult. In any case the purpose of the enquiry was not in the first instance descriptive being rather more concerned with establishing sets of management guidelines through an analysis of practice. Attempts to 'discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables' (Cohen & Mannion 1981), or any hypothesis-testing, perhaps deriving from this project, would be for another occasion.

Since the main purpose was to build up a picture of a particular area of school life, an approach which relied upon case study - '. . . a systematic investigation of a specific instance . . .' (Nisbet & Watt 1978) - was seen as appropriate for a number of reasons:- Firstly, it suited the researcher working alone, when a questionnaire or other survey approach could demand more in time and resources than was likely to be available. To employ most of the time and means in trying to portray a small number of school situations seemed to be a sensible course of action.



Secondly, the case study had begun to receive a degree of recognition and some academic respectability. A major influence had come from those evaluation studies which pointed to the limitations of the traditional agricultural-botanical model and its reliance upon numerical results. An alternative approach, illuminative evaluation\*, stressed the importance of particular school situations: "Its concern is with description and interpretation rather than measurement and prediction. It stands unambiguously within the alternative anthropological paradigm". (Parlett and Hamilton 1972). Such a view, clearly implied a case study approach and the full and careful examination of the single instance, through observations, interviews and the study of documentation.

Thirdly, such an approach was receiving growing support from researchers working in the field of educational management who espoused a phenomenological viewpoint. Among the most influential was T. Barr Greenfield who acknowledged the Weberian position which "leads to the particularistic, the concrete, and the experience-based study of organisations. Durkheim's path leads to the aseptic study of organizations, Weber's to one which smells of reality . . . Phenomenologically based research . . . aims at dealing with the direct experience of people in specific situations. Therefore, the case study and comparative and historical methods become the preferred means of analysis". (Greenfield 1975, p.67)

Fourthly, the case study provided the natural setting of the whole-unit which the development of management guidelines seemed to require. Such an approach would enable the researcher to get the feel of situations, to note the fine details in context, to record the perceptions of those who were involved, to identify perceived problems and difficulties, even to get involved himself by pursuing something of a participant role. All these matters

\* While making full use of the case study, this enquiry does not claim to be an example of 'illuminative evaluation'.

could help give credibility to a handbook of suggestions.  
or to a management resource book.

Finally, because of the practical nature of the enquiry, aimed at providing something that would be useful to schools, it was decided to supplement the material from the case study schools by gathering examples of policy and practice from other secondary schools, in both the state and private sectors. It was decided to send letters (see Appendix A page 195 with Directors of Education's permission when necessary, to all secondary schools in Scotland asking for documentation and comment.

2. THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Pupil-involvement and the establishment of machinery such as the Pupil School Council or Forum constitute relatively new developments in Scottish schools. These developments are to be understood in a context which may be seen to have three main and interrelated elements.

The first element reflects the ideas and the theory. At different times in the history of education different ideas seem to exert an influence. Although the manner and the extent of the impact of ideas may not be easily apprehended, it ought not to be ignored.

The second element, often drawing on the first, but not necessarily determined by it, is that of 'official' or government policy regarding educational provision. It concerns the pattern of schools and schooling. The third element, in important ways linked to the first two, is that of school management making and taking decisions, and planning and co-ordinating programmes of instruction. Thus the creation of a Pupil Council may be seen as a management response to current ideas and policy. We may now look at the three elements in more detail.

## 2.2 EDUCATIONAL THEORY

If the existence of a Pupil Council means that pupils are to have a genuine voice in school affairs, then an appropriate theoretical model will be a child-centred one.

It may be said that the child-centred or progressive educational theory upon which this model is based makes various value-judgements relating to the essential dimensions of education, namely about educational aims, about curriculum content, about organisation, about roles and about methods.

Thus, the educational aims which are preferred emphasise worth and the full growth of the individual person. With respect to curriculum content, this is seen as being determined by

individual pupil needs and interests, in contrast to a knowledge-based or school subject-centred view. As regards organisation, this is viewed largely in terms of self-directed learning rather than in terms of teacher-directed class activities. As for pupil roles, these are to be active and determining, while teacher roles are to be non-directive and facilitating, unlike those of the traditional teacher at the blackboard. In the case of methods, these should favour activity and discovery learning, not the passive acceptance of knowledge dispensed by the teacher.

From this analysis it is clear that a central concept in the theory is that of 'freedom'. While not always clearly defined, this seems to imply that the pupil should be free from external control and direction as early and as fully as possible. The argument so far is largely psychological and based upon assumptions about the human animal, about 'human nature'; man needs to be free. Only in an atmosphere of freedom can the 'noble savage' develop in a true fashion; the social contract is entered-into reluctantly.

As we have seen, in educational terms the implication is that the emphasis will be on the individual and on activity which encourages self-expression. Only in this way will the human person grow, unrepressed and without distortion. Closely allied to this notion is that of pupil-choice: if pupils are free, then they are free to choose, free to choose what to learn and when. A further proposition which emerges is that curriculum is to be thought of in terms of process rather than product.

Such freedom, of course, would mean freedom from control and direction by others. But schools, traditionally, are institutions where pupils are controlled by 'the sovereign head' (Easthope, 1975), and his staff, Scottish schools no less than others (see Richmond, 1971). Any change would strike at these deep traditional roots.

### 2.3 POLICY

If it true to say that there have been shifts in the climate of thought in favour of a pupil-centred educational theory, these

are not to be explained solely in terms of the development of ideas; the ideas have existed for a long time. The new factor is that the policy-makers have, to some extent, taken up these ideas in the formulation of policies for action and change.

The secondary school, in the public sector particularly, has changed, and in ways which may be said to reflect or to permit a 'progressive' educational theory. At the very least the changes make possible the emergence of schooling in accordance with a pupil-centred model, although it would be wrong to say that substantial change in that direction has occurred, or that change is always consistent with that model.

Thus, in the secondary comprehensive school, where the common course and mixed-ability teaching are advocated, there is an emphasis on pupil-choice of curriculum rather than on external prediction of 'success' and allocation to schools and courses. Today's different aims and objectives may be entertained, content being construed in terms of the process rather than product of learning. Organisational arrangements may differ from what went before, pupils forming unstreamed groups, teachers operating in teams representing various subject specialisms thus reducing the traditional autonomy of departments and their heads. Roles and relationships may also be different, the extreme being represented by schools where curriculum is the subject of negotiation between the student and the teacher who is more a guide and counsellor, less an instructor. In such situations there are also implications for methodology and the focus is on the individual student being more responsible for his/her own learning and, in keeping with this view, assessment favours the internal (rather than the external), even incorporating a good amount of self-assessment.

The opportunity, therefore, to take up a more child-orientated position is available to secondary schools; indeed, there is something of an invitation to do so. Yet it would be a distortion of the truth if it were held that the only influences have been in that direction. Some influences are clearly knowledge-based, when the comprehensive school is seen in terms of eliminating or reducing 'wastage of ability' in the interests

of improved academic achievement overall. And there is a third set of influences which prefers neither of these: this is society-based and egalitarian, stressing equality of output in the educational system. Here equal means the same and such a view of the comprehensive school sits uneasily alongside one which gives most currency to the individual and to the pupil-orientated approach to secondary schooling.

Although pupil-centredness is not the only factor, it is an important one in the designs for education which the national and local policy-makers have produced. The remaining question is how schools respond to the designs.

#### 2.4 THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

How can schools respond, if they do at all to the matters mentioned above; to the impact of ideas and of policies such as might seem to lead to an enhanced role for pupils in the conduct of school affairs?

Put in another way, a way which recognises the importance of management at school level, the question becomes, 'How can school management respond to ideological and political influences of the kinds that have been indicated'?

There is, of course, some lack of clarity regarding the meaning of the term 'management'. Wide reading of the literature indicates that this may sometimes mean management structure (Headteacher and senior management), sometimes the management process i.e. the tasks carried out and the strategies employed. Sometimes it encompasses both and includes all the decision-making and policy-making that goes on and this global use of the term is employed here. A recent general definition of this kind is offered by Hoyle:- 'Management is a continuous process through which the members of an organisation seek to co-ordinate their activities and utilise their resources in order to fulfill the various tasks of the organisation as efficiently as possible' (Hoyle 1981, p.8).

For school management, then, three main sorts of response seem possible, two representing more extreme positions, the third lying between the two. At one extreme, the response may be

simply to reject the arguments and deny the pupils any say in school affairs. This would be to affirm 'traditional' educational theory and the knowledge-based view of curriculum which it underpins; the authority of the Head and staff would be supreme, permitting only passive roles for pupils. (As will be argued below, these could include prefect roles when pupils do little more than serve the needs of the staff and of the school.)  
No real participation is envisaged in this view.

At the other extreme, the Headteacher and colleagues may take the demand for a pupil voice in school affairs as literal and genuine, establishing machinery (i.e. pupil councils) to make this possible. In these circumstances pupils may be actively involved; there may be a degree of participation.

A third position, between the two extremes, perhaps embodying something of both, can be identified. In this case, while not denying the validity of the demand for pupil involvement, the response may be more limited and in terms, not of immediate full involvement by the pupils, rather in terms of training for future involvement. The emphasis is not so much on participation now, more on preparation for participation.

Having advanced the idea that there are at least three possible responses to pressures towards pupil involvement, then, three 'models' of involvement may be postulated, one authority-based, the second a training model, the third democratic and rights-based. These three models may give direction to the research by presenting three possible 'models of reality' against which the thinking in the case study schools and in other schools may be tested and clarified. Before specifying these models in a little more detail we should turn to an examination of the terms 'involvement' and 'participation'.

## 2.5 INVOLVEMENT

Clarification is not easy, partly because the terms 'involvement' and 'participation' have been used loosely and interchangeably. However, central to any definition will be some reference to 'power' or 'influence'.



In analysing the concept of 'Power', Easthope (1973) identifies in the literature seven different uses, stating that the powerful are:-

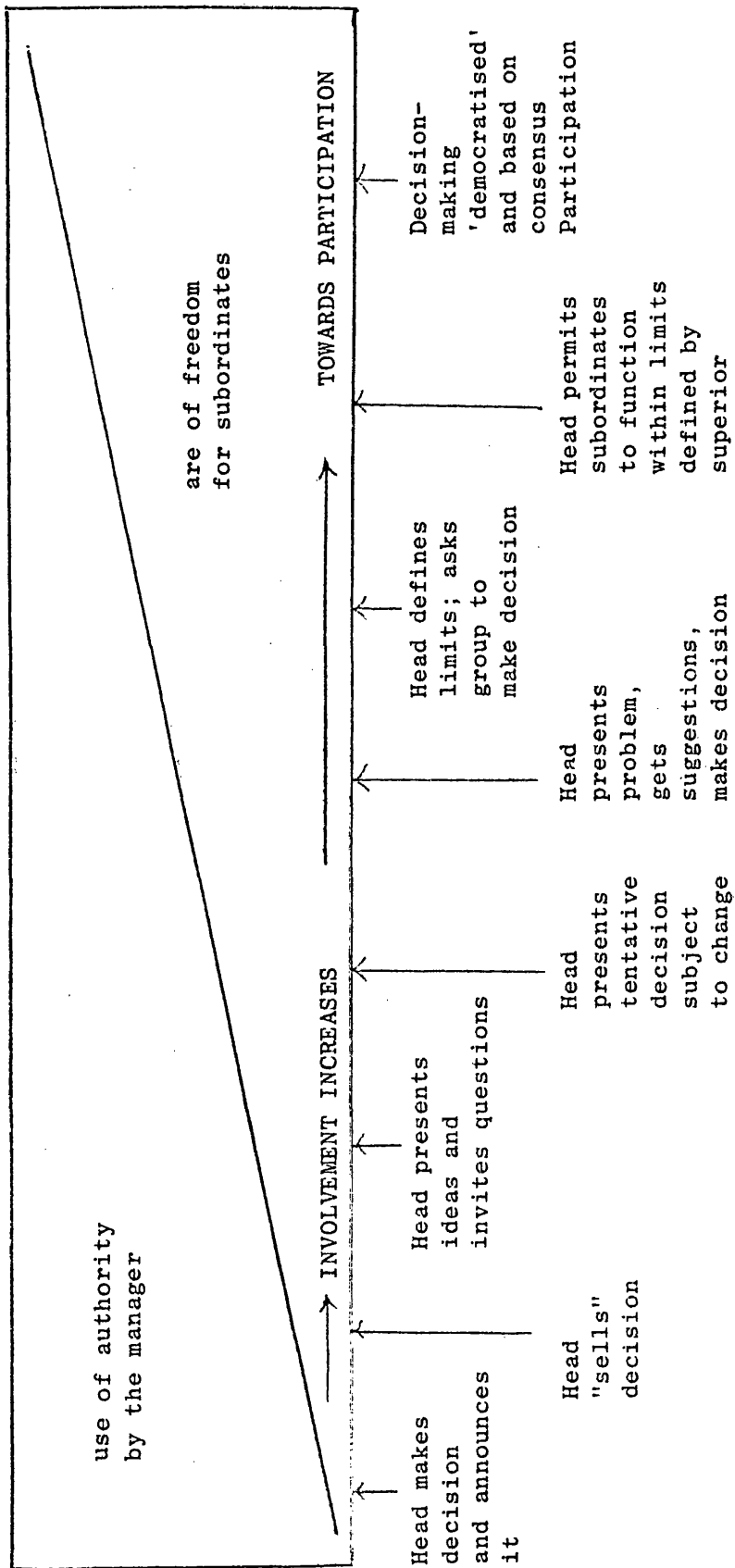
- those who express the values of the group
- those who occupy key positions in a communications network
- those who take or influence decisions
- those who control another person's behaviour
- those with freedom of action
- those seen as powerful by others

In bringing these together Easthope argues that most can be subsumed 'if one conceives of power as control of a situation'. Easthope also states, 'Power is an important aspect of an organisation, if not the central phenomenon'. When this is applied to schools we must mean the power of the Headmaster who has been seen to be very much the absolute ruler, 'the captain of the ship'. All decisions have been his to take, with no part to be played by others.

Involvement, therefore, may be defined as occurring to the extent that there is a move away from absolute control of the policy-making and decision-making by the Headteacher, as in the diagram below. At one extreme of the continuum there is 'boss-centred leadership', the manager (headteacher) simply making a decision and announcing it. At a point one step away from the extreme the manager informs and explains; he/she "sells" the decision. Various intermediate points are specified, representing degrees and forms of consultation and delegation, through to what is defined as full participation, when decisions are arrived at in a shared way, perhaps by consensus.

Subordinate-centred leadership

Head-centred leadership



Adapted from Tannenbourn R, Schmidt W.H. (March 1958) in Harvard Business Review Vol. 36, pp. 95-101

Two further aspects of involvement require to be highlighted. Firstly, for involvement to be seen as genuine and worthwhile there must be discernible outcomes from the involvement. Those who are involved must be able to see some practical results, or to believe that these really could occur. Secondly, those who are involved should have the opportunity to put forward ideas and to initiate policy. These should not be seen as for the boss alone, but for others too.

One other question of importance is the why question - why is involvement preferred? Two main answers may be given, one having an industrial origin: a subordinate-centred approach entailing involvement in the decision-making process is related to high production. Involvement of staff in the affairs of the factory is linked with high production in the factory. In this case the reason why is one based on efficiency and effectiveness. This argument, although stated in terms of industrial performance, may be extended to organisations like schools, despite the fact that their products are not always measurable nor countable. 'There is growing evidence', wrote Morgan, 'to suggest that participation is not only beneficial because the involvement of organisation members secured a more complete carrying out of the decisions, but it can also produce technically better or more correct decisions!' (Morgan, 1976)\* Such a view may be applied to educational institutions, then, (although more recent research shows that the 'alleged casual interaction' may be reversible, (Heller & Wilpert, 1981 p.24) and there too we may see involvement as supporting an efficiency model.

The second justification for involvement is not concerned with efficiency; indeed it is sometimes seen as in conflict with it. The argument is moral: members of the organisation have a right to be involved, and this right ought to be recognised. In this case the argument for the involvement of pupil members of the organisation derives from assumptions about personal freedom and about the worth of the individual human being and about the relevance of these ideas to younger age groups. There are difficulties about these arguments, as is noted below.

\* *Organization Development. Unit 6 of Open University Course E321, Section 1.*

In summary, we may say that involvement entails some movement away from total control by the Head, that the process of involvement should result in outcomes which those who are involved recognise, and that those who are involved should have the opportunity to initiate policy. The main justifications are in terms of efficiency or based on moral arguments. The three 'models' of involvement reflect these different aspects differently.

## 2.6 AN AUTHORITY-BASED MODEL

Traditionally in independent schools, and in schools which recognise similar values, pupils are called upon, not so much to become involved, but to serve the needs of the staff through prefect systems. These arrangements usually operate wholly on the authority of the Head. Only senior pupils may be concerned. The Head, and other senior staff, possibly, choose the elite. Duties are allocated. There may be minor privileges.

In terms of the continuum set down above, involvement is minimal. The pupils have no control over situations affecting policy, no voice in school affairs. In any event, only a small number of pupils are concerned.

The question of outcomes does not arise, therefore. Nor does the question of initiating policy. At most there is a reporting-back session with the Head or Housemaster, when some suggestions on detail might be put.

In this model, categorised as authority-based, there is no real involvement as defined.

## 2.7 A DEMOCRATIC MODEL

At the opposite extreme to the authority-based model lies what might be termed a democratic model where pupils throughout the organisation do play a part in running the school. The pupils may be directly involved as in the case of A.S. Neill's small boarding school, Summerhill. "Summerhill", wrote Neill, "is a self-governing school, democratic in form. Everything connected with social or group life, including punishment of

social offences, is settled by vote at the Saturday night General School meeting. Each member of the teaching staff and each child, regardless of his age, has one vote. My vote carries the same weight as that of a seven-year old". (Neill, 1962, p.45)

An example from the state sector, although an unusual one, is that of Countesthorpe College, where the pupils are called students. This also operates on the basis of a general meeting, called the Moot. "The body that establishes any ruling consensus in a general meeting, the Moot, which is open to all, including non-teaching staff and students". Thus the pupils, along with others, have a place and an influence in this school 'parliament'.\*

Clearly, in the case of Summerhill and of Countesthorpe, the conditions for a degree of genuine involvement, tending towards full participation, do appear to be met. All pupils are or may be involved, they do have the power to influence or initiate policy and there are outcomes to the involvement, therefore.

There are unusual examples. In the more 'ordinary' schools too there may be School Councils established on a democratic basis, with genuine involvement of pupils. A democratic model of pupil-involvement seems to be justified by two main propositions:-

- (i) that pupils ought to be involved; that they have a right to be involved; and,
- (ii) that the involvement should include the power to ensure that there are outcomes to the involvement.

These two propositions are clearly linked and they rest on the assumption that pupils are complete not embryo human beings. There are obvious difficulties with such a position: the basic assumption can be challenged, perhaps by reference to a developmental factor and to the capacity for participation as something which occurs later in a person's development. For example, it was difficult for the writer not to be amused on being introduced in a primary school to the class representative of a P3 class! And there is in any case a difficulty regarding the nature of a 'right' as being either inborn or as something granted or not granted by a society. Furthermore, the 'rights'

\* See Watts, John, in Bush, Tony et al (eds), "Approaches to School Management" (Harper Row, 1980) p.297

of pupils may sometimes be in conflict with the rights of others, of staff and parents. One other major difficulty concerns the legal basis of schools which vests authority and responsibility in the person of the Head. This would have to be altered if a 'democratic model' was to be freely applied, especially in the state sector.

## 2.8 A TRAINING MODEL

A third model is postulated, called a 'training model'. This also requires the establishment of councils or forums, but they are 'dummy' councils and not 'real' ones. The amount of involvement entailed is minimal. There is no intention to ensure that there are outcomes to the business being conducted nor is it expected that significant policy will be changed or initiated. This does not mean that the exercise will not be taken seriously. It may be taken most seriously and not perceived as in any way bogus.

What is different is that the justification is more exclusively an educational one. Thus:-

- a. On leaving school at 16 or 18 young people will have to be involved in the democratic process in one form or another - at work, in a club or similar organisation or group, in further or higher education, politically, and so on.
- b. Secondary schools ought in various ways to prepare pupils to be involved in these situations.
- c. Although pupils cannot be involved in important decision-making in school, there are situations which might be exploited in order to provide training involvement.

A training model then is one which emphasises the institutional and educational functions and sees the school as having changing responsibilities towards pupils as pupil-needs change. It is a needs-based rather than a rights-based view.

There are various difficulties attached to this view also. A basic one, of course, is that it can in no way satisfy those educational thinkers and activists who call for 'liberation' of children nor does it satisfy the demands of the National

Union of School Students. One further problem is that training in involvement that lacks real form and content may by its nature fail to achieve its intended purpose. This model, then, is more vulnerable, perhaps, to the charge of not being genuine, of being more 'tokenism' or merely a 'containment model', to keep the more militant students in check until we run into calmer waters when the demand for involvement can be quietly forgotten.

It must be accepted that these three models are not mutually exclusive. Although there are essential differences there is some overlapping. Two ways in which there are overlaps may be noted. Firstly, the idea of training or preparation has a part, if sometimes a different part, in all three models, not only in the training model. Being a prefect, in terms of the authority-based mode, is seen as good experience for the future; and Neill was quick to acknowledge the educational value of the self-governing community.

A second aspect, applying to all three models, is that of efficiency and effective decision-making as referred to earlier. A prefect system is in some way meant to contribute to the efficient running of the school. From a management standpoint, then, something of the efficiency view is clearly evident. This may also be said of the democratic and training models. The democratic model particularly may be seen as serving the cause of achieving the 'best' decisions about school policy and the 'best' performance in terms of agreed aims and objectives for the school. Pupil perspectives on issues and pupil insights into problems may sometimes be invaluable in arriving at 'best' solutions, especially when these are offered in a fully participative forum. It is also arguable that when the training model applies some of these advantages with respect to efficiency and effectiveness may accrue, if to a lesser extent.

These three possible models should be useful when considering the different policy and practice in the case study schools.

### 3. THE CONTEXT OF SCOTTISH EDUCATION



In the course of many years of experience a characteristic impression of Scottish education emerges. With its traditional and continuing emphasis on academic learning in the school, often supported in the home by patterns of child-rearing born of Calvin's harsh puritanism, Scottish education is not likely to take easily to the forms of pupil involvement upon which this enquiry is focused.<sup>(1)</sup> If pupils are to have any place in the formal scheme of things, it will probably be in the prefect system which has survived into the age of secondary comprehensive education. One Depute Rector<sup>(2)</sup> puts it as follows:-

*" . . . (the) Academy is, of course, an ancient foundation dating from medieval times. As an Academy it dates from about 1750. Until the onset of comprehensive education it was a selective school and many of its attitudes e.g. the pursuit of academic excellence, the maintenance of school uniform, the prefectorial system itself, spring from the authoritarian assumptions of the selective school"*

Prefect systems, as forms of involvement, do continue to exist, then, and the origins and traditions of the school are important, along with the attitudes of staff, parents and pupils, in determining this. Although not all schools' prefect systems may continue to adhere rigidly to the 'pure' model, it is useful to note that such a definition of the prefect system contains seven essential elements:-

- (i) The prefects are a select few.
- (ii) They are chosen by the school hierarchy.
- (iii) The main criteria of selection are the capacity for leadership and the ability to accept responsibility.
- (iv) In their own conduct prefects are expected to exemplify school values.
- (v) There are duties which prefects must perform.
- (vi) Some of these duties carry the authority to help with school discipline.

(1) For example see Mann, Horace (1843), "Report of an Educational Tour".

(2) In written comment submitted to the author.

(vii) With these duties go certain limited privileges and rewards.

Each of these is illustrated variously in evidence provided by the schools. The Rector of an Academy\* gives his overview of the situation there in one succinct paragraph:-

*"Sixteen prefects are appointed (in a year of approx. 100 pupils) at a meeting of all Heads of Departments and the school administration. Pupils are chosen for their ability to accept responsibility. Their duties are to assist staff with pupil control in lines and corridors, to supervise cloakroom areas, to assist with teas etc. at social events and to help staff generally. In return they have their own common room, with facilities for making tea and they are allowed to have a radio. The return is poor for the work they do and I tell them that their professional life will be just the same. Those who accept real responsibility in life are not given the financial reward they deserve."*

The underlying ideology here is clear. The view taken is an elitist one in a straightforward sense. The select few will take their place on merit in the top strata of society as leaders or managers, and the Head and senior staff will try to identify these people early through the prefect system. This form of pupil-involvement is intended to provide experience of leadership and practice in holding responsibility. It is based primarily on the assumed needs of society, less on the needs of the individual, still less on individual rights.

As we have seen, also of great importance to the traditional model of the prefect system is the notion of service ("Their purpose is service", wrote one Headteacher) or duty, something which pupils have to learn to appreciate as they mature. The term 'duty' applies in two respects: firstly, prefects have a duty to behave

\* In written evidence submitted to the author.

in certain ways themselves; secondly they have duties to perform, often with respect to the behaviour of others. This two-fold notion of duty is apparent, for example, in the following extract from a school document provided for the research:-

#### DUTIES OF PREFECTS

As leaders in the school community, Prefects are expected to set a good example to pupils in all respects. This includes the wearing of school uniform, punctuality, appearance, good behaviour and loyalty to the school. Prefects do not have the right to punish a pupil but may report a pupil to an Assistant Rector. Minor misdemeanours may be reported to a Housemaster or Housemistress. Prefects' duties are as follows:-

1. To assist the Rector and staff with school activities and social projects.
2. To assist with House Activities and sports.
3. To act as guardians to groups of first year pupils.
4. To help with tuck shop supervision.
5. To help supervise the behaviour of pupils in the playground, corridors and especially, in the Assembly Hall/Lecture Area, the Social Centre and in the Library/TV area.
6. To report to an Assistant Rector, or in an emergency to any member of staff, the misconduct of any pupil within or without the precincts of the school.

sgd. The Rector

See Appendices C,D and E p.197-204 for further examples taken from school documents.

A further important aspect of the prefect system idea concerns the question of privileges; there are duties to perform and their value is recognised by the granting of privileges, albeit of a minor kind. (see also Appendix M, page 219) A good example

is the common practice of allowing prefects to use a school entrance which is out of bounds to other pupils. Occasionally there are also rewards granted to prefects, for example: "At the end of the session they have the privilege of being awarded a day's excursion to Aviemore which is accepted as a just recompense for the services which they afford the school".\*

So far the discussion has been wholly in terms of the traditional model of the prefect system. Correspondence, however, suggests that not every school is faithful to that model as it has been defined above. Arguably, some schools at least are beginning to reject some of the assumptions upon which prefect arrangements are based. This is occurring on ideological grounds, perhaps, although more often the reasons are practical ones. The most common deviation, but a fundamental one, concerns the way in which prefect are chosen: the move is away from selection by Head and promoted staff to something broader and apparently less elitist. One change that is sometimes preferred is to make everyone in S6 a prefect, creating what may be called a 'senior system'. A second option is to ask for volunteers while a third is to arrange for the prefects to be elected by the staff and pupils or even by pupils alone. The Senior Prefects or School Captains will also be elected in a similar way. This change from selection to election or the preference for election over selection marks a 'softening' of the traditional model of the prefect idea, making it possible, perhaps, for some schools to entertain broader notions of pupil-involvement such as might be represented in pupil councils.

Reasons given for the abandonment of prefects are in a sense practical: the raising of the school leaving age, and the advent of comprehensive education, have kept in school pupils who would otherwise not have been there. These pupils are not always ready to accept school values nor do they take to the idea of prefects. Heads report that 'good prefects are often being 'got at' outside school, or that pupils gang up on a prefect' Abandonment or change is forced upon them, they say.

Others give reasons that are overtly ideological e.g. 'We have

\* *Written comment submitted to the author by a school Rector.*

never had a prefect system in this school because it seems to us unfair in this modern society, where violence and intimidation are commonplace, to invest pupils with an authority which they could only exert at some risk to themselves'. Another Headteacher, although admitting that 'the system was working well', has abolished prefects 'because I consider that in the long-term such systems are divisive and militate against the sense of participation and self-discipline which I wish to encourage in all pupils'.

Where there are pupil councils, what form do they take? As with prefect systems, this varies from school to school, according to the circumstances, and probably according to the wishes of particular Rectors or Headteachers. To begin with, they differ in name - Pupil Council, School Forum, Pupils' Representative Council, Pupils' Representative Committee, Students' Council, School Committee, Pupil-Teacher Committee, and even Community Council, are the various titles that are used. Unusually, one school employs the name 'The Thrie Estaites'.

They differ too in the way in which they are set up and in the way they operate. From a study of information and comment, a number of significant points may usefully be noted:-

- (i) A key role is played by the Headteacher. When changes occur they are often on the Head's initiative. One head, for example, clearly wants to do much more but he is proceeding with care: "First of all I had to introduce regular meetings of Assistant Heads and Principal Teachers and you will gather that the time was not yet ripe for a prefect system, school council etc". Staff-involvement will have to come before pupil-involvement.
- (ii) Structures differ. Sometimes some kind of two-tier system, comprising Year or House, councils, plus a top tier for the whole school, is preferred. One Headteacher writes: "My doubts about an all-school council centre on the compatibility of pupils ranging from 12 to 18 years old".
- (iii) The representative unit is usually the Form or the Tutor Group.

- (iv) Sometimes the council is a Staff/Pupil Council. The following extract illustrates this, among other things:-

Pupil-Teacher Committee

". . . Within any school community, it is vital that opportunity exists for pupils and teachers to come together from time to time to discuss matters of mutual concern. The Pupil-Teacher Committee, formerly known as the School Council, has met on several occasions this session under a new constitution. Representation is now slightly reduced to make discussion less diffuse and decision less difficult. Meetings at times have been extremely animated, with lively contributions from pupils at all stages. It should perhaps be said that the Pupil-Teacher Committee is more a forum for making suggestions and ventilating grievances than a panacea for all our problems, especially shortage of accommodation. An important feature is a regular report from the School Council, and satisfactory solutions have been found for various difficulties arising from the day-to-day running of the school, as well as for the desire for pupil representation on various committees . . . "

- (v) Pupil council aims are sometimes provided or referred to e.g. "The main purpose . . . is to give pupils a say in the running of the school and a secondary function is liaison with all classes, thus complementing the weekly newsletter". On at least one occasion the purpose was put in terms that were more appropriate to a prefect system: "The Council is also used as a vehicle for arranging supervisory patrols of year Toilet and Shelter areas".

(see also Appendices F, G, H and J)

- (vi) Policy regarding what could be discussed varies. One school takes an open view of things and the rule is: "Any topic may be raised as long as it is done so courteously". Others take a more cautious view e.g. "It must be clearly understood that the Council are to discuss matters of general concern, not individual cases, and no discussion should concern a particular member of staff". And e.g., "The manner in which the Council carries out its responsibilities is worked

out in consultation between the Council and the Board of Studies". In one other school the discussion of matters relating to curriculum is specifically excluded.

- (vii) All pupil councils are set up through some form of election. To that extent, at least, the democratic nature of the exercise is recognised.

However, at least one school imposes limits on that, the Headteacher saying that 'minimum safeguards are applied to prevent anti-social candidates from being elected'.

Comment from schools also highlights some main areas of difficulty with respect to formal pupil involvement generally. A sentence used by one Headteacher speaks for a number of others: "Democracy is a very tender plant and difficult to raise, both with teachers and pupils". This Head is one who has tried to establish formal involvement of pupils and he is anxious to improve what is in existence. Another Head, one who had tried and failed, writes pointedly as follows:-

*"There is no discernible desire for a pupil council at present; certainly there is no pressure whatsoever from any quarter for the resurrection of this body. The idea was not popular with school hierarchies for obvious reasons, and it was discredited even among pupils because the bolshie political activists/extremists tended to try to take it over and the majority of pupils, like the intense conservatives I have always found them to be, then did the thing in to block them. Pupil power, such as it was, was destroyed by its own mistakes of judgment: we had a pupil magazine around this time that died in this way."*

This suggests five central questions which might be asked in schools where there is a pupil council:-

- (i) Are the ideas surrounding pupil school councils clearly understood?

- (ii) Has sufficient attention been paid to the question of how best to introduce the machinery and how best to maintain it?
- (iii) Are there 'better' structures among the various possibilities?
- (iv) How adequate are the knowledge and skills of the pupils who are involved?
- (v) What measures of success would be appropriate?

These central questions may be borne in mind as the evidence from the five case studies of pupil council situations is examined in detail.



#### 4. SCHOOL INVESTIGATIONS

#### 4.1 CHOOSING THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

Five schools were chosen for special study. The factors determining the choice of schools were various.

First and foremost the schools had to be ones where something was known to be happening, in terms of the involvement of pupils, albeit in different ways and to different extents. Equally important, the schools required to be accessible, both in the sense that they were geographically not too far away, and in the sense that the Headteachers and staff were willing to receive the researcher and to co-operate with him.

It also seemed desirable to include schools which represented both the non-denominational and Roman Catholic categories. In addition, it seemed reasonable to look for some variety in mode and degree of comprehensive development in the chosen schools\*. Help was sought from members of the Inspectorate to supplement the researcher's own knowledge of the school scene, and the choice which emerged was as follows:-

SCHOOL	DIVISION	RELIGION	SIZE & TYPE	COUNCIL	INITIATOR
A. Airth	Glasgow	R.C.	Large all-through	Well-established	Head Teacher
B. Brae	Glasgow	Non denom	Medium all-through	Developing	Head Teacher
C. Cross	Renfrew	R.C.	Medium growing S5/6	Established	Assistant Head Teacher
D. Duke	Renfrew	Non denom	Medium growing S5/6	Not achieving	Head Teacher
E. East	Lanark	Non denom	Medium growing S5/6	Idea at first rejected	Principal Teacher

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\* The decision was taken not to identify the schools nor the staff, but to use fictitious names.

It would be wrong to argue that this is in any way a representative sample. Such was not looked for. The plan was to case-study a manageable number of varied school situations and to portray what was happening there, to analyse the pictures which emerged, and to use this analysis to support tentative hypothetical statements regarding the basis for the operations of pupil councils.

The case studies of these operations were expected to produce data under various headings as follows:-

1. The origin of the idea.
2. The strategy for implementation.
3. Form of organisation.
4. Constitution.
5. Elections.
6. Roles of Pupil Representatives.
7. Roles of Teachers.
8. Meetings.
  - (i) Frequency.
  - (ii) Times.
  - (iii) Location and seating arrangements.
  - (iv) Procedures: role of chairman, secretary.
  - (v) Agenda.
  - (vi) Pupil participation.
  - (vii) Teacher participation.
  - (viii) Minutes.
  - (ix) Outcomes.
9. Development over one or more sessions.

#### 4.2. DISCUSSIONS WITH HEADTEACHERS

Although the idea was not always Headteacher-initiated, and although the extent of the Head's practical involvement varied, the Head was always seen as the key figure in the scheme of things.

It was necessary, therefore, to talk to Headteachers, on the basis of an open-ended interview. The interviews were loosely structured (see Appendix N on page 219 for details of interview schedule) with the purpose of achieving five things:-

- (i) to obtain some idea of the Head's own educational philosophy.
- (ii) to obtain some idea of the Head's management perspective.
- (iii) to obtain some idea of the Head's understanding of pupil-involvement.

- (iv) to obtain the Headteacher's description of the formal arrangements.
- (v) to obtain the Head's permission to approach other key personnel.

#### 4.3 DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER KEY PERSONNEL

In all the situations about which information and research data was obtained, at least one person, and usually several persons, other than the Headteacher was/were involved in establishing and/or providing the management in-put necessary for the continuing existence of arrangements for pupil-involvement.

The status and function of these persons varied and they included:-

Depute Headteacher  
Assistant Headteacher (Guidance or other)  
Principal Teacher (Guidance or other)  
Assistant Principal Teacher (Guidance or other)  
Class or Register or Tutor Group Teacher

These people were seen informally or formally, in a variety of situations and for varying amounts of time according to circumstances and opportunity. The purpose of these discussions was five-fold:-

- (i) To ascertain their notions of pupil-involvement and to check them against Headteacher views and others.
- (ii) To obtain their descriptions of the arrangements.
- (iii) To seek their permission to attend Council meetings as an observer.
- (iv) To seek their help in the observation.
- (v) To monitor their changing perceptions of the progress of the arrangements over a period of time.

#### 4.4 OBSERVATIONS OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

It was, of course, only possible to attend a few of the Council meetings which took place.\* Often data obtained second-hand from the Headteacher or other co-ordinators had to suffice.

Yet some observation of meetings was clearly essential, if only to 'get the feel of' what was happening. Observations recorded related to the following matters:-

\* See page 32.

- (1) Time, place, seating and attendance.
- (2) Procedures.
- (3) Roles of staff.
- (4) Roles and skills of pupils.
- (5) Issues.
- (6) Outcomes.
- (7) Impression of the 'quality' of the discussion.

It was found useful to draw a plan of the room, to note the seating and, as far as possible to note the contributions and the contributors. The last was very difficult to achieve with completeness and accuracy, except when video-recordings were available, although then the presence of recording equipment was obviously an inhibiting factor. Video-recordings accompany this thesis.

#### 4.5 STUDY OF DOCUMENTS

One other kind of data could not be neglected; printed material. Any items in print that could have been relevant to the enquiry in any way were collected and examined. These included:-

Staff Handbook and other management items.

Working Party reports.

Constitution.

Agendas.

Minutes.

#### 4.6 WRITE-UP OF PUPIL COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

In these ways, then, facts and impressions were gathered. They were noted at the time and filed appropriately. Subsequently they had to be assembled to form a continuous account for each of the five schools, these five accounts together providing examples to be analysed and discussed.

#### 4.7 EXTENT OF CONTACT

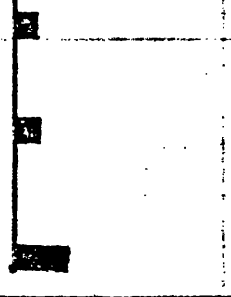
The five main case-study schools were not visited equally often. Schools A, B and C were visited more, D and E less. This was due in part to the different circumstances prevailing there, as the accounts show.

DIAGRAM TO SHOW CONTACT WITH CASE STUDY SCHOOLS - BY MONTHS, AUGUST TO JULY.

1975-76

months

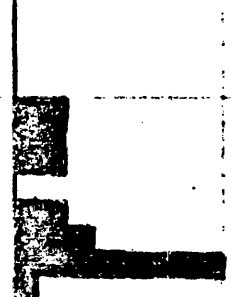
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1976-77

months

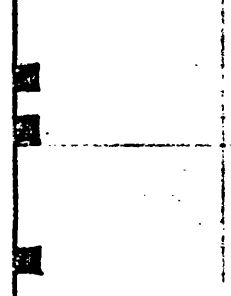
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1977-78

months

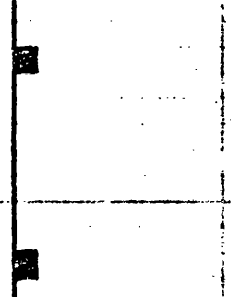
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1978-79

months

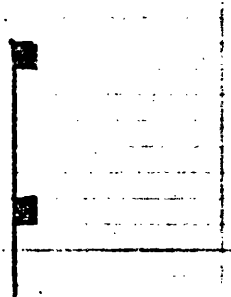
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1979-80

months

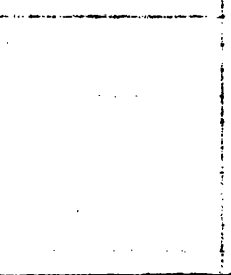
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1980-81

months

A S O N D J F M A M J J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J



SCHOOLS

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

(one shaded square=one visit of at least one hour)

4A. SCHOOL A - AIRTH SCHOOL

#### 4A. CASE STUDY SCHOOL A: AIRTH SECONDARY SCHOOL

##### 4A.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous Headmaster had been a 'scholar and a gentleman', popular with some teachers, too mild in the estimation of others, not able to win the full confidence of all staff in the face of the problems which a predominantly non-academic school population presented. Although the school had been purpose-built as a comprehensive school, clearly there were problems, physical, social, educational.

In physical appearance the school was typical of those built in the late 1960's and added to later in the wake of ROSLA and other growth. It was extensive, 3-storeyed, towered slightly at one end, on a dark day offering a silhouette like an oil tanker. Yet the water there was not the sea, but a modest, insalubrious-looking stream containing the proverbial old pram and other debris, making its way through the treeless, rough land to a destination that could only be more pleasant. There were other buildings nearby, abused local authority housing, some scheduled to survive, some to be demolished to make way for a new shopping complex - eventually to provide 'uplifting' lunchtime activities for the pupils, said the cynics. All in all the school did not present a happy and attractive aspect.

Internally the buildings similarly reflected the ordinary. Long corridors, broken by pairs of swing doors at intervals, gave access to strings of classrooms. No doubt seeming modern in its day, there was much glass in large windows, less in the ROSLA block perhaps. The Library and other communal areas were more pleasant and more comfortable, yet not presenting anything approaching the visionary. To the practised eye there was little in the appearance of the school that would easily inspire a sense of pride in the hearts of the pupils when there was an important and undoubted need to do just that.

However, even a brief acquaintance with the catchment area led to the view that, to some pupils at least, school might have been something of a haven, an escape from the harsh realities of life



at home. Social problems were some times severe. The teachers consistently said that this was so. The local community newspaper confirmed it, referring to the area as one where 'no human being deserves to be living under conditions found in Airth-hill'; where 'vandalism, thuggery and neglect' were matters of much concern. The failure of politicians and officials, national and local, was attacked repeatedly in the columns of this grassroots tabloid, and the attacks were echoed in school by the more vociferous members of staff\* who saw the root of some of their difficulties in school as originating elsewhere.

There seemed to be no doubt that the physical and social problems were related in some ways to the educational problems. Not unnaturally the latter are of prime concern to the present head and his staff. Two examples serve to illustrate this well: firstly there was strong dissatisfaction with the academic achievements of school pupils at O Grade and H Grade. Presentations have been substantial but the pass-rate has been comparatively poor in some subjects - the present head reported progress in closing the gap. Thus the belief in the importance of examination success was not seen as inconsistent with the comprehensive idea. Nor, secondly, was performance in basic skills seen as other than a matter of considerable significance. Here the differences between the primary feeders were carefully monitored each year and the cumulative data from the testing of P7 classes was held to show (a) that standards might be declining overall and (b) that certain of the primary schools were failing badly. In this case, being a matter external to the secondary school, it was not easy to devise or control policy to meet the situation, although the head would dearly like to do so, being a man who took management seriously.

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\* No one was more outspoken than the school chaplain, a young man with strong views, often directed against the Housing Department of the Corporation.

#### 4A.2 THE HEADTEACHER

Indeed, the present Head\* was more sophisticated than most in his appreciation of management in education. He was a manager and he had wide knowledge of management in a variety of settings. As a consequence he was regularly called upon to lecture on educational management to audiences in colleges, teachers' centres and elsewhere.

He was a qualified historian and he continued to engage in teaching, something to which he attached a great deal of importance.

Having the advantage of being physically well-built, he seemed easily to succeed in making his presence felt. In and around the school he saw and was seen: pupils were quickly reminded of shortcomings when these were noticed, literally down to the level of being told to 'pick up that piece of paper'. Staff too were dealt with positively, in too authoritarian a manner, some said. The Depute Head, there before and still there after this particular Headmaster had left, commented with some feeling on the 'Mohammed Ali' style which the Head brought and kept to during his three years in the school. Videorecordings of Board of Studies meetings provided evidence of this authoritarian style of leadership. This evidence from interviews suggested that his style of management could be described as having high 'impact' and as being somewhat towards the authoritarian side of the continuum, while being firmly in touch with the democratic.

In their discussion of a two factor approach to style of management (autocratic/democratic; or production-centred/person-centred). Paisey & Paisey (1980) draw on the work of Misumi and Tasaki in postulating an impact or intensity dimension. 'In both cases ... a conscious, deliberate effort must be made by the supervisor to make an impact on the group members'. (page 98) While, in these studies, the concept of 'impact' is operationally derived, the term is used here impressionistically.

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\* *Circumstances have changed. After three successful years in the school the Head moved to take over a still larger school which also required to be 'pulled up', it was said. The scene overall has changed in that rather more secondary Heads are now 'management conscious'.*

#### 4A.3 MANAGEMENT POLICY

An examination of policy-making process and product confirmed the style of management and revealed some underlying assumptions about organisations, about people, and about roles. 'School is a living, growing organism ... schools are not static ... there is always reaction and inter-action. There are always tremendous welfare problems, interaction of staff with staff, staff with pupils', the Head said in a videorecorded interview. The Head believed that his 'main function is to ensure that there is a happy working atmosphere' ... 'to create a team spirit throughout the school'. He saw himself 'at the point of a very delicate triangle of forces - pupils, parents and teachers'. This delicate triangle of forces 'has to be held in balance' so that each child who comes to the comprehensive school can be motivated to give of his/her best.

Staff too had to be motivated. When the tasks had been analysed and jobs specified, these were delegated to staff. The Head then had the job of providing an input, sometimes with others, to see that the staff had the means to carry out the tasks, and to ensure that they were motivated to do so, and to see that they did carry out the tasks.

Although having an important trio of functions, 'delegating, motivating and inspecting', the Head did not see himself as the sole decision-maker and decision-taker. In actual practice he argued, major decisions were taken by the Board of Studies (consisting of Head, Depute Head and five Assistant Heads) and 'not by myself in splendid isolation or occupying a place of lonely eminence in my own room'. Furthermore, whatever the decision, 'anyone who is going to be affected by a decision taken in the school should have the right to be consulted about that decision'. And, 'I think it is important that, when decisions have been taken, then a great deal of consultative discussion and participation ought to have preceded it ... Everyone who has something to say ought to have been given the opportunity to say it, and, therefore, it seems to me that a primary function of the role of the Headteacher is to ensure that the machinery exists in the school whereby every member of staff, from your probationary teacher to your Depute Head, knows that there are procedures, that there is machinery whereby he/she can influence decisions,

whether it is in the Guidance structures, curriculum development or in the organisation of parents' meetings.'

In that school the procedures and the machinery did clearly exist. On examination there were found to be ten principal elements as follows:-

- (1) The Head and Depute Head
- (2) Board of Studies
- (3) Principal Teachers Subject
- (4) Departmental Meetings
- (5) Guidance Team
- (6) Assessment Team
- (7) Full Staff Meetings
- (8) Ad Hoc Committees
- (9) Staff Council
- (10) The Pupil Councils

The last of these, in context along with the others and reflecting the same thinking, we can now consider in some detail.

#### 4A.4 THE PUPIL SCHOOL COUNCILS

##### 4.(i) Origins

We have seen something of why this Headteacher came to the view that pupil involvement was desirable and necessary. In an interview (the full text appears on pages 58-63) devoted to this development, the two main reasons were given.

The first derived from the 'consultative imperative' already referred to, that those who were affected by a decision should have the right to be consulted about that decision, and the pupils quite obviously fell into that category. The second reason was stressed as being more important: "if we are going to retain six-year comprehensive schools, as I hope we are, not hiving pupils off at the end of S4, then I think we have to introduce a much greater degree of involvement by pupils, especially as they grow up and become more mature ... "

Each of these reasons, on examination, seems to contain two arguments and there are suggestions of an ambivalence which can affect much of the thinking about pupil involvement. On the one hand, there is the view that pupils ought to be consulted; that

society now accords them rights which were not previously thought to be appropriately extended to younger members of the community. On the other hand, there is the view that pupil involvement is valid on educational grounds, as preparation for later life as citizens and workers in a democratic society. In theoretical terms these two views suggest the two models, a democratic model and a training model, as postulated above (pages 15-18).

#### 4.(ii) Strategy for Implementation

In this instance the idea to have a Pupil School Council clearly originated with the Headteacher. The documentation and interview evidence from the Head and staff all indicated this. And, as we have seen, the creation of machinery for pupil participation was part of the management design.

The strategy for implementation was in line with what had become normal practice in the school: a working party was established, papers were written, amendments made in the light of feedback from all the staff, and a final paper emerged. This was approved and accepted by the Headteacher and Board of Studies.

The proposal contained in the final paper did reflect the Headteacher's views, but perhaps not completely. The following points are to be noted:-

- (a) In the preamble the assumption was made that the idea was being advanced in order to improve communication.
- (b) The role of Councils must be 'an advisory one' was strongly emphasised.
- (c) The presence of staff was seen to be necessary in order to 'ensure that the pupils' discussions and complaints were channelled along the proper lines'.
- (d) Guidance personnel were seen as those likely to provide staff in-put.

#### 4.(iii) Form of Organisation

A great deal of effort was invested in deciding on the best way of organising the Councils. As a result, two levels of Council were suggested, one for each Year group, consisting of representatives of each class in the Year, and at the upper level, so to speak, one

whole-school Council, called an Executive Council, the membership consisting of representatives of each of the Year Councils.

The documentation explains why a two-tier arrangement was preferred. This was borne out by the Headteacher interviews, where the Head referred to two basic and closely-related advantages:-

- (a) pupils in each Year want to talk about their problems and the Year Council offered them the freedom to do that; they had their own interests, the S1 viewpoint being particularly 'narrow'.
- (b) to arrange for pupils to be adequately represented on a single Council would have resulted in a body that would have been too large and too clumsy, 'and we felt particularly that the ones at the bottom end of the School might feel very inhibited about speaking'.

We may now turn to a consideration of each of the Councils.

#### 4A.5 S1 YEAR COUNCIL

The first year Council in the course of extended discussions with all staff concerned was said by them to be 'very disappointing'. From impressions gained by the author during two periods of observation, very little was being achieved.

The author formed the opinion that there was an initial problem of numbers. Two representatives from each of 13 classes produced too large a company for effective exchange of ideas to be easy. Sometimes the attendance was poor, in 1976/77 due to bus strikes, and one member of staff said that this seemed to help!

The author also noted that the problem was worsened by the seating arrangements that were determined by the classroom where meetings were held: members sat in rows, close together, in a small room. The Assistant Head said that he was aware of the difficulty but had not been able to take appropriate action.

The presence of Assistant Head Teacher or Principal Teacher (Guidance) seemed to the author to be essential, both to keep control and to guide the pupils through the necessary procedures. When the Council was left on its own, the author noted that the Chairman and members tended to lose the way and the meeting disintegrated.

Skills shown by the chairman were poor: he did not know how to present an item of business and see that this was dealt with before proceeding. Nor did council members seem to the author to have an adequate grasp of the purpose of the meetings. They seemed intent on raising any matter when one occurred to them, regardless of what had been said before.

Not that pupils had full control of the agenda. Issues raised were sometimes at the suggestion of the Assistant Head responsible for First Year, and questions to do with fund-raising, loomed large in the business of this and other Councils: school authority\* seemed to see the Councils as a way of stimulating fund-raising efforts. Newly-acquired cottages in the country were being furnished and equipped, much extra money being required for this. One pupil councillor asked, 'When will the school cottages open?'

Although some matters were raised by the pupils, for example to do with parties and discos, the bulk of the business was the result of what had been put on the agenda by school staff. The problems of litter and late-coming fell into this category.

The need for the representatives to report back was also raised on the initiative of staff, (prompted by the researcher's questioning, perhaps). Clearly this was of central importance to the arrangements as a whole and for this not to have happened would have been a serious omission, in the opinion of the author.

One other matter put to the Council by school staff was unusual. A particular girl in the school had been having difficulty in settling down and she was apparently very unhappy. Her case had been considered by the Guidance Team and the Assistant Head (Guidance) had agreed that an appeal should be made to the pupils, through the Council, to try to assist her, and this appeal was made. This case raises questions about Guidance procedures as well as questions about the function of a Pupil Council at first-year level.

An edited copy of the researcher's notes on one S1 Council meeting further illuminates the position, as follows:-

\* It was learnt subsequently that the issue first arose in a Board of Studies meeting chaired by the Headmaster.

AIRTH SCHOOL

S.I PUPIL COUNCIL

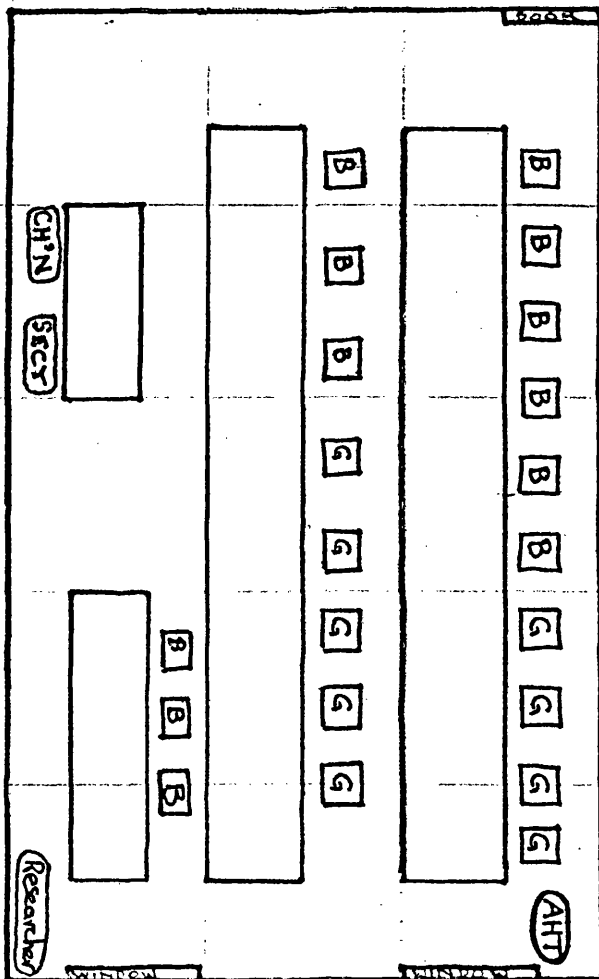
7:11:77

History Base

2.55 p.m.

Assistant Headteacher Mr. Simson in charge.

Sketch of the room. Very cramped lines of seats.



23 representatives present, 4 absentees.



<u>TIMING</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTOR</u>	<u>BUSINESS</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
14.55	Chairman Chairman	Welcomed everyone, including the researcher. asked the secretary to read the minutes	AHT told Chairman to do this Was involved from the beginning Therefore, was holding things together.
	Secretary	read brief minute	
14.58	Chairman	(prompted by AHT) asked each representative to report on fund-raising suggestions put forward by the classes.	
15.02	Class A rep. IB IC ID IE IF IG IH II	Sponsored penalty kick. Had not been disursed. Sponsored swim. Sponsored silence Sponsored silence. Sponsored silence. Old Folks' Night. Sponsored silence Collecting tin.	Reporting was not very positive. AHT called away to telephone. Restlessness began.
15.06	IJ IK IL IM	Had not been disursed. Raffle. Sponsored silence Raffle.	..... ..... ..... .....
	Chairman	asked 'What has been done in the way of, keeping things tidy?'	continuing restlessness ..... .....

(continued)

15.10	Representative	answered, 'Put bins out'	No discussion on to new point.
	Chairman	asked 'Has late-coming improved?'	Restlessness
	Chorus ...	'No .... give them the belt'	Shuffling
	Girl rep.	'There was supposed to be a dance and when we got there there was n'ae wan'	:
15.13		'...play... competition is missed ...'	Noise meant that points were not heard properly.
15.15	Chairman	called for order ... had to shout 'Order!'	No one knew what to do.
		period of silence	Appeared to be back to fund-raising
	Various reps.	'... raffle ...' .. 'swap shop, paying 5 pence per time'	
		silence	
	Boy rep	asked 'When will the cottages be open?'	
15.20	Chairman	answered 'Some time in May'	Pupils began tapping on desks with pencils.
		silence	

	Mr. Simison	told everyone to be quiet.	AHT returned.
	Mr. Simison	asked if there were any more suggestions.	A vague piece of leadership.
	Various reps	answered at once.	Muddled replies.
15.23	Boy rep	said 'Fines for dropping paper.'	
	Girl rep	'Give rewards for picking up paper.'	
	Boy rep	asked, 'What about the gates at the end of the field?'	The question was not meaningful to anyone, apparently.
	AHT Mr. Simison	signalled to the chairman to 'end off now'.	
15.25	Chairman	said 'Thank you all for comin'.	Blunt.

Overall Impression

An immature group.

The AHT's presence was essential. The chairman displayed very limited skills, as might be expected of an S1 pupil who had not been prepared for the task.

#### 4A.6 SECOND-YEAR COUNCIL

If improved competence and better organisation were expected of the Second-Year Council, then these appeared to have been realised, to some extent at least.

There were still difficulties of organisation due to numbers, there being 12 boy and 12 girl representatives. Desks arranged roughly in a square was a modest response to a difficult problem. Three Guidance teachers shared the responsibility for supervision and they might well have pooled their thinking more about this particular problem and others.

The need for skilled supervision on the part of the teacher was apparent to the visitor. The teacher knowing where to position her/himself was a matter of basic importance: one teacher chose to patrol round the group when it was in session, adding his voice to the proceedings from wherever he happened to be.

Intervention varied in nature and purpose. Sometimes there was encouragement: 'I'm sorry, I'm talking too much'. Sometimes there was a reprimand: 'You should come here with points for discussion; this is your meeting, not mine'. Sometimes an opinion was expressed, e.g. on the virtues of homework when this was under attack. Sometimes explanations were offered - 'school cannot open more often in the evenings because of expenditure cuts'. To some teachers at least the role when overseeing a Council meeting differed little from that when teaching in the classroom.

In spite of teacher criticism of pupil councillors, a study of agendas, minutes and observational records revealed a varied list of issues raised in Council meetings. Predictably, perhaps, most referred either to school conditions and facilities or to social activities - altering the length of breaks, opening of more toilets at lunchtimes, provision of S2 common room, provision of facilities for making tea for those with packed lunches, improvement of the tuck shop, opening of the swimming pool at lunchtimes, organisation of more clubs in the evenings, and so on.

Such a list would be misleading if it suggested that there was full discussion of these issues. A study of comments, of notes and of observational data, suggested otherwise. Matters were sometimes only mentioned and not discussed at all. When there was discussion

this was often superficial and inconclusive. However, some of the more contentious matters did invoke more comment from more people, leading to a more definite conclusion. Discussion of school uniform, for example, included the usual arguments, with attacks on the double standards which permitted female staff to wear trousers while girl pupils were forbidden to do so. That school uniform should be totally abolished was carried unanimously. An equally strong attack on the need to do homework, however, did not lead to an unequivocal outcome; votes were tied at 9:9, with 7 abstentions! The teacher present interpreted this as a decision that there should be less homework (not abolition) and he suggested that it should go forward as such.

A third issue of a contentious kind has some bearing on this enquiry as a whole: the use of S5/6 pupils on stair-duty was considered. Feelings were expressed strongly that senior pupils should not be given the power and the authority which these duties seemed to carry. From a study of the various Councils the picture which emerges is that of senior pupils aspiring to power and privilege with younger pupils expressing objections and resentment of that idea.

The S2 Council, then, appeared to be functioning reasonably well, and the arrangements overall were workmanlike, as the following specimen minute suggests. Among other things this minute indicates that this school, and the development of pupil councils, was at that time attracting interest from outside.

#### *SECOND YEAR PUPIL COUNCIL*

##### *Minutes of Meeting Held on Wednesday 19 November 1975*

*The Chairman, S Hearn, welcomed pupils to the meeting.*

*The Minutes of the last meeting were read.*

*Apologies:* *M McWilliams - 2D*  
*Substitute - T Campsie*

##### *Report from School Council:*

*J Mullen told the meeting that the Headmaster did not like the idea of five minutes off Period 5. Five minutes off afternoon registration was suggested but it would then be too short. The final solution is -*

five minutes off morning registration and five minutes off interval. Lunch break is now 1235 hrs to 1345 hrs.

The discussion about uniform was postponed until the next meeting.

#### POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

##### School Buses

M O'Brien asked why Carnwadrie couldn't have a special bus as Arden does. Mr McNeill pointed out that the school has already asked for a bus but it concerns the transport dept, so perhaps the parents should approach them.

The point was raised that vandalism on the buses could play a large part in the Corporation's refusal to give a bus. J Mullen asked all councillors to put it to their own classes that if vandalism was stopped, there might be a chance of getting a bus.

##### Travel Passes & Dinner Tickets

Lynn Galloway asked if it would be possible to have a type of transcard in order to stop travel passes being lost or stolen. There would have to be a stamped photograph, like a passport has.

Dinner tickets have the same problem of being lost or stolen. It was agreed that representatives from 2nd Year would ask the Headmaster about a travel pass and dinner ticket on a yearly basis. He would also be asked if the quantity of portion of school dinner could be increased.

##### School Cottages

Two years ago £2,000 was raised for the cottages.

Nothing more has been heard about them. According to the Headmaster the price has gone up. It was agreed that we would try to raise the extra money by sponsored walks, raffles etc. Also we will ask the Headmaster about having another disco in the dinner break. However, first we will ask him about the exact position regarding the cottages.

### Second Year Christmas Dance/Party

The majority of pupils want a dance in the evening. Mr McNeill and Miss Malone would be willing to come to help, but we also need some other teachers to come along. We would also need to ask the corporation for the let of the hall. There would be no smoking. It would have to be on a Tuesday or Wednesday and finish no later than 2200 hrs. School Council representatives will ask the Headmaster.

### Violence and Bullying

It was agreed that it was the responsibility of the councillors to influence their classmates with regard to bullying, extortion, graffiti etc. Also their general behaviour in class, especially in the case of young inexperienced teachers, whose lives can be made a misery by a few hooligans in each class. The people who behave like this just want attention, and we can see that they don't get it.

### Assessments and Options

Options are decided by you, your parents and the school, and also by what kind of job you want to do. The point was raised that 2nd Year is a bit early to make such important decisions. Should it be left to 3rd Year?

### Latecoming and Truancy

Will discos stop truancy? They might, but would not help latecoming in the morning. Some pupils can't be bothered hurrying. It was generally agreed that it is the same people who are late every day, and these are not necessarily the ones who live furthest from the school. A suggestion was made that the names of latecomers are written down, and if they are late more than three or four times they should be punished. It was also pointed out that no employer will employ someone with a reference which says that the person is a consistent latecomer.

*Present at a large part of our meeting was a visitor from the Common Market, a German. He was very impressed with our meeting and the fact that people so young could conduct a meeting so well. So our meeting was a success. At the close of the meeting we decided that we should meet at least once a month.*

#### 4A.7 THIRD-YEAR COUNCIL

The third-year Council prompted special interest for a number of reasons. Being older, a little more might be expected of the pupils\*and this turned out to be so. Especially significant was the part played by the Principal Teacher (Guidance) who had responsibilities for the third year. The head had suggested that the Council under this Principal Teacher's charge might be interesting and it proved to be the case.

Since the organisation of the school was such that the Guidance staff 'moved up' with the pupils, the Council arrangements for these pupils had been administered by this Principal Teacher (Guidance) in the previous year, when the pupils had been in Year Two. He gave the Council an undoubted sense of direction and purpose without exerting too dominating or too inhibiting an influence; pupil councillors spoke more often and more freely in his presence.

The meetings were timetabled to occur during an S3 Guidance period, with the result that all councillors could easily be withdrawn. An announcement over the tannoy reminded the representatives about meetings, for example at 2 p.m. for a meeting commencing at 2.15 p.m, telling them to go to the study-room adjoining the Library.

This room, although small, provided good conditions for meetings. The room was carpeted and furnished with easy chairs and low tables, although 24 pupils were more than could be accommodated without the careful placing of furniture beforehand, and this was not always done.

The representatives were left to find their own seats and the members almost invariably grouped themselves, boys in one part of the room, girls in another.

The Principal Teacher or Assistant Principal Teacher of Guidance attended. Six of the pupil representatives had known Council responsibilities as members of the Second-Year Council.

\* *Opinion offered in schools (supported by the author's assumptions about the greater maturity of 14 year-olds) was that S3 Year Councils were likely to be much more effective.*



At the inaugural meeting, with reminders at subsequent meetings, the Principal Teacher explained the purpose of the Council: it was a means of representing the views of the pupils. He stressed the importance of regular contact between classes and representatives and indicated that this could best be arranged during the Wednesday Guidance period (presumably the staff were all aware of this) when they should see if their classmates had anything to raise. A little surprisingly, perhaps, no mention was made (when the researcher was present) of the complementary need for representatives to report back to their classes after Council meetings.

The thoroughness characterising the Principal Teacher's way of handling things was also apparent in the conduct of the elections of office-bearers. Proposals were called for and noted; voting took place; pupils accepted (or refused; some refused even after voting had taken place, thus causing the elections to be conducted again!) and the chairman took over the meeting. The Principal Teacher's style was geared to helping pupils learn about the tasks and procedures associated with the running of any representative committee.

One respect in which this was noticeable was in the way in which the Principal Teacher drew on the experience of those six pupils who had been representatives on the S2 Year Council in the previous session: for example, regarding their views on the frequency of meetings and the nature and extent of contact between representatives and the classes which they represented. This overt attempt to exploit cumulative experience of Councils was something to be encouraged.

Not that the Principal Teacher\* held an unorthodox view on the idea of Councils. He accepted the spirit and the letter of the Final Draft Paper and he kept this clearly in mind. Like other teachers he was anxious that pupils should not harbour false or exaggerated ideas regarding the power and influence of the Councils. 'There is always someone above us who takes decisions', he said on one occasion.

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\* The Principal Teacher left this school subsequently and he moved to become Assistant Head Teacher (Guidance) and then the Adviser in Guidance.

That person in the school situation might very well be the Headteacher and it was mentioned more than once that he could appear at any meeting in school without giving notice. This occurred once when the researcher was there: the Head arrived with a Police Inspector (Community Involvement). The chairman anyway was not overawed by their presence and he immediately asked the Head about the current restrictions on the letting of schools - this was relevant to the matter then under discussion.

The item which followed that on the agenda concerned litter in the playground, or 'rubbish in the yard' as the usual phrase had it. The Headteacher entered into the discussion, prodding the group, as a teacher might, into responses and suggestions. As was consistent with other pupil opinion expressed elsewhere in Council business, there was some strong feeling against pupil responsibilities which in any way resembled those of prefects. One boy, certainly not overawed by the presence of visitors, suggested that the Head himself might do more patrolling of the playground! Various other matters were discussed. The Head left when there was no reaction to his question, "Are any other things bothering you?"

In general terms the issues raised followed a pattern similar to that which applied to other groups and other years. Points placed on the agenda by 'management' included fund-raising, and problems over litter, graffiti and truancy: it seemed to be becoming almost standard practice that Councils discussed at least some of these matters each year. An issue of specific relevance to S3 was that concerning the success or otherwise of the choice of options made at the end of S2: here the purpose was apparently to do with communication - telling the pupils how things were being monitored so that those not coping with choices made could be assisted.

One other issue did provoke a good deal of quite heated debate at several meetings. Apparently, Alison, the S3 Girl representative on the top-tier School Council was not herself a member of the S3 Year Council. This was challenged by one Boy representative, Stephen, who saw this as 'anomalous because she did not represent an S3 class', to use his own words. The Chairman defended the position saying that the explanation was simple: none of the S3 Council Girl members would agree to nomination. Chairman added

that Alison had attended well. Stephen retorted that these were childish points and he demanded a vote. On a show of hands Alison received a vote of confidence by 10:4 votes, although this question was to come up again later.

The arrangements for the visitation by a group of pupils and staff from another school about to establish School Councils also came up for discussion. Surprisingly this was apparently given more attention here at S3 Council level than at full School Council level (see below). This was probably due to greater awareness about Councils on the part of the Principal Teacher. However, what riled these pupils was the decision not to go below S4 in choosing membership of the reception group! They wished to be involved.

One event of considerable significance for this Council demands comment. From the beginning the Principal Teacher had made it clear that he did not wish to dominate the proceedings. In private conversations with the researcher he explained that he saw himself as having a diminishing role, and he may have said something along those lines to the councillors. In any event the request was put to him by the representatives that the S3 Year Council should meet in private. The Principal Teacher reminded the Council that no meeting could bar staff totally e.g. the Headteacher could walk into any meeting at any time. The Principal Teacher's reaction to something that he had predicted and encouraged was, therefore, a cautious one. He suggested that they should be on their own at the next meeting and that he would be nearby in case he was required. He added that they should not regard this as an opportunity to 'have a right good go at them' (i.e. staff).

The pupils' formal comment on the value of what went on behind closed doors was contained in printed minutes issued subsequently:-

*"As requested, our last meeting was held without any member of staff being present. The main reason we requested this was to see if pupils would be more 'open' and would be less shy in putting forward their ideas. We must admit that this meeting was not a success. None of the points on the agenda was discussed in any depth, possibly because we lacked the advice*

*of a member of staff on matters of school policy. For the future we have requested the attendance of a member of staff at our meetings".*

In general this conclusion was confirmed in conversations which the researcher had with the pupils. The chairman described it as a disaster. Contributions were in fact fewer; more people sat quietly. However, some matters of substance were discussed.

A decision had been taken not to have Alison as an S3 representative on the full School Council, thus reversing an earlier decision.

The question of late-coming by pupils also received attention and the extreme solutions of suspension or expulsion were reportedly mentioned. At a more constructive level two pupils, Jim and Mairi, had argued that the main reason for truancy lay in the school's failure to provide meaningful alternatives to 'O' Grades.

Clearly the Headteacher and others saw the S3 Council as achieving more than most, and this was borne out by the findings of this enquiry. A great deal seemed to depend upon the leadership of the Principal Teacher (Guidance) who was sensitive to the broader issues, and to the fine detail as the following specimen agenda shows.

*3rd Year Pupils' Council Meeting - 21st September 1976 - Period 6*

- AGENDA
- 1. Fund Raising*
  - 2. Rubbish in the Yard*
  - 3. Girls Toilets - not enough*
  - 4. Smoking in both boys and girls toilets*
  - 5. Meeting of Pupils' Council Year Representatives on Wednesday with Head Teacher*

*J. McNeill*

*Principal Teacher (Guidance)*

*20th September 1976*

**4A.8 S4 AND S5/6 COUNCILS**

In contrast with the S3 situation, the S4 and S5/6 Councils seemed at the time to be achieving much less.

However, these Councils were not often observed directly, largely by design and always because of limitations of time.

The S4 Council was said to offer little that was new or different and S5/6 representation was to be seen in the full Pupil School Council, the top tier.

In the case of S4 one interesting fact was that the boys were out of favour and an S4 Girls Council was functioning regularly and separately. When an equalising of privileges or a sharing of social events with the boys was mentioned, the Principal Teacher in charge of the S4 Girls Council said that he did 'not have faith in the boys' and the Assistant Principal Teacher present echoed this by saying that 'the boys were not capable of responsible action'. The hope was expressed that the girls might succeed and provide 'a model for the boys to follow'.

It was clear that, in the estimation of these members of staff at least, the S4 Council existed, not as a right but as a privilege in itself or closely bound to privileges which may come as a result.

#### 4A.9 THE FULL SCHOOL COUNCIL

The top-tier was called, rather strangely, the 'Executive Council'. There was no evidence that it ever lived up to its name by receiving issues to be acted upon from the lower tier.

However, it did begin and continue to operate on the lines set out in the Final Draft Paper. The Depute Head Teacher referred to this document at the inaugural meeting. He mentioned that the group consisted of pairs of representatives sent by the Year Councils and that the prime object of the operation was to improve communication in the school.

Five meetings were attended, a sixth was video-recorded (see accompanying videotape) and the progress at others was discussed from time to time with the Head Teacher and the Depute Head Teacher.

Meetings were customarily held during school time, either first period in the afternoon or last period in the day, in the comfortable Library Tutorial Room which was carpeted and equipped with soft chairs, low tables and one teacher's table of the usual type. The way in which people sat was to some extent left to chance and it did not always result in the best arrangement, some pupils not sitting where they could best contribute. Those not facing the chairman or with the backs of others immediately in front of them, seemed left out of the proceedings.

The attendance was generally good: only those representatives who were absent from school could reasonably not appear. However, when meetings were called by tannoy, the message was not always received nor always understood, being confused with announcements about Year Council meetings. The question of a quorum was discussed but not resolved. On one occasion a stand-in took the place of a representative. On another occasion neither of the S2 representatives were present.

Initially the Depute Headteacher necessarily played a major role. He took the chair, explained the purpose of the exercise and oversaw the nomination of office-bearers. These were obtained with difficulty but once the four 'volunteers' has been found, the Depute Head handed over to the chairman.

Yet he continued to play an influential part. There were occasions when his knowledge, advice and guidance were necessary. The chairman sometimes needed encouragement and prompting, perhaps before the meeting commenced. The secretary sometimes needed help in presenting the minutes. However, on some occasions the Depute Head seemed to over-step the mark, dominating proceedings, inhibiting pupil contributions, when the opposite was called for. Worse still, his manner sometimes left much to be desired, for example, when addressing the boys as 'OK son', and in his occasional lack of respect for the chair. The impression gained by the author was that the Depute Head's own practice did not offer a 'good' model.\*

That the pupils lacked the necessary skills was quickly apparent, nor was it surprising. The chairman had to learn how to open the meeting, how to ensure that issues were adequately discussed and how to obtain contributions from all or most of the group. The secretary was equally uncertain as to the nature of her function. Both made progress over the months and their replacements showed further progress.

If the key office-bearers showed deficiencies, so did the other councillors. Contributions tended to come from three or four people, and there was a lack of substance to points made. It seemed reasonable to suppose that, although there were gradual improvements all round, the way to greater progress lay outside the meetings in the preparation and follow-up.

\* This impression emerged from Headteacher comment, from personal contact with the Depute Head over a number of years, from observations of pupil-council meetings and from study of

The issues raised were always serious and always important to the pupils. Social matters understandably figured high in the pupils' thinking. S2 representatives wished to argue that they were old enough to be allowed to organise a disco in the evening. S4 pupils were anxious to gain admission to the S5/6 dance. The demands for facilities were also to the fore, especially the demand for improved or extended common-room facilities for various groups. Sometimes the matters for discussion were put on the agenda by the Head or the Depute Head and these tended to concern school standards of one kind or another - the problems associated with litter in school, graffiti on the walls, and pupil-latecoming: the Council was for ideas on how to deal with these problems. Other matters put forward regularly by staff related to the raising of money for school funds.

Two other kinds of issue related more directly to questions of power and authority. The councillors themselves, or some of them, seemed keen to advance their own power. Questions to do with monitorial duties came up from time to time, either to extend them or defend them. Much emotion was invested in discussion of the fact that monitors in the dining room 'were given cheek' by pupils. One other matter of this kind raised by pupils was that a prefect system should be established and operated. This generated much heated discussion centring on the point that pupils chosen as prefects would be very much at risk.

Occasionally the issue discussed approached the borderline of what would be permissible in the eyes of some, if perfectly reasonable in the estimation of others. Take the question of late-coming; it was argued that pupils were sometimes late because the school buses were late, and that certain named teachers refused to accept this as an excuse. Individual teachers were being criticised. Take also the question of the S5/6 common room. Damage had been done there and the privilege of using the room had been suspended. The chairman reported that pupils had seriously thought of withdrawing their services from dining room and stair duties. However, the use of the room had been restored to them some weeks later and the threat of 'industrial action' had been averted!

Because this top tier was called the Executive committee, and for general reasons, a matter of great importance was that of the

outcome of the discussion of issues raised. The procedures making possible a practical outcome did exist, principally through the direct contact which the chairman had or could have after each meeting. In addition, the presence of the Depute Headteacher at the meetings meant that he himself could take up some of the matters discussed.

Outcomes seemed to be of two kinds, (i) in actual results and (ii) through explanations. Results of a practical kind were achieved on some occasions, for example in the granting of extra and improved facilities. On other occasions explanations were offered: for example, it was explained that there could be no improvement in toilets provision until the question (then being discussed by the Staff Council) of accommodation for staff had been resolved.

Sometimes, of course, outcomes in each of these respects seemed less than satisfactory, particularly the second. It was not always made clear to pupils why such had to be the case, why they should not concern themselves with staff late-coming, for example. They were simply told that this was not ignored and was dealt with properly.

It would be wrong, of course, not to recognise that the deliberations and discussions had value in themselves, even when there was no practical outcome. It was worthwhile to discuss vandalism, the merits and demerits of perfect systems, and the extended use of school premises, even though there were no ready solutions to the problems which these matters revealed. There was evidence from pupil reactions that these discussions were valued by them; what was unfortunate was that a single period was not always long enough to allow the discussion to run its course.

The Headteacher at that time was positive in the belief that a two-tier arrangement was the best, and we have seen something of the workings of the Year Councils and, now, of the top tier. Reference has already been made to Headteacher thinking and it would be appropriate to provide more details of his views as expressed in a recorded interview.

#### 4A. 10 AIRTH SCHOOL : EDITED SCRIPT OF TELE RECORDED INTERVIEW

T.A. *I'd like to turn now to the question of the involvement of pupils. You have had for some time, not perfect systems in your school*



*but a system of pupil councils, at Year level, and there is a top tier, a School Pupil Council. Can I ask how you arrived at the decision that there should be this sort of formal involvement of pupils?*

H.T. There are two reasons. The first one, mentioned to you a long time ago, is that it is an axiom for me that people who are affected by any decision that I or the Board of Studies take have the basic right to be consulted about that decision, to have that decision explained to them. And I think that pupils fall into that category. Second, and more important, if we are going to retain six-year comprehensive schools, as I hope we are, not hiving pupils off at the end of S4, then I think that we have to introduce a much greater degree of involvement by pupils, especially as they grow up and become more mature. And so, when I spoke of the training of staff, I am also very much concerned with the training of pupils. Mr McElhone\* always talks about having more industrial relations in the school. Well, this is an industrial relations exercise, and therefore I was anxious to get the pupils involved from a very early stage and I would say that during the past two years the signs are there, that the pupils doing this have much greater confidence, confidence in their ability to speak in public, to argue a case, and confidence to come to people like me with their case.

T.A. *So you've given two reasons: firstly that pupils ought to be consulted, at least they ought to have an opportunity to voice their opinions. You've also said that the school is a place for them to be prepared for later involvement in democratic society, in industrial society, to take up your point.*

*A particular question about Airth is, how did you come to have a two-tier system of pupil councils?*

H.T. As you can well imagine, Ted, yet another committee was formed to look at this problem and a draft report was circulated to staff for comments. Then a second draft was produced, then the final draft.

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\* At that time Frank McElhone was Under-Secretary of State for Scotland with responsibility for Education, in a Labour government.

And it was fairly unanimous in the end that the two-tier system had two basic advantages. First of all, by taking pupils on a year level, you had a kind of homogeneous group. The children in the first year tended to talk about a different set of problems, and the children in the first year felt freer to talk in that set-up.

The second advantage of having two tiers was that we could not devise a system of school councils which adequately reflected the pupils if in fact it was going to be so large that it would become administratively rather clumsy and we felt particularly that the ones at the bottom end of the school might feel very inhibited about speaking.

T.A. *I've seen different pupil council situations in schools and there are the problems that you mention.*

*One big problem that I notice is the problem of the early-leaver - it's always the problem of the early-leaver, of course. So often they get missed out altogether. Certainly if there is a concentration on the main school council this means senior pupils. Do you think in Airth that the early-leaver has had a good opportunity to be elected, for example?*

H.T. Yes. This has happened.

The strange thing about the school council is that it has not been the ablest pupils who have been nominated for the councils. The children, apart from one particular instance, have acted in a very responsible manner. When I say they didn't go for the ablest, I mean the ablest intellectually. In fact one boy has recently been taken off the pupil council because his behaviour and so on was not considered suitable ...

T.A. *By the pupils?*

H.T. ... Yes by the pupils, not by me, by the pupils themselves, and I think this reflects a growing sense of responsibility.

T.A. *Indeed it does.*

H.T. The only thing we have to do, Ted, is break through into the age of women's lib because the chairmen of the councils are all boys and the secretaries are all women. Perhaps this is the next stage in the training!

T.A. *A subsidiary point concerns the link between the Pupil School Council and the external school Council. Is there a link?*

H.T. Yes. The link is that the pupil representative on the (external) School Council speaks at the meeting of the Pupil School Council about what has been happening at the School Council.

T.A. *A reporting back?*

H.T. Yes, a reporting back, in the same way as the parent representative addresses the parents association when they meet and keeps them up to date with what is going on.

T.A. *Are there any other difficulties or problems about pupil councils not yet mentioned?*

H.T. The important thing, it seems to me, is that if I were talking to a head who wanted to set this one up, I would say for heavens sake don't be despondent, you will be disappointed, but don't let the despondency involve you too much, I think they are very difficult, in the same way that parents' associations are not easy. It is easy to say, yes, we want the pupils to be involved, but I think it takes a number of years for this to happen. The present pupil council at Airth is a lot better than it was 2½ years ago, as you yourself would say.

T.A. *I would indeed.*

H.T. You can see the children becoming used to the system. They have to have time to get used to it. Anyone who sets out on this road, should not be too disappointed if the results are not all that good initially. I would say it probably takes a number of years to get the whole thing established and for the pupils to get used to the idea.

It is extremely important that those pupils who are nominated be given the opportunity to go back to their class in a guidance slot or whatever and to talk back, and say this is what we've been discussing, so that it's not simply the involvement of a small group of pupils. If that is all you mean by a pupil council I would say, forget it.

T.A. *I'm sure you're right. And this underlines the important role of teachers - teachers at the form/class level, the register class level. There's got to be good opportunity for pupils to do the*

*things you've just mentioned.*

H.T. Yes, I suppose that initially the guidance would be more involved but I would like to think that the registration teachers would become more involved and take an interest in what was going on, and stir the children up to become more involved in this kind of thing.

The important thing is to make sure that there is this reporting back, that you don't get too disappointed if the results are not all that obvious in the initial stages.

T.A. *Good. You've described pupil participation in a formal way. I want to put this additional question to you - The pupil council, is it the full answer? Or has it to go along with something else, in terms of pupils having a place in school, pupils feeling, more than they have in the past, that they've got a role in things?*

H.T. I think you're right, to think that we are only at the beginning of the road. What I would object to is to go full blast, and take pupils who've not been trained in this kind of thing at all, and start to give them participation in big decisions affecting the school. But I would imagine, in the years to come, when pupils have been given this kind of training, that gradually they will have a voice ...

T.A. *Even if finance were involved, for example?*

H.T. Yes ... the difficulty with finance is that there are legal difficulties and there are other problems: for example, sometimes, the Headteacher, with the consent of the Senior staff and the finance committee, might disburse the money in such a way that it would not be desirable that pupils should know. It may be, in the future, that we would have a set of pupils who would have a say, and who would treat that kind of confidential information with the respect it deserves. I am talking about ex gratia welfare payments, such as helping some very deprived youngsters to go on a school excursion, or something like this.

I think this is the beginning. The great nettle which the profession will have to grasp is that, when we talk about pupil involvement, when we talk about parental involvement, when we talk about how they are not much good, because they never seem to talk about anything really important, the really important thing that

goes on in the school is the curriculum, what happens to the pupils between the hours of 9 and 4 ...

T.A. *Will pupils have more say in curriculum?*

H.T. Yes ... it is time for the profession to recognise that this will come, and therefore we shouldn't be frightened of it. We should be prepared to train parents and pupils to take a responsible attitude. It is up to us, in response to this need of the future, to start drawing up plans.

T.A. *Thank you.*

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On this note, struck by the Headmaster of Airth School as he looked ahead to future developments, we may now turn to the second case study school.

SCHOOL B - BRAE SCHOOL

## CASE STUDY SCHOOL B : BRAE SECONDARY SCHOOL

### 4B.1 INTRODUCTION

Brae School, coming later to the idea of formal pupil involvement, to some extent built on the experience of Airth School. The initiative also came quite clearly from the Headmaster.

This second school, although non-denominational, was in many respects like the first. The Pupil School Council idea could be seen against a similar social and educational backcloth.

It was similarly located in a typical and uninspiring outer-city housing area. There was no private housing nearby, nowhere very close where staff would be likely to reside.

The role was smaller and falling (By the time these enquiries were being written up in a final form the decline in secondary school rolls had really begun to make itself felt.) although one or two RC pupils had begun to enrol for a number of reasons\*. A significant Asian population was growing too and the school employed a teacher-specialist in 2EL; there was also the possibility that a teacher of Urdu might join the staff. Because of a set of social problems similar to that which the first school, Airth, experienced, compounded by the presence of children of Asian origin, the need for close links between home and school, for substantial involvement of parents, pupils and staff was most apparent.

Some twelve years earlier the original school bearing the same name was in old buildings, enjoying a strong academic tradition. As one reads in a booklet for parents, "The old school had a very high reputation, long-held and well-deserved. For almost a

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\* Initially the issue seemed to be a dislike of or a clash with the authority of the neighbouring R.C. comprehensive school. On 2.4.79 two boys arrived to ask to transfer, saying that they did not like the teachers nor the pupils: 'The ither dae ah got a doin', the other said that the Head there had ordered him to take an earring off but, 'Ah widn'y d'it'. Not surprisingly these pupils were not enrolled. They were told to come back with their parents (when the transfer might have to be accepted). In the meantime the one Head would telephone the other. The head of Brae School says the staff complain unfairly, that 'we just get the RC dregs'. More recently the flow of RC pupils had begun to increase as parents sought to avoid expensive bus journeys for their pupils.

hundred years people were proud to say that they were associated with Brae School".

The new buildings were typical of those built in the 1960's, box-like with plenty of glass, still institutional, rather drab and unexciting in appearance. Internally the buildings were very much the new version of the old, with separate classrooms, egg-crate like in pattern. Not that this was the whole story: Library, Common Rooms and specialist areas for Art and Home Economics etc., and the Swimming Pool, all gave the building an important quality.

Academically the school faced those problems which comprehensive education brought: "... many new pupils were admitted and the school became a comprehensive one ... In the last ten years there have been many changes in society, especially in education, and during that time the school has been building a new identity, a new tradition and a new reputation." (Booklet to parents).

#### 4B.2 MANAGEMENT STYLE AND STRUCTURE

Headteachers differ as people and they differ as Heads of schools. Also appointed at a relatively young age, in his early 40's, this Head, Mr. Stone, was equally energetic and dedicated, but he differed from the Head of Airth School in personality and general approach to the management. His management style had, perhaps, a little less impact, and it was closer to the democratic position (Paisey & Paisey 1980). He tended to see few decisions as his alone, more for the Board of Studies, as in the case of the S4 examination issue raised by the S4 Year Council and referred to below.

Other decision-making structures existed, including the Suspension Board (consisting of Headteacher, Depute Headteacher, a Principal Teacher of Guidance and the School Social Worker) to take the decision when a pupil might have to be suspended. Various committees were also in existence e.g. the S3/S4 Common Core Committee, and the Committee on Remedial and Immigrant Education,



although neither had been as productive as the Head had hoped. The Discipline Committee was interesting - it dealt with all matters to do with School Rules and it had produced a revision of the Movement About the School Section, for example. What was particularly interesting was that the Head had appointed a "'hard man' as chairman to show the staff that it is not always 'soft' policy that carries the day", to use the Head's own words.

This was clearly in line with the impression that he showed sensitivity to the opinions and feelings of others and was reluctant ever to ride rough-shod over them. In manner he was undoubtedly milder than some Heads, and as a result he was open to this charge of being 'too soft'. The staff thought that this was so - he himself said so. Was the atmosphere a 'wrong' one when a girl pupil could come up to the Head in the corridor and comment on his recent haircut, saying, 'Sir, you've had a baldie'? There were various other observed instances during Council meetings when pupils' manners towards the Head would have been described by some as less than polite. None of these instances would have been seen by Mr. Stone as other than appropriate in the circumstances, although he was always prepared to listen to criticism from any source.

As in the case of the Headmaster of Airth School, Mr. Stone was well-known beyond the school, because of his special interest and pioneering efforts in the field of Guidance, especially Careers Guidance. He was regularly called upon to join committees and to speak at meetings. His awareness of management principles was no less, but it differed in origin and emphasis, perhaps. The origin was more intuitive, more completely derived from experience, less from the study of works on management. The emphasis differed in that it was more guidance-orientated. "Our school should be itself a community and play a part of value in the community around us", he said on one occasion.

The word 'community' and what that meant was clearly of central importance to this Headteacher, and it was out of that that his notion of the Pupil Council sprang. "I see the Councils as part of the whole business of setting up the school as a community rather than simply as an institution", he said. And, "I feel that pupils are the most important people in the school and if they do not have chance to express their opinions then it is not doing its job fully". Community/school/pupil-involvement; these three went closely together, then, in this Head's thinking.

#### 4B.3 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUPIL COUNCIL

How did the Pupil Council idea emerge and develop in this school? The steps taken were true to the thinking as outlined, in three key respects. Firstly, the initial Discussion Paper, written by the Headteacher, linked Community Councils (not yet established), School Councils and Pupils Councils: "The introduction over the last few years, of pupil or pupil-teacher councils in schools may be seen as a similar development or as a logical extension of the student councils which have existed for some time in universities and colleges".

Secondly the approach to the idea was not authoritarian but based on the view that others in the school should be involved.

Thirdly, the machinery that was set up involved pupils as well as staff from the start. A Study Group was formed consisting of three staff and seven pupils with a remit requiring them to study what other schools had done and to make recommendations to the Headteacher.

The Study Group took its task seriously. The Discussion Paper was examined carefully and practice elsewhere was investigated, with a visit paid to a school whose councils were already established. The school visited was in fact Airth School referred to in this enquiry.

The work of the Study Group did not proceed without difficulties and disagreements. One staff member, seeing himself (probably rightly, said the Head) as the only one doing the work, had reacted aggressively, and not in ways which did him credit. For the seven pupils some of the reality of involvement was already beginning to make itself apparent!

In the Report submitted by the Study Group, dated 14th June 1976, a system along the lines of that seen in operation at Airth was recommended. There were to be two tiers, one consisting of Year Councils, the other the full Pupil School Council composed of two representatives of each Year Council. The Report was circulated to all pupils in classes S4 to S6, as well as to all staff, for their comments. In fact no responses were received from anyone, neither pupils nor staff, and the way was deemed clear for the establishment of the Councils as recommended, beginning early in the next session.

By about nine weeks into the session all the Year Councils were in existence, though they were not all at the same stage of development. The blueprint gave an important role to the Teacher Adviser who was to be chosen by each Council, and some Councils had already persuaded a teacher to act in this capacity. The S3 and S4 Year Councils had gone further by selecting a boy and a girl from their number to represent them on the full Pupil School Council once established. The S1/Year Council had also begun to consider this next step. Perhaps because of a pre-occupation with other things, the joint S5/6 Year Council had apparently made the least progress.

This good, early progress was maintained and by January all the Councils were meeting, each with its Teacher Adviser present or in the wings, and minutes were being produced regularly by the Secretary. The Chairman role was also being discharged quite successfully in each Council, and in taking points from the Council to the Headteacher for his comments and response.

A very good illustration was afforded by a matter emerging from the deliberations of the S4 Year Council and backed by a petition signed by 50 fourth year pupils. The issue concerned the period when the O-Grade examinations were being held and when the final examination preparation was seen as of vital importance. The S4 Year Council, on behalf of all fourth-year examination candidates, was demanding parity with S5/6 who did not go to classes when Highers were in progress. The same was demanded for pupils in S4, some of whom had a high O-Grade load.

The Head was very pleased that this matter had come up in the way that it did. The machinery set up was being used in the very manner that was intended.

Mr. Stone's response was that there was pressure from the Regional Council not to release any pupils from classes because of examination commitments, not even S5/6. He added that the law regarding compulsory attendance at school for those under 16 years of age was not to be disregarded.

On reflection the Head also made the point that various alternatives might be open to him, regarding the amount of time that could be allowed off for examination/preparation according to the number of O-Grades being sat.

This matter raised by the S4 Year Council had a clear outcome at that time. The question was put to the Board of Studies. The decision taken by the Board of Studies was that the same arrangements should be for S4 pupils taking O-Grades as for S5/6 pupils taking Highers.

#### 4B.4 THE S2 AND S4 YEAR COUNCILS

Each of these Year Councils was observed in action and useful insights were gained - the accompanying video recordings illustrate the two situations in some detail.

Both Councils were found to be working reasonably well. S2 Councillors, as in Airth School, were showing a little maturity, and meetings were beginning to have a sense of direction and purpose. More time would be required for the necessary skills to be fully developed, and the meetings observed showed some periods of uncertainty and indecision. One comment of importance should be made: it would be wrong to try to hurry this process. In the early years at least meetings must proceed at a leisurely pace so that the young pupils can gain the necessary confidence. There was evidence supporting such a view - some of the less confident councillors gradually come to contribute when a more disciplined approach might have prevented this.

Closely related to this was the role played by the teacher adviser (a young female teacher) who allowed the meetings to develop their own momentum. She tried not to dominate the proceedings, quietly encouraging the pupils in their efforts. Her interventions were kept to the minimum and they were of two kinds:-

- (a) offering guidance on procedure e.g. when the chairman failed to allow the opportunity for matters arising from the minutes to be discussed
- and (b) providing information that was needed e.g. when the children were not aware of the legal position regarding the holding of a raffle.

The teacher adviser (a young male teacher) to the S4 Council took a different stance: he played a more active part in things. This was surprising because the pupil councillors were significantly older and much more capable. The girl chairman in particular (she shows her skills in the video-recorded interview and Council meeting) was well able to cope and she gave good leadership to the Council.

These S4 pupils had plenty to say without prompting and the impression was that the teacher adviser was too dominant.

Sometimes his contributions were helpful, when concerned with procedural matters, for example, but he could be criticised for giving his opinions, and for commenting on issues about which the councillors might have done most of their own thinking. Good examples were found in the lengthy discussions of the proposal to introduce a prefect system into the school - the teacher adviser clearly held strong views on the matter.

#### 4B.5 THE PUPIL SCHOOL COUNCIL

As has already been mentioned, the S5/6 Council was the last to get fully underway and because of that the top tier was later in emerging than had been hoped for.

There were various other reasons why the main School Council did not appear quickly. In the first instance the Headteacher himself was uncertain as to its shape and function, something which he stated openly. A second reason deriving from the first one was that the Council lacked a clear set of guidelines which arguably were essential to its success. In fact, the Headteacher, showing that he had an open mind on the matter put to the Council itself the question as to what function it should have.

At a more prosaic level the Head did put other business their way: he also asked the Council to consider the problems of litter and graffiti which were seriously affecting the school.

None of the meetings was observed at first hand. Two matters of some interest were reported upon by the Head. He noted with regret that there was a tendency for the senior representatives and the junior representatives to talk in separate groups during the meetings. This looked like being a problem, Mr. Stone felt.

Mr. Stone also noted with surprise that one of the first issues raised by the Council on its own initiative was the suggestion that a Prefect System should be created in the school. The Councillors argued for it and the Head put forward counter-arguments. The solution to this deadlock, again on the initiative of the pupils, was that there should be a study group established:

the videotaped discussions which accompany the research contain further details.

These recorded discussions also contain important references to the value of the top-tier in a two-tier system of Councils.

#### 4B.6 ELECTIONS

With the relative success of the previous session behind it, the Pupil Council idea was able to be taken into 1978-79 with some confidence. The details were more clearly understood and the Elections to Year Councils were able to proceed in accordance with printed instructions as follows:-

##### Brae Secondary School

Pupil Councils.

Session 1978-79

Here are the details of the arrangements for the election of councils for this session.

1. First year councillors will not be appointed until after the October holiday. This is to allow first year pupils to get to know their class-mates before electing representatives.
2. Second, third and fourth year classes will each elect one boy and one girl as the class representatives on their year council.
3. Fifth and sixth year classes will each elect two boys and two girls as their class representatives on a joint fifth and sixth year council.
4. Register teachers are asked to explain to their classes the procedure for making nominations during afternoon registration on Friday 6th October which will be extended for this purpose.

##### 5. Nominations

All nominations of candidates for election must be in writing. The following must be given: (i) candidate's name and class; (ii) candidate's signature accepting nomination; (iii) signatures of two members of the class who make the nomination.

Nominations will not be accepted after morning registration on Wednesday 11th. Register teachers will read out the full list of nominations at that time.

#### 6. Elections

The election will be held at p5 on Wednesday 11th October.

All classes (except first year) will remain with register teachers in usual rooms to elect representatives.

First year classes will be taken by their register teachers to the Assembly Hall.

#### 7. Voting

The register teacher will put a list of all nominations on the blackboard at afternoon registration and then explain the voting rules to the class. Pupils will cast votes by writing the names of their chosen candidates on separate slips of paper which will then be collected and counted under supervision by the teacher.

All pupils vote for both representatives. In other words every pupil may cast one vote for the girl representative and one vote for the boy.

Election will be decided by simple majority of votes cast.

If no candidate is nominated, the Headmaster must be informed immediately nominations close.

If only one boy or girl is nominated, he or she will be elected unopposed.

In the event of a tie, a second vote must be taken for the tying candidates only. If the result is still a tie, the candidate must be chosen by spinning a coin or drawing lots.

The register teacher will send the names of the pupils elected to the school office and the Headmaster will announce the full lists before the afternoon interval.

#### 8. Normal timetable will be resumed at period 6.



## 9. Office Bearers

Each council will meet the Headmaster or a teacher delegated by him. They will appoint from their number a chair person and secretary. They will then select a member of staff who will be invited to act as adviser to the council.

For all three appointments, candidates must be nominated and seconded by council members and the result decided by majority vote.

In the event of a tie for the election of chairperson, the result will be decided by spinning a coin or drawing lots.

In the event of a tie for the election of secretary or adviser, the result will be decided by the chairperson's casting vote.

4.10.78

R.G. Stone (Headmaster)

These elections did raise some relevant questions and they were not without interest. They were handled with varying degrees of insight and sympathy by the Register Teachers. In one S2 Class observed only one boy and one girl were nominated and there was no contest. In another class the girl representative was elected unopposed but an election of a boy was necessary.

Conversations with S2 Register Teachers revealed differing degrees of awareness, from one who showed understanding and commitment to the idea, to another who did not know why there were elections and who had no notion of the need for those elected to keep in touch with the class and report back to them.

The S5 elections encountered a number of problems. The first was very basic: the room was locked and no key could be found! The DHT was in charge and by the time the room was opened he was in a state of considerable embarrassment, so much so that errors of an arithmetical kind occurred when the time came to count votes!

The S6 election proceeded smoothly under the guidance of the Headteacher and the class then engaged in some discussion of the

Council and its purpose.

One question concerned the choice of a Teacher Adviser. Some Councils wanted the same teacher. One problem concerned the teacher's willingness to take on the task any way. The pupils had no doubt that teacher advice or guidance for the Upper School was necessary.

The question of information flow was also raised - how well-known were the Councils throughout the school? The pupils believed that they were not well-known enough. How could the idea be publicised? How could the customers at the classroom level be kept in the picture?

The Elections then seemed to proceed reasonably well. That is apart from one unpleasant fact that came to light later: the Head received a report that 'Strong-arm tactics' had been used to get certain people onto the First-Year Council.

The work of the Councils, although soon to encounter major difficulties, was then able to begin. The Headteacher saw each as achieving something worthwhile. One Upper School Council meeting was particularly interesting because of the basic issues that it illustrated regarding the functioning of Pupil Councils.

#### 4B.7 UPPER SCHOOL COUNCIL (S5/6)

This particular meeting took place only a few days after another one when it was decided to meet again quickly and to ask the Headteacher and a staff member of the Finance Committee to attend in order to answer some points.

The meeting took place at period 8 and after school in the Social Subjects Base, a small room with comfortable chairs, ideal for holding small-group meetings in a relaxed atmosphere.

The Headteacher explained that it was not possible at such short notice to get someone from the Finance Committee to attend.

One by one the six items from the previous agenda were looked at, and each was directed to the Head, asking at least for comment, if not action.

Mr. Stone was happy to accept this situation; indeed, he saw it as healthy, desirable and a sign of progress. He was most willing to respond. The items were all dealt with clearly and with either immediate or promised results. For example, the Head was able to report on action regarding improved bus services. He said that the demand for no bells during examination weeks would be met.

A great deal of time was spent discussing the wish of the pupils to establish a Former Pupils Club. Two pupils in particular had pressed the idea, to the extent of sizing up the problems and working out the details. The need for moral and financial support from the school, and possibly from other sources, had prompted the decision to raise the matter with Mr. Stone. His reaction in a way seemed designed to discourage the idea; in another way he could be seen simply to want to alert the young people to the depth of the problems of finance, of membership and of organisation generally. This he did without causing the enthusiasm to wane; indeed, the Head showed himself willing to lend all possible support. The other details were not of interest but it is relevant to comment that skills and understanding such as might be obtained through the operation of Pupil Councils could have value later for Pupils who might be engaged in organising and running bodies such as Former Pupil Clubs.

Three other items warranted attention, the first having a bearing on an aspect of curriculum. The S5/6 pupils were very critical of the Discussion/Guidance double-periods, seeing them as a waste of time. Shorter sessions with smaller groups discussing relevant topics in accordance with a properly structured programme were suggested. While defending the existing arrangements, Mr. Stone promised to keep the pupils' criticism in mind for action in the future.

The next item also had a bearing on curriculum. 'What had happened to the school's much acclaimed homework policy?' the pupil representatives asked.

The Head explained what had happened. It was a sad story. The Homework Policy had been drawn up quickly, too quickly he thought. Staff approval was quickly obtained. The Head then thought that the Policy should have been put to parents through the PTA, and also to pupils. There had been delays, due largely to the failure to deliver homework diaries. The chairman of the working party was now going to re-draft the policy statement. Mr. Stone apologised for the delay and he promised to present the document to the pupils before next Friday. As mentioned below, the Headmaster said privately that he saw the emergence of Homework Policy through consultation with all interested parties as something of considerable significance and he was keen to see it realised in this way.

A final matter raised by and discussed with the Upper School Council was also of considerable interest because it concerned pupil representation of the School Finance Committee whose main task was to administer the School Fund. Here also the Headteacher himself wanted to see progress made. He agreed immediately to one point: he had always intended to publish details of how moneys were spent and he would see to it that this was done quickly and regularly.

The question of pupil membership of the Finance Committee was less straightforward. He was very frank with the pupils. He said that he had thought that staff members were ready to accept pupil representation; in fact representatives had been chosen. But there was staff uneasiness\* and last-minute objections had been raised. In his position as Head, Mr. Stone had to be sensitive to the feelings of staff and he had to proceed slowly. The staff view was that issues of a confidential nature might come up in the deliberations of the Finance Committee.

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\* *In fact it was the Depute Head who refused to countenance the idea.*

Mr Stone said that things would have to remain like that for a while. He himself would like to see the Finance Committee re-organised, perhaps for next session. There should also be parent representation because parents raised most of the money. And, hopefully, there would be pupil representation.

We may at this point consider in a little more detail the views of the Head, Mr. Stone, as he gave them in a tele-recorded interview.

#### 4B.8 BRAE SCHOOL : EDITED SCRIPT OF TELE-RECORDED INTERVIEW

T.A. *How do Pupil Councils fit into the overall pattern which you've set up in the school?*

H.T. I see the Councils as part of the whole business of setting up the school as a community rather than simply as an institution. I see it as part of a general system where we have people coming from outside into the school, old folk coming to luncheon clubs, part of the system where youngsters are going out into the nursery school into the community centre. It is part of a general system to look on the school as a community rather than an institution of learning.

T.A. *How was the idea born? What procedures did you see as necessary in order to implement the idea in Brae School?*

H.T. I had seen the idea in another school where it had not worked too well and I was anxious to do it in Brae because I felt that parents, and pupils too ought to be involved in the process of education and ought to have an opportunity to express their views.

I feel that pupils are the most important people in the school and if they do not have a chance to express their opinions then it is not doing its job fully.

To begin with I wrote a discussion paper based on my previous experience of councils and on what other headteachers had said to me. I then formed a committee consisting of some senior members of staff and pupils and I asked them to meet to consider the discussion paper and to prepare a report on what should be done. I also knew of one other school, Airth Secondary school, where councils had been going for some time and arrangements were made for members of the working party to visit that school.

T.A. *So pupils were in it from the beginning?*

H.T. Yes. When setting up something for pupils, it had to be done that way.

Well, we did a good deal of thinking. The pupils were impressed by what they saw at Airth School. They also saw faults, which they wanted to avoid. After thinking carefully, the committee prepared a final report. This went to all members of staff, and to all senior pupils i.e. S1-S4.

The outcome was to be the establishment of a 2-tier system, on the Airth pattern. There was to be a year council for each year in the school consisting of 2 pupils, 1 girl and 1 boy, elected from each class in the year. There would also be on top of that a full school Pupil Council, with 1 boy and 1 girl elected from each of the Year Councils.

T.A. *So you followed the Airth School pattern, with a two-tier system?*

H.T. Yes. I must say a little about this later, because there is a possibility of changing it next year in the light of experience.

T.A. *I see. I must come to asking how things are working out in due course.*

H.T. Yes. To begin with we set up second, third and fourth year councils. I spoke to the year groups, told them what was going to happen then we set up an election system. The elections were held during the guidance period in one week. So in one week we set up S2, S3 and S4 Councils. We delayed the first-year council until a little before Christmas to give the first-year pupils a chance to get to know each other. And we had some difficulty with fifth and sixth year council. The original intention was to have separate councils for S5 and for S6 but the numbers in senior school don't really merit this. So I discussed the matter with fifth and sixth year and we decided to have a single council for S5 and S6 only. That was set up. The first-year council was set up after that, and then the full Pupil Council was set up. An interesting aspect of it - I think Airth probably worked on the same principle - was that each year council was asked to elect its own teacher adviser. And they did this. The teacher adviser's function is just that, to be an adviser to the council.

T.A. *You've moved us into the area of the people who are involved, and there are some very important people. There's your own role, and I am very much interested in that; what your own function has been initially and what it continues to be. And there is the teacher adviser. You are different from Airth here in that the teacher adviser is built into the system in a much more formal way. This is a very important job: the teacher adviser. Tell me more please.*

H.T. Yes, I am not terribly happy with the way the teacher adviser situation had developed. Each year council elected its teacher adviser. My advice to the teacher advisers, the guidelines I gave them, suggested that in the junior school, first and second year in particular, the teacher adviser would normally be present at a meeting, but would not direct the meeting. The council elects its own chairperson and secretary and they are the people responsible for running the meeting. In the senior school my

feeling was that the teacher adviser would not normally be present unless he had asked to attend or unless the council members had asked him to come along to give them advice.

In general what has in fact happened is that the teacher adviser has been present at almost all of the meetings. It has been interesting to observe the different personalities of the teacher advisers. In some cases they have acted in a very non-directive way, having merely supported the chairman if and when necessary. In other cases the teacher adviser I think has probably had too much of an influence having consciously or unconsciously directed the council meetings.

T.A. *Would it be fair to say then, that you want pupils to be as free as possible to let things develop as they want them to develop?*

H.T. Yes. I was very anxious that the council should not be influenced by the teacher adviser however sympathetic and however reasonable that person may be. In fact I think there is some evidence, in one council at least, that the teacher adviser tends to side with one or two people on the council. And I have noticed that when arguments are made against the favoured group, the teacher adviser will then intercede and argue on the side of the favoured group. That's something that I would prefer not to see. I can remember in another school seeing a school council largely destroyed because the teacher in charge was not prepared to allow the pupils to have freedom of speech and freedom to criticise what is going on in the school. It is terribly important, if you are going to have pupil councils, that the pupils must have the right to say that they are not satisfied with what is going on in the school.

T.A. *The teacher adviser is very important. May I ask about someone else, the register teacher? Is there someone there at the register class level who has some part in the scheme of things. For example, I am thinking of the original election of class representatives to the year councils. I am also thinking of possible feed-back situations where the representatives would require an*



*opportunity to come back to their classes, to say things, and to ask for further instructions.*

H.T. We haven't got this organised on a formal basis at present and I suspect that one of the weaknesses of the system, after one year of running is that pupil councillors have not communicated well with the class people who elected them. This is partly because this is a new idea and because in some cases that have had difficulty in finding time to do it. I have heard it from one or two representatives that their guidance teacher wouldn't give them time to talk about pupil council business, that the guidance teacher wanted to do something else. I think that we'll have to make it clearer to pupils and to teachers generally next year that there has to be time allotted; probably during the guidance period, possibly during registration, when they can talk about council business. I think we have to make that clearer than it has been this year.

T.A. *Yes, there are some interesting thoughts there, about monitoring the machinery and keeping it going, and so on. I think a person at that level must be quite important.*

*I am not forgetting your role in things. May I come back to that. You had a function at the outset, to get the thing going. What is your function now that it is going? To what extent do you intervene? Are you waiting in the wings for things to come to you as a consequence of pupil council meetings or are you expecting the teacher advisers, for example, to be in touch with you? Perhaps the chairman of the councils?*

H.T. These are very searching questions, Ted. They are important questions because I realise when you ask them that there are still a lot of things to sort out.

There's been a tendency which I've favoured for the secretaries and chairpersons to come to me, to see me direct. I'm happy with that. However there's a danger that the teacher adviser will

feel superfluous. And there's been during the past year a little bit of doubt in the minds of some of the teacher advisers as to precisely what their role is. I think I share that doubt. I don't think we've got it clear yet what they should be.

My role in the first instance is a supportive one, supportive in the sense that I have to let all of the youngsters in the school see that I believe in pupil councils, that I haven't set them up just for show. This is the greatest snag of the lot, really, that of setting up pupil councils and then giving them something which they really can't do; letting them see that when they do complain, something happens, that there really is action - it is not always easy. It is very, very difficult to convince youngsters that you really are doing something, because they come to you and they say they want this done, and they expect it to be done in 5 minutes. I tried to explain to one council in fact that it would take time before we could produce the results that they wanted. I am quite sure that they saw that as an excuse, a way of saying, all right, something will be done, but that in fact nothing really would be done.

So my job is supportive, but it also makes sure that whenever I possibly can I do take action on comments, suggestions made by pupil councils. If we don't do that we may as well not have them at all.

T.A. *We're moving on quite nicely. I am coming on to questions of an evaluative kind and what changes you are envisaging as being necessary in the near future. But, on the question of staff, before we come fully into that area - how have staff perceptions been to date? Have you experienced say, a degree of opposition on the part of some staff members to the idea, and is that still the case, perhaps, that there are some who perhaps are opposed to the idea?*

H.T. I would think on any school staff there would be one or two teachers who would not take very kindly to the idea of pupils participating in the management of the school at any level to any extent. Generally speaking there is a fair body of staff in the school who are happy enough and they will see it is not impinging very much on what they are doing in school at all.

I don't think there's been a real opposition. Where we have encountered a little difficulty is in my decision which was accepted by the staff and by the pupil councils at the time of their setting up, that we should involve pupils in the school finance committee. This is a sensitive area, as you spotted straight away. I had been preparing that or thought I had been preparing it for about six months, suggesting to the staff and to the finance committee that there was a case now for having pupils involved in a school finance committee. After all, the money is collected by the pupils and their parents and it is going to be spent on the pupils. So it seems to me not unreasonable that the pupils should be represented on the finance committee which deals with all of that. The pupils themselves were quite pleased with the idea and in due course elected two female representatives to go on to the finance committee. The finance committee seemed to offer really no objection to the idea at all until the two people were elected, and then suddenly they began to have doubts and we are in the position at the present moment where I will have to meet the finance committee and discuss with them what precisely their role and function is going to be in the future now that they are going to have pupil members on that committee. Perhaps I should have done that first but I thought that I had done the groundwork satisfactorily although it seems that I had not, not completely.

T.A. *Yes, there's a very interesting case of difficulty.*

H.T. There was another very interesting one, which I think is worth going over, and that involved a staff committee which had been set up perhaps a year ago to look at discipline in the school and their first step was to produce a set of movement rules. The geographical lay-out of Brae School is complex and it's quite difficult to find your way from one place to another.

T.A. *The task was to produce a highway code.*

H.T. Yes. The staff committee produce a set of rules on movement in the school which I agreed to accept. It meant that pupils could only go in certain ways and there were certain restrictions on movement in other parts of the school. The rules were implemented and they ran for about 3 months when I asked the staff committee to review them and tell me what they thought of them. They said they were fine. There were problems, though, which I felt I could see quite clearly, and at a later stage I asked the pupil councils if they cared to give me their views on movement regulations

T.A. *This was all the year councils, was it?*

H.T, Yes, all the year councils were asked what they thought about movement in the school.

The first and second years didn't think very much about movement in the school. I think the problem was maybe a little too difficult for them. The fourth year council came up with some sensible suggestions, about the maximum of rules and just common sense behaviour, monitored by teachers. I liked this but it didn't agree with the staff committee's views. Here is the classic management problem, if you like, where there are two advisory bodies, both set up by the manager, giving conflicting views about what should be done. And I took the classic management easy way out and didn't do anything, for a time. But the fourth year committee weren't happy about that and they came back to me and asked me to attend a meeting when they asked,

'Why haven't you done anything about our recommendations?' I explained the difficulty and said to them that it would be hard for me to overrule the views of the staff discipline committee and at the same time I didn't want to ignore their views since I had asked for them. And it seemed almost as though there was a stalemate until the chairperson of the fourth year council suggested that the council could perhaps get in touch with the discipline committee, have a meeting with them, and see if a compromise could be achieved.

T.A. *This was a good initiative from the pupil council.*

H.T. A splendid initiative. I was delighted with it and in fact they did meet and they did achieve a compromise.

T.A. *A marvellous outcome.*

H.T. I am happy with that. It is one respect in which we have really been successful. There are some respects in which we haven't.

T.A. *Yes, I want to invite you to say more on the success of the scheme.*

*First of all I want to ask you a particular question, about the involvement of all pupils in the idea of pupil councils. One criticism sometimes made of pupil councils is that the non-academic child tends to be left out ..... they don't get elected, they're not interested in any case, they're glad to leave when they are 16 and get away from it all. Now the genuine idea of pupil councils might say, well, that's most unfortunate, they must be involved, everyone's got to be involved, in the elections and the business etc. How do you react to that? Are there safeguards that you can establish so that this doesn't happen? Is it a problem anyway?*

H.T. We've only had one set of elections and I was very happy with the outcome of the elections. People elected to the pupil councils were not the academic élite of the school solely. There was a

fair representation of the academic youngsters, and of youngsters from good and caring families but there were also quite a number of people appointed as pupil representatives who don't belong in those categories, who are just ordinary weans of the school and perhaps not very bright academically at all. I am not sure in one or two cases how they came to be elected and I am not sure if the democratic process worked very well but then it doesn't in any walk of life. Overall I was quite pleased with the election of representatives.

I think there are some things that haven't worked. I think, in general, communication from the councils to the citizens in the year group, the two-way communications, haven't been as good as they should be. Also, the second tier, the full school council hasn't functioned very well at all and I am not sure that I see a real job for it to do. I think we could manage quite satisfactorily with year councils only.

T.A. *May I ask one final question: do you see in any way that school councils are a training ground for democracy? Are we training pupils in the business of preparing and holding elections, in the business of representing people in the councils? Is this part of it?*

H.T. I think to say we are training them in democracy is just a little bit overblown, but I think there is a very real education function in the existence of school councils. I am quite certain of that. The kids learned a lot from the negotiation with the discipline committee. They've learned a lot from listening to other people, they're beginning to understand the school better, to realise that the headmaster can't wave a wand and make things happen just like that. They are beginning to understand, I think, how to work in committee and they are beginning to understand the things that can go wrong in committee, that one person can dominate. Yes, there are a lot of educative advantages in having pupil councils. My experience in the first year is that they are working

quite satisfactorily in some respects, not very well in others, but that the experiment is very worthwhile and certainly one that I want to continue with.

T.A. *A good sentence to close our discussion with, before we are joined by two pupil representatives, Alan and Lorraine. Thank you very much.*

#### 4B.9 LATER DEVELOPMENTS

Sadly, perhaps, things did not continue to develop and the story during the following two sessions was one of Pupil Councils in decline in Brae School. The groundwork had been laid in the two previous sessions and an apparently good start was made to the third. However, this was not to be maintained because of frequent disruption of school life due to fuel shortages and industrial difficulties. Management effort was required elsewhere and a decline in teacher morale and teacher commitment was reported.

During the fourth session the decline was absolute, despite the wish to reverse the trend as expressed by the Head the previous June. None of the Councils functioned at all.

Mr. Stone blamed only himself. He had not taken appropriate action. He had not made arrangements for the elections. He had kept putting things off because of other demands on his time during a very difficult period.

What was interesting, he felt, was that there had been no protest from pupils, nor from any members of staff. What this amounted to was that he had convinced neither pupils nor teachers that the Pupil Council idea was a good one. He himself had never doubted the value of Councils. Nor had the strategies for establishing them been ill-chosen.

Mistakes had been made. For example, it had been wrong simply to let pupils choose a Teacher Adviser and leave it at that. He as Head ought to have chosen the teachers and he ought to have

followed up the operation with them. He felt that the Guidance Principals in Brae School were not the right people to become Teacher Advisers to Councils.

An additional observation made by the Head was that the 'climate' had to be right and it had not been. By this he meant that staff attitudes had not been right; they had not been prepared to accept forms of relationship and behaviour and interaction appropriate to the Council idea.

As far as the pupils were concerned, there were two important problems. Firstly there was the overriding question of outcome: pupils had to see things happen as a result of their discussions and representations. This necessary momentum was not easy to maintain. The second problem was that pupils had to be properly prepared; they had to learn to participate\*, possibly through school Guidance programmes. Any future plans for Brae School would have to take full account of these and other matters.

Perhaps the most significant conclusion of all drawn by the Head was that the two-tier arrangement was not a good one: there was a case for Year Councils, but not for a Pupil School Council in addition. This issue is one which was encountered in the third case study school which may now be described.

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\* *It is difficult to avoid the view that the researcher was influential because of frequent questioning on this point.*



SCHOOL C - CROSS SCHOOL

## CASE STUDY SCHOOL C: CROSS SECONDARY SCHOOL

### 4C.1 INTRODUCTION

The third case study, Cross Secondary School, was visited from time to time during the period 1976 to 1980 in order to enquire into questions of formal pupil-involvement there.

This school differed in a number of interesting ways from some others that were visited. It afforded an opportunity to look at Pupil Councils in a situation that was both similar to and different from the others.

This Roman Catholic school was situated in an urban environment in the Renfrew Division. It was experiencing the process of transition from Junior Secondary to Secondary Comprehensive School and in 1975-1976 it had reached the situation where S4 classes were wholly comprehensive. The future, with an increasing roll (from 870 to 1040), meant that it would begin to 'grow' an S5, then, hopefully, an S6 which would complete the process of transition, at least in terms of the age and aspirations of the pupils.

The educational problem for this new school, then, was that of creating an educational tradition of academic respectability in a town which had long boasted its successful High School and Academy. The immediate management response to the problem was to group pupils in accordance with two 'bands', classes A to D in the 'top' band, E to H in the 'lower' band. There was some mixing only within these bands and it was customary to speak of the 'top' and 'bottom' of the school. With pupil-involvement in mind there would then be the problem of how to involve all pupils equally.

It was suggested that this division of pupils could very well reflect their different social backgrounds. "The catchment area comprises an area of private dwellings and an area of council housing. There are pupils therefore from superior residential areas and good working-class areas", the Headteacher wrote.

The buildings did not provide the best of educational environments although the physically elevated position of the school ensured a regular supply of cold air either to stimulate or numb the mind! The main building was formerly the non-denominational selective

school to which some new developments had been and were being added. In these 'second-hand' buildings, with their long strings of classrooms, built solidly in accordance with a solid academic tradition, it could be especially difficult to create in the minds of the pupils a sense of belonging and involvement.

#### 4C.2 MANAGEMENT STYLE

The Headmaster was most willing to respond to questions (see Appendix N page 219) regarding pupil-involvement. A very experienced Head, to retire (a little early) within two years, he was mild in manner but not 'soft' with either staff or pupils. Yet the impression gained was that the management style was towards the laissez-faire and that it was of relatively low impact. (Paisey & Paisey (1980)).

The Head, Mr MacInnes, showed an awareness of ideas about pupil-involvement and he expressed the wish that pupil-teacher relationships should be happy and relaxed but not free and easy. For example he was concerned over the slack discipline in some primary schools, and in his own school he had had to 'tighten up with some teachers who became lax'. He referred to the key position of the position of the Register Teacher, and of Guidance and Religious Education classes in establishing good relationships, something that was especially important when there were problems, for example discipline problems.

Also of importance, Mr MacInnes argued, in achieving good relationships, was the need not to apply too rigidly the hierarchy of promoted posts that existed. He himself operated an open-door policy to staff, pupils and parents, as did the other senior staff. As far as pupils were concerned the policy was that a pupil could see any member of staff at any time, 'subject to the usual constraints'.

#### 4C.3 ORIGIN OF PUPIL INVOLVEMENT

The management structure was such as a school of that size would warrant: Head, Depute Head, and 3 Assistant Heads. What singled this school out from others from the point of view of the enquiry was the part played by one of the Assistant Headteachers, Mr Moreno. He had been involved from the start and indeed there was some suggestion that the initiative had been at least partly his, when

it was decided that the Prefect System was not working. Mr. Moreno administered the arrangements for the pupil-involvement and throughout he had been the key person when in other schools this had been the Headteacher.

Assistant Head Mr Moreno, in his early 30's, a teacher of modern languages, was described by the Headteacher as a 'positive and energetic young man'. Having a Master of Education Degree, and having also attended a major course in management training, he possessed both the practical experience gained in promoted posts and the theoretical concepts enabling him to analyse, to manage, and to comment upon school changes and developments. He had his own clear picture of what was desirable in terms of the involvement of pupils.

#### C.4 FORUMS

Although subject to the collective decisions of the Board of Studies, or Management Committee, as was the preferred term in Cross School, the Assistant Head had room to influence developments in the areas of responsibility which had been delegated to him. It can be assumed, for example, that he had much to do with the decision to use the term 'Forum'. This was obviously a good name since it avoided confusion with the external body called the School Council (Macbeth A. MacKenzie M. 1980), not to mention the Schools Council. There were to be two tiers, the Forums for each school year and, eventually, the School Forum composed of representatives of each Year Forum.

#### C.5 EARLY IMPRESSIONS

During the session 1976-1977, when Cross School was first visited (at the suggestion of a member of the inspectorate), the Year Forums, up to S5 (there would not be an S6 class in the school until the following session) were already in operation. In addition to his overall responsibility for the Forum arrangements, Assistant Head Mr Moreno was personally involved in the detailed organisation of the S1, S3 and S4 Forums. The S2 Forum was supervised by Mrs Manders (Assistant Principal Teacher of Guidance) while the S5 Forum was guided by Mr Rae (Principal Teacher of Geography) who already had a good deal of contact with senior pupils and who was therefore well-suited to the task.

These staff were always present at the meetings which were held in ordinary classrooms during the lunchtime breaks, except for the S5

Forum which sometimes met during school time. Minutes were kept for the meetings except for the S1 Forum whose meetings were described as 'a disorganised mass of ideas but a necessary stage to be gone through'. We may consider each of the Forums in turn.

#### 4C.6 S1 FORUM

From the beginning Assistant Head Mr Moreno had clear opinions on the S1 Forum. Firstly, he was whole-hearted in the view that there should be a Forum for first-year pupils: an early start was necessary. On the other hand Mr Moreno thought that it would be easy to fall into the trap of expecting too much of these youngsters; a great deal of help and guidance would be required.

The Assistant Head acted upon these beliefs. Care had been taken to see that Register Teachers conducted the election of representatives; there was input from management, therefore. The teachers concerned were questioned and they reported no special difficulties, although there tended not to be much by way of a contest. Lack of confidence was a problem and some pupils refused to accept nomination.

Care was also taken to see that the representatives attended, although there could not but be difficulties since the meetings usually took place at 12.45 p.m. i.e. during the lunchtime break and in pupils' own time. The Forum met in a classroom near to Mr Moreno's own room. This was a traditional classroom with school desks in rows and a teacher's desk where the Assistant Head sat during the meeting, the representatives clustered around him.

Mr Moreno took a major part in the meetings, by responding to issues raised. There was no shortage of issues. In one meeting these included:-

- (a) Punishment for late-coming Pupils felt that this was being meted out unfairly. Mr Moreno questioned the group closely, and he made his view known on the wrongness of late-coming. The position that appeared to be negotiated was that there should not be belting for the first offence, nor for the second, but afterwards this would be a reasonable punishment.
- (b) Recreational Facilities Typical of a category of issues raised was one from the boys asking for facilities to play snooker! Mr Moreno took trouble to explain the position

clearly, saying that a lack of accommodation was the great obstacle. They would have to wait until they were in S3.

- (c) Trousers for Girls Also typical of a group of issues raised was this one, demanding permission for the girls to wear trousers in winter. These could be the same colour as the school blazer, and wear should be permitted between certain dates and not merely 'when there is snow on the ground' as at present. Mr Moreno agreed to put the matter to the Headmaster.
- (d) Toilet Doors Another matter which Mr Moreno agreed to take to the Head was the demand for catches on the inside of toilet doors. Both girl and boy representatives spoke on this matter. Mr Moreno pointed out the difficulty, the tendency for damage to occur. Would the pupils report those who misused the locks? 'Yes' was the response in chorus.
- (e) School Bell The school bell was not always heard in the playground. Could there be a louder bell? Mr Moreno said that the bell sounding was followed by blasts on a whistle when this was seen to be necessary.
- (f) Severe Teacher Complaints were made concerning a particular teacher. He was too strict. If you moved you were belted. Mr Moreno avoided asking the name of the teacher, but he did learn that the events occurred in a science laboratory. He pointed out that the safety factor was very important there. Privately Mr Moreno said that this was an embarrassing matter. He thought that there was clear evidence of over-use of the belt and something would have to be done, but discreetly - he knew who the teacher was.

All these points were brought up by pupil representatives, and they were typical of those raised at other meetings.

Sometimes the Assistant Head himself raised matters. The levying of money for School Funds was one - were the pupils doing their bit? The Forum was also used as a means of trying to improve discipline: "There is too much horse-play in the yard"; and, "Tuck Shop papers are littering the school". Mr Moreno said that he wanted the representatives to carry these messages to their classes

so that there could be improvements.

How was the performance of the S1 Forum viewed? The Assistant Head was reasonably satisfied with progress made. Over the years since its inception the scheme had operated quite well. In the case of S1, as mentioned, not too much should be expected, not too much in the way of organised contributions: 'a lot of hot air gets built up, and they have to get it out of their system'.

#### 4C.7 S2 FORUM

The second-year Forum was controlled initially by a young female Assistant Principal Teacher (Guidance). Although of a quieter disposition Mrs Manders organised the arrangements most effectively. As with S1, the elections presented no special difficulties and the links between representatives and their classes were carefully preserved.

The flow of suggestions and complaints\* was easily maintained, it was reported. These were sometimes similar to matters brought up by other Forums and these included:-

- (a) Need for locks on toilet doors.
- (b) Bus passes late in appearing.
- (c) Queueing outside the canteen should be avoided.
- (d) Girls want to wear trousers.
- (e) Classes 2.1 and 2.J wanted homework.
- (f) Need for a bicycle shed.
- (g) More shelters were needed.
- (h) Need for lunchtime study facilities.
- (i) School buses late.

and so on.

Mrs Manders felt that things were functioning quite well, and that the S2 Forum was showing increasing maturity in the way in which issues were raised and discussed. Procedures were better understood and minutes regularly emerged in written or typed form after each meeting.

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\* This term was used by the Assistant Head in his remarks to the R.I./ Register Teachers; the representatives' job was to bring 'complaints' to the Forum.

Mr Moreno expected and demanded a little more of the third-year Forum. The group appointed its own chairman and secretary each school session. Minutes were kept for each meeting, a practice which did tend to die out, to be re-established later. The meetings took place in a classroom, the chairman seated at the teachers' desk, Mr Moreno not far from him. Boys tended to sit together, girls together, 'upper' and 'lower' school pupils forming separate clusters. Attendance at these lunchtime meetings was not always very good.

Two or three pupils tended to contribute much more than others. Mr Moreno continued to play a fairly prominent role in this Forum's affairs, either by responding to issues or raising them. He opened one meeting, for example, with the words, "What were you arguing about last week?", since no written agenda was to hand. His presence seemed to be necessary.

The issues raised were various. Sometimes these were similar to matters considered in other Forums, sometimes not. One note-worthy characteristic was that younger pupils tended to be jealous of older ones, and S3 pupils in the middle position in the school were no exception. One issue demonstrated that clearly. An S3 boy raised the question of school outings, mentioning that S5 were going to an Outdoor Centre for a weekend. Mr Moreno explained the background to this, saying that 12 S5 pupils who next year would be the core of the school's first Sixth Year were going there to plan how S6 would work, 'to see what privileges they will get since senior school must have privileges'. This caused an immediate and strong response from an S3 girl from 'lower' school. "They shouldnae get so much privileges" she said with some emotion. The Assistant Head countered by saying that Cross School offered very little; there was no senior common room, for example. This question of privilege, while being in itself relevant, to the involvement of pupils, especially senior pupils, was a reminder of the problem facing this school in its transition from junior secondary to secondary comprehensive status, and to the part which Forums might play in furthering or hindering the progress.

While Mr Moreno did not make extravagant claims, he expressed general



satisfaction with the S3 Forum as it developed over the sessions, and this was echoed by other staff. To some extent progress was acknowledged to be cumulative, from session to session: pupils generally and staff generally became more aware of purposes and procedures. Yet this did not exclude the view that particular pupils were of key importance. When there was a good pupil chairman, with a reasonably firm grasp of procedure, with knowledge and understanding of the issues, and with a confident air, things went very well; pupil contributions were controlled and the business was got through. This was evidently so in the case of the S3 Forum whose chairman showed marked improvement in the ability to organise meetings and to control the business. The secretary too was important and having a clear set of minutes and an agenda was beneficial.

A meeting of the S3 Forum in March 1980 illustrated a number of these central questions. This was an unusual meeting in several respects. The new Headteacher\* was present by invitation to answer various points. Mr Moreno was also present. Upper Forum representatives were there as observers. Some 32 people were assembled in a classroom some sitting on desks, others standing.

The secretary did not have minutes to read, and she received a mild reprimand from Mr Moreno. However the chairman, a girl, handled the proceedings competently, putting the various points to the group and to the Head for his comments. These points were:-

- (i) The headmaster replied to a point saying that he thought that the insulation of the school was up to standard.
- (ii) There was a demand for an extra free period, to be taken from R.I. perhaps. There were only three R.I. periods as it was, said the Head. "What subject would be happy to take a one-third reduction of its time-table?"
- (iii) There was increasing pupil<sup>f</sup> discontent over the importance attached to late-coming. The Headmaster said that the image of the school was at stake. "Late-coming gives the school a bad name", he said.

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\* The new Headteacher had taken up the appointment at the beginning of the session, and quite soon substantial changes were being made. He wanted to end the system of Banding of classes as a matter of urgency in order to try to remove the 'two-schools-in-one image'.

- (iv) A representative asked about the ways in which moneys collected in school were spent. The Head explained that the Finance Committee decided. "I am sorry that you don't know", he said. "I shall see to it that the details are posted on the notice-board regularly".
- (v) The question of a school bus for the west-end of the catchment area was raised. The Head said that the figures had been passed to the bus company who were also considering the suggestion that there should be an ordinary bus service to serve that area. It would be a matter of what the numbers would justify.
- (vi) A boy representative asked why there was not a classroom available as a common room for S3 boys when the girls had one. "Why not?", replied the Headmaster. He would look into the matter. Assistant Head Mr Moreno spoke explaining that the boys had failed to turn up at a meeting to discuss the common room idea. The girls had appeared and they had gained this privilege. "The boys should not be passive if they wanted things done", he said.

The meeting was brought to a close by Mr Moreno. He thanked the Head for coming and he thanked the chairman. Mr Moreno said privately that this S3 Forum performed promisingly largely because of the good leadership shown by the girl chairman. Currently the S4 Forum was short of leadership and the Upper School was disappointing for the same reason. He ended the meeting on an evangelical note urging representatives to do three things (a) to attend all Forum meetings, (b) to ensure that minutes of previous meetings were drawn up and given to the chairman and (c) to report back to the people they represented, which meant that they should take notes.

#### 4C.9 THE S4 AND S5 FORUMS AND THE UPPER SCHOOL FORUM

In the early months of the Forums it was assumed that there would be a representative Forum for each Year Group, for S1, 2, 3 and 4 and for S5 and S6, when these years eventually appeared in the school. This assumption was amended for the later stages in the

light of experience but initially there were separate Forums for S4 and S5.

The S4 Forum, when it was observed, and when comment upon it was gathered did not inspire much enthusiasm. The organisational framework was there - Mr Moreno saw that it was - but the meetings were dull and they contained less than might have been expected.

It is true that minutes were compiled, typed and signed. They were very brief and to the point, for example:-

MINUTES

1. Agree that meetings should take place on a Thursday lunchtime.
2. Election of M.G. as secretary.
3. Election of G.B. as president.
4. Interview with Careers people - see Guidance staff. Careers sheet will be read out to inform pupils as to which teacher specialises in which subject.
5. Common room - still being discussed, as to which room it will be held in.

Classes represented: IV A, B, C, D

.....  
sgd.

Those meetings that were observed conveyed a similiar picture. In a typical meeting there were 8 of the 10 representatives present. With the Assistant Head they were easily seated round a teacher's desk in a classroom.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read quickly by the secretary. No matter arising from the minutes led to discussion. There was no agenda and the chairman asked for business. A boy representative referred to the rule banning boys from a certain corridor area, because of damage caused there. This was resulting

in some boys being late for classes. Assistant Head Mr Moreno listened to this point and said he would make representations to the Headteacher to see what could be done.

The chairman asked for other business. There was no response and a long period of silence while people were thinking.

After a few minutes a representative referred to the long delays in the issuing of canteen tickets. S1 and S2 were reported as getting their tickets promptly at Period 1 on Mondays, others much later.

Various additional points were made, including the one that parents were not paid until Friday and they might not have any money!

Mr Moreno intervened to say that the process of issuing tickets depended on the office staff. They were the key people and pupils should be cautious. The best thing would be to make the complaint clearly in the minutes of the meeting. The AHT here made the suggestion that the HT should be invited to attend a future meeting (In his log the researcher wrote that this suggestion was received 'with awesome enthusiasm').

A third point complained of the lack of a waiting room at the Sports Centre. There was only a wall to sit on.

Finally, the Assistant Head reported that the senior citizens group would be in school during the last week of term for tea and entertainment and S4 classes would be expected to play their part.

Thus was a typical (it seemed) dull meeting brought to a close. Even with the Assistant Head playing a prominent role, there was little to enthuse about in the early performance of the S4 Forum.

The picture emerging from the S5 Forum was rather brighter. Principal Teacher Mr Rae brought the group of seven pupils to his room for the meetings and these were held during school time. The meetings were very carefully minuted (see example below) - it was clear from conversations with Mr Rae that he insisted on this being done - and this suggested well-organised meetings, which observations confirmed.

Topics discussed were usually very close to the interests of the group. In a written comment on one of the meetings the Head wrote: "A useful meeting and the topics were relevant. However, they tended to be of the 'What can we get' variety rather than 'What can we give?' I am sure that this imbalance will right itself." (The

minute book was submitted to the Head after each meeting for his comments).

Apart from extensive discussions of the arrangement for various dances and discos, the question of the provision of a common room for S5 consumed a good deal of time. The pupils apparently felt very strongly about this and they compared themselves unfavourably with others in neighbouring purpose-built comprehensive schools. They wanted a place of their own, somewhere which 'shuts you off from the teachers. Teachers should not make it their authority to walk into a common room, they must knock'. Headteacher written comment was: "The point about teachers not being allowed to walk in puzzles me. Perhaps there is more here than meets the eye. After all, no one should enter a room without knocking, if the room is occupied. Should not be thinking along the lines, 'This is our room and we can do what we like in it'. If this is so, we have all got to start thinking again."

One boy, in describing how he saw such a room, said that 'the common room would need to be a place to study and relax and also to be able to play a record-player'. One might wonder about the compatibility of these activities!

A set of minutes may now illustrate the position further.

#### 4C.10 Minutes of S5 Forum Meeting

*(reproduced with only the names changed)*

*A meeting of the Fifth Year Forum was held on  
Friday 28th January in Mr Rae's room at 1.50 p.m.*

*Present: Headmaster, Mr McInnes, Anne, Brenda, Carol, Alex,  
Brian, Charlie, Dave.*

*There was an amendment to the previous minutes. The meeting of the School Council took place in James Street, not in the Town Hall as stated.*

*The minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Charlie seconded by Dave.*

*Matters arising from previous minutes.*

*It was decided to use the Christian names of all present instead of the initials.*

Due to the Headmaster's presence at the forum meeting there were no comments of the previous meeting, these were given at this meeting.

Comments:

The tickets which have been printed for the school dance are excellent.

The Headmaster asked Charlie about a full School Forum meeting to discuss what happens at the School Council's meetings and in reply Charlie stated that he had spoken to Mr Moreno and a meeting is to be arranged in the near future.

Another aspect which came out at the Council's meeting was the attendance at Cross School. It is one of the worst in the area. Dave asked the conversion of the cloakroom into a common room for the fifth years.

The Headmaster stated that this was impossible, but has arranged that we could have Fr. Brand's lean-to as a common room. As long as we clean it up ourselves and make all arrangements for furniture and chairs and our amusements.

Charlie stated that in the High School each house in the school has a common room and in the Academy each class has a common room. In reply to this the headmaster stated that these schools were purpose-built and ours was not.

In our school the accommodation is tight and we have no classes set aside for the sole purpose use as a common room. Classes may be used but the permission of the teacher has to be given.

The Headmaster said that he has no authority to convert any area within the school unless he has permission from the district Education office and there is no money to convert. The roll of the school must increase to receive any money to do any alterations.

Charlie suggested the storage area under the old school buildings but this is not suitable. In the old lean-to a lot of work is necessary and some boys have agreed to do this during their free periods.

Dave said that fifth years usually stand in the link corridor but the headmaster said that no matter what the restrictions were someone had to compromise. Charlie said that the poster had been put up and we had received £35 for the tickets. We agree that the meal should be left until the last week. Any profits from the

*dance would go into school funds and used to the benefit of the whole school but 5th Years would have priority.*

*There is to be a mission in the school and 5th years would take registration on Friday 4th February.*

*P.T. Mr Rae raised the point that not all of the senior school wear school uniforms and this is a bad thing because the senior school influence the younger school.*

*Brenda raised the point of the water being removed from the dining hall. The Headmaster said that there was not enough staff to wash up the glasses because of the cut down.*

*It was suggested that the girls could help.*

*Being no other business the meeting closed at 2.45 p.m.*

*The date of the next meeting was set for Friday 11th February.*

*sgd. Girl Chairman*

*(minutes initialled by Headteacher)*

#### **4C.11 A CHANGE OF DIRECTION**

While the S5 Forum might have been said to have been operating satisfactorily, the outcome was not seen to have been as good as was expected. The position had to be reconsidered. A second important factor was the difficulty encountered in creating the top-tier or full school Forum. Experimental meetings were held and Mr Moreno felt that these did not work. There were two principal reasons: (i) the large size of the group and (ii) the difficulty of finding issues that were of interest to the group as a whole.

The decision was taken to develop in another direction, at least for the time being, through the formation of an Upper School Forum, representing not single classes, but a combination of S4, 5 and 6. It was felt that this could get the best of both worlds, by ensuring better-quality discussion among pupils than had occurred in the two separate Forums, and by providing a body which to some extent could carry out the functions of a top-tier.

#### 4C.12 UPPER SCHOOL FORUM MEETINGS

This new body met regularly throughout the following session.

Meetings were held at lunchtime, in the classroom adjoining Mr Moreno's own office.

At one meeting, to take an example from the four that were attended, fourteen pupils were present, eleven girls and three boys. The atmosphere was relaxed and no one seemed bothered by the presence of Mr Moreno and the researcher, who by now was quite well-known in the school.

The girl chairman called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, including Mr Moreno and the writer. No minutes had been taken at the previous meeting so there were none to read.

The chairman called for business and the secretary asked if Mr Moreno could explain why bells were always ringing during the lunch hour. Mr Moreno replied saying that they knew as much as he did; the 'funny boys' were responsible. They were being silly. If the bell rings, pupils should investigate - it could be real! A bell and a whistle would be a fire warning.

The secretary then asked about a lunchtime common room for S4 use. There had been such a room. There had been rowdiness, she knew. Could Mr Moreno say why the room had been closed? He answered that the reason was as she had stated. S4 had not behaved responsibly. Once they were prepared to accept responsibility they should form a committee and come to him.

A girl representative said that there was need for 'someone there to make sure that no carry-on went on'. Chairman asked if they could ask a teacher, Mrs Manders, to do this. Mr Moreno answered with a firm, 'No!' The committee must be formed first, then come to him. Once these arrangements had been made, Mrs Manders could be approached.

A boy representative, Paul, asked about the number of S4 classes. There were 8. Paul pointed out that there were only three form representatives from S4. Why were they not present fighting for their own common room?

The discussion of this point continued at a good pace, sometimes heatedly. The chairman had to intervene on at least two occasions.



The point was made that representatives might not know of the meetings. Whose job was it to post the notices? 'Not mine', said the secretary. The possibility was mentioned that representatives might not even have been elected!

In summarising the position, the chairman proposed the motion that this Forum become associated with the endeavour to obtain a common room for S4.

A girl jumped in to propose a counter-motion, that S4 should try to obtain a common room under their own steam.

The chairman said that this could not be allowed until the first motion had been voted on. Paul countered, 'on a point of order', to say that this was not so. After some further exchanges on this procedural matter, the counter-motion was voted on. It was defeated by 10 to 4 votes. The first motion was carried therefore.

The chairman then closed the meeting, as the bell for the first period in the afternoon was about to sound. The next meeting was arranged for the same time and place next week.

The meeting was handled with some degree of competence, although about half of those present made no contribution at all. One fact of significance was the presence of only three boys. One of them, Paul, was quietly impressive. He helped substantially in getting out of the procedural difficulty. One other footnote of considerable importance, the Assistant Head kept to the rule of his new thinking, to pursue a non-interventionist role. He took no part except when asked a question.

Other meetings seen or reported upon were similar in pattern and content. However, mention of one matter has to be made, namely that it was to this Forum that the pupil representative on the external School Council reported. Unquestionably this procedure, the reporting back, was necessary. The girl who was the representative did this quite well, if nervously when visitors were present. On the negative side, the reporting back did not seem to excite much interest. This was probably because School Council business rarely got close to the affairs of the particular school, and also because the representative herself, although willing, was from her own experience not very

enthusiastic about School Councils in so far as they required pupil participation. The reporting was dull: the representative usually read a prepared statement whose content was not minuted in the Forum minutes. The statement usually consisted of a list of items of business and little more.

However, Mr Moreno expressed some satisfaction with the operation of the Upper School Forum. The idea of a second tier had not been resurrected nor was there an indication that it would be. Indeed, other senior pupils were being admitted to meetings of the Upper School Forum, as observers, thus giving this Forum an extra degree of recognition. These 'visitors' could contribute, with the chairman's permission, but they had no voting rights.

### C.13 STAFF AND PUPIL IMPRESSIONS

During this period 1976-80, then, a system of Forums was established and developed in Cross School. The school itself experienced difficulties as it negotiated the transition from a junior secondary to a comprehensive school image, and these difficulties were reflected in the problems encountered in the Forum. Especially prominent was the problem of throwing off the 'two-school' image and later changes in the organisation and management of the Guidance system acknowledged that there was still some way to go.

As we have seen, both Headteacher and Assistant Head saw the Forums as important to the school as it evolved and matured as a 6-year school. To the two Headteachers, and to other staff, the development of good pupil-teacher relationships was of paramount importance. In summarising his view, Assistant Head Mr Moreno stated that he saw the Forums as (i) providing formal contact with pupils and (ii) providing a channel through which he could get things done.

What of other staff reaction? How did the teachers feel? Undoubtedly there was both approval and criticism. The interviewing of three S1 Register Teachers chosen at random from those with 1, 2 and 3 years experience of the idea respectively, provided something of a picture.

They took their responsibilities seriously. Assistant Head Mr Moreno had explained things at assembly so the pupils knew what

was expected of them and election or nomination of pupil representatives proceeded satisfactorily although in varying ways.

After the 'elections' these three S1 teachers knew little of what was happening. One said that the class was not so bright that year, and this could have accounted for the apparent lack of activity. Two had heard that the raising of school funds had come up for discussion at Forum meetings. One said that an R.I. discussion on, "What would make life happier?" led to ideas to put to the Forum. These three teachers, although evidently willing and interested, knew little and contributed little.

What were their overall impressions? "Pupils like to feel that they can affect things", said one. "A good idea, it seems to me", added a second. The third, with three years experience of Forums, said, "I am not sure. . . . The kids should be kept in place more . . . It is OK if it works; if not, then it is a waste of time". All agreed that the staff generally did not know much about the Forums. "These were not a topic of conversation. If the staff were to learn more, there would be an opposition group".

Mrs Manders, Assistant Principal Teacher (Guidance), who had been involved at S2 Forum level, added her own views to this picture. She noted the problem of the less-able in the Forums: "As far as the non-certificate pupils were concerned, they do not see the point of the Forum . . . Perhaps it is accepted at the outset, but they drift away from it, because they expect miracles and these do not happen . . . . The brighter ones do seem to understand the situation . . . The less-able just can't concentrate on a discussion".

Mrs Manders' view of the reaction of staff was in line with the views of others. "There is not a great feeling about the Forums among staff", she said, and "They really do not know much about them". "When they do", added Mrs Manders, "the Forums are thought of as 'a complaint time idea'." Notwithstanding, her own attitude towards Forums was favourable: "Yes, it is a good idea, especially if we can solve the problem of the lower school". In one respect her views were conservative: "all issues should be discussable except complaints about individual staff". It may be recalled that Mr Moreno himself came round to the view that no issue should be excluded.

The comments from Principal Teacher Mr Rae were a further useful addition to the picture. The Forum idea seemed to him to be a very good one. He too was an advocate of slow and careful change, but perhaps at a pace a little quicker than that prevailing. The staff did not know enough about what was happening, he felt. They did not know enough to want to mount any opposition. This was because the Assistant Head in charge had kept a low profile, too low a profile, he thought: "the nettle must be grasped if further advance is to be made".

Yet there was staff suspicion and opposition, as has come out in some of the reported comments. This could grow. Two further examples illustrated the point. There was the case of the 'offensive minutes'. A copy was promised but it did not materialise. What seemed to have happened was that the Upper School Forum minutes, written in what was described as 'crude language', criticising school management referring in particular to 'petty rules', were displayed on noticeboards. Staff reaction was immediate and strong. Although the Head did not seem himself very concerned, he felt that he had to react because of the feelings of the staff. The minutes were to be removed and no more were to be posted.

Assistant Head Mr Moreno thought that this was a most unfortunate occurrence which 'put us back a long way'.

A second incident also involved the S4 - 6 Forum. The pupils were not happy about staff car parking in the playground, especially when it was near to the school entrance. In this case they were cautious in their approach. The minutes showed that they considered approaching the staff directly, but they thought better of this because it could be 'a sensitive issue'. Instead they wrote to the Headteacher pointing out that they were concerned\*. Could it be argued that the pupils were learning from their experiences?

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\* Some observers would accept that there was congestion because of careless parking by staff and that the pupils were making a reasonable point.

There were hints of staff reaction against pupils having a voice and power through the Forums, therefore.

What might be said about pupils reactions? Their willingness to attend and their ability and motivation to contribute were indicators of pupils' opinions and feelings. In addition 5 pupils selected by Mr. Moreno were asked directly for their views. These were 'leaders' of pupil opinion and not surprisingly, but encouragingly, they said that they enjoyed the Forum meetings. The meetings offered 'a chance to moan' which 'was good for you'. It was also 'good for pupils to be able to speak their own opinions'. The social side was also referred to as 'good', as were the opportunities to 'form links with the teachers'. This was tempered with words of caution: '... you've got to watch ... you could cause friction and bad feelings'. The 2 chairmen and 2 secretaries (i.e. one of each, past and present) who gave their views struck a more sombre note: 'the remedial sections were not bothered'. These remedial pupils thought the others 'snobs', reported one. Another was more outspoken on this theme - 'you never will unify the school', she said.

This question of how to develop a whole-school tradition appeared in another form in the next case-study school, Duke School.

**4D. SCHOOL D: DUKE HIGH SCHOOL**

## D. CASE STUDY SCHOOL D : DUKE HIGH SCHOOL

### 4D.1 INTRODUCTION

This school has been visited regularly, at least once per term since 1975. The purpose of these visits has often been connected, not with pupils but with trainee teachers, with the formal links established between some schools and colleges of education\*. Matters to do with pupil-involvement were enquired into at the same time.

The significance of Duke High School to this enquiry rested initially on the possibility that the management team might have been persuaded to establish machinery for involving pupils when none then existed.

In addition, as in the case of Cross School, it was a school that was 'growing' an S5 and S6 and becoming a full all-through secondary comprehensive school. Thus, some form of comparison was possible.

Background factors also made Duke High School interesting. A non-denominational school, in Lanark Division, in an area which had long experienced industrial depression, it clearly had to face social and educational problems of a serious kind, problems which inevitably affected both the academic and pastoral dimensions of the school.

There were at least two other significant problems. The first was staffing. Perhaps because of its location in an undesirable area where coalmining was once a major activity, this school was among the last to reach adequate staffing levels: teachers did not rush to teach there. Although the staffing situation did improve with increased teacher supply, the problem may have lingered on, showing itself in a high teacher absence rate and poor staff morale.

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\* *The Depute Head was the 'Regent' as advocated in the Brunton Report (The Training of Graduates for Secondary Education, H.H.S.O. 1972) and as realised through the Regent Scheme established on the initiative of Jordanhill College of Education*

The second problem concerned buildings. Although a new building on a new site, the programme was slow to be completed and there were accommodation difficulties continuing over a period. The buildings themselves, however, were pleasing, as was the internal design and the school overall seemed attractive, in contrast to the drab housing area in which it was located.

#### 4D.2 MANAGEMENT

The management set-up was characterised by what was in effect a dual system of leadership. The Depute Head had taught English there for many years and he knew almost everyone and was known by almost everyone in the school and in the area. With his vigorous manner and outgoing personality he made his presence felt throughout the school and beyond. He was always able to outwit the wily parent or pupil or teacher although occasionally he may have acted too hastily or clumsily.

In most respects the Depute Headteacher contrasted with the Headteacher. The latter was quieter, more aloof, often out of school on educational business and the Depute was often left in charge as a consequence. The Head, one suspected, was somewhat defensive about a man whose popularity was based on many years in the area when he himself was a relative newcomer. Yet the Head appreciated the strengths of his Depute and he wished them to be fully employed in the interests of the school. The Head's style of leadership also differed from that of the Depute, tending definitely towards the authoritarian end of the spectrum and showing low impact (Paisey & Paisey 1980). As one Principal Teacher remarked, "There's no democracy in this place." and, "He's never in the place any way".

#### 4D.3 PUPIL-COUNCIL DECISION

In conversation early in 1976 the Headmaster expressed interest in Pupil Councils and agreed that the idea might go ahead in his school one day. He would discuss the matter later.



A full discussion did take place on November 19th, 1976. The Head was friendly and he spoke of a number of things. There were various problems as an S5 was being established, he explained. These consumed a lot of management time. The major issues raised questions of classification and grouping. Thus:-

- (i) There was the question of streaming. He took the view that there should be streaming from S2, since 'setting brings up too many time-tabling problems'.
- (ii) There was the question of pupil-choice of subjects when streaming begins - the machinery for doing this effectively.
- (iii) Thirdly, there was the question of the O-Grade and classification - how best to group the certificate pupils at S3 onwards.

With involvement or participation in mind there were problems associated with the involvement of staff, not to mention pupils. In this connection the Principal Teachers were an 'especially difficult group', said the Head. They met as a group from time to time but discussion rarely went well: the Principal Teachers, some of them any way, seemed inhibited in formal meetings and progress in solving problems was difficult to achieve. In fact, it was easier to raise issues on a one-to-one basis, and that was what happened from time to time. Nevertheless, some Principal Teachers could be awkward. There was one who said that he had not been consulted about an Open Evening. He said quite bluntly that he was not going to do it. The headmaster told him quite bluntly that he was. The Principal Teacher's response, uttered in grumbling terms, was that he would 'put out a few bunsen burners'.

These were some of the difficulties and the problems with which the Head was having to contend. They were offered as reasons why his attitude towards the Pupil Council idea had hardened - he was doing other things.

There were additional reasons. While he himself might be aware of needs and issues, other key personnel might not be. The strategy and the timing had to be right. In the case of Pupil Councils, not only was there a lack of awareness of what was entailed, there was also outright opposition to the idea. This came particularly from the Assistant Headteacher (Guidance), and without his concurrence the idea could not go ahead; this man was obviously of central importance to any policies regarding pupil-teacher relationships.

4D.4 THE OBJECTIONS OF THE ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER (GUIDANCE)\*

Permission was sought to meet the AHT (Guidance) and there were no obstacles to this. The AHT himself was most willing to discuss the matter and he did so, fully and frankly.

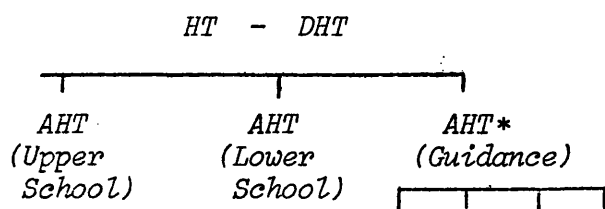
He had had experience of Pupil Councils elsewhere. He was not keen on this formal machinery for two main reasons.

- (i) Firstly, because there were no real outcomes for the pupils, since they could have no power.
- (ii) Secondly, the meetings tended to degenerate into situations where pupils confront teachers with complaints about different members of staff.

In no way was he against the view that there should be channels of communication with pupils. However, a House System and/or Prefect System should suffice.

He himself as AHT Guidance 'kept his finger on the pulse' through the weekly House Meetings. These were attended by the two Captains and the two Vice-Captains, as well as by the House Staff. Complaints (e.g. about bullying) were put forward then, and suggestions too.

\* The management structure was:-



This AHT was responsible for the four Houses and his team consisted of Housemaster/mistress and Assistant Housemaster/mistress for each House.

There was also a Prefect System in the school, based on the House System and there were four Prefects' rooms, one for each House. The Prefects had school duties (e.g. helping with dining room supervision). This had worked well although one or two 'had turned the badges down' i.e. they had declined to accept the role of prefect.

In actual fact all or most senior pupils had duties of one kind or another. There were then 64 pupils in classes S5.

In summarising his position the Assistant Headteacher said that he preferred 'democratic control' to 'democracy'. He instanced the 'rascal' who was nearly elected as the School's representative on the external School Council; a girl was in fact elected and she was doing the job quite well.

Clearly the Assistant Headteacher (Guidance), a senior member of staff with a good deal of authority or influence was firmly opposed to the idea of establishing Pupil Councils. The Head was not prepared to overrule him, preferring to wait for the right time and opportunity. From the writer's point of view this was disappointing since it pre-empted the study of a new development from the moment of inception. The file was closed, therefore.

#### 4D.5 THE FILE RE-OPENED

This proved not to be a final closing of the file. A Pupil Council for the School was formed a year or so later but unfortunately this was not known about until it was well underway. Although contact with the school was continued, no one conveyed the information about the creation of a Council to the researcher. Probably this was because the initiative did not come from the top but from middle management, from the Principal Teacher of Chemistry in effect. Who was he and what in fact was happening?

#### 4D.6 INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL TEACHER OF CHEMISTRY

In May 1979 the Principal Teacher of Chemistry, Mr Graham, was asked a number of questions - How did the idea originate? Who produced the basic document? How did it work? When did the meetings take place? What role did the staff play? - in order to obtain his view of things.

The idea was his: he had seen it before in another school although it failed there. He put it forward in this School in the hope that it could introduce 'a little democracy into a situation that was devoid of it', although 'there was none for the staff, never mind the pupils'. In particular the Assistant Headteacher (Guidance) had not been keen but he had talked him round over a period of time. Once this had happened, the Headmaster's permission was forthcoming.

The object of the exercise was to form a committee representative of the pupils, to be called the Pupils' Committee. Along with colleagues from the Modern Studies and Geography departments, he had produced a document out-lining the aims and objectives of the Committee as follows:-

##### DUKE HIGH SCHOOL

##### PUPILS' COMMITTEE

- AIMS:
- a) *To enable the pupils to gain an understanding of the principles of democracy.*
  - b) *To ensure that decision-making within the school is not too remote from the pupils.*
  - c) *To increase the level of communication between pupils and staff.*
  - d) *To provide a link between the pupils and staff which would have the effect of improving staff/pupil relations.*

OBJECTIVES:

- (i) Meetings should be held on a regular basis at intervals of four weeks.*
- (ii) A record of the meetings should be kept in the form of minutes.*
- (iii) A member of staff would act as non-voting chairman. As chairman that person would ensure that the business of the meeting would be carried on in an effective manner.*
- (iv) Any member of staff present at the council meeting should only act as an observer and would not have any voting rights.*
- (v) Notice of any matter to be discussed in the council should be given to the chairman in writing at the start of the meeting OR before the start of the meeting.*
- (vi) That the Committee should discuss and vote on any matter coming before it. Before any motion is presented to the Rector it should be passed by a majority of Committee members at the meeting. At least 9 Committee members should be present to constitute a meeting. An apology for absence from a meeting should be tendered to the Secretary or a substitute should be sent. If no apology has been tendered for three successive meetings that particular person should be excluded from the Committee.*
- (vii) That when the views of the Committee have been forwarded to the Rector he or his representatives should be invited to reply at the next meeting.*

At the beginning Mr Graham approached a few pupils and formed a committee 'as a starter'. Later it was possible to set things up properly making full use of the Register Classes as envisaged. Register Classes would send their chosen representatives to meetings of the Years, which meetings would each choose two representatives to join the Pupils' Committee. Membership would therefore number 12, with a member of staff as non-voting chairman.

All the main details of the Pupils' Committee are given in the statement above, but three aspects are worthy of special mention. Firstly, the meetings were to be held either at 4 p.m. on Mondays or (sometimes) at 12 noon on any day i.e. always during pupils' own time. Secondly, staff roles were to be supportive, not dominating: teachers present could not vote.

Thirdly, the outcome of each meeting was seen as a series of points to be put to the Headteacher for him to respond to. The Minutes were written with this very clearly in mind. The Minutes and the Head's replies then appeared in a single statement printed for distribution and for posting on noticeboards, as the following example shows:-

DUKE HIGH SCHOOL

Replies to Minute No. 6 Pupils' Committee

1. All pupils, boys and girls, should be allowed to wear stud earrings.

Answer The one factor for any rule on earrings is safety. The 'keepers' or whatever is worn to keep the ear piercing open, must not be able to catch on anything.

2. Another pay phone should be installed for the use of 4th, 5th and 6th years only. Pupils from these years are phoning at awkward times for career information and jobs.

Answer The installation fee for such a phone is £54 and the rent would be £11 per quarter. The School telephone bill is over £500 per quarter. For emergencies a telephone is always available. Career information should be done by letter to ensure accuracy.

3. Bell should ring once to indicate that queues for dinners are outside and to ring twice when queues are inside.

Answer Agreed.

4. Exam timetables to be issued earlier - at least two weeks prior to examinations.

Answer This used to be done but most timetables were lost by the time of the exams. In future a copy of the timetable will be put up on the house noticeboards at least two weeks prior to exams. The exam timetables will then be issued nearer the exam date.

5. Tuckshop to open at lunch times i.e. main tuck shop only. Prefects on lunch/tuck shop duty could do this.

Answer Provided the prefects agree or staff can be found, the tuck shop will be open for a trial period from 12.30 - 12.55.

6. A wider choice available at tuck shop for senior pupils to go round all prefects' rooms.

Answer A fairly wide choice is available within storage limits. Suggestions for additions to choice would be welcome. The upstairs tuck shop is for all pupils in 5th and 6th years and not only for Prefects. There is also insufficient time to visit all rooms.

7. Trays to be issued in dinner halls. It is awkward to carry both cutlery, tumbler, meat and sweet dishes at the same time.

Answer A few trays are available but they tend to cause more accidents as dishes slide readily on them and due to lack of room. I would suggest that tumbler and cutlery be collected after dishes are safely on table.

8. More educational visits to factories etc. and to see people at work relevant to careers.

Answer Few factories are willing to accept large groups (200-250) of pupils. The cost would also be prohibitive. At present the School is attempting to prepare a complicated programme of work experience for 4th year pupils where they will spend one fortnight with an employer (unpaid). The success will depend on the number of employers willing to participate in the scheme.

9. *Pegs or coat hooks to be provided in all classrooms. Perhaps boys doing technical subjects could make these.*

*Answer Just look at those provided in the Hut in the playground. There are 50-55 rooms in the School. Wood strapping, screws and pegs would be quite costly. Many rooms have no wall on which pegs could be fixed. If pegs were outside the classroom the School would not accept responsibility for the safety of any coats left there.*

It is interesting to note that, through the efforts of a member of staff who had had experience of pupil participation elsewhere, a Pupil Committee was established in school after all.

A year later Mr Graham was reasonably satisfied with developments although it was not easy to maintain the momentum. He saw the Register Teachers as very important but they were busy people and there could be difficulties with respect to the elections and attendance.

Mr Graham felt that in the last resort the Headmaster's attitude would determine the success or failure of the exercise. He was concerned about the responses to the minutes. These looked good, typed and duplicated, but then they were merely posted on the noticeboards. True reasons for decisions may not in fact have been offered. The appearance of the Headmaster in person would make a very great deal of difference; in those circumstances there could be some discussion of issues raised. In effect, because of the Head's attitude, the information flow was largely one way, upwards only.

Perhaps there was a lack of commitment because of duplication of effort. Three members of the Committee were also Prefects. The Headmaster met the Prefects occasionally albeit irregularly. Was there an anomaly here to be corrected in one way or another?



4E. SCHOOL E: EAST SCHOOL

#### 4E. CASE STUDY SCHOOL E : EAST SCHOOL

##### 4E.1 INTRODUCTION

East School was visited during the period 1976-1981. Visits were not frequent, but they were deemed adequate to the situation.

During that period a considerable amount of change took place both in staffing and in the nature of the school. In staffing the Head who was interested in the idea of Pupil Councils was replaced by one who was not. In addition, two other key personnel, the two Assistant Headteachers who shared responsibility for the Council arrangements, both left on gaining further promotion. The school itself changed as a result of a reorganisation of secondary education in the area. From a Junior High School taking only some pupils up to age 16 years, it became an all-through secondary comprehensive school as preferred by Labour Party thinking in Scotland. In that changes of these kinds are normal to the life of any school, they added to the value of this small case study to the enquiry.

There were various reasons why this school was a good one to visit. As a Renfrewshire Junior High School, whose more able pupils sooner or later were lost to the academically very successful Senior High School, it offered a contrast to other school situations where there were Pupil Councils. The catchment area included one of the socially most difficult neighbourhoods outside Glasgow, and this was a matter which might have highlighted some of the problems which those encouraging pupil participation could encounter.

The school buildings were themselves interesting because of the very high quality of the design and appearance. Internally the facilities were very good, with pleasant classrooms, excellent specialist provision in art, science, technical, library and resources centre etc., and with a splendid entrance foyer and administration block. Built on a first-class, open site this

school could have been thought of as having an advantage over others in any efforts to foster in the pupils a sense of belonging and involvement.

#### 4E.2 MANAGEMENT

An essential factor determining the choice of a case study was the willingness of the Headmaster and the management team to have outside observers on the premises. This Headmaster, Mr. Collins, was most willing to allow that to happen. In fact, he preferred open government at all possible points and outsiders with serious interests were always welcome. Mr. Collins was a man who was much respected inside school and outside and he was regularly called upon by Local Authority and College to join working parties or study groups. He was a man with ideas who also enjoyed success at the level of practical management. His style of management could be said to have high impact and it was towards the democratic end of the continuum (Paisey & Paisey 1980).

The Head, therefore, believed in involvement, particularly the involvement of staff\*, but including involvement of parents and pupils. With respect to the last, every encouragement was given to senior staff to organise the Pupils Council, and the Assistant Head (Curriculum), a teacher of Classical Studies, was concerned in the arrangements, as was a lady Assistant Headteacher (Guidance). The structure and functions of the Council were described in a succinct five-point statement drawn up by the first Assistant Head in October 1973 as follows:-

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\* In a letter dated 31st October 1977 the Head wrote: "... I have given the point you raise much thought and I have come to the conclusion that there would be little interest in a conference for teachers on Pupil Democracy. Staff democracy - yes!"

### PUPILS' COUNCIL

*The Pupils' Council will discuss and offer advice on matters relating to the general well-being of the school.*

*It will consist of one member, elected by ballot, from each tutor group. Elections will be held every Term: Council Members may be re-elected.*

*The Council will meet regularly under the supervision of members of staff.*

*Recommendations from the Council will be raised to the appropriate member of staff for consideration.*

*Council membership will be withdrawn from anyone who proves himself or herself not to be a good citizen of the school.*

Two points should be commented upon. Firstly, the meetings were to be held under the supervision of members of staff. The operation was to be quite clearly controlled in that way, and in practice it meant that one or both of the Assistant Headteachers were present.

Secondly, the purpose of the meeting was seen in terms of the production of recommendations, to be put 'to the appropriate member of staff for consideration'. The Pupils' Council, then, was to meet, under the chairmanship of a member of staff, to formulate suggestions for action or for change in school organisation.

#### 4E.3 MATTERS DISCUSSED

From a study of minutes, and from observations recorded at Pupil Council meetings, an interesting range of matters was found to be discussed and recommendations made. These were broadly similar to findings elsewhere, and the topics seemed to fall into four categories:-

- (i) SERVICES AND FACILITIES\*
- (ii) SCHOOL MEALS
- (iii) RULES AND BEHAVIOUR
- (iv) CURRICULUM

The first, SERVICES AND FACILITIES, related to basic needs as seen by the young people. They were of three sorts: most took the form of a demand for the provision of new equipment or new facilities. Equipment included such items as cycle sheds, lockers and hairdriers, while the facilities sought included the wider use of the Youth Wing etc. A second set of demands related not so much to new provision but to the standards of the existing provision. These included complaints about the school bus services, about seats in the science labs that were too hard, about the lack of locks on toilet doors, and so on. Under a third sub-heading went instances when pupils alerted the authorities to danger: metal bar on high jump stand, inadequate street lighting near to school, crushing in queues, and so on.

Arguably, perhaps the second category, SCHOOL MEALS, should be included in the first. It was kept separate because of the obvious importance attached to school meals by the pupils themselves.

Rather more of the business raised had to do with matters that were in a sense organisational. These included the question of bad behaviour in the dinner queues, S1 and S2 pupils getting bruised in the process! There were also questions to do with the loss of dinner tickets, and the misuse of early dinner passes, the refusal by auxiliaries to fill the water jugs, and the need to find a better place where packed lunches might be eaten.

Running through these matters were issues to do with order and fairness. Rather more basic were complaints about the food itself. Surprising was the question asked about the calories/protein balance of the fare that was served. Not surprising

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\* A more detailed analysis is to be found in Appendix L pages 217, 218

were the references to chips and there not being enough of them, especially for those pupils who were unlucky enough to be towards the end of the queue! Finally, on a more amusing note (perhaps!), there was the reference to "spiders in the dinners", and the reference to custard - "The state of the custard continues to be a cause for concern", one minute read!

The third category, again overlapping to some extent with others, embraced issues relating to RULES AND BEHAVIOUR. These posed an important question, one which occurs in all business discussed by Pupil Councils - Who in fact raised the issues? Sometimes the school staff were responsible, sometimes the pupils. The pupils were certainly the initiators where rules about dress were concerned: 'Why are we not allowed to wear jeans?'; 'Why do we have to wear school uniform?' etc. Pupils were also the probable initiators of questions about punishments and whether or not they were fair: 'Why are we punished for playing football in the playground?'; 'For late-coming?'; 'Why should the punishing of a whole class be allowed?' Concern about 'too much strength used in belting' was also raised by pupils, while the idea of detention as an alternative was raised by an Assistant Head in order to obtain pupil reaction to it. When there was discussion of misdemeanours which led to the punishment, this was prompted by pupils or staff. There was general staff and pupil concern about bullying, about the 'slinging of pellets', about dangerous crushing on stairways, about vandalism, and about the eternal problem of litter. In the Pupil Committee meetings then, there was evidence of a strong sense of responsibility among the pupils. They were as anxious as staff to defend standards, and to defend the same standards. There were no indications of a clash of values, which was not to say that there were no hidden conflicts which might not surface one day.

The fourth category was CURRICULUM, and it was difficult to find business which could easily be subsumed under this heading. If

'curriculum' was to be interpreted in the narrow sense, as having to do with the teaching/learning process, then there was little to report. There were complaints about the time-table of some pupils but the concern here was not with the content of curriculum. The case for the establishment of a school magazine was another matter presented to the Committee on more than one occasion but again this might be interpreted as peripheral to the learning programme. This was also the case perhaps, with respect to the demand for basketball for the girls, and more football in Physical Education for the boys. The demand for more class excursions, and the particular demand by some for a fishing week-end were still further removed from issues to do with the central parts of the curriculum. During the time when the school was visited 'curriculum' in the narrow sense was not found to be the subject of Committee business although one might argue that it ought to have been.

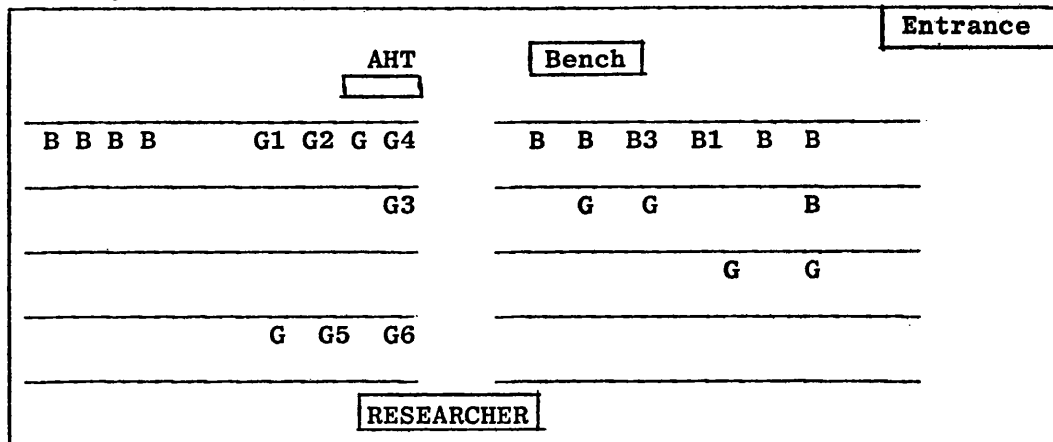
#### 4E.4 PUPIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In an arrangement whereby two pupils from each class or tutor group were to be elected the result would be a representative body of some size. So it was at East School where 60 pupils were chosen i.e. one-twentieth of the school. General communication was through the four House Assemblies but the tutors were always free to operate as they wished. Sometimes they chose the representatives, sometimes volunteers were called for, sometimes voting took place. "Some representatives came well-prepared and capable, others not so", said the Assistant Head.

Meetings were held every 3 or 4 weeks, usually in the Social Studies Lecture Theatre - with such numbers a large room had to be used, of course. Initially the chairman and secretary were nominated by the staff but later the members chose their own office-bearers. Since the meetings were held at lunchtimes, the attendance was not always good, averaging about 30 to 40 claimed the Assistant Heads.

At one meeting, to take an example, only 23 pupils were in attendance. The pupil chairman was absent because of illness and Assistant Head Mrs. Alexander took the chair. The seating was as the following plan shows:-

B = Boy G = Girl



The meeting was opened at 1.10 p.m. by Assistant Head Mrs. Alexander who went through a list of items dealt with at the previous meeting one month ago. She commented briefly on each and asked for any matters arising. Two points, one about school discos and a second about school buses received some attention.

The attention then moved to the agenda which had been contained in a notice on display on noticeboards. There were two items for consideration, (both raised by the staff, it appeared) and Mrs. Alexander read them out: (1) punishments (2) charities. On introducing the first the AHT asked if detention was a suitable punishment for misdemeanours.

G1 responded saying that it was, since it took time from pupils who would use that time in pursuing pleasures.

B2 pointed out that there would be difficulties with pupils who came to school by bus from the more distant parts of the catchment area.

G2 countered by saying that this should make the pupils all the more determined not to get detention.



Mrs. Alexander wondered if detention would not best operate during the period 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Activities Days.

G3 said that this would not then be a proper punishment because the pupils concerned would go home as usual at 4 p.m.

B3 concurred saying that it would not bother some and it would be just like a normal school day.

B4 argued that there should sometimes be the use of the belt too.

The Assistant Head added that the detention on Activities Afternoon would mean a loss of these desirable activities.

G5 argued that the whole class should be kept in when one member of the class offends.

On asking for a show of hands, the Assistant Head saw that none indicated that he/she thought that detention was not suitable.

Mrs Alexander asked if there were alternatives but none was suggested.

The second item on the agenda referred to the charities appeal. A local newspaper had launched an appeal for money for a kidney machine. The Head thought that the school should respond. Would a levy of 20p per pupil be a good idea? If so, how should it be collected?

About six representatives thought that 20 pence was too much.

G4 commented that collections at Assembly might be a good idea.

A G said that some might be missed if that was to be the way.

Another G added that you could not force pupils to contribute.

Collecting round individual classes was a suggestion put forward by B. G6 moved away from the idea of a collection and she suggested a Coffee Morning: the pupils would sell the tickets, bake cakes etc.

A sponsored run was suggested by a B.

Another B suggested a Concert but this was dismissed by the Assistant Head on the grounds that it would be too time-consuming.

Under AOCB the question of the lateness of school buses was raised by a B. The buses could be as much as half an hour late. Mrs. Alexander said that they should get their parents to complain; the school had complained so often.

The meeting ended at 1.30 p.m. as the bell sounded.

The next meeting was provisionally arranged for two weeks that day at the same time.

#### 4E.5 COMMENTS

The activities of the Pupils' Committee continued in that way and along those lines. Although the Headteacher was himself not directly involved in the Committee arrangements he did see them as worthwhile and he supported the idea fully. As mentioned earlier, the Head's outlook was one which encouraged involvement and 'open management'.

The Depute Head, an able and ambitious man, was of a similar mind. However, he was not inclined towards very radical views and his thinking coloured the basic statement on the nature and purpose of the Committee. The arrangements were to be fairly tightly structured. Yet he was aware of the values and difficulties: he hoped that the pupil participants would improve their skills and deepen their interest in the Committee, particularly when the S5 and S6 classes emerged and matured. The main difficulty he saw as that of maintaining the operation of the Committee in such a way that the pupils always saw the results of their efforts.

The Assistant Head (Guidance), Mrs. Alexander, was, as indicated, also concerned in the arrangements. Her approach to the idea was similar, she hoped for improved performance by the pupil participants but she did not underestimate the difficulties. From an earlier stage of optimism she had moved to feelings of disappointment. The problem of finding times when the Committee could meet was critical and this loomed even larger when the Depute Head gained

promotion and she was left with the responsibility. Sadly the attendance became poorer, the older ones in particular staying away. There were also difficulties with the agenda - the same matters kept coming up. She was also critical of the chairman who lacked the necessary skills and who lost control under pressure. Perhaps the Assistant Head's own enthusiasm was affected by the arrival of a new Head with new ideas, making more or different demands on the management team. Quite soon she herself moved to take a post in another school.

#### 4E.6 THE NEW HEADTEACHER

In June 1978 a new Headteacher arrived. Although not expressing the wish to end the Pupil Committee arrangements Mr. Farmer quickly declared his intention to establish a Prefect System. He had had wide experience of this in other schools and saw it as valuable in developing pupils' sense of responsibility.

In effect, Assistant Head Mrs. Alexander was asked to make the initial moves early in the following session. Pupils were asked to offer themselves for duty. Mrs Alexander was to make the final choice.

A good number of Girls came forward. Mrs. Alexander consulted the Principal Teachers, and recommendations were discussed by the Board of Studies. The Girl Prefects, said Mrs. Alexander, were doing well quite quickly. Not so the Boys. "One Boy Prefect of the 14 was good, the rest were hopeless." All Prefects were resented at first, said Mrs. Alexander.

She was responsible for the Prefect arrangements and the use of her time and energy in this way meant the decline of the Pupils' Committee.

The Headteacher was aware of the criticisms levelled at Prefect Systems. Some said they savoured of elitism - an argument which he rejected. 'It need not be so'. There was pupil resentment of

Prefects and this he thought was based on false conceptions. It was true that some thugs had beaten up a Prefect and four pupils were suspended as a result.

The duties which Prefects had discharged so far had been light: assembly duty, corridor duty etc. Next session there would be more Prefects and more duties. For example, there would be some who 'would look after first-year pupils, junior pupils'. The emphasis would be on helping, on serving and on responsibility.

4F. DISCUSSION OF CASE STUDY DATA

#### 4F. DISCUSSION OF CASE-STUDY DATA

The selection of these schools was not random. They formed a varied group in terms of a number of important and relevant factors.

They differed with respect to denomination, location, size, history, structure and organisation. They also differed in the extent to which the comprehensive school ideal had been realised. Two were all-through comprehensive schools of the preferred type, one Roman Catholic and large, the other small with a significant Asian population. Two were in the process of 'growing' an S5/6, one (R.C.) also experiencing the consequences of amalgamation, both with substantial numbers of 'non-academic' pupils. The fifth was also emerging as an all-through school but as a result of re-organisation in the area. All were actively engaged in improving the image of their school both educationally and generally, and this was seen as having bearing on the question of pupil involvement, both informally and formally.

The Headteachers, always playing a key role in the establishment and maintenance of councils, differed too, in their style of management, yet none was at the extremes of the authoritarian-democratic continuum. Two, perhaps three, might be regarded as among the more distinguished Scottish comprehensive school headteachers.\*

With respect to the pupil councils themselves there was variety in mode and extent of achievement. The first council was well-established and continuing to be successful; the second took its first steps carefully and successfully, but then declined; the third also got off to a good start, and was being consolidated at year council level; the fourth, after initial rejection, made a promising start on the initiative of a Principal Teacher; the fifth existed only to a modest extent and it began to wither on the arrival of a new Headteacher who favoured prefect systems.

\* *On the assumption that Headteacher roles are of central importance to the success of a school (see, for example, (D.E.S. (1977), "Ten Good Schools") it is reasonable to argue that their influence would be crucial to the development of pupil-involvement. (See also Rutter, 1979)*

These five school situations may be considered in terms of the main elements of the diagram on page 13:-

- (i) All showed the influence of current thinking in that they all had set up formal arrangements to involve pupils. Arguably, then, all showed some signs of being influenced by progressive ideology, if only slightly. One, Brae School, was more 'open' in its approach to pupils and to the community.

However, it would be wrong to label any of these schools as 'progressive' or 'child-centred'. For more extreme examples it would be necessary to go outside the state system, perhaps, to Kilquhanity House and to John Aitkenhead's example which more fully warrants these labels. Within the public sector the ill-fated policies of Robert MacKenzie in Fife and Aberdeen stand alone.\*

- (ii) All public secondary schools were, of course, subject to the comprehensive blueprint; statutory pronouncements, reinforced in some areas by local political affiliations, had determined that. However, the picture was by no means a uniform one. While all five case-study schools had the ideal of the all-through comprehensive school before them, the interpretations varied noticeably.

In their analysis of what constituted a comprehensive school, Hunter, Archer and Peck (1977) listed three criteria (a) that the school should be a neighbourhood one taking all 12-plus pupils (b) that there should be no streaming of classes and (c) that there should be social mixing of pupils. A fourth criterion could reasonably be added - that pupil-choice be recognised as fully as possibly. The demise of the selective system meant that no longer would there be prediction of future pupil performance followed by allocation to secondary courses. Prediction and allocation would be replaced by pupil-choice of

\* As disciples of A.S. Neill these men were well-disposed towards the idea of pupil influence on, even pupil control of, aspects of school life.

curriculum after a period of orientation. Although this may not necessarily be taken as far as in Countesthorpe College where there was 'negotiation of the curriculum with the student', an element of genuine choosing on the part of the pupil was required. Furthermore such a notion of genuine choice rests on the assumption that the chooser is free to choose and that the chooser has worthwhile choices to make. This, then, cannot be a narrow notion, limited to isolated instances of curricular choice, but a broader one which acknowledges that the pupil has a valid point of view to offer on aspects of school life and learning. We are led, then, to the view that the comprehensive idea entails the notion of pupil-involvement. To that extent comprehensive secondary education reflects a child-centred ideology upon which the formal involvement of pupils may be based.

Again, among the five case-study schools, Brae School, in the thinking and practice of the Headteacher at least, reflected this broader view rather more than others. Mr. Stone talked of the pupil council idea as being connected with the idea of 'the school as a community rather than simply as an institution'. And in trying to develop a homework policy, for example, in consultation with staff, pupils and parents, he gave practical expression to this view.

There was evidence from Airth School that the Head was clearly aware of these issues but in saying that 'there were nettles to be grasped' by teachers he was advocating a more cautious approach at the time: developments in the direction of more pupil-involvement in the future were envisaged. Perhaps they were envisaged in the other schools too and there were hints that they were, in the minds of some any way.



(iii) So far, in terms of the theoretical models, the case study schools have been seen as sharing common ground - the ideological and political background factors have been the same. However, some differences in the responses to these factors began to be noticed. How far did these differences reflect democratic or training models?

Clearly all fell between the two extremes, combining aspects of both models, tending to cluster somewhat nearer to the training model.

In the table below the five schools are rated by impression and no more so, on five variables - Headteacher ideology, ideology of other key staff, management structure and process, pupil council autonomy, and pupil council outcome. Each is considered in terms of acceptance of or encouragement of pupil-involvement, 1 representing low involvement, 10 high involvement, 5, the mid-point, suggesting a position appropriate to a combined democratic/training model.

	Headteacher Ideology	Key Staff Ideology	Management Structure and Progress	Pupil Council Autonomy	Outcomes	Total
Airth	6	5	6	5	5	27
Brae	7	4	7	6	7	31
Cross	5	5	5	4	5	24
Duke	3	7	3	2	2	17
East	5	5	6	3	4	23

Duke School, on these subjective measures, was revealed as having low involvement, and only the ideology of the innovator kept it

in the reckoning. The innovator or change agent was himself unhappy with the progress being made, mainly because the value of the council was not fully recognised by the Headmaster and others.

East school occupied a position nearer to the centre, the idea being viewed as a training one and a little more. Lack of recognition again emerged as a characteristic.

Cross School was more generally at the centre. Commitment to the idea was quite widespread and genuine, in terms of a training/ democratic model.

Airth School, according to the measures, occupied a place slightly towards the democratic end of the continuum. Positive leadership on the part of the Headteacher was the determining factor.

This was also the position in the case of Brae School, which came out as the most democratic. The commitment of the Head, along with policies consistent with Mr. Stone's views, was significant. However, the factor which determined the character of the pupil council idea in Brae, the personal influence of the Head that is, may have been the cause of its undoing. The Head appeared to fail to carry the staff with him on this and other matters, to quote Mr. Stone's own explanation. The true situation was probably more complex.

In conclusion, then, it may be said of these five examples that they represented different points on a continuum which had a training model at one end and a democratic one at the other; that they were clustered towards the centre, only one edging significantly in the direction of the democratic.

Together they exemplified in general and in detail much that was involved in the establishment and operation of pupil councils. They helped substantially in drawing up the management guidelines which are offered below, guidelines which embody findings on many matters of detail that were seen to be important in the case studies.

**5 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES : MAKING PUPIL COUNCILS WORK**

**5.1 BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE IDEA**

**5.2 PUTTING THE IDEA FORWARD**

**5.3 ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES**

**5.4 ATTENTION TO DETAIL**

**5.5 PUPIL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

**5.6 ACQUISITION OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

**5.7 MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

## 5.1 BEING CLEAR ABOUT THE IDEA

One headteacher wrote, 'In this school there was no pupil council in the past, there is none at present, nor will there be one in the future'. This pronouncement was made in 1978. A headteacher might say much the same today, but he would probably be in a small minority. In many schools some pupils at least are involved formally in one kind of Pupil Council or another. Most schools are likely to make moves in that direction in the future.

Some Pupil Council arrangements have been established, but then they have failed. Why does failure sometimes occur?

Circumstances vary, of course, and success depends on a number of factors. For all new developments there is perhaps one golden rule: the idea and its purposes have to be very clearly understood by all who are concerned. Without the understanding there cannot be the necessary commitment to the implementation of the idea.

In order to clarify the idea perhaps we should look at the 'why?' question first - why have pupils councils been developed? The answer in part must be in terms of the changing 'climate of thought', in trends, national and international, trends which are against authority and hierarchy and in favour of more involvement in the decision-making by those who are affected by decisions. In schools this means involvement of three sets of people - staff, then parents perhaps, and now pupils.

Nevertheless, an explanation in terms of a changing climate of thought cannot be a complete one. There has also been the impact of ideas, and the move has been towards a progressive or pupil-centred ideology. What is of real significance in practical terms, however is that the policy-makers were influenced by this trend when drawing the plans of the 'new' secondary comprehensive school which emerged officially in 1965.

The secondary comprehensive school contains a strand that is essentially pupil-centred. Selection at primary school level was abolished. The reliance on early prediction of future performance ended, and with it ended the process whereby pupils were then allocated to schools and to courses. In place of these arrangements was to be mixed-ability grouping and the common course during the

early years of the secondary school, pupils experiencing a period of 'orientation', getting to know their interests and their strengths and weaknesses so that choice about curriculum might be made. The emphasis was to be on pupil-choice rather than on prior, external prediction of later academic 'success'. The message, then, along with others coming from the comprehensive school blueprint, was that the focus should be rather more on the individual pupil making choices, being more responsible for his/her own learning and generally being more involved in the school as a community.

A general trend towards involvement, and a view of secondary education in line with that trend - these provide the backcloth to and the explanation of the school developments with which the enquiry is concerned. However, schools may respond differently and for different reasons and these responses require clarification. Three main sorts of response seem possible. At one extreme, the response may be simply to reject the arguments in favour of involvement and to deny the pupils any say in secondary school affairs. This would be to affirm 'traditional' educational theory and the knowledge-based view of curriculum which it underpins. The authority of the Headteacher and of teachers would be supreme, encouraging only passive roles for pupils. In terms of formal arrangements this would mean no more than prefect systems through which pupils do little more than serve the needs of the staff and of the school. No real participation is envisaged in this view.

At the other extreme, headteacher and staff may take the demand for pupil involvement as literal and genuine and they may establish the democratic machinery to give pupils a voice in school affairs. This democratic model of pupil-involvement entails two main propositions:

- (i) that pupils ought to be involved; that they have a right to be involved, and
- (ii) that the involvement should include the power to ensure that something happens as a result of the involvement.

These two propositions are, of course, closely connected and they both rest on the assumption that pupils are complete and not embryo human beings.

There are obvious difficulties with such a position. The basic assumptions can be challenged, perhaps on the grounds that there is a developmental factor and that secondary school pupils are not adequately developed for participation. Furthermore, there may be a difficulty regarding the nature of a 'right', as being either inborn or as something granted or not granted by society. In addition, the 'rights' of pupils may sometimes be in conflict with the rights of others, of staff and of parents. One other major difficulty concerns the legal basis of schools which vests authority and responsibility in the person of the head. This would have to be altered if the 'democratic model' were to be freely applied.

Lying between the two extremes, perhaps sharing some common ground with them, is a third response, suggesting a training model rather than a democratic model. In this case, while not denying the validity of the demand for pupil involvement, the response may be more limited and in terms of training for future involvement. This training model shares common ground with the democratic model but the argument which it presents is more exclusively an educational one. The argument runs as follows:-

- (a) On leaving school at age 16 or 18 young people will have to be involved in the democratic process in one form or another - at work, in a club or similar organised group, in further or higher education, politically, and so on.
- (b) Secondary schools ought in various ways to prepare pupils to be involved in these situations.
- (c) Although pupils cannot be involved in important decision-making in schools, there are situations which might be exploited in order to provide training in involvement.

The training model, then, is one which emphasises the institutional and educational functions and sees the school as having changing responsibilities towards pupils as pupil-

needs change. It is a needs-based rather than a rights-based view.

There are also difficulties attached to this view. A basic one, of course, is that it can in no way satisfy those educational thinkers and other thinkers and activists who call for the 'liberation' of children, nor does it satisfy the demands of the National Union of School Students. One further problem is that training in involvement that lacks real form and content may by its nature fail to achieve its intended purpose. Playing at democracy just will not do.

In the democratic model there is involvement for its own sake and the argument is a moral one based on the notion of 'rights'. There is at least some pupil-power, in the sense of a degree of control over situations and outcomes, although, as has been noted, this power-sharing would require to be legitimated.

The training model stresses not pupil rights but pupil needs. The concern is with present educational needs and with future real needs for which the pupils may now be prepared. School experience should provide the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills for use later.

The democratic model rejects authority and rigid hierarchy, which the training model may accept. Thus, when the training model applies, a prefect system based on privilege may co-exist with a pupil council, i.e. the two may be seen as consistent.

A further important question concerns the idea of efficiency. On the face of it, the democratic model, being concerned with participation for its own sake, may seem not to be concerned with efficient management, although this is by no means excluded. The training model may be more readily categorised as an efficiency model: we involve pupils for purposes of training but they might sometimes, through their comments, help management to make the 'best' policy decisions. To some extent this may protect the training model view from the charge of not being genuine, of being



mere 'tokenism' or merely a 'containment model', to keep the more militant students in check until we run into calmer waters when the demand for involvement can be quietly forgotten.

Where there are pupil councils the arrangements may reflect one model or the other or, as is more likely, a model which lies between the two, and a number of variations is possible. What is important to each individual school is that the bases upon which its council idea rests should be understood at the outset and should be regularly reviewed.

## 5.2 PUTTING THE IDEA FORWARD

As might be expected, where there are Pupil Councils they are found to have emerged in different ways. The growth point may have been at classroom level, or within departments at a middle-management level, or at the level of top management, or because of initiatives across these levels.

Developments at the level of the class are probably rare. There are obvious difficulties facing an individual teacher who favours the idea of some formal involvement of pupils, and he/she is not likely to take the initiative unless pupil interest is there already. Some support from upper management is also necessary.

These were the circumstances in Hill Academy\*. Some pupils in middle school had heard of the National Union of School Students and they were wondering about joining. The Head suggested that, as a first step, they might start something for themselves, and he knew that a teacher would be interested. This teacher, a probationer, in fact, although not straight from college and with experience of life outside the world of education therefore, took up the idea. He soon formed a steering committee of pupils, whose weekly lunch-time meetings drew up a constitution and worked out the details of the elections etc. During the year since then the Council has become a reality and a success, having won acceptance and active support throughout the school - the pupil Council provides the two representatives for the external School Council, for example. Given favourable circumstances then, developments from the 'classroom floor' level can prosper.

There are also severe difficulties to be faced when the development arises at middle management level. Braidfor Academy provides a good example. Over a number of years there had been opposition to the idea of formal pupil involvement. The Head took a somewhat neutral stance but the Assistant Headteacher (Guidance) was

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\* *Real names are not used.*

actively opposed because of 'previous experience'. Only the persuasive skills of a particular Principal Teacher changed this and, with the help of some colleagues, a Pupil Council was set up. It achieved a degree of recognition but not much encouragement from the Board of Studies nor from the Headteacher. The Principal Teacher continued to provide the necessary leadership and some success could reasonably be claimed. However, the future of the Council could not be seen as other than uncertain.

Not surprisingly most often the development comes from the top, from the Headteacher and/or from someone near to him. Yet it would be an error to assume that such developments are always assured of success. Nor would it be correct to assume that top-down developments always proceed along similar lines, as two examples show.

One Headteacher, having set up a fairly complex management structure to cope with a range of problems and involving many staff from first year probationers upwards, wanted to extend this structure so as to involve pupils. The Head's management philosophy led naturally to the development of a pupil Council and use was made of the existing management structure to plan for and to develop the Council idea. The arrangements required the involvement of the Depute Head, of Principal Teachers and others. Council meetings were time-tabled and in important respects its success was assured.

A second Headteacher approached things differently. The idea was first raised by an Assistant Headteacher at a Board of Studies meeting. It was received favourably there and the same Assistant Head was asked to be responsible for getting things underway. He did this by involving various staff who he thought would be able to contribute effectively. Although the Head was himself actively concerned, the Assistant Headteacher implemented and maintained the arrangements. The amount of pupil interest remained quite high and the venture could easily be described as successful.

Both these schools and others made use of the idea of the Working Party in managing the innovation. One in particular provides a good example although the term 'Study Group' was preferred. The procedure adopted was as follows:-

- (i) Headteacher wrote a Discussion Paper clarifying the idea\*, giving a lead as to possible shape of a Pupil Council, and suggesting the establishment of a Study Group.
- (ii) The Study Group was formed and this 'consisted of 3 members of staff appointed by the Head, and 7 students, 2 from 4th Year, 2 from 5th Year and 3 from 6th Year, all elected by their Year groups'.
- (iii) Study Group members visited another school where a Pupil Council had been functioning successfully for some time. They talked to staff and to Council Members.
- (iv) The Study Group produced a report making recommendations. This report was submitted to the Head.
- (v) The Head proposed one addition - 'The School Council shall appoint two of its members to serve on the School Finance Committee'.
- (vi) The Head circulated the report to all staff and pupils for their comments by a certain date.
- (vii) When comments had been received and noted, plans were made for the first elections and the council idea became a reality.

Such a procedure exemplifies good management practice in important respects. There is careful thought and planning beforehand. Those who are to be involved - teachers and pupils - are involved from the beginning; due regard is paid to the need for good communication and co-ordination; and there is clear but not dominant leadership throughout. A strategy of this kind would appear to give the innovation a good chance of success.

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\* In the Discussion Paper he wrote, "When the Regions came into being in 1975, provision was also made for the creation of school and community councils. The aim was to give members of the community a greater part to play in their own local government ... The introduction over the last few years, of pupil or pupil-teacher councils in schools may be seen as a similar development or as a logical extension of the student councils which have existed for some time in universities and colleges".

### 5.3 ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES

'What's in a name?' we may ask. The various arrangements for involving pupils go by various names - General School Meeting, The Moot, School Senate, School Forum, School Council, Pupil Council, Pupil Representative Council, School Committee, and so on. Sometimes these terms are interchangeable, sometimes the meaning and purposes are different. In practical terms they appear to fall into four main groups.

- (i) Firstly, and on the 'grand scale', there is the structure that takes the form of direct democracy, when all pupils are given the right to participate equally in the deliberations of the decision-making body. In this they may be joined by all staff, all the academic or professional staff at least. The classic example is that of Summerhill where 'each member of the teaching staff and each child, regardless of his age, has one vote'. 'Summerhill,' writes Neill, 'is a self-governing school, democratic in form. Everything connected with social, or group life, including punishment for social offences, is settled by vote at the Saturday night General School Meeting' (Neill 1954). Summerhill is, of course, a special case, but well worth noting.

Countesthorpe College in Leicestershire, albeit within the public sector, is also a special case, having been planned along unusual lines from the start. 'More important', says Richmond when referring to Countesthorpe, 'it represents an attempt to bring shared decision-making down to the lowest possible level and to make democracy a going concern' (Richmond 1973). The Moot and the Community Council (representing users within the adult and youth provision of the College) formulate the College's policy. Democracy is again of the direct kind: 'The Moot is open to all staff, students in so far as they wish to attend, and parents when they are able'. However, because of the size of Countesthorpe, there are other structures: 'The Moot forms sub-committees, standing or ad hoc, to deal with specific business' (Watts 1977). These 'other decision-making groups are responsible directly to the Moot and any individual may challenge their decisions through the Moot'. The Countesthorpe example has

been much studied and it may be a model for the future where circumstances permit.

- (ii) Less radical is a school situation where there is a Council that is representative of the different age-groups or classes or houses. In this case pupils are likely to be elected by their fellows, perhaps in a way that ensures equal representation of boys and girls.

The resulting Council would probably be quite large. One such, to take an example, is called the School Senate, and pupil membership (senators) is nearly sixty, plus teacher members. The School Senate meets during school hours, monthly or as is required.

In this instance the School Senate appears not to hold special powers like the Countesthorpe moot. To some it may appear not to have much power at all and among the Working Rules is one that reads: 'The Senate will make recommendations to the Rector who will undertake to provide an explanation if the decision cannot be implemented'. However, it is a good example of a single whole-school Council which on the face of it operates on the basis of representative democracy.

- (iii) Other structures also employ elected or nominated representatives, and one that is sometimes favoured is a two-tier system of Year Councils topped by a whole-school Council. Each Year Council is composed of representatives of each class in the Year, perhaps one boy and one girl from each class. The Year Councils once they are formed elect or appoint their representatives to the full Pupil School Council i.e. the top tier.

There are two reasons why a two-tier system might be preferred. First of all there is the question of size: a single Council with 50 to 60 members is too large an assembly, perhaps, for satisfactory debate. The Year Councils should be of manageable size, then, and secondly the groups would be much more homogeneous; matters which seem important to

12 year-olds\* may not be the same as those which interest 16 year-olds or 17 year-olds and in a Year Council arrangement better treatment of issues is assured. The top tier, in one case called the Executive Committee, should provide the forum for a full discussion of general school matters.

- (iv) A fourth category of structures (Year Councils only) might in some respects seem not to warrant separate treatment. It might be described as the two-tier system minus the top tier! In a number of cases when the arrangement set out to be two-tier, with experience the extra level was found not to be worthwhile. Schools where this has happened have given three reasons for it:-

firstly, there were difficulties in finding business for the top tier and in maintaining the interest and level of activity;

secondly, there was uncertainty regarding the relationship between the two tiers

and thirdly, there was the feeling that the separate Year Councils were achieving all that might reasonably be expected of any form of pupil-involvement.

This 'natural progression' to the acceptance of the Year Council as of central importance and as viable without a top tier, may involve other variations and these could be significant. The younger Councils may be left to gain experience and to develop on their own, but the older Councils may be easily and usefully grouped. S5 and S6 might obviously have a combined Council and S4, 5 and 6 sometimes form a single Council. In that these Councils represent the older and more mature students, they may be considered as like a top tier. Rightly or wrongly, this seems to give a more privileged place to the older pupils, which the younger ones are quick to resent.

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\* Observation and study of Year Councils suggest that S1 and possibly S2 Councils may not work well, initially at least. The pupils may lack the necessary to good, organised discussion, and issues raised may be 'trivial' in nature. The Year Council provides the necessary experience and the opportunity to learn the required skills.

Another development, in fact sometimes associated with this pattern, but by no means essentially associated with it, is the presence at meetings of any number of other pupils as observers. This gives the meetings a sense of occasion, especially when the Headteacher is there to answer certain points. It also contributes to school-wide awareness of what the Council means and it furthers the idea of open debate of issues of common concern.

The practice of allowing observers is one that might grow, along lines well-known elsewhere,\* where any students and staff may sometimes observe the deliberations of even the main decision-making body in the school or college. If this happens now at pupil level, could it be extended to other committees in school?

Two other points, regarding the link between Pupil Councils and other structures need to be made. There is first of all the body external to the school, but with school representatives on it, namely the School Council as required by section 125 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. Some schools were slow to forge a link, arguably a necessary one. Others came quickly to the idea that the school representatives should be seen as representatives and that they should report back to the pupils they represent. One way of managing this is to arrange things so that the representatives are members of the Pupil Council and that they give periodic reports to the Council. (To be realistic it has to be said that pupil comment on their function as school representatives on the School Council is sometimes adverse - they are not always sure of what their function really is.)

One other pattern of links is found in one school where the Headteacher takes a particular view of participation. An example illustrates this well: homework is often an issue of concern to pupils. Too much can be given by too many teachers without regard for the total load. Pupils complained in one school and the Head asked the pupils, through the Year Councils, to prepare a policy on homework. This they did and, through an ad hoc committee, the staff were asked for their proposals. As a consequence, an agreed policy emerged. But this was not all. The position was then put to the PTA for parent comments. These were received and final adjustments made: staff,

\* See Open University Course E321, Unit 6, "Organization Development" especially 6.13, page 20.



pupils and parents were parties to the final document. To this headteacher in this school, decision-making involving the three partners was to be preferred whenever possible. Different structures and processes will emerge in different schools according to circumstances.

#### 5.4 ATTENTION TO DETAIL

5.41 Obvious though it may be, it does need saying - unless due attention is paid to detail, an innovation will not prosper. As we have indicated, good preliminary planning is the first essential. To this must be added the need to motivate the staff and the pupils who are involved, which means that there must be continuing management input by the Head and/or others, and commitment to the idea by everyone. A further important requirement is that the working of the idea must be monitored so that adjustments can be made in the light of the feeding back of information to the decision-making machinery.

5.42 Among the detail requiring constant attention are matters to do with communication. Sometimes the staff do not know much about the Pupil Council when one exists! Sometimes pupils are inadequately informed, and neither group of participants can give its full support in these circumstances. Sometimes pupil members are not given proper notice of meetings and attendance is obviously important. The need for information is not restricted to the time before meetings: people require to know what happens at meetings and what the outcomes are. Good schools review their communication systems from time to time and issues regarding their effectiveness with respect to Pupil Councils would arise then. Communication about the Pupil Council would include:-

- (a) A section in the prospectus for parents.
- (b) A section in the Staff handbook.
- (c) References in the daily/weekly communication sheet.
- (d) Notices on notice-boards (agendas, minutes etc.)
- (e) Announcements at assemblies, School, Year or House.
- (f) Oral communication by class/register teachers/tutors.
- (g) Tannoy announcements.
- (h) Discussions at staff meetings and committee meetings.
- (i) Discussions at meetings of the PTA.

5.43 Important detail concerns the roles of staff who are involved. These have been illustrated in the examples given above. One aspect, however, is sometimes overlooked or given insufficient attention: the Pupil Council idea is not likely to operate

sufficiently well if staff support comes only from the top. Observation of different systems in operation suggests that the class teacher or register teacher or guidance teacher has a key part to play. This person operates at that place in the structure where the pupil councillor is chosen, where the councillor hears the views of his/her 'constituents' and where the councillors report back to the constituents. There is sometimes evidence of teacher negligence, or even teacher opposition at the level of the class, in which case the Council may die an early death.

One of the most important tasks undertaken at the class level is the election of the councillors. This requires to be done with care and in accordance with a procedure which is both clearly understood and fair. Although scope must be left to the individual teacher, some form of agreed procedure is probably desirable. This might be the democratic one, when pupils are proposed and seconded and voted for in a secret ballot, although sometimes there might just be a case for teacher intervention either to limit the number of candidates or even to nominate the councillors.

5.44 A number of other matters, sometimes quite specific matters, requiring particular attention are as follows:-

(i) The time and length and frequency of meetings are details which need careful attention and decision. Some schools go for meetings after school or during lunchtime breaks. The drawbacks here are significant and time-tabled meetings ensure good attendance although one period, giving little more than thirty minutes, is probably inadequate.

Some Councils meet as frequently as once a week, others find monthly meetings sufficient. It is clearly important to meet at the 'best' time and for as long and as frequently as seems necessary for the use and maintenance of the Council machinery.

(ii) The calling of meetings is also something which has to be done properly. The date of the next meeting is likely to be part of the business of each meeting

although a reminder may be necessary. Time-tabled meetings, with reminders given through the school tannoy system an hour or so beforehand is an arrangement which works well.

- (iii) It is an error to assume that a meeting can be effectively run in any place that happens to be free. Ordinary classrooms can be far from ideal. One school finds that the tutorial room adjoining the library offers good facilities. Not being a classroom helps, when a relaxed, informal atmosphere is called for, and the seating (comfortable soft chairs) there can be effectively managed in that the various representatives can be properly seated and identified.
- (iv) Although a relaxed atmosphere may be desirable in the interests of good discussion, it remains important that proper committee procedures be adhered to. These should apply to any member of staff present, be he/she Headteacher, other senior staff, 'teacher adviser', or any other teacher, just as they should apply to pupils. There are, of course, further related questions about the part which any member of staff can or should play during meetings. A good general rule might be that he/she should keep to normal procedures and avoid being too dominant.
- (v) For committee procedures to operate properly, pupil office bearers must emerge. The chairman and secretary are likely to be elected from their number by the councillors. Observations suggest that a chairman and secretary with the required knowledge and skill are necessary to the success of the Council. Experience also suggests that they must be briefed before each meeting, and that they ought to have some part in setting the meeting up.
- (vi) The question of attendance is itself an issue and it involves a number of subsidiary questions. In some way or other, by calling the roll, or more informally, the attendance requires to be noted; a good representative is, among other things, one who attends well. The

evidence is that pupils are quick to want to get rid of their representative if he/she is not up to standard. One subsidiary question is whether, in the event of someone being absent, a substitute should be provided, and how a substitute might be found. And, as in the case of all meetings, there needs to be a procedure for determining if there is a quorum.

- (vii) Pupil Councils sometimes seem to be too casual regarding two matters - the agenda and the minutes. These printed items form important detail. It can be asserted with confidence that both are needed, that pupils should be involved in their production (the secretary in the case of the minutes, of course), and that they should be widely distributed and displayed.

In the case of minutes a further matter is that these are linked with outcomes or results of meetings, and this means that minutes help to connect the business of one meeting with that of the next. These tangible manifestations of productive effort are needed if interest and commitment are to be preserved.

- 5.45 Attention to the fine detail is necessary. Councils have sometimes failed because this has not been recognised as vital. Not that it is easy. One Headteacher wrote as follows:-

"It has been very difficult to get a pupil council underway. So far I would not claim that it is effective. There has been difficulty getting a reasonable number of pupils to attend, even though they are elected from each of our over fifty register classes. Democracy is a very tender plant and difficult to raise, both with teachers and pupils."

## 5.5 PUPIL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

'The S4 Year Council works well because we have a good chairman';  
'The S2 Forum is failing because of the poor quality of the  
representatives'; 'The School Council is doing well this year -  
there are two or three pupils who really know what it is all about'.  
These teacher comments on the success or otherwise of Councils are  
to be heeded although they beg questions regarding what makes a  
good chairman, or poor representatives, or pupils who really know  
what it is all about, and so on. What KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS are  
needed by 'good' participants and HOW MIGHT THESE BE ACQUIRED?

Before trying to come to some kind of answer to this question there  
is an important preliminary point to be made: whatever knowledge  
and skills are needed these cannot all be seen as prerequisites.  
The process of involvement must itself be a learning process, when  
S1 Year Council business may be 'a disorganised mass of ideas but  
a necessary stage to be gone through', older and more experienced  
pupils being able to contribute, hopefully, with increasing  
competence. This supports the view that teacher input is needed  
initially, when formal structures are being established, and  
afterwards during the years when pupils are learning from the  
experience.

### 5.51 KNOWLEDGE

Bearing in mind, then, that this may be acquired over a  
period of time, it may be said that in the first instance  
participants minimally require knowledge and understanding of  
committees (Councils are, it is assumed, similar to committees),  
and of committee procedures.

Phyllis Bentley provides a suitably simple statement about  
committees:- "Committees offer a democratic method of  
managing human affairs" (Bentley 1962, p.7). Here is something  
straightforward for pupils to think about, perhaps during or  
following a meeting of the Year, or of the class, when a  
Council is being set up.

Additional points for consideration could be that the Council  
or committee, being democratically elected, is responsible to  
the larger group i.e. to the Year or to the whole school;

that members should be faithful to the trust placed in them by those who elected them; and that every member on the Council has the right to express an opinion. (Quot homines, tot sententiae.) Some appreciation of the importance of these matters is unavoidable.

Equally important is the realisation that an elected body like a Council needs a constitution or rules, such as the following:-

#### PUPILS' COUNCIL

The Pupils' Council will discuss and offer advice on matters relating to the general well-being of the school.

It will consist of one member, elected by ballot, from each tutor-group. Elections will be held every Term. Council members may be re-elected.

The Council will meet regularly under the supervision of members of staff.

Recommendations from the Council will be raised with the appropriate member of staff for consideration.

Council membership will be withdrawn from anyone who proves himself or herself not to be a good citizen of the school.

These rules, then, embody the purposes of the Council, the terms of membership, and the duties and powers of members. Also of importance are the rules regarding the election of members, the terms of service, and the possibility of replacement.

These rules or constitution also regulate the behaviour of the Council and in addition it may have its own standing orders governing procedures. The more obvious common procedures refer to ways in which issues are raised, motions proposed, amendments proposed and votes or ballots taken. All these matters require to be understood and observed, including the most basic rule of all, that remarks must always be addressed through the chair.

Knowing what constitutes a 'good' issue is also of obvious importance. In an absolute sense this knowledge would

probably be acquired over a period of time, in which case it would be perceived as a function of the understanding of the purpose of the Council: those pupils who understand the Council 'best' will know what make the 'best' issues.

The meaning of the idea of Pupil Councils was discussed above but it is pertinent to the argument at this stage to mention what may be seen as an error made by some schools when a School Committee or Council is set up. Its purpose is said by these schools to be mainly concerned with receiving complaints from pupils; it becomes a complaints committee. Such a narrow interpretation may not easily lead to 'good' discussion of 'good' issues.

However, any issue perceived by pupils as worth raising may be seen as a 'good' issue, even if adjudged to be trivial by staff, whether it be a demand for hair-driers, a complaint about the quantity of chips served at lunch, a request for fishing week-ends or a suggestion about the punishment of litterbugs. These are four of the very many matters likely to be raised by pupils, often with a great deal of feeling. In a real sense, if a relative one, then, they are all good issues. Yet three general propositions might usefully be advanced:-

- (i) If the issue has already been discussed recently, then for practical reasons it is not a good one.
- (ii) If an issue 'on the table' has not been dealt with adequately then a new issue cannot be a good one.
- (iii) Issues relating to e.g. large sums on a capital project must be unrealistic and therefore not good issues.

## 5.52 SKILLS

Some matters already mentioned clearly have a skill component: knowledge and skills may not be easily separated. Yet there are other important aspects which seem to involve language skills of a basic kind. These might seem obvious but they are too easily taken for granted. Three key example are:-

- (i) Listening. Careful listening to all that is said is necessary. Could there be substance to the charge that listening skills have declined in schools?



- (ii) Note taking. If representatives are to take their job seriously, they require to note, not everything that is said, but the main points. This prepares the ground for their own contributions and it also provides them with material to take back to the groups they represent. Good note-taking determines good reporting-back. In the case of the office-bearers this is particularly important, of course.
- (iii) Speaking. Oral communication skills must be at the heart of the business. Being able to speak clearly and knowing how to make points, how to ask questions and how to make a proposal are all required. These might be seen as central among a number of discussion and debating skills.

#### 5.53 ROLES

In any formal arrangements there are likely to be the key positions of chairman and secretary. In particular the pupils playing roles associated with these positions will require the knowledge and skills mentioned, and more, in discharging their responsibilities.

Both the chairman and secretary, perhaps with assistance, will have duties before a meeting, and in the main these will probably have to do with the agenda (= things to be done). The form of the agenda is likely to be always similar, with (i) Apologies, (ii) Minutes and (iii) Matters Arising, coming first, (iv) Other Business and (v) Date and Time of Next Meeting, completing the pattern. Decisions regarding the distribution of the agenda will require to be made.

The secretary, boy or girl, has to appreciate that there are duties specific to the position. Principally he/she is responsible for 'making, keeping and rendering accurate records'. Minutes of Pupil Council meetings vary: sometimes they are short and formal, which some schools see as adequate; sometimes all points made during discussions are minuted. The task is quite demanding but the secretary must get it right. If there is an attendance register, the secretary might also be made responsible for it.

The chairman, girl or boy, is also faced with difficult tasks, perhaps even more so than the secretary. However, the more subtle skills may not reasonably be expected of a pupil chairman, not to begin with anyway. The overall shape of the role may be summarised as follows:-

The chairman opens the meeting, conducts the meeting, determines the length and shape, but not the outcome, of the discussions. She/he keeps the meeting in order, puts resolutions to the meeting, and closes the meeting. The chairman's decision on points of order, modes of procedure, acceptance of resolutions, results of votes, who shall speak next and the opening and closing of meetings, are absolute and must be accepted by all members. When the chairman speaks all others must be silent. Throughout, the chairman must behave with impartiality.

(Adapted from Bentley 1962)

This is at least a possible model to be aimed at by the chairman and Pupil Council.

Pupil representatives on the School Council may also be referred to at this juncture. What knowledge and skills do they require? The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 setting up School and College Councils said nothing about pupil representation. Detailed arrangements were left to local authorities and to schools, and the representatives have been chosen differently and they have operated differently. A 'pure' democratic model might suggest the following:-

- (i) that Pupil Council representatives should be elected democratically and pupil representatives on the School Council should be chosen similarly.
- (ii) that there should be an agreed link between the pupil representative on the School Council and the Pupil Council to which body the pupil representatives should report back periodically.

During the earlier years of the operation of School Councils

some Headteachers found the idea of such a link rather surprising; they had not considered it. More will now be influenced by arguments about 'the experience of democracy in action for pupils', to which MacBeth and MacKenzie refer in their report on Scottish School Councils. 'This view of participation in schools has been given some emphasis in a number of countries and has often been carried to the classroom level. It is argued that children understand democratic principles better if democracy is seen to operate within the school itself'. (Macbeth 1980).

If pupil representatives on School Councils are to discharge their responsibilities well they will require relevant knowledge and skills. Reporting-back poses special problems. This must be done in a way they themselves understand and in a way which the pupil councillors appreciate.

## 5.6 THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

If identifiable knowledge and skills and attitudes are necessary to the proper functioning of Pupil Councils, the question arises as to how and when these are acquired. They may be seen to be the result of four things:-

- (i) The quality of the school
- (ii) The normal academic curriculum
- (iii) The social education programme
- (iv) Deliberate training programmes

(I) The general quality of the school has a clear bearing on the question. The first in one set of secondary school aims (D.E.S. 1977) reads, "To help children develop lively, inquiring minds; giving them the ability to question and to argue rationally, and to apply themselves to tasks", an aim which expects pupils not to play a passive role but to be actively involved and to learn to have and to express opinions. One particular school establishes a similar purpose - "To enable pupils to develop their talents and interests fully through both academic and extra-curricular activities". Both suggest a community where pupils count, where it is accepted that young people have a valid point of view to offer.

The Rutter enquiry (Rutter 1979) into secondary schools and their effects on children gives research support to the idea that the characteristics of a particular school do matter: "The implication is that individual actions or measures may combine to create a particular ethos or set of values, attitudes or behaviours which will become characteristic of the school as a whole". The ethos of the school is important to learning and to behaviour: trusting children and treating them as responsible has good consequences and produces good schools. And good schools, says Rutter, are "schools which set good standards, where the teachers provide good models of behaviour, where the pupils are praised and given responsibility, where the general conditions are good and where the lessons are well-conducted". The ethos of the schools has to be right if the Pupil Council is to prosper.

(II) The academic curriculum of the school, in conjunction with the hidden curriculum of values, will also contribute, both (a) incidentally and (b) directly, towards establishing conditions in which pupil-involvement may flourish.

(a) If pupils are required only to sit still and listen and write down what they hear, according to the extreme traditional pattern, they will be conditioned to a negative and passive role. At almost the opposite extreme is the teacher in Countesthorpe College who sees the teaching/learning situation very differently: 'I imagine a small group of teachers, 3, 4, 5, working with a group of some hundred pupils ... they are part pedagogue, part master, part fellow pupil, part interested spectator ... In a society which respected the student's autonomy, such small co-operative cells would be at the centre of the educational process'. Something of this, at least, is necessary if appropriate skills and attitudes are to develop easily through everyday teaching/learning situation.

(b) In a direct way also, the academic curriculum has contributions to make towards pupils acquiring the skills and knowledge that were mentioned above. These are essential contributions, and they may be considered in terms of the traditional subject areas, or four of them, sufficient to make a start to a task which might be carried out more exhaustively.

Firstly, the relevance of English, in its various aspects, is quite obvious, spoken English coming first to mind. Stanley Nisbet wrote in 1957, "... a school which fails to teach its pupils to speak easily and effectively and to listen intelligently is guilty of gross dereliction of duty", (Nisbet 1957) and we may say at once that the skills of speaking and listening must be vital to Pupil Councillors. Other aspects of language, including literature, which should extend pupils' awareness of the range of opinion and feeling about human problems and issues, are also relevant.

Secondly, the Social Subjects - Modern Studies, History, Geography, Economics - may also contribute and use relevant skills, but in addition these disciplines should provide

knowledge of those institutions and procedures which distinguish a democratic form of society from others. Pupil Councils, we have argued, are to be understood in this larger context.

Thirdly, as well as the social sciences, the Physical Sciences have a contribution to make. The concepts of science may sometimes be relevant to Council issues, but it is an understanding of the scientific approach that is likely to be more influential, particularly in regard to the gathering and analysis of data (i.e. sifting the evidence), which any adequate discussion of an issue or problem often requires.

Finally, Business Studies claims mention, because office practice and procedure might be seen as providing knowledge and skills close to the needs of office-bearers and ordinary Council members. Automatically, when committee matters are at issue, or when minutes have to be compiled and duplicated, some schools think of the Business Studies department as the guardians of the expertise, and of the equipment too, perhaps!

(III) So far it has been argued that the skills and knowledge and attitudes required by pupil councillors (and their electorate) 'emerge' from the life of the school as a whole as well as through the ways in which the teaching/learning is organised. However, we may ask if there is also relevant provision of a specific kind, perhaps called 'Social Education'. The answer provided by the influential Munn Report (SED 1977), "every teacher is a teacher of social education", seems to reject that idea, although there is evidence (MacBeath 1981) that about two-thirds of Scottish secondary schools offer special programmes of one kind or another.

Do any of these programmes serve the needs of Pupil Councils? How do the programmes operate anyway? The first report of the Scottish Social Education Project summarises the position as follows: 'Social Education or guidance programmes are now an established feature of most Scottish secondary schools. The most common form this takes is a weekly period which appears

on the timetable as 'guidance' or 'social education' but may also be known as 'social guidance', 'tutorial', 'home', 'education' or even 'life'. What happens during these periods varies substantially from school to school but it may be assumed that on some occasions the position is as follows:-

- (i) The group is relatively small, perhaps less than 20.
- (ii) The teacher with the group gets to know the pupils well because of the regular contact. The pupils also get to know one another and the teacher well. Confidence is built up.
- (iii) There is a programme to be followed, consisting of a series of topics or issues or problems, some of which may be suggested by the pupils themselves. The items on the programme are varied, with moral or social or personal content, thus dealing with human relationships and with aspects of life in contemporary society.
- (iv) For at least some of the time the teacher acts as neutral chairman and the emphasis is largely on discussion. The pupils learn how to analyse an issue or a problem, how to identify and sift relevant data, how to come to a considered viewpoint. They also learn to listen to the views of others and to respect their opinions.
- (v) It is logical that this group becomes the one to elect representatives to the Pupil Council and some of the discussion is devoted to Council Matters.

Quite clearly, when such a structure and such a programme exists, perhaps based on a House system, the discussion skills that are practised do have bearing on the activities of a Pupil Council. It is not surprising, then, that Guidance staff sometimes find themselves playing at least a co-ordinating role in Pupil Council affairs.

There is another question to be considered with respect to Guidance/Social Education, and this is in connection with two other school matters, namely Leisure Education and Extra-curricular Activities. These four have possible points of contact, through organisation and staffing, perhaps, and certainly in terms of the provision itself. One thinks of games, sports, and athletics; of excursions and expeditions;

of the school/house magazine, school choir and school band or orchestra; of the drama club, the debating society, and so on. Sometimes these activities are set up in ways which involve pupils in the organisation, and one form of involvement supports another. Often leisure and extra-curricular activities also mean interaction between pupils and in these respects they reinforce significantly the skills which are necessary to the effective operation of Pupil Councils.

(IV) A fourth way in which knowledge and skills may be acquired is through an actual training programme for pupil councillors and others. This could consist of a number of elements as follows:-

- (a) Talks by school staff on aspects of Council work and on committee procedures generally.
- (b) Contact between older and experienced pupil councillors and younger pupils who are learning how to participate.
- (c) Talks by adult visiting speakers on committee work in which they are engaged e.g. local councillor or School Council member.
- (d) Viewing of filmed or videotaped examples of Pupil Council meetings, for analysis and discussion.
- (e) Study and discussion of printed items - the constitution, agendas, minutes, reports etc., including this document, "Making Pupil Councils Work".

At the very least all pupils require to be properly informed about procedures for involvement. They must have an understanding of the procedures generally, and they must know what part they are expected to play. Hopefully this would go some way beyond a single briefing period at the beginning of the session, towards a systematic and developing programme as outlined above.



## 5.7 MEASURES OF SUCCESS

If organisations are established to achieve certain objectives, then it is necessary to review progress from time to time, to measure how far these objectives have been realised. Pupil Councils, along with all other aspects of the life of a school would be part of the review.

Assuming a 'rational model', then, with agreed outcomes to pursue, how might these outcomes be organised? Following Drucker (Drucker 1954) we may say that 'any enterprise should always be achieving updated and stretching objectives' within eight areas - Reputation, Innovation, Effectiveness, Productivity, Resource Acquisition, Staff Development, Community Relations and Public Responsibility. A Pupil Council could contribute to the achievement of targets under a number of these.

- (1) Reputation. Because of declining rolls and educational contraction, and in the light of the so-called "parents' charter," the need for schools to look to their reputations and their popular images assumes a new importance: if parents and pupils do not find what they want, they may decide to go elsewhere.

In statements of targets to be aimed at one may find the following:-

- a) Documents well laid out and well printed
- b) Parents know what we are doing and why
- c) Generous publicity about what we are doing is displayed in the catchment area
- d) Staff report our work, give talks etc.
- e) Press asked in to report interesting things happening here and our successes
- f) Employers invited in, and their advice sought, and they are kept in the picture. (Holroyde 1976)

The activities of Pupil Councils are relevant to all these and to other targets under this heading: a good structure and pattern of pupil-involvement, if it is well-publicised, and if visitors are encouraged, should help the reputation of the school.

(ii) Innovation. In this second 'key results area' a number of targets may again be mentioned. Holroyde lists fourteen and we may select 5 as ones to which Pupil Council activities may contribute:-

- a) Minimum distinction between academic and non-academic pupils.
- b) Emphasis on skill development rather than acquisition of knowledge.
- c) Introduction of Social and Environmental Studies and inter-disciplinary projects, which are likely to be discussion-orientated or learning-based.\*
- d) Working parties of staff and pupils identify and solve real school problems as part of the curriculum.
- e) Consultative procedures believed in by the staff.

A system of Pupil Councils ought to draw on the services of all pupils, younger and older, boys and girls, academic and non-academic; the skills required and used are among those valued by democratic society; and involvement which leads to better solutions to real problems is likely to be accepted wholeheartedly.

One particular innovative approach referred to above may again be mentioned - that where one Headteacher was working towards policy jointly agreed by staff, pupils and parents, e.g. an agreed policy for homework. In the current climate this must be a most laudable target to which the Pupil Councils must contribute.

\* A good example is the Humanities Curriculum Project material developed through the Schools Council.

(iii) Effectiveness. Under effectiveness we may think first of all of good examination results, of good standards of behaviour etc. To these Holroyde adds:-

- a) Parents want to come in
- b) Employers seek our pupils
- c) Community wants to help the school.

If involvement leads to greater commitment to the aims of the organisation, then patterns of pupil involvement (along with staff involvement) should contribute to the effectiveness of the school overall. To add a specific point, if Pupil Councils are thought of in terms of a training model, then they should be effective in imparting identifiable skills and knowledge.

(iv) Productivity, and (v) Resources, with targets relating to the provision of and the best uses of time and facilities and materials, may be improved through ideas coming from pupils, possibly through Pupil Councils.

(vi) Staff Development. Drucker was writing in the 1950's yet today practical interest in this concept within the educational sphere is perhaps at its highest.

Pupil Councils may be the means of furthering staff development in at least three ways:-

- a) Elements in training sessions for form teachers, register teachers or tutors and others are likely to be concerned with the working of Councils.
- b) Pupil Councils and related meetings provide teachers with opportunities to develop different patterns of relationships with pupils.
- c) Pupil Council activities contribute generally to the notion of participative decision-making with which teachers ought to be familiar.

Pupil Councils may also contribute to targets under Drucker's two other key results areas, (vii) Community Relations ('Staff respect pupils and vice versa. Dealings are frank and helpful')

and (viii) Public Responsibility ('Little vandalism. Building is clean.' - Pupil Councils seem to discuss these matters regularly when Head and others ask for their ideas.)

Some concluding comments require to be made. In the first place, little has been said so far concerning the actual measuring of success. Where this can be done, arguably it should be done. Pupils may be asked for their views, formally in questionnaires, and/or informally. Responses may be counted and looked at in relation to the targets. In addition, and more usually, perhaps, mental if not written notes may be made when Council activities are seen to be contributing to important goals - the analysis above suggests that this could be quite often.

Sometimes the feedback may be from former pupils who have found the Pupil Council experience useful in post-school situations, at work or in clubs or societies etc.

There is a case for the establishment of Pupil Councils. If a school finds the idea worthwhile it will continue, and regular review should lead to change and improvement. Being clear about the Pupil Council idea, planning the innovation, choosing the structure, attending to the details, preparing the pupils and staff, and estimating success are all necessary if the idea is to prosper.

## 6. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The research has two main purposes. One is to enquire into both the idea of pupil-involvement in school affairs, and the practice through a detailed examination of particular school examples. The second is to employ these examples to try to throw light on current questions of management theory and practice in educational institutions. The enquiries may claim to have been reasonably successful in that key ideas have been clarified and guidelines to help the practitioner have been compiled.

## 6.2 RESEARCH STRATEGIES

If success is to be claimed it is due in part to the choice of fruitful research strategies. Since 1974 at least, when T. Barr Greenfield delivered his influential paper on the phenomenological perspective to the Third International Intervisitation Programme on Educational Administration (see Greenfield 1975), making such a choice has not been easy. The case for either a normative or an interpretive paradigm has continued to be argued equally strenuously. With Cohen and Manion (1980), however, the problem might be resolved by recognising that both are equally valid, or with Eric Hoyle that the two approaches should be considered as complementary: 'One cannot look down both ends of the telescope simultaneously, but I do not believe that we should be condemned to look down one end only'. (Hoyle 1976).

However, in this research it has not been possible to employ both perspectives, merely to recognise the validity of both. Data from all schools through a census or a structured sample would have been relevant and illuminating in building up a quantitative picture of Scottish schools as a whole in terms of the extent of pupil involvement, identifying any trends and developments more systematically.

The emphasis is much more on the qualitative, through case studies, where opportunities are taken to try 'to understand

and interpret social phenomena from the inner perspective of man himself' (Cohen and Manion 1981, p.35), or, less technically, 'to report on the social world as the daily newspaper does'. (Schwartz and Jacobs 1979, quoted in Cohen and Manion 1981, p.36) Thus, Headteachers, other promoted staff, other teachers, pupils and others, were encouraged to give their perceptions and beliefs and wishes with respect to structures and procedures, and with respect to ways of justifying these and other aspects of school reality.

### 6.3 METHOD: CASE STUDY

In order to obtain useful illustrative material the 470 or so public and independent secondary schools in Scotland were asked for information, and a good proportion responded. The material was placed on file and used where appropriate to further illustrate points arising from the extensive case studies of selected schools. These case studies have achieved a number of purposes as follows:-

- (i) A useful record of circumstances (with respect to pupil-involvement) as they exist in five schools is available.
- (ii) Factors associated with 'the more holistic qualities of the unit' are noted in what amount to five different pictures of a selected aspect of school life.
- (iii) The procedures and roles studied highlight the importance of key factors.
- (iv) The use of an 'interpretive' approach through unstructured and open-ended interviews with participants is demonstrated.

### 6.4 PUPIL-INVOLVEMENT

#### 6.41 Traditional Prefect Systems

The impression gained is that the traditional form of pupil involvement, the prefect system, continues to exist in some Scottish state secondary schools.

This is not surprising and we have noted that the idea is well-rooted in the academic tradition of Scottish education. In some schools, then, an authority-based model of pupil

involvement seems to apply. Correspondence and conversations with Headteachers provide illustrations. One Head writes of prefect systems: "Their main aim is to cast a brotherly and sisterly eye over younger pupils during intervals and at lunchtime", thus revealing those three essential ingredients: (i) the prefects are a labour force (ii) their function is disciplinary and (iii) there is a moral dimension to their duties. Traditionally an academic elite would carry out these duties.

In taking such a view, public schools might be sharing or reflecting a practice that is readily associated with the independent or private sector of education. Correspondence and/or discussions with 33 Heads of schools in the independent and grant-aided categories suggests that prefect systems (although not to the exclusion of pupil councils) do hold a strong position in these schools, especially when the school is a boarding school. One Headmaster, in comment which stressed the disciplinary aspect, reports that the use of corporal punishment by prefects had been banned as recently as 1974, to be replaced by other forms of punishment. Another school, in comment that is also relevant to the disciplinary aspect, explains that prefects are working with and to a senior member of staff called the 'Master of Discipline'. In another school not 'prefect' but 'ephor' is the term that is preferred. In ancient Sparta the five ephors were guardians of the state's moral standards and in particular they were to watch over the constitution and over the behaviour of Sparta's two kings. Presumably the school ephors see themselves as guardians of school rules and school behaviour; it is not known if they are also expected to watch over the behaviour of the Headmaster and Depute Headmaster! This special example does indeed illustrate the traditional roots of the prefect idea and the influence of ancient Greece on school organisation.



There are possible reasons other than traditional ones why state schools retain prefects, and Headteachers wanting to change things might not find it easy to do so. One Head, having taken up a new appointment in January 1981, says "There are two things that I cannot change: the first is school uniform and the second is the prefect system. Parents would not stand for it". Perhaps these parents support the idea on the basis of a continuing school tradition but there are additional reasons, to do with higher education and with employment. Application forms for a university place invite applicants to state any position of responsibility held, and the position of prefect is thought to carry weight. For example, a Headteacher of a school with only 40 secondary age pupils has created prefects because he found that his pupils being interviewed for university places 'were at a disadvantage' when asked if they had been prefects. Universities are looking for prefects, it seems and parents believe that employers are too.

However, comment from pupils suggests that prefect systems are not always as Head, parents and others might suppose. Pupils themselves are sometimes very critical, and it is illuminating to examine in some detail the reactions of one S6 pupil, Neil,\* who is especially forthcoming.

Looking back, Neil sees his time as a prefect as 'of no value really', although he had in fact included it in his university application form. He is not impressed by the view that being a prefect means shouldering responsibility, although this is of prime importance in the estimation of some advocates of prefect systems. One Head writes as follows: "It is our experience that this type of responsibility helps in the development of well-balanced, thinking young people and we, the staff, enjoy working with them, and the willing and effective response they give to our various requests". It would

\* These comments were made by the most outspoken of five pupils interviewed in this school.

be interesting to know if the pupils in that school felt the same. Some pupils, like Neil, would deny it, arguing that no responsibility is entailed when you are simply told to do certain things, such as enforcing written rules about movement in corridors and on stairs, with no encouragement to exercise discretion.

Neil's objections run deep and he is troubled by the questions which the prefect idea raise in his mind. At S5 he had 'escaped being elected' but at S6 the 'invitation' to become a prefect was extended to him. His other main objections are:

- a) In spite of an apparently democratic approach through voting, mystery surrounds the final choice. The staff have the final word, it is thought. This is certainly believed to be so in the case of the School Captain (Boy) who would not have been the pupils' choice, Neil says.
- b) The prefect role as go-between between staff and all the pupils does not seem to work, although he would do his best. The pupils simply do not have the confidence in prefects which the arrangements require.
- c) The 'policing role', as Neil calls it, is equally ineffective. A crowd of pupils trying to climb stairs which were out-of-bounds, are not going to allow prefects 'to take names' nor can they, in such numbers, be taken to the Headmaster when they refuse to give their names. Perhaps because of the impossible nature of the task, prefects do not always bother with their duties.
- d) In spite of denials, the system does encourage bullying of pupils by 'power-seeking prefects'; this was even more evident that session, when Neil was a prefect, Neil says.
- e) Neil is most concerned by the divisive effects of the creation of 'a kind of elite'. The division

takes several forms. Classes are divided, S6 prefects preferring to use only the prefects' room, and there is no S5 common room.

The Prefects, as well as being divided from their non-prefect classmates, are also divided from the rest of the school; they are universally disliked.

In the light of the opinions given, and bearing in mind the conflicts which are apparent in the views of various sets of participants as reported, what general conclusions can be drawn about prefect systems in secondary schools today? While allowing that abolition could not always take place immediately, the case for retaining or creating prefects, as a form of pupil-involvement in secondary school affairs, does not seem to be a strong one, for the following reasons:-

- (i) If training in responsibility is a major objective, the prefect experience may provide much less than it is believed to be providing.
- (ii) In any case, there should be and could be other opportunities in school to provide experience of responsibility and for more than a select few.
- (iii) The employment of prefects as a 'labour force' is easily abused. Even if there is need for help by pupils, other solutions are possible and these could be more democratic.
- (iv) The notion that prefects form a link between all pupils and the staff seems a curious one. In effect they seem to create divisions of one sort or another. Again, a more democratic alternative exists.
- (v) Ideologically the prefect idea is incompatible with assumptions upon which the comprehensive school is based, as argued above (see p137/138).
- (vi) As a form of pupil-involvement, the authority-based prefect system is severely limited; only

some pupils, usually from one stratum of the school population, are likely to be directly involved. There are better ways.

#### 6.42 Modified Prefect Systems

Not all prefect systems remain close to the traditional pattern in which the select few are chosen either by the Head alone or by him/her and other senior staff. From correspondence it is apparent that some systems have never been so extreme while others have evolved, becoming apparently more democratic (see Appendices C, D, E)

Where there has been evolution this seems to have had two strands, one relating to control, the other to function. Control sometimes evolves from total control by the Head, through control which means staff-involvement in the choice and supervision of prefects, to one which involves at least some pupils in the election of prefects. Function evolves in parallel, from that of a service provided as ordered by the staff, towards a function that is more caring and more concerned with school and pupil welfare.

One view of this evolution is to say that it is a genuine reaction to changing circumstances; society demands less authoritarianism and more open government, and schools must be sensitive to such demands. Furthermore, with the raising of the school leaving age and the emergence of comprehensive education, arrangements such as prefect systems have to involve many more pupils directly and the idea has to be acceptable to this broader spectrum of 12 to 16/18 year olds. As a consequence, new arrangements, suggesting a more open mode of control, have to replace the old.

A second view is a cynical one, that the old notions really show little more than minor modifications, designed to 'contain' the situation, not to alter it radically.

In any case the 'modified' prefect system does not seem to escape the criticism of prefects as outlined above: effectiveness in terms of intended outcomes is not necessarily improved, and the practical and ideological difficulties remain. If there is a better alternative it may be looked for in pupil council arrangements.

#### 6.43 Pupil Councils

While it is argued that pupil councils have a great deal going for them, it is accepted that there may be problems and difficulties. As reported above, numbers of schools have tried the idea and dropped it, the reasons given being varied. Apathy is one reason: 'The children were apathetic and the system died'. Another is alleged deficiency on the part of the pupils - 'This lack of intelligent, responsible leadership militates against the success of pupil participation in school affairs'. One Head says (surprisingly, perhaps) that the council was dropped because 'it was felt to be a structure imposed from above'. Another says, mysteriously, that the council 'has never worked well for no particular reason'. And so on. Although these reasons and others as reported are serious reasons, sometimes they are avoidable, through an improved management strategy, as analysed in Part 5 (see pages 141-170). These observations suggest that the establishment of pupil councils is desirable, and often feasible.

However, before arguing the case further, there is the prior question of the definition of a pupil council - what light has the enquiry thrown on that? A number of points emerge:-

- a) A council ought to be distinguished from a prefect system if it is not to invite the same telling criticisms already referred to; some councils seem to be merely prefect systems with another name.

- b) The pupil council idea depends on the recognition that pupils have valid opinions to offer, both on school problems and on the educational provision made for them.
- c) The view taken cannot be solely in terms of a 'training model'; pupils have to learn to participate, but this should not exclude at least a measure of genuine involvement when pupil opinions are seriously considered.
- d) This involvement, entailing some real consultation and perhaps a degree of participation, should concern at least one complete year group of the 12 to 16 year olds.
- e) Involvement should be through the democratic process whereby classes or tutor-groups or other units freely elect their representatives; and these representatives for their part should report back to their constituents.

What can be said about these points is that they constitute minimum criteria which must apply if the arrangement can reasonably be called a pupil council. As has been demonstrated, some schools go some way beyond these criteria to a more complex pattern of arrangements entailing a good measure of pupil influence on school affairs, although actual pupil power or control is excluded on legal/contractual grounds at least. These more ambitious examples seem to display more enlightened attitudes towards childhood (Aries, 1973) and towards children, and the involvement is of a clearly participative kind where pupils really do share in the decision-making and the decision-taking.

Two further matters require to be noted, one to do with discipline and policing, the other relating to staff. Some pupil council situations which might be seen as 'acceptable' in terms of the given criteria, do invite councillors to carry out prefect-type duties (see Appendix F page 205) along with the council duties and functions. On the face of it, this seems to be inconsistent with the council idea as applicable to the state comprehensive school. (In the 'closed' boarding school this may not be

inconsistent with the philosophy of the school even if extensive pupil involvement is intended. See the Gordonstoun Document in Appendix P , pages 229-31 ). However, the schools themselves presumably do not see it that way - perhaps schools are institutions where competing or conflicting aims are difficult to avoid.

It must also be noted that some of the 'better' pupil councils involve both staff and pupils. This could be questioned on various grounds e.g. restricting pupil freedom of discussion; as in Airth Secondary School (see above, page 38), staff and pupils (and parents too) might be thought of as needing their separate forums, although sometimes debating the same issues. However, if staff and pupils are both to be involved, the main voting strength might still lie with the pupils, thus leaving the pupils (apparently) as the major influence. (See Appendix N , pages 225-228 ). This question and many others would be matters for management decisions.

#### 6.44 Management Guidelines

The idea of the pupil council is described as being desirable and feasible and the data is seen as supporting such a view. At the same time the importance of the management dimension is fully recognised: desirability and feasibility have no significance if the management awareness and skills necessary to develop the idea are lacking. An important purpose of this inquiry is to develop a set of management guidelines for study and use by school staff and pupils: a major emphasis is on seeing things happening and on trying to gain insights into how they work. As a consequence, the practicum which makes up Chapter 5 (pages 141-170) has emerged. In the final words of those management guidelines, 'Being clear about the Pupil Council idea, planning the innovation, choosing the structure, attending to the details, preparing pupils and staff, and estimating success, are all necessary if the idea is to prosper'.

6.45 Justifying Pupil Councils

A number of Headteachers argue in correspondence against the establishment of pupil councils, not so much because they are opposed to the involvement of pupils but because they do not approve of their formal nature -- they disapprove of formal arrangements, preferring informal contacts.

These Heads see formal structures as barriers and counterproductive in terms of fostering good relationships.

Sometimes these Heads are in charge of small secondary schools or small secondary departments and in these circumstances the argument carries weight. However, some Heads of larger schools also argue in favour of the informal, when Head and other staff operate an 'open door' policy - "I am always available to any pupil at any time and they know that", said one. This is seen as an effective way of obtaining pupil views and pupil reactions to school life and events, and again there is substance to the argument.

What seems clear, however, is that it is not a matter of choice between alternatives. The informal, while good in itself, does not go far enough: there are purposes which it cannot achieve. Nevertheless, what can be asserted is that the formal in some sense depends upon the informal. That is to say, without the essential ingredients of good pupil-teacher relationships, when staff in classrooms and outside genuinely want to encourage the expression of pupil opinion on a wide range of matters, there cannot be effective formal structures. The mere creation of structures cannot guarantee outcomes which seem dependent on a complex set of circumstances.

At the same time there must be these structures, as well as the quality relationships upon which they depend and which they should enhance; pupil councils are at least highly desirable and probably they are necessary in all secondary schools today. That councils are of value to the schools and to the pupils themselves has been argued at a number of stages in this enquiry and the argument



may be summarised as follows:-

- (i) Firstly, to involve pupils is in accord with the general outlook today: society demands involvement and pupil councils are in tune with this demand when prefect systems are not.
- (ii) Secondly, to involve pupils is in accord with contemporary attitudes towards young people to whom more recognition is given and to whom more rights granted.
- (iii) Thirdly, patterns of pupil involvement support a present-day curriculum in its four main aspects - an academic aspect; a vocational aspect; an aspect to do with leisure; and an aspect (encompassing the others) designed to produce citizens with the skills and attitudes enabling them to cope with a period of rapid change as we move into the age of the 'semi-post-industrial society'.
- (iv) Fourthly, when there are extra dangers to society due to this rapid change and the threatened 'tyranny of the expert', there is a new urgency in our demand to schools that they should respond to the need for training in democratic citizenship.\* (Heater 1979; Entwistle 1971). This should be carried out in ways which reflect something of both the 'training' and 'democratic' models of pupil involvement as postulated.
- (v) Finally, and relating to all four of the previous points, in a secondary school which wishes to establish a sound reputation in the eyes of parents, employers and others, a good measure of genuine and productive involvement, including the involvement of pupils, could be helpful. School management should recognise this.

## 6.5 MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES

In origin this enquiry is largely a management one, arising out of more general enquiries in schools where there is said to be good school management. What light does it

\* See also Piaget, Jean (1932), "The Moral Judgment of the Child" page 366.

throw on the management scene generally?

While not generating radically new perspectives, a number of propositions do receive some support from the enquiries. The overriding question is that of involvement in the decision-making in schools and there is nothing in the findings which does anything other than support the notion that there must be some move towards a greater sharing in the management process. Involvement is everywhere demanded and it is seen as a 'good thing', and where there is involvement Heads are in no doubt that the quality of the decision-making is improved.

Not that there are grounds for being prescriptive about the precise form and extent of the involvement that is necessary. This should be at least at the level of genuine consultation, where the 'consultative imperative' (Those who are going to be affected by a decision must be consulted about that decision.) is regarded. We have seen that pupils can be and should be consulted on a wide range of school affairs. In Germany the 'Schulermitverwaltungen' have been stigmatised as constituting 'eine Farce' and this must be avoided.

(Wringe 1981)

Furthermore, the enquiries suggest that matters should sometimes go beyond the consultative level to the participative, where there is a real sharing of the control over some of the decisions that are taken, and where there is an opportunity to initiate policy. Again, this is demanded and it is justifiable. To take an obvious example, for pupils not to have a say in deciding on how some of the money, which they have been instrumental in raising, is spent seems odd, to say the least. It may also be said that an important 'training' opportunity would have been missed.

Yet the management message about involvement is larger than this: it is that there should be a general sense of being involved, embracing staff, pupils and parents. Perhaps it should begin with staff involvement, proceeding from there - sometimes the staff laughed at the pupil council idea when they perceived themselves as always subject to unilateral decision-making! School management might go further, as has

been exemplified, trying in some areas to obtain a consensus between staff, pupils and also parents; such a model of decision-making procedures could be useful in certain circumstances, given the necessary managerial awareness and skill. In any event (and there is support for this from elsewhere: see Heller & Wilpert 1981) it seems clear that participative management cannot be forced but should be built up gradually on the basis of trust and a genuine desire to draw on the skill and expertise of the participants.

How fully participative ought school management to be? This would vary according to the circumstances and according to the issue: A good Headteacher adjusts his method to the nature of the task. The only guideline emerging from this enquiry is that a measure of general involvement is desirable and possible. In any event, there are limits set by the legal-contractual position of the Headteacher. The words of the 1979 HMI survey can appropriately speak for this enquiry: good Heads are categorised as those who 'consulted fully the staff of their schools and allowed decision-making to be widely shared while retaining an overall and acknowledged leadership'. (DES 1979). It is argued in this enquiry that pupils should also be involved.

In the findings, then, there is support for the view that successful and superior Headteachers are likely to adopt a participative style of leadership. Other inferences may be drawn regarding the good Headteacher profile and two of them are noteworthy. The first is very general, not easy to be specific about, open to the charge of being mere assertion: Headteachers require the leadership skills necessary to introduce and sustain innovations (Bolam 1975). This means that participative structures and processes require more, certainly not less, leadership and this is required at various levels in the arrangements viz., in the case of pupil councils, at the class/tutor-group level, at year level and at whole-school level. Such leadership also has bearing on whether or not the relationships in teaching/learning groups, and in the school as a whole, are likely to be friendly towards notions of involvement. (Richardson 1975).

If the school is to prosper, then, management expertise and skill (right down to the detail included in the Chapter 5 Guidelines), are necessary requirements. A second point here, one that is more specific, also concerns these requirements. Insights obtained from the case studies, and inferences drawn from documented and video-taped evidence, point to the importance of intellectual qualities in good Headteachers, to what has been referred to in this enquiry as 'Headteacher awareness'. Better Headteachers while not claiming to know all the answers have thought carefully about the ideas upon which trends towards involvement are based. They display the qualities of 'philosophic-mindedness' which Sussman (1976) identifies as having the three dimensions of comprehensiveness (relating problems to long-range goals; the power to generalize, etc.), penetration ('questioning of what is taken for granted or self-evident'; 'seeking for and formulating fundamentals', etc.) and flexibility ('freedom from psychological rigidity', 'seeing issues as many-sided', etc.) Arguably pupil councils are more likely to emerge and to proceed along successful lines when the Head and other key personnel possess qualities of this sort. They are qualities which may well influence or even determine what is intuitively called the 'tone' or 'ethos' of the school, and this in turn must influence all kinds of developments.

A number of matters referred to so far in this final discussion of management aspects of the enquiry touch on questions of general theory. It was never expected that a coherent theoretical statement would emerge but some references to known theoretical positions are possible.

These largely confirm what is known as a systems view of organisations. Broadly speaking, as systems view rejects a mechanistic model in favour of an organic model of organisations. The latter sees the organisation as representing a unity, no part having an existence separate from other parts; the whole has to be considered as a dynamic network of relationships. Therefore, in terms of the enquiry, events in the classroom or tutor-group, involving teachers, pupils and class-representatives, and events in and surrounding years council meetings, and events in and around full council meetings, and events in staff rooms

and in staff and Boards of Studies meetings, etc., all relate to one another; they are interdependent, not separate. As has been shown in examples given, attempts by individuals or groups to deal separately with the component elements, or attempts to deal with only some of them, have not been successful in terms of intended outcomes. Nor can pupil involvement in school affairs be enquired into in isolation from other forms of involvement, nor can involvement be considered wholly in isolation from other aspects of the life of the organisation, and so on.

Such a view, then, seems better placed to accommodate the findings of this enquiry than is a reductionist, analytical interpretation. The emphasis is on event and process, as well as on structure and product, and the notion of involvement itself has been represented as tending that way; undoubtedly, in formal and informal ways of involving pupils, there are major process aims with respect to skills and attitudes. Yet the analysis shows that there are product aims too and these must also be entertained - there must be a balance.

And the systems view seems well-suited to the idea of balance - an organisation, like an organism, should be in a state of equilibrium. Elements which seem opposed can be considered as complementary and none need be excluded. Schools are among organisations which seem to be characterised by ambiguous, even conflicting aims: knowledge-based or pupil-centred, product-orientated or process-orientated, for training or education, towards competition or co-operation, and so on. To go for one rather than the other would result in an imbalanced value-system, and balance would have to be restored. New factors arising from the dynamic nature of reality may threaten the balance and these have to be countered. The demand for involvement, stemming from the changing 'climate' or 'rising culture', is itself a product of the dynamic process, and in its various aspects it too requires to be in balance.

Hopefully the demand for involvement will in its own fulfilment provide the conditions whereby balance and synthesis can be attained. If staff and pupils and parents are genuinely

involved in the pursuit of a range of recognised and complementary purposes, harmony in the school should result. Perhaps the effects will go beyond that, helping to produce citizens who are able to contribute to the solution of those crucial social, political and economic problems which threaten our existence. A systems view suggests an approach which is ecological and holistic leading to harmony and concord, not one which is piecemeal and linear, leading to discord and confrontation.

#### 6.6 FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the discouraging remarks in the Headteacher's letter which forms the frontispiece to this thesis, much has been achieved. This points to further lines of enquiry that might be pursued in the future.

Firstly, while this research has produced interesting documentation and useful analysis, further careful observation and monitoring of developments along similar lines would be worthwhile. More detailed studies conducted in different parts of the country would give a truer picture of the Scottish scene as a whole.

Secondly, in spreading the net more widely, studies of community school situations should be included. By definition, perhaps, these schools entail a degree of involvement, and enquiries into pupil involvement there could be particularly illuminating.

Thirdly, in these additional enquiries special attention could be paid to teaching/learning regimes at classroom level, and how these might influence the quality of pupil involvement where this is encouraged.

Fourthly, since pupil involvement was also seen to be closely related not only to teaching/learning regimes but also to curriculum content, some further clarification of certain areas of curriculum are called for. In particular, the nature of social education and its relation to guidance in Scottish secondary schools, requires to be made clear. These curriculum matters, and others too, perhaps, have clear relevance to questions of support for pupils as they develop

their ability to participate by acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills. Using other terminology, the pastoral curriculum (as opposed to the academic curriculum) requires to be clearly defined in so far as it bears on questions of pupil involvement.

Fifthly, within the area of curriculum, questions relating to political education - its nature and purpose, what form it should take, what teaching/learning strategies should be employed - need to be looked at in detail in relation to pupil involvement.

Sixthly, with matters of curriculum content still in mind, the distinction between product aims and process aims, as highlighted in the discussion above, requires to be followed up. Process aims seem equally prominent in arrangements for pupil involvement. The idea that process and product aims in school might be monitored separately through separate procedures and by separate staff teams is one that might be investigated, in the interests of pupil involvement and more.

Seventhly, more requires to be done to further clarify the notion of participation, indicating where we are being led by the changing climate of ideas. The Stenning view (1981) of 'collective bargaining and its sovereignty over most other forms of participation in the conduct of institutional affairs' could be tested.

Eighthly, and in association with participation, or in conflict with it, current thinking about accountability could be looked at closely in the context which this research has defined, where staff, pupils and parents might all be involved. There are conceptual issues, for example about whether or not accountability should be a reciprocal relationship between the parties involved, as there are practical questions about procedures for accountability.

Ninthly, when schools, like other organisations, are considered too bureaucratic, too insensitive to change, the feasibility of alternative structures could be examined in the kinds of situations upon which this research has been concentrated. The principle of vertical control, the bureaucratic model, is

apparent in most secondary schools, although as Herbst (1976) says, 'the nature of the task is increasingly that of needing to cope with the management of a complex ecological type network of horizontal dependencies'. The new emphasis in schools on process aims, the willingness to engage in interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum, the resulting inter-departmental endeavour, the greater public interest and involvement in schools, not only in community schools, with the demand for greater accountability, and so on, all suggest that the 'nature of the task' is changing. Experience of arrangements which involve pupils, where pupils have a voice in school affairs along with others, may be of value in the search for improved forms of intra- and extra-school organisation.



APPENDICES

FIRST LETTER TO SCOTTISH SCHOOLS



**JORDANHILL**  
College of Education

PRINCIPAL  
T.R. BONE MA MEd PhD

Southbrae Drive  
Glasgow, G13 1PP  
Telephone 041-959 1232

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Department of Education

Dear Headteacher,

For about two years I have been researching aspects of school organisation. A question of central importance to the study is that of pupil-involvement in school affairs, with particular reference to Prefect Systems and/or Pupil School Councils or equivalent.

In addition to in-depth enquiries I now wish to obtain a picture of the Scottish position as a whole and I wonder if you would be kind enough to help with the latter by giving me a little information. I should be grateful if you would respond in three ways:-

- (i) Will you tell me please, giving approx. dates, whether or not you have or have had a Prefect System and/or a Pupil School Council in your school?
- (ii) If possible, will you send me copies of any printed items that are to hand, giving information about the operation of the arrangements mentioned in (i).
- (iii) If possible, will you please send me a copy of the school handbook or equivalent, along with other items, perhaps, such as would contain basic information about the school and its organisation.

It would be very valuable to me to have this information and I should greatly appreciate your help. I have informed your Director of Education of my wish to write to you, and he has raised no objection.

With many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

E. G. Archer  
Lecturer in Education

APPENDIX B

LETTER SENT TO A SELECTION OF  
U.K. INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



**JORDANHILL**  
College of Education

PRINCIPAL  
T.R. Bone MA MEd PhD

Southbrae Drive  
Glasgow, G13 1PP  
Telephone 041-959 1232

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dear

I should be grateful if you would send me a copy of the school prospectus. In addition I wonder if you might be able to let me have copies of any printed items which contain information about the School Prefect System and/or School Council. In researching the question of pupil involvement in school matters I should like to assemble a picture of the U.K. position as a whole, in both the public and private sectors.

Your help in this way would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

E. G. Archer  
Lecturer in Education

## APPENDIX C

### PREFECTS: EXAMPLE ONE

#### A. Background

The school opened in September '74 with a roll of 500 (S1 and S11 only). There was no attempt to institute a prefect system until (a) the school developed and senior staff were appointed and (b) the pupils matured sufficiently to make such a system effective.

During sessions 75/76 and 76/77 prefects were appointed (in the first instance by the Rector personally). However, the system was kept fairly informal due mainly to the youth of the school itself i.e. no traditions habits, patterns etc., existed. The youth of the pupils themselves was also a factor. They had no example to follow since they were in the senior year throughout their school lives and it was felt that too formal a system would demand too much of them.

#### B. Present System

This being the first year proper of a prefect system, the prefects were selected by the Depute after consultation with all form teachers, guidance staff and Assistant Rectors. The initial body selected (some 30-32 in number) met during the pre-session in-service course, at which time the prefects themselves elected a head boy and a head girl. Following this meeting (chaired by the Depute) the prefects met socially with the staff over refreshments.

The Prefects now meet formally once every two weeks during class time (a 40 minute period has been set aside for this). These meetings are now chaired alternately by the head boy and the head girl. A minute secretary has been appointed. An agenda is prepared and circulated in advance of each meeting. The Depute does not always attend these meetings but always does so when he has submitted an item for the agenda. The prefects themselves now propose and elect or reject candidates for prefect to a maximum of 40. The depute retains the right of veto but has exercised it only once. The system is still in its infancy and its efficiency is hard to judge.

Appendix C contd.

C. Prefect's Duties

Once again, lack of precedent means that this school must start from scratch. We are still in the process of formulating precise duties but so far they are as follows:-

- (1) Preventive measures. By being present in corridors, yards etc., during intervals and lunch hour, breaches of school discipline are often prevented. When breaches do occur, the prefect takes no action other than to reprimand but if not satisfied with the outcome reports the pupil concerned direct to Depute. A rota for this type of duty is drawn up each term by the head boy or girl.
- (2) Protection - prefects are asked to "befriend" the youngest pupils and try to ensure that their school day is worry free. Prefects have in fact been approached frequently by young pupils seeking help.
- (3) Example. Prefects accept that they should set the standards for other pupils in all things - behaviour, diligence, dress etc.
- (4) Liaison, Prefects are the link between the pupils and the staff. At present, in the absence of any pupil council, they are looked to convey opinions of pupils to the Rector directly or via a teacher of their choice.
- (5) Service. Staff are encouraged to make a conscious decision to turn to the prefects when they require help in any situation whether it be major assistance or even fairly petty. Staff are encouraged to delegate certain projects to prefects who may in turn seek help from other pupils.

D. Prefect Privileges

Many privileges seem petty to the teacher yet are appreciated by the young adult.

- (a) Entry at will to lunches (as staff). This can be better appreciated if a queue of 700 pupils daily can be imagined.
- (b) Prefects do not have to queue before boarding 'buses (over 1,000 pupils are taken home by special bus).

Appendix C concluded.

- (c) Scope with free time. Prefects have a certain freedom at the times when their personal timetable does not follow the fixed curriculum.
- (d) Common-room. This is a misnomer since this room is restricted to prefects. There are facilities - tea making - dart board, study cubicles, etc.
- (e) Access to all parts of the school at times forbidden to other pupils.

## APPENDIX D

### PREFECTS: EXAMPLE TWO

#### THE PREFECT SYSTEM

##### 1. Duties of Prefects

As leaders in the school community, Prefects are expected to set a good example to pupils in all respects. This includes the wearing of school uniform, punctuality, appearance, good behaviour and loyalty to the school. Prefects do not have the right to punish a pupil but may report a pupil to an Assistant Rector. Minor misdemeanours may be reported to a Housemaster or Housemistress. Prefects' duties are as follows:

- (1) To assist the Rector and Staff with school activities and social projects.
- (2) To assist with House Activities and sports.
- (3) To act as guardians to groups of first year pupils.
- (4) To help with tuck shop supervision.
- (5) To help supervise the behaviour of pupils in the playground, corridors and, especially, in the Assembly Hall/Lecture Area, the Social Centre and in the Library/T.V. area.
- (6) To report to an Assistant Rector, or in an emergency to any member of staff, the misconduct of any pupil within or without the precincts of the school.

##### 2. Election of Prefects

- (a) Prefects are elected by a vote of Staff and all pupils in Classes V and VI. All pupils in Classes V and VI are eligible as candidates.
- (b) A minimum of 6 boys and 6 girls are elected from each House. More may be elected from a particular House where there are more than the minimum number of good candidates.
- (c) When voting has taken place, order of merit lists are prepared by the Register Tutor and House Staff giving equal weighting to staff votes and pupil votes. These House order of merit lists then provide the allocation of Prefects, boys and girls, to each House. However, unsuitable pupils may be excluded if the Rector is so advised by the promoted

Appendix D contd.

guidance staff and investigation supports the advice.  
The Rector alone has the right to exclude any candidate from Prefectship or to dismiss any Prefect once elected.

3. Head Boy and Head Girl

- (a) A Head Boy and Head Girl are elected on a vote of Staff and pupils in Classes V and VI. The Assistant Rectors (Guidance) will be responsible for compiling order of merit lists of the candidates for presentation to the Rector.
- (b) The Head Boy and Head Girl are responsible to the Depute Rector for the smooth and efficient running of the Prefect system especially with regard to carrying out of duties.

4. House Captains

- (a) Each House has a Boy Captain and a Girl Captain who are respectively in charge of the Boy Prefects and Girl Prefects of the House.
- (b) These captains are appointed by the Principal Teacher of Guidance of each House in consultation with the Rector.
- (c) The House Captains are responsible to their Housemasters and Housemistresses and to the Head Boy and Head Girl.

5. Staff Support

All staff should support Prefects in maintaining good discipline within the school. This can be achieved in two main ways:

- (a) by Subject Principal Teachers seeking such support at departmental meetings.
- (b) by Housemasters and Housemistresses calling regular meetings of their House Prefects. All such meetings should be announced in the daily bulletin and the Rector, Depute Rector, Assistant Rectors and the Head Boy and Head Girl have the right to attend any of these meetings.



Appendix D concluded.

6. Training of Prefects

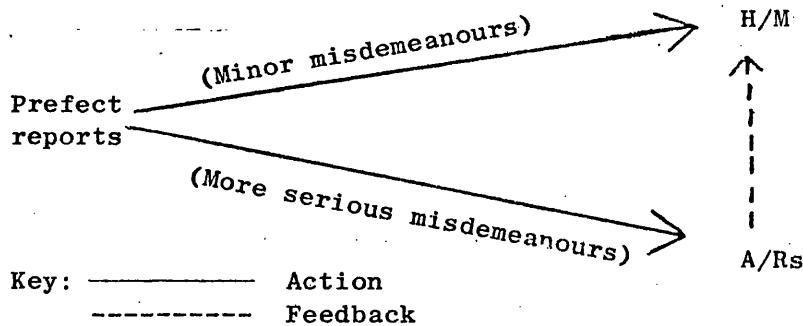
The Depute Rector is responsible for the training of Prefects. This is done mostly through meetings of all Prefects and through meetings of Group Leaders (House Captains).

7. Privileges

Prefects have the following privileges:

- (a) The use of the Library T.V. Room at intervals when not on duty.
- (b) The freedom to go out of school at free periods.
- (c) The right to walk through the Administration Corridor.
- (d) The right to leave classes 5 minutes before the bell at the morning interval when on duty.

8. Disciplinary Channels



9. Oversight of Prefect System

The Depute Rector is responsible for overseeing the Prefect System. Housemasters and Housemistresses are responsible for organizing regular meetings with the prefects in their House to discuss problems and give support. Housemasters and Housemistresses are expected to keep the Depute Rector informed of what matters are discussed at the House Prefects' meetings.

Rector.

APPENDIX E

PREFECTS: EXAMPLE THREE

DUTIES OF PREFECTS

- (a) It is the responsibility of all prefects, at all times, to help in maintaining good order throughout the School and in the vicinity of the School, and good behaviour on the part of all pupils; also, to see that the various Rules of the School are observed. They should all possess a copy of the Rules of the School.
- (b) They have authority to check pupils for minor misdemeanours in School, or on the way to or from School or in School uniform, to report pupils where necessary to members of staff and to report serious misconduct through the Senior Prefects to the Deputy Rector or Deputy Headmistress.
- (c) They must do all in their power to uphold the good name of the School and take any necessary action to carry this out.
- (d) They must be good examples themselves for the other pupils.
- (e) They must be prepared to take charge of pupils where necessary, and when no teacher is present, e.g. in a noisy classroom, in the corridor or stairs, on Corporation transport.
- (f) Their principal routine duty will be assisting the Year Teachers. They will be attached to Year Groups, by the Senior Prefects, and will be expected to help with the supervision of pupils in that Year Group as arranged by Year Teachers.  
The distribution will be as follows:  
2 Boys and 2 Girls to each of Years I, II, III, IV,  
and V/VI (i.e. 10 Boys and 10 Girls)
- (g) They will be responsible for the running of the Year Tuckshop.
- (h) They will help with the running of school and year functions and also with looking after visitors.

Appendix E concluded.

DUTIES OF SENIOR PREFECTS

1. To assign prefects to Year Groups and, as necessary, to school corridors and classrooms; to supervise the carrying out of their duties. A copy of the distribution of prefects should be handed to the Deputy Headmaster, Deputy Headmistress and Assistant Head Teacher (Year Organisation).
2. To arrange for, or to undertake, duties for absentees.
3. To act as Chairman of the School Council on alternate occasions.
4. To act as spokesman or representative of the School on public occasions.
5. To convene regular meetings of prefects to discuss duties and other matters affecting prefects.
6. To supervise the Prefects' Rooms, Boys or Girls respectively, and the Senior Pupils' Common Room.
7. To be responsible for the organisation of senior pupils' dances in conjunction with the Deputy Headmistress.

DUTIES OF DEPUTY SENIOR PREFECTS

1. To assist, and deputise for, the senior prefects in the carrying out of their duties.
2. To assist with the central arrangements for the tuck shops.
3. To carry out the normal duties of a prefect, if required.
4. To carry out patrolling if required.

APPENDIX F

PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE ONE

SCHOOL COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION

The School Council shall be a General Council of staff and pupils.

Aims and Functions of the Council

The Council's chief function will be to serve as a platform for discussion between staff and pupils, and, as such, to serve as an advisory body to the Rector.

Its chief aim will be to involve pupils in school matters and school policy within the terms of reference as stated below.

The spheres under which the Council might operate are:-

<u>Suggestions</u>	Activities Afternoon, "Happenings" etc.
<u>Social</u>	Parties, sports' day, swimming gala, parents' evenings, oversight and development of school clubs, societies, school magazine.
<u>Discipline</u>	Corridor work; social areas; dress; latecoming; lack of respect for prefects; school rules; dodging classes; afternoons off school; behaviour on transport and street; smoking; sanctions on these.
<u>Grievances and Complaints</u>	These should be brought to the notice of the Council through pupil representatives.
<u>School Environment</u>	Litter, wall writing, campaigns (smoking, health, litter, etc.)
<u>Liaison</u>	Liaison with the Community Centre, youth services, other schools. Use of the school and other centre facilities after school.
<u>Links with Community</u>	Social service, emergency service (help for people going to or leaving hospital).

Appendix F contd.

The Following may not be Discussed:-

The Council will not involve itself in discussion of the academic curriculum. The Council will not indulge in any discussion which involves criticism of any individual pupil or member of staff.

There should be no discussion on the evaluation of teaching or the contribution of a teacher to the school.

If doubt arises as to whether a topic or decision is within the terms of reference of the Council, the Council will then accept the decision of the Chairman as final.

Constitution of the General Council

Membership: The Council will consist of 18 pupils and 7 staff (3 boys and 3 girls from VI, 2 boys and 2 girls from V, 1 boy and 1 girl from IV, III, II and I) 1 year members shall be elected, prior to the October holiday.

Council Offices Chairman - a senior pupil, Vice-Chairman - a member of staff, Secretary - a pupil.

Terms of Office

All Council members will serve for a period of one year and seek re-election if desired. On retirement of any member during that period, replacement will be by election by the group which he or she represents.

If any member is absent from two consecutive meetings, without reasonable excuse, then he or she shall be automatically expelled from the Council.

In the absence of the Chairman at any meeting, the Council will elect, from its members, a Chairman for that meeting.

Voting

A two-third majority will be required to carry any motion on school policy, otherwise by simple majority.

The Chairman has the right to vote.

Voting will be by a show of hands. A ballot vote can be at the discretion of the Chairman if several members express a desire for it.

Appendix F contd.

- Quorum 9 Pupils and 4 staff will be required to constitute a quorum, at any meeting.
- Reports School clubs and societies should submit to the Council a report once per term on membership, activities, etc.
- Finance Committee The Council will appoint a Finance Committee, the memberships of which is to be decided by the Council.
- At regular intervals the business of the Finance Committee shall be reported to the full Council.
- All requests in excess of £50 are to be referred to the full council for approval.
- Meetings Statutory meetings will be held monthly at 4.10 p.m.
- Other meetings will be arranged by the Council as and when required. The Annual General Meeting, where amendments to the Constitution may be made, will be held in March of each year.
- Reports to Pupils The minutes of each meeting will be displayed in staff-rooms and given to Form Teachers for discussion with their classes.
- Amendments to the Constitution The Council can recommend amendments to the Constitution at any time during its term of office.

STANDING ORDERS

1. All business of the Council shall be conducted under the following rules of debate.
2. Rules of Debate
  - (a) Each item on the Agenda will be discussed in turn, although the Chairman has discretion to vary the order or insert additional items.
  - (b) Discussion will end in a proposal which must have a seconder.
  - (c) Amendments may then be moved and seconded.
  - (d) Voting will be in the first place on the amendment.
  - (e) All remarks must be addressed to the meeting through the Chairman.
  - (f) On a point of order or information being raised, the speaker gives way until the Chairman has ruled on the point.

Appendix F concluded

3. Minutes

The meeting may enter into Committee, and the Secretary may use his or her discretion in making a note of the main points raised during the discussion. At the end of the discussion, the Chairman will give a brief summary for the approval of the Council. This will then be minuted.

PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE TWO

Board of Representatives

The Board of Representatives exists to give pupils an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of the school by providing a recognised channel of communication with the Rector.

Board of Representative meetings will be convened once a month in form period. Any other meetings can be called by reference through the Board of Studies representative to the Rector.

Each form has elected one representative and one depute to the Board of Representatives. This person also represents the class on the Year Council.

It is the responsibility of the Form representative to ask the Form Teacher for an opportunity to report the proceedings of the Councils formally to the whole class. Form Teachers will thus be aware of discussions and decisions.

The Board of Representatives will be chaired by the Head Boy or Girl or an elected depute. A member of the Board of Studies will also be present. Year Staff may also wish to attend.

The Agenda for the meeting must be available TWO days in advance. Each representative must have the Agenda prior to the day of the meeting.

An arrangement has to be made for representatives to collect the Agenda as the Board of Representatives secretary will not be expected to take these to pupils. The Agendas will be available from Miss McNaughton's room.

If a matter is referred to the Board of Representatives by the Rector it must be remitted down to Form Classes and the replies recieved before a final recommendation is given. Most items for the Agenda should also come from the Form Classes or Year Council.

Standing Orders will be as those of the Year Councils until amended.

Year Councils can only be convened through the Year Staff who will consult the school diary in the school office to avoid dates clashing.



PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE THREE

School Representative and Year Councils

The system of representative councils adopted last session seemed to achieve a little more than previous experiments - slow and cumbersome as they sometimes were. As I said to S1/2 pupils last Wednesday, overnight revolution, even if desirable, is not the objective of these councils; they are designed to provide a forum for the interchange of views, requests, complaints and, rarely, votes of thanks.

The Scheme

1. Year Group Councils: One Council for each of the Groups S1/2, S3/4, and S5/6, each register class having ONE REPRESENTATIVE. Meetings of S1/2 and S3/4 will be held during Assembly periods at regular intervals or as required. S5/6 Year Council will normally meet during Activities periods or as agreed.

Chair (persons?) - S1/2 - Miss Gray  
S3/4 - Mr Michie  
S5/6 - Mr McCulloch.

Register teachers are requested to arrange for the election of class representatives as soon as possible and give names to the appropriate Chairman.

Register teachers are also asked to encourage classes to decide on topics to be placed on the Agenda for discussion, to stimulate discussion before the meetings and then give the opportunity for the Class Rep. to report back. Democracy needs careful nurture.

2. School Representative Council: The following composition seemed to work quite well last year:
  - (a) Pupils: Two Representatives from each year council (1 boy, 1 girl) elected from the whole year from the class representatives. Pupils should be encouraged to get to know all year representatives, decide on suitable candidates so that a proper system of proposing, seconding and then balloting can be operated,

Appendix H contd.

- (b) Staff: Six, to include two promoted, two unpromoted, one other and one non-teaching member of staff.
- (c) Chairman, Vice-Chairman - Class VI representatives, who I suggest, should also represent the pupils on the School Council.
- (d) Ex-Officio members: Rector, Deputy Rector.

Meetings of the S.R.C. will take place as determined by the council itself.

APPENDIX J

PUPIL COUNCILS: EXAMPLE FOUR

Pupils' Representative Council

Each register class in years 1 to 5 elects one representative (boy or girl). Each 6th year class elects 2 representatives, a boy and a girl, to serve for a school session on the Pupils' Representative Council.

The Head Boy and Head Girl are EX-OFFICIO members of the Council normally acting as Chairman at alternate meetings.

The Depute Rector is a non-voting, Staff Assessor.

The Formation:-

	64	members	(from 64 register classes years 1 - 5)
+	8	"	(from 4 register classes year 6)
+	2	"	(Head Boy and Girl) EX-OFFICIO
Total	<u>74</u>	members	

From the Council a STEERING COMMITTEE is formed. It consists of:-

Head Boy

Head Girl

Secretary (elected by the Council)

1 representative of class 4

1 " " " " 5

1 " " " " 6

The Council must meet once, at least, per term. The Steering Committee have the power to call other full Council meetings if and when the need arises. They make up the agenda for such meetings.

The Pupils' Representative Council takes responsibility for the disbursement of the Charities Fund. (This is a levy of 1p per week from all pupils in school). They will also discuss matters referred to Pupils' Representative Council members by pupils and matters referred to the Council by the Rector (e.g. from Principal Teachers Meetings). Their recommendations are passed, by means of the Minutes Book, to the Rector, with whom the final decision rests.

Shortly after receipt of the minutes of each meeting, the Rector meets with the Steering Committee and the Staff Assessor, to discuss and explain the Rector's replies to the minutes.

Depute Rector

PUPILS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

1. Number of Meetings

The School Council shall meet once every term. Additional meetings may be held if necessary.

2. Quorum

To prevent unrepresentative meetings, one half of the members shall form a quorum.

3. Order of Business

An agenda (giving a list of items for consideration) shall be prepared by the Chairman and Secretary, after consultation with the Committee. All items thereon shall take precedence over other business. Any member wishing to introduce other items may do so under the last heading on the agenda - A.O.C.B. (Any other competent business).

4. Minutes

The Secretary shall read the Minutes of the previous meeting at the beginning of each meeting. After the confirmation of the Minutes, they shall be signed by the Chairman. Members may then ask any questions arising out of them, but for purposes of information only. No debate shall be allowed. The Minutes of each meeting shall be written up as soon as possible thereafter and sent to the Rector. Any very urgent business may be brought orally before the Rector.

5. Selection of Speakers

Every member shall stand when speaking, and shall address the Chairman as 'Mr Chairman' or 'Madam Chairman'. When more than one member rises to speak, the first to rise shall be given precedence, the decision resting with the Chairman.

6. Motions and Amendments

The first proposal shall be known as the Original Motion. All succeeding proposals are amendments. Motions and amendments shall be moved and seconded before they can be discussed. (On the other

Appendix J concluded

hand, discussion may lead up to the formulation of a motion.)

When an amendment is moved to an original motion, no further amendment shall be discussed until the first amendment is disposed of. If an amendment be carried it displaces the original motion and becomes the substantive motion. Further amendments can then be moved. The surviving proposal shall then be put to the vote as the main question, and if carried becomes a resolution of the meeting.

7. Right of Reply

The mover of a motion shall have the right to reply at the close of the debate to points raised. Then the question shall be put by the Chairman.

8. Voting

Voting shall be by a show of hands. The Chairman shall have a deliberate vote and, if there is an equal number of votes, he shall have a casting vote also.

9. Chairman's Ruling

The ruling of the Chairman on any question under the Standing Orders, shall be final unless challenged by not less than four members, and unless 2/3rds of the members present vote to the contrary.

10. Alteration of Standing Orders

No alteration of Standing Orders shall be permitted except by a motion of which notice has been given. A 2/3rd majority of the members present will be necessary to alter standing orders.

APPENDIX K

HEADTEACHER INTERVIEWS

Schedule of Questions

SECTION A

1. Will you give me, please, perhaps in printed form, some basic facts about the school?  
Brief history, catchment area, feeder primaries, roll and staff, buildings, other matters.
2. Similarly, will you supply basic facts about the organisation?  
Promoted staff, departmental and guidance structures, etc.

SECTION B

1. What could be said to be school policy about pupil-teacher relationships?
2. How do you think the pattern of pupil-teacher relationships is determined and influenced?
3. Who in the school would be particularly concerned with pupil-teacher relationships?
4. Which situations facilitate teacher-pupil contacts?
5. When, where and how do pupils have access to staff?
6. Are any pupils given special responsibilities of any kind?
7. Is there current debate in school about any matters mentioned so far?
8. What is your own view of secondary pupils and the extent of the responsibilities which they can and ought to accept?
9. Do you see the situation as changing towards greater involvement of pupils?
10. If this were to happen, what do you see as the main problems that might arise?
11. What contacts can parents have with the school while their children are pupils?

Appendix K concluded.

12. How do the staff feel about contacts with parents?
13. What are your own views on the role that parents can and ought to play?
14. What has happened to date in the formation and operation of the pupil school council?
15. What effects if any do you expect the Pupil School Council to have on the school?
16. It is argued that, in terms of control and management, schools have moved away from a position of authoritarianism. How far do you think they can and should go towards greater involvement of staff, pupils and parents?

APPENDIX L

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES RAISED IN EAST PUPIL SCHOOL COUNCIL

1. Services and Facilities

- S - Slowness in repairs to fittings
  - S - Path to hockey pitch; feet are wet before pupils arrive there
  - S - Lack of Technical aprons
  - S - Defects in the school bus service
  - S - Seats too hard in the science rooms
  - S - Temperature too high in the science room
  - S - Toilets have no locks, nor soap, nor drinking water
  - S - Pavements near the school in poor repair
  - SD - Inadequate street lighting near to the school
  - PE - Provision of hairdriers demanded
  - PE - Provision of lockers demanded
  - PE - Provision of pegs in/near classrooms demanded
  - PE - Provision of bicycle sheds demanded.
  - PE - Provision of ice-cream at Tuck Shop demanded.
  - PF - Lunchtime use of Library advocated
  - PF - Showering during school time, not own time, demanded
  - PF - Wider use of mini-bus advocated
  - PF - Use of Youth Wing at lunchtime advocated
  - D - Dangerous metal bar at highjump
- 
- S - Standards
  - D - Danger possible
  - PE - Provision Demanded
  - PF - Further use of provision

2. School Meals

- Chips run out before everyone served
- Custard like water
- Calories/protein balance queried
- Problem of lost tickets
- Misuse of early Dinner passes



## Appendix L concluded

Better place for people to eat packed lunches

Auxiliaries refusing to fill water jugs

Unruly queues

Spiders in the dinners!

### 3. Rules and Behaviour

DRESS	Why wear school uniform?
DRESS	School (summer) dress for girls demanded
DRESS	Why not allowed to wear jeans?
PUNISHMENTS	Why and how punish for latecoming? Why are teachers allowed to punish whole class? Too much strength is used in belting Detention should be used as an alternative
RULE	Why no football in the playground?
CRIME	Slinging pellets
CRIME	Bullying
CRIME	Vandalism
CRIME	Crushing on the stairs
CRIME	Litter problem: pick up as punishment?
UNFAIRNESS	Forced to do PE when ill
DISCIPLINE	Teams: picked players are not turning up
PRIVILEGES	Prefects: no one is in favour
PRIVILEGES	School Captain idea: no one is in favour
REWARDS	Should be $\frac{1}{2}$ day holiday as reward for raising cash for mini-bus.

### 4. Curriculum

Time-table complaints

Girls want basketball

Not enough football during PE

Need for a school magazine

Not enough class excursions

Why not have fishing weekends?

APPENDIX M

PREFECTS: A PUPIL'S VIEW

(A sixth-year pupil who had thought seriously about being a prefect gave his views in a recorded interview. The following is an edited transcript of that interview).

T.A. *When did you realise that you might be a prefect?*

A. In 4th year. I suspected it then. In the voting in fifth year I persuaded people not to vote for me. It was 'I'll vote for you, if you'll not vote for me' kind of thing . . . I tried to keep out of it.

T.A. *Who did the voting?*

A. Fifth year for fifth year prefects, boys for boys, girls for girls; sixth year for sixth year. But that is not all. The staff have a say. Whether they vote for people from a short list or whether they veto things, I don't know.

T.A. *How many prefects are there?*

A. There are 14 fifth years, 7 boys and 7 girls, and 10 sixth years, 5 boys and 5 girls. The Captains and Vice Captains are chosen from them. We don't know how, but we suspect that it is mainly the staff who decide.

The boy who is Captain this year is unlikely to be voted for by the pupils. He is even less popular now. He is almost the perfect Captain for the staff - he does what he is told. He doesn't bother whether he's popular or unpopular if he does something and so quite a lot of us don't like him in the school, particularly first and third year.

T.A. *So you were not in fact a prefect at S5. What happened at the beginning of this session?*

A. This time I didn't get people not to vote for me. We had the elections and results were circulated around the staff. A number of people were then called down to the Headmaster's Office . . . we were told that we had been elected prefects. Then one by one he called people out and said, 'Are you willing to take on the responsibility of being a prefect?'

Nearly everyone said 'yes', including a girl who turned it down the next day and handed in her badge.

T.A. *Did she say why?*

A. She said that she didn't think that she had the right to boss people of her own age.

T.A. *What did you do?*

A. I said that I wanted to think on it overnight. I was the only person to do that and the Headmaster was slightly shocked by it.

I spent a sleepless night and I went in next day and said I would take it. I said I wasn't happy with the policing side of it. Keeping contact between staff and pupils appealed, but he said I couldn't do one without the other . . . I was saying that I was willing to do it but that I had reservations.

T.A. *Can you recall the previous night? What issues did you think about?*

A. The ideals of the prefect system are that you are meant to be representing the pupils to the staff - you take their opinions to the staff because you're more approachable than a teacher apparently, but that side of it doesn't seem to work in practice at all. If the pupils have a teacher regularly throughout the week, they'll turn to them rather than to someone who keeps ordering them down the stairs. So I didn't feel that it was going to work, and it hasn't worked.

T.A. *Was that a problem to you?*

A. It was a problem because I felt I'd be wasting my time.

T.A. *Yes. Were there other thoughts?*

A. The other thing was the policing. Really you are doing a lot of dirty work for the staff. They want the corridors cleared and they've got their intervals and they're not going to do it and so they get prefects to do it.

It encourages prefects to grab people and to push them down the stairs. There's a lot of bullying really, from the prefects and that's happened more this year than in other years.

I didn't like that side - I didn't want to have much to do with it.

T.A. *So this has been happening more than previously!*

A. Yes! I think that what's been happening is that William as Captain has been forcing prefects to do their duties properly. You cannot sit in the prefects' room during the intervals and so we've been out on the stairs and they've been a bit annoyed about it and they tend to take it out on the first years.

Added to which was the arson attempts in the school where pupils burnt out toilets and things. There were four fires and in the fourth one, which was the largest, there was a whole classroom area burnt out. And none of the fire alarms were working. They were all switched off because there'd been fires earlier and they hadn't been repaired then. And none of the fire extinguishers was working either. So the staff were going around telling people to get out of school. I was going around trying to break fire alarms and they didn't work. It took everyone a good five minutes to get everyone out of the building. After that no one was allowed in school during intervals; they were much, much stricter.

T.A. *So this is an example of policy.*

A. Yes. In the short term the effect was like that. It didn't last. They've gradually relaxed and they're not bothering about it so much.

T.A. *Is the clearing of these places entirely the responsibility of prefects?*

A. Staff sometimes help and if they see a prefect having difficulties they will help them ...

The centre stair gets very cluttered up, with prefects, and with people trying to get up and down ... Once there were 7 prefects on the stairs, people getting forced down the stairs who were arguing, and others legitimately trying to come down the stairs.

T.A. *Were there any other aspects that worried you?*

A. Yes. The prefects are a kind of elite. They have their own room. They've got lockers in it and they're allowed to go in there at intervals and at free periods.

And there's the sixth year common room. This causes a split in the sixth year - the S6 prefects don't go into the common room. Also people stay in the prefects room when they're meant to be doing their duties. For example there are 23 prefects (one has been de-prefected for swearing at a teacher), and recently there were 6 doing duties and I counted 10 in the prefects room doing nothing.

Also the rest of fifth year don't have any common rooms to go to, so there's the same split in fifth year.

The prefects also tend to hang together. They have this extra power and they tend to use it as a group.

The prefects are not treated as ordinary pupils by the rest of the school.

T.A. *So there are two aspects: the system splits the classes and it also splits them off from the rest of the school.*

A. Yes. Each Monday registrations are 25 minutes long and each prefect is allocated a registration class to go to, from first to third year only, and if they've got any problems or questions you are meant to try and deal with them. They don't do this because they don't really know the prefects.

You're also supposed to give them information which has already been read out over the tannoy system, or its in a bulletin which the registration teachers are given.

Also the teacher sits in the room and you are trying to get any complaints, may be about teachers or prefects, and they are not willing to do it with the teacher sitting watching them ...

T.A. *So not much comes from anybody by way of complaints?*

A. No. I've had complaints about prefects blocking the stairs. And there was one girl who was at orchestra one lunchtime and she was kept there quite late. She was going to history which is on the top floor and the prefects wouldn't let her use the nearest stair, which made her even more late. She went straight to the Headmaster and got that complaint sorted out.

T.A. *Are there other systems in the school?*

A. No. In fact I suggested that there should be a candidate system

for prefects. Those willing to be prefects could let their names go forward for voting, otherwise not. The Headmaster told me that the system was working fine as it was. He said that you could turn it down, but people just don't turn it down.

And if you had a candidate system, the ones taking it up would be the bullying ones anyway, the ones who enjoy this power.

T.A. *Are you allowed to punish anyone?*

A. You take names. Other than that, physically take people to the Headmaster or the Depute. But, generally, taking names is suicide; they say 'Mickey Mouse' or something like that. They refuse to give a name and if there is nothing else that you can do other than take the name, or take them down. If you've got about twenty people blocking the stair, there's nothing much you can do, and they know it as well.

T.A. *Why do you think there are prefect systems?*

A. There are two things: laziness on the part of staff who don't want to do the duties, to get someone else to do it; that's a large part of it.

The other thing is the concession to some form of pupil representation and this does go part of the way towards it. The thinking is that pupils are more likely to get complaints from other pupils than a teacher would.

T.A. *There is an argument that says it's good for you to be a prefect. Do you think there is anything in this?*

A. You learn how to take this position of authority and tell people what to do and there is that side of things.

I don't think it gives responsibility, really. You are told to stop people going up and down the central stairs and you have that power and a lot of people don't use any discretion whatsoever ... there doesn't seem to be responsibility coming into it. There is a written rule and you just follow that written rule or you are lazy and you just don't bother following it at all.

T.A. *Are there other situations where responsibility is entailed?*

A. Librarians are selected to run the library ... discos ... school concert ... school fete ... clubs and societies ... the school newspaper which is run by third year: they criticise the prefects in print, and teachers too but not by name.

T.A. *So the newspaper shows that the body of the school doesn't like the prefects.*

A. Yes. No one likes them ... First and second year resent the prefects; third and fourth year are more vocal about it; and fifth and sixth year, because some of them are prefects, they split the years, and they don't like that.

T.A. *If the question of abolition of prefects came up, how do you think the staff would feel?*

A. I think they would want to keep it. It is seen as an easy way of getting rules observed.

T.A. *How do you think parents might feel?*

A. I don't really know. Some parents would probably agree with prefects, because of this responsibility thing. Others would probably disagree.

T.A. *Was there anything in the University entrance form about prefects?*

A. Yes. And I wrote down that I was one! It was under 'Positions of responsibility held or outside interests' or something like that.

T.A. *So it does seem to mean something.*

A. Yes. If someone came to me and said they were a prefect I wouldn't hold that in their favour at all ... People outside the school don't know what it is really like, there are different systems in different schools.

T.A. *If the Headmaster abolished prefects, would there be any loss to the school?*

A. Apart from rules about using the central stair, no. I think the atmosphere would improve.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

The School Council shall be a General Council of staff and pupils.

AIMS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council's chief function will be to serve as a platform for discussion between staff and pupils, and, as such, to serve as an advisory body to the Rector.

Its chief aim will be to involve pupils in school matters and school policy within the terms of reference as stated below.

The spheres under which the Council might operate are:-

Suggestions

Activities afternoon, "Happenings" etc.

Social

Parties, sports' day, swimming gala, parents' evenings, oversight and development of school clubs, societies, school magazine.

Discipline

Corridor work; social areas; dress; latecoming; lack of respect for prefects; school rules; dodging classes; afternoons off school; behaviour on transport and street; smoking, sanctions on these.

Grievances and Complaints

These should be brought to the notice of the Council through pupil representatives.

School Environment

Litter, wall writing, campaigns (smoking, health, litter, etc.)

Liaison

Liaison with the Community Centre, youth services, other schools. Use of the school and other centre facilities after school.



Appendix N contd.

Links with Community

Social service, emergency service (help for people going to or leaving hospital).

THE FOLLOWING MAY NOT BE DISCUSSED

The Council will not involve itself in discussion of the academic curriculum.

The Council will not indulge in any discussion which involves criticism of any individual pupil or member of staff.

There should be no discussion on the evaluation of teaching or the contribution of a teacher to the school.

If doubt arises as to whether a topic or decision is within the terms of reference of the Council, the Council will then accept the decision of the Chairman as final.

Constitution of the General Council

MEMBERSHIP: The Council will consist of 18 pupils and 7 staff (3 boys and 3 girls from VI, 2 boys and 2 girls from V, 1 boy and 1 girl from IV, III, II, and I). One year members shall be elected, prior to the October holiday.

COUNCIL OFFICES

Chairman - a senior pupil, Vice-Chairman - a member of staff, Secretary - a pupil.

TERMS OF OFFICE

All Council members will serve for a period of one year and seek re-election if desired. On retirement of any member during that period, replacement will be by election by the group which he or she represents.

If any member is absent from two consecutive meetings, without reasonable excuse, then he or she shall be automatically expelled from the Council.

In the absence of the Chairman at any meeting, the Council will elect from its members, a Chairman for that meeting.

Appendix N contd.

VOTING

A two-third majority will be required to carry any motion on school policy, otherwise by simple majority.

The Chairman has the right to vote.

Voting will be by a show of hands. A ballot vote can be at the discretion of the Chairman if several members express a desire for it.

QUORUM

Nine pupils and 4 staff will be required to constitute a quorum, at any meeting.

REPORTS

School clubs and societies should submit to the Council a report one per term on membership, activities, etc.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Council will appoint a Finance Committee, the membership of which is to be decided by the Council.

At regular intervals the business of the Finance Committee shall be reported to the full Council.

All requests in excess of £50 are to be referred to the full council for approval.

MEETINGS

Statutory meetings will be held monthly at 4.10 p.m.

Other meetings will be arranged by the Council as and when required. The Annual General Meeting, where amendments to the Constitution may be made, will be held in March of each year.

REPORTS TO PUPILS

The minutes of each meeting will be displayed in staffrooms and given to Form Teachers for discussion with their classes.

Appendix N concluded

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Council can recommend amendments to the Constitution at any time during its term of office.

STANDING ORDERS

1. All business of the Council shall be conducted under the following rules of debate.

2. RULES OF DEBATE

- (a) Each item on the Agenda will be discussed in turn, although the Chairman has discretion to vary the order or insert additional items.
- (b) Discussion will end in a proposal which must have a seconder.
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- (d) Voting will be in the first place on the amendment.
- (e) All remarks must be addressed to the meeting through the Chairman.
- (f) On a point of order or information being raised, the speaker gives way until the Chairman has ruled on the point.

3. MINUTES

The meeting may enter into Committee, and the Secretary may use his or her discretion in making a note of the main points raised during the discussion. At the end of the discussion, the Chairman will give a brief summary for the approval of the Council. This will then be minuted.

THE GORDONSTOUN DOCUMENT

- Aims:
1. To remind Colour Bearers of the responsibilities they took on when they accepted the obligations of the Colours.
  2. To provide Colour Bearer Candidates with an idea of what will be required of them if they should accept the obligations of the Colours.
- 
1. Colour Bearers should be willing to see their daily life and conduct in terms of service to the community and not to view their position as one of privilege.
  2. Colour Bearers should be aware of wrongs and try to right them. Vigilance at all times is essential. Courage is necessary when dealing with some situations and Colour Bearers cannot afford to let popularity govern their actions when they are trying to improve the School. They should try to influence the public opinion of the School by stating their own views strongly about important matters such as stealing, vandalism, honesty, swearing and manners.
  3. Colour Bearers must exercise their power justly. Friendship should not hinder Colour Bearers from taking action and their fairness must be of the highest quality at all times, nor should they shrink from a task because it would be easier or more comfortable to avoid it.
  4. Colour Bearers must be conscious that their example will be followed. The Colour Bearers' standards set a basic guideline to the whole School. This does not only apply to outside appearance i.e. tidiness, manners, but also to more important matters of honesty and integrity. Colour Bearers must never be hypocrites.
  5. With the community at heart Colour Bearers should be aware of individuals and their needs as well as the good of the whole School. Compassion is a vital quality in a Colour Bearer.

Appendix P contd.

6. Colour Bearers are responsible for the well-being of the School. It is their task to see that the School rules are upheld. They must always try to explain the reasons behind the rules instead of simply enforcing them-mechanically. However, as Colour Bearers they have a right and a duty to enforce the rules and should not have to resort to argument to enforce their will. This task calls for qualities of perserverance and patience.
7. Colour Bearers must work together as a team in the School. They must back each other up and be conscious or their unity. Solidarity is a very effective method of enforcing rules. This does not mean that Colour Bearers are expected to sacrifice their own individuality. Free discussion of view at Colour Bearer Meetings is vitally important.
8. Colour Bearers are the representative of the School, not only of their respective Houses. They are expected to get to know as many boys and girls as possible, Colour Bearer Candidates in particular. They should mix freely in the School, attend meals in all dining rooms, and visit other houses whenever possible. They must communicate with the school and represent its members conscientiously.
9. Colour Bearers must treat election and discussion meetings of the Colour Bearer Body with the utmost seriousness; the future of the School is their responsibility. In election meetings all proposals must be honest and fair, and each prospective Colour Bearer and Colour Bearer Candidate must be viewed critically before the vote is taken. No lobbying or prior discussion, except among the Colour Bearers within the Houses, is allowed. Whenever possible Colour Bearers must communicate matters discussed in such meetings to the School, except those related to individuals; these must be kept strictly confidential.
10. Colour Bearers must adhere to the principles of the Trust System i.e. Training Plan, Walking punishments and support the system by example.

Appendix P concluded

11. Unless a boy or girl has the good of the School community at heart he must not accept the obligations of the Colours. Genuine concern is vital. Vigilance is needed for efficient communication and initiative is necessary for the solution of problems.
  
12. Colour Bearers who after election find themselves in a position where they are either unable to uphold these standards or who by their conduct make themselves unfit to wear the school Colours are expected to offer their resignation.

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## NOTE ON ACCOMPANYING VIDEOTAPE

During the years when this research was being conducted various examples of pupil councils in action were video-recorded for research as well as for teaching purposes. Some examples are provided on the accompanying videotape. These are illustrative of a good number of points made in the research, ranging from the practical, for example seating arrangements at meetings, to the more sophisticated, for example staff and pupil roles and skills.

### First Sequence

- (1) Pupil Councils in Queen's Park Secondary School.

Part 1 : Headteacher's Perspective.

(0 to 209)

- (2) Pupil Councils in Queen's Park Secondary School.

Part 2 : Pupil Reactions.

(209 to 326)

- (3) Pupil Councils in Queen's Park Secondary School.

Part 3 : S2 Year Council in Session.

(326 to 473)

- (4) Pupil Councils in Queen's Park Secondary School.

Part 4 : S4 Year Council in Session.

(473 to 570)

### Second Sequence

- (5) Original material, showing an S3 Year Meeting in Bellarmine Secondary School.

(570 to 704)

- (6) Original Bellarmine Secondary School material showing brief staff ad hoc committee discussion of pupil evidence on the issue of corporal punishment in schools.

(704 to 722)

- (7) Original material showing the top tier, whole-school council in session in Bellarmine Secondary School.