

Organisational Review of the National Parent Forum Scotland

February 2024

Contents

1. Context
2. Purpose and methodology
3. Findings: strengths and areas for improvement
4. Moving forward – recommendations
5. Conclusion and thanks
6. List of interviewees

1.Context

Scotland can be justly proud of its longstanding commitment to parental engagement and involvement, recognising that parents are the most important educators in their children's lives. We have achieved significant success in actively involving parents in educational policy review and development.

The National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFS) was established in 2009 as a direct result of Scotland's Parental Involvement Act (2006) and is the only independent, national parental engagement and involvement organisation in Scotland that is volunteer led and run. The role of this unique organisation is to ensure that parents across Scotland have a say on issues of concern and policy development and review in relation to their child's education. The key functions of the organisation include representation of parents, consultation and producing publications.

'The ambition for establishing the National Parent Forum was to follow through on the Scottish Government's belief that parents should be equal partners in determining the education policy and helping shape all educational settings to provide the very best possible child-centred, learning experiences for children and young people.'

Jackie Brock, former civil servant, and former Chief Executive of Children in Scotland

The organisation has played a critical role, in providing a vehicle for parents to have a direct influence on a wide range of issues relating to their children's education and health and wellbeing. NPFS has successfully fostered partnership with local authorities, national government, and other organisations to ensure that parents are enabled to have their views presented at all levels. Through their active engagement and participation, parents can play a full and equal role as partners in making the right decisions to improve outcomes for Scotland's children and young people.

There is no doubt that NPFS has been successful in enhancing the role of parents in the decisions that impact on children's lives since its inception. Over the years, the organisation has contributed to numerous developments and activities and has enabled parental views across Scotland to be considered. The Nutshell series has covered a range of topics and been used extensively to support parents to develop their understanding of educational and other related matters so that they can play as active a role as possible in their child's learning.

Unfortunately, the last four years have presented significant challenges for NPFS. Prior to the pandemic, there had been a few operational issues and a period of change involving organisational leadership, hosting arrangements, Scottish Government policy officials and NPFS staffing. The period of the pandemic exacerbated matters with new representatives not being able to meet their peers in person and, in a few authorities, not being able to connect with relevant local authority staff, headteachers and parent councils.

The new Chair, Cheryl Burnett was elected in 2021, having been NPFS representative for South Lanarkshire for 10 years and is supported by a leadership team consisting of four vice-chairs. Due to the challenges highlighted, her tenure has been difficult with the delay in the current funding agreement with Scottish

Government and a lack of staff support having a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

Nationally, the impact of the pandemic and other factors has continued to put pressure on the relationships between children, young people and their teachers and a strain on the partnerships between parents and schools. NPFS representatives are often embedded in their school communities and play an important role in supporting the rebuilding of these relationships.

2. Purpose and methodology

The organisation has conducted several previous reviews but felt that these had not been sufficiently robust in their scope. Due to the challenges experienced and the impact of these on the organisation, NPFS representatives agreed that there was a need to conduct an organisational review which would identify organisational strengths, areas for improvement and find possible solutions and recommendations to enable the organisation to rebuild, grow, and develop. The funding arrangements with Scottish Government enabled the review to proceed.

A programme of interviews involving the NPFS leadership team, NPFS local authority representatives, Scottish Government policy officials, leaders from national organisations, key individuals who have been involved with NPFS and local authority colleagues was agreed with NPFS and Scottish Government. Two of the interviewees had been involved in establishing NPFS when working as policy officials in the Scottish Government. In addition, focus group discussions were facilitated with groups of NPFS representatives. These activities have provided critical insights into important areas including the following:

- Governance
- Leadership
- Support for NPFS representatives
- Planning and operations
- Role and impact
- Partnerships

The focus of discussions has been to identify what has been working well, what needs to change / improve in addition to discussing barriers / challenges, and potential opportunities. The review has helped to identify issues impacting on the current effectiveness of the organisation and to look at possible solutions.

The review findings have led to the production of a set of recommendations which will support the future development and sustainability of the organisation. A number of these recommendations will require discussion and agreement with relevant Scottish Government policy officials and other organisations.

3. Findings – strengths and improvement areas

The review has identified significant strengths which include the following:

- passion and voluntary commitment of NPFS representatives to improve outcomes for all Scotland’s children and young people.
- willingness to engage and work in partnership with Scottish Government, local authorities, national organisations, and other key stakeholders.
- wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience of NPFS representatives.
- impact of NPFS at both national and local level.
- NPFS representatives’ understanding of their local communities and ability to make connections.
- positive organisational reputation at local and national level.
- agility and flexibility in responding to a wide range of requests.
- resilience and commitment of NPFS Chair and leadership team.
- production of Nutshell publications.

‘I help parents/carers feel confident and empowered to contribute and engage in their young people’s school learning experience.’

George, NPFS representative

‘Being a representative allows me to bring national issues back to my local authority. It also gives me confidence knowing that issues being faced locally are not just specific to my local authority.’

Mary, NPFS representative

‘As a NPFS representative, I know that I am able to amplify the voices, positive ones or those with concerns, to our local authority and to national government to allow parents to see that their opinions and experiences matter to those creating and executing policies that affect their children.’

Mel, NPFS representative

Almost all existing NPFS representatives took part in interviews. They presented as highly motivated, passionate, and committed individuals who want to make a difference to all children and young people through representing the views of parents to influence positive improvement and change. They come from a wide range of backgrounds and possess a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience.

The experience of representatives in their role varied according to the length of time they have been involved in NPFS and their status within the local authority they represent. Those who have been representatives for a period prior to the pandemic have generally managed to establish good connections in their local authorities enabling them to consult with and represent the views of parents well. However, representatives who have been more recently appointed have often struggled to build connections and establish their role due to the impact of the pandemic and current constraints on the organisation. Members of the leadership team continue to make strong efforts to support representatives in this situation.

In around a third of local authorities, NPFS representatives are involved strategically and play an important role on various committees. NPFS representatives have positive relationships with Directors with responsibility for education and other senior staff across local authority departments. They make a positive contribution to strategic planning including community planning. NPFS representatives are regarded by strategic leaders as co-producers and creators. This picture, however, is inconsistent across Scotland's local authorities.

'Our NPFS representative is on the Education and Learning Committee and is actively targeted to be included in working groups across policy and practice for our Directorate for the knowledge and experience she brings from both local partnerships and NPFS.'

Gillian Brydson, Director of Skills, Education and Learning, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Despite the challenges faced by the organisation in recent years, the role and contribution of NPFS at national level has continued to be significant and is recognised and valued by a range of national leaders.

'The EIS considers NPFS to be an organisation committed to working collegiately with other key stakeholders such as teachers to protect and improve the quality of education that young people experience in our schools and to celebrate its many successes to date.'

Andrea Bradley, EIS General Secretary

NPFS played a critical role during the pandemic, providing effective communication and information-sharing with parents across Scotland. The organisation contributed to all the workstreams of the Covid Recovery National Group. This was evidenced again during the teacher strikes where NPFS worked in partnership with the EIS and local authorities during this difficult time.

NPFS have maintained a positive working relationship with COSLA who see the benefits of strengthening this relationship and are keen to support NPFS to build stronger parental engagement and involvement structures at local authority level. The organisation has supported consultation with parents on a wide range of topics and worked with Connect and other parental organisations to deliver a series of engagement activities for the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment conducted by Professor Louise Hayward.

'NPFS were an essential part of Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment. Without the support of parents, any changes would be very difficult. NPFS were integral to the process – they ensured that the voices of parents were included throughout the development of the policy advice.'

Professor Louise Hayward

NPFS contribute to many forums addressing the needs of children and young people with Additional Support Needs including *the ASN Parents Together Network*.

NPFS are called upon for advice and parental views on an extensive and diverse range of issues. These have included:

- feedback on vaccination centres and leaflet design
- work with the Child Poverty Action Group on the cost of the school day
- improving school meals
- influencing local council strategies for parental engagement and involvement
- challenging council budget cuts

Poverty continues to have a major impact on children, young people, and families. NPFS representatives are embedded in local communities across Scotland and have a real understanding of the issues being faced by families. Representatives play an important role in signposting parents to other services and agencies.

Representatives provide direct support to parents at local level providing advice to individuals and support for parent councils. They often act as chairs of their local authority parent council chairs network and are asked to provide training for parent councils and deliver presentations on parental engagement and involvement.

NPFS has established a positive reputation having worked successfully with a wide range of partners across Scotland including third sector organisations.

'Respectme, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service has enjoyed a strong and productive relationship with NPFS over many years, sharing intelligence, and collaborating on themes of mutual interest and concern. Hearing directly from parents across and carers across a national network, adds enormous value to our work and we are grateful for the partnership opportunities this presents, and for the positivity of leadership at all levels within NPFS.'

Lorraine Glass, Interim Director, Respectme

Improvement areas

During discussions, the following improvement areas have been identified. The Leadership team are aware of most of these and have demonstrated a willingness to take necessary action. It should be noted that many of these have been because of the challenges the organisation has faced in recent times and not having a staff team to support them in their work. NPFS are finding it difficult to plan due to a current lack of understanding regarding future funding arrangements. This will also require Scottish Government, Children in Scotland, and other partner organisations to collaborate with NPFS in finding solutions. A realistic action plan should be developed to address the following:

Governance

- strengthen organisational governance.
- explore the establishment of an Advisory Board / Group
- build leadership team with mix of skills, knowledge, and experience.
- adhere to the principles of good governance.
- review the current memorandum of understanding to clarify and enhance the relationship with Scottish Government policy colleagues.
- review organisational vision and core purpose to ensure that these are still fit for purpose.

- ensure that constitution, policies, and procedures are reviewed annually and updated accordingly.
- protect the independent nature of organisation and its core purpose.
- enable flexibility and creativity in responding to parental concerns.
- identify more secure and stable funding arrangement.
- provide necessary support for the organisation to thrive through the provision of a skilled staff team.
- review the current service level agreement, update, and strengthen hosting arrangement with Children in Scotland.

Planning and operations

- focus on quality rather than quantity with SMART goals.
- develop a three-year strategic plan with agreed priorities.
- clarify expectations with Scottish Government in terms of planning and reporting.
- develop cycle of planning and review.
- improve communication and information-sharing both internally and externally.
- improve promotion and marketing.
- working with local authorities, develop a consistent approach to recruiting representatives.
- plan and host regular meetings for all representatives.

Leadership

- agree mentoring / coaching for Chair and leadership team.
- build organisational leadership capacity.
- improve succession-planning to improve organisational stability.
- utilise skills, experience, and knowledge of representatives more effectively in leadership roles including working groups.
- set up working groups on specific themes to develop the organisation and utilise skills and expertise of representatives.
- improve communications between the leadership team and area representatives.
- meet regularly as a leadership team and arrange meeting with all representatives.

Support for representatives

- provide robust induction for new representatives.
- provide clear role description with clear expectations.
- develop a peer / buddy support system for new representatives.
- develop core training for representatives including dealing with the media; GDPR.
- offer shadowing opportunities to prepare representatives for representing the organisation at national level.
- provide support for representatives to make connections in their local authorities.
- hold regular in person meetings for representatives.
- keep all representatives informed.

- expand number of representatives in local authorities to create small teams covering 3-18 where possible.

Impact

- record, measure, and promote the impact of the organisation more effectively.
- keep an up-to-date record of NPFS activities at local and national level.
- share and promote best practice.
- build political support and identify organisational champions.
- produce an annual impact report.
- ask for feedback from organisations that NPFS representatives engage with.
- address gaps in representation and develop an equalities, diversity, and inclusion strategy to ensure inclusion of all parents.

Partnerships

- enhance collaboration with Scottish Government.
- develop partnership working with Education Scotland.
- continue to build on positive partnerships already established and seek new partnerships.
- build stronger connections with local authority staff responsible for parental engagement and involvement.
- establish a positive working relationship with Connect including clearly defined roles and areas for collaboration and partnership working.

4. Moving Forward - recommendations

The organisation needs to address gaps in its governance structure which would help to address most of the areas that require improvement. Alongside this, there is now an opportunity to agree an appropriate staff structure which could include:

- Chief Executive Officer / Director to work with the Chair and leadership team to take the organisation forward (0.5).
- Outreach / development officer to support NPFS representatives and help build local structures (0.5).
- Administrative / communications and marketing support (0.5) (this could be considered as part of the hosting arrangement with Children in Scotland}.

In terms of governance, an Advisory Board / Group could be established with the following remit:

- provide oversight, support, and challenge.
- mentoring for Chair and Leadership team.
- work in partnership with leadership team in setting of strategic direction and priorities.
- ensure transparency and accountability.
- provide quality assurance and effective reporting.
- ensure effective policies and procedures are in place.
- promote self-assessment.

The Advisory Board / Group would help to maintain the independent nature of the organisation, bring rigour to strategic decisions and operational procedures, and provide support to the leadership team. The Advisory Board / Group would also have an audit and risk function which would strengthen financial decision-making.

The fact that NPFS is a volunteer led and run organisation needs to be acknowledged, protected, and celebrated. Scottish Government has a strong commitment to volunteering and NPFS provides an excellent example of added value and social impact. The impact of the organisation is significant, and its effectiveness could be further improved through having an effective staff team and appropriate governance structure.

'Local representatives who are volunteers do an amazing job. They are also parents and parent council representatives who give a lot, and they care.'

Des Dickson, Education Operations Manager, South Lanarkshire Council

Various factors have created tensions in the relationship between NPFS and Scottish Government. This relationship needs to be reset and the *Principles for Positive Relationships* provides useful guidance on relationships between Scottish Government and third sector grant holders.

An improved governance structure would improve confidence levels and hopefully support the development of an improved relationship. Difficulties in agreeing the strategic focus of the organisation, funding restrictions, uncertainty regarding future funding have all impacted on trust and reduced flexibility for the organisation to operate.

Current funding is made available through the Educational Development Research and Services (Scotland) Grant Regulations 1999 and reflects current education priorities. NPFS believes this makes it difficult to respond to wider parental concerns and continue to make an effective contribution on issues which impact on children and young people's learning. During the review, there was recognition of the role of NPFS in Getting it Right for Every Child (GiRFEC) and the need for wider considerations relating to overall health and wellbeing including the significant impact of poverty, mental health, and the impact of the pandemic to be included in their remit.

'The impact of our NPFS representative is not only felt within our service but also with our wider partners, third sector and NHS colleagues.'

Gillian Brydson, Director, Dumfries and Galloway Council

NPFS has benefited from a positive relationship with the Education Scotland team responsible for parental involvement and engagement, but this has lessened in recent months, and it would be helpful to clarify the specific support that would be beneficial for the NPFS leadership team. Education Scotland is currently going through a period of reform. Once the roles and functions of the new organisations are confirmed, it would be useful to clarify the relationship between the new bodies and NPFS. HM Chief Inspector confirmed that she is keen to work with NPFS to support parents to be well informed about inspection processes.

Children in Scotland have been the host organisation for several years with the Chief Executive Officer providing the organisation with much valued support. She often steps in to provide direct support and guidance to NPFS chair when required and plays an intermediary role in working out solutions when issues arise, including financial issues. However, it would be beneficial to revisit the terms of the hosting arrangement to establish whether current gaps could be addressed, for example, administrative and communications support and future arrangements for governance and staffing arrangements. The current Service Level Agreement has been in place for some time and would benefit from being reviewed and updated to ensure greater clarity and clear expectations.

NPFS have numerous demands placed on them from across Scottish Government policy areas, national organisations and at local level. Due to a lack of staff, and difficulties in supporting representatives to develop their confidence and knowledge, it has become increasingly difficult to fulfil all the requests to a high standard. This has led to a few colleagues interviewed commenting on expectations not being fulfilled and meetings being attended mainly by the Chair. This is beginning to be addressed with other representatives shadowing the Chair with a view to taking her place in working groups etc. However, until the situation with staff and funding is resolved, NPFS need to focus on quality rather than quantity and improve their ability to prioritise their activities.

The NPFS Chair can be a difficult role and could benefit from having formal mentoring support. The role is voluntary and should not be as pressurised. It is critical to get the right mix of skills, knowledge, and experience in the leadership team and to ensure that there are clear expectations of the various roles. NPFS need to consider their processes for recruitment and selection of the Chair and Vice Chairs going forward.

A member of the leadership team is about to stand down and the Chair and another vice Chair are in their final year of office. Steps are currently being taken to address succession planning to create a smooth transition period and retain stability. The Leadership team should be recruited on the basis that they will act as ambassadors for NPFS. As such, they should demonstrate organisational values in their interactions with others and follow the Code of Conduct that is in place.

The recruitment processes for NPFS representatives varies across Scotland and could be improved to provide a more consistent approach. Support for NPFS could be enhanced by the employment of an outreach / development worker who could also help build relationships with local authority staff who have responsibility for parental engagement and involvement. Potential representatives should have an understanding and clear expectations of the role in addition to a robust induction programme and core training.

A skills, knowledge, and experience audit of all NPFS representatives would be beneficial and help to allocate roles and responsibilities more effectively. The Chair is starting to allocate specific roles to representatives with appropriate skills and knowledge including the recent nomination to the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

It has been difficult for new representatives to meet their peers and for in person events to take place. The Chair, vice chairs and other representatives have made strong efforts to welcome and provide mentoring to new representatives. However, the building of relationships is difficult without having the opportunity to meet in person. Internal communication and information – sharing is critical to ensure that representatives are kept aware of NPFS activities and can input their views.

Requests for NPFS input are often made without much notice and having no administrative support has impacted on the Leadership team's ability to keep representatives informed and up to date. The Chair and Leadership team need to consider how they can address this through a fortnightly email update or similar process. There is also a need to re-establish regular meetings for representatives to discuss issues and share information. Consideration should also be given to setting up working groups on specific themes to support the growth and development of the organisation.

In terms of external publicity and promotion, NPFS are aware that this needs to be improved as external stakeholders are often unaware of the organisation's reach and impact. A strong marketing and promotion strategy would help the organisation to increase its visibility at school, local authority, and national level.

Our current curriculum covers 3 -18 years, and our engagement and involvement of parents should reflect this. NPFS should consider a representative model which would include parent representatives for early years, primary and secondary / post school in each local authority. This would create a team of representatives who could support each other, increase the representation of parents, support succession planning and sustainability and provide a wider pull of parents to represent NPFS at national level. This would create a national network of NPFS representatives covering early years, primary and secondary / post school and create opportunities to develop age and stage related forums. Building a stronger representative base would help to support the organisation increase its reach and impact. This would assist Scottish Government's understanding of emerging concerns and themes and improve communication and the flow of information from local to national level.

In expanding representation, NPFS is increasing its focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). Schools, local authorities, and organisations committed to the involvement and engagement of all parents need to work together to widen participation and build partnerships with organisations who can support the inclusion of all parents. Consideration is being given to co-opting parents from various groups currently. There is an opportunity for Connect and NPFS to collaborate and develop an Equality Diversity and Inclusion joint strategy.

A strong and effective NPFS is dependent on effective local authority structures and unfortunately, we do not have a consistent model of effective practice. This has an impact on new representatives in particular who have been unable to establish their role and connections. Education Scotland are committed to supporting parental engagement and involvement nationally and hopefully will support local authorities to improve their structures through inspection and support activities as the new agency develops. It would also be beneficial for NPFS to strengthen their connection with the

Scottish Parental Involvement Officers Network (SPION) where issues relating to local authority connections can be raised and discussed,

‘Colleagues within the Scottish Parental Involvement Officers Network (SPION) welcome the opportunity to work more closely with NPFS. The opportunity for a representative of NPFS to attend meetings would facilitate discussion on areas of mutual interest.’

Kathryn Farrow Chair of SPION, Quality Improvement Officer, Glasgow

NPFS continues to have a positive impact as recognised by those interviewed but needs to improve its ability to demonstrate the positive outcomes achieved. Consideration should be given to developing an evaluation framework which helps to measure success through the gathering of evidence including comments from individuals associated with the groups and organisations that the organisation works with. This would provide more detail in funding reports for Scottish Government policy colleagues and raise the profile of the organisation both locally and nationally through marketing and promotion activities. The production of an annual impact report with case studies, statistics and quotes would help to raise the profile of the organisation and publicise its activities.

Almost all individuals interviewed were clear about the differences between Connect and NPFS but recognised that this can be confusing as the roles appear to be overlapping. The organisations would benefit from producing a joint message on their websites and appropriate literature that defines the remit of each organisation and highlights their unique selling points.

It would be helpful for Connect and NPFS to agree the areas where collaboration and partnership would be helpful and to highlight these in their strategic plan. The current situation where there appears to be competition between the two organisations needs to be resolved and a more positive working relationship established for the benefit of parents, children, and young people in Scotland.

Collaboration and partnerships with other relevant organisations including Connect need to be clearly defined to ensure the best use of available resources and to maximise impact on improving the voice, influence and participation of parents and carers at both local and national level.

Key Recommendations

- Agreement needs to be reached on Scottish Government funding for NPFS as a matter of urgency to enable the organisation to forward plan, operate effectively and take forward an action plan which addresses the improvements highlighted in the review. (NPFS cannot take forward improvements without financial support)
- Funding considerations should include the employment of a staff team, creation of an Advisory Board / Group, provision of a training and development programme for representatives and operational costs.
- Steps need to be taken to address the various challenges in the funding relationship between NPFS and Scottish Government. This relationship needs to be based on clear expectations and a shared understanding of these.

- NPFS should be recognised and celebrated for its critical role in engaging and involving parents across Scotland at both local and national level on the wide range of issues that impact on their children’s lives.
- The independent nature of NPFS as a volunteer led and run organisation and its core purpose should be protected to enable representatives to respond to all relevant parental concerns regarding their child’s education and health and wellbeing.
- The Memorandum of Understanding with Scottish Government and Service Level Agreement with Children in Scotland need to be reviewed and updated as required to ensure that these are fit for purpose.
- Consideration should be given to investing in an Advisory Board / Group with skills, knowledge, and expertise to strengthen organisational governance and support the leadership and staff team to take the organisation forward to the next stage in its development.
- Models of representation need to be considered that will ensure equality, diversity and inclusion, effective succession planning, continuity, and the future sustainability of the organisation.
- All representatives need to have a clear understanding of their role through a robust induction programme and support to make connections in their local authorities. A buddy support scheme and shadowing opportunities would be helpful, in addition to updating the handbook for representatives.
- NPFS and Scottish Government should work with Education Scotland, COSLA and Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and agree an improvement plan for parental engagement and involvement in Scotland – as part of the review, conversations with colleagues have indicated a willingness to support this.
- A re-launch of NPFS through a high-profile event would be helpful. This would provide an opportunity to demonstrate Scottish Government’s commitment, enable NPFS to highlight good practice and raise the profile of the organisation nationally.

4. Conclusion and thanks

The findings of this review provide strong evidence of the on-going impact of NPFS. However, without adequate funding, the current situation is not sustainable, and the organisation is at risk of spiralling into a downward trajectory without the financial support it requires.

The outcomes of this review, provide an excellent opportunity for Scottish Government and NPFS to re-launch the organisation in recognition of the benefits NPFS brings to children, young people, parents, and families across Scotland. The public investment in the organisation will help parents across Scotland to continue to play a key role in the decisions that make a positive difference to outcomes for children and young people.

‘Parents can only be equal partners if their time, commitment, and resources are valued and supported. A partnership of equals is one where each partner has the independence to determine their agenda and priorities and there is respect for each partner’s contribution. Moving forward, I think this must be a test for any claim by Scottish Government and their agencies that they respect and value parent voice.’

Jackie Brock former Chief Executive of Children in Scotland

NPFS want to work in partnership with Scottish Government, schools, local authorities, and other organisations to continue to expand parental engagement and involvement acknowledging that it is difficult for groups who may feel excluded to participate. As part of the Promise, they are keen to look at how kinship carers could become more involved. Discussions have taken place on the idea of co-opting parents from under-represented groups including BAME. The employment of an outreach / development worker as part of the staff team would assist with this.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the review. The recent event, where representatives came together mainly in person and online to discuss the review findings was particularly useful and demonstrated a high level of commitment and motivation to address the issues, find solutions and move forward. I cannot emphasise enough how impressed I have been with the contribution they make and the amount of time they give, for all the right reasons, on top of work, carer, and other responsibilities to make things better for Scotland's children, young people, and families.

Anne Gibson
Independent Consultant

'We have had a sharp focus on Education Reform and our NPFS representative has led much of that discussion as she has been part of the national NPFS debate. It is great to see parents empowered and valued as they feed into the 'big discussions' in Scottish Education. After all, who understands the needs of children and young people better than their parents and caregivers. The NPFS provides an excellent forum and structure for our parents to have a voice. We should respectfully listen to them, support them and value what they have to say.'

Audrey May, Executive Director, Children and Families, Dundee City Council

6 List of interviewees

NPFS Leadership team
NPFS representatives:

Jackie Brock former Chief Executive, Children in Scotland
Judith Turbyne, Chief Executive, Children in Scotland

Lorraine Sanda, Director of People, Clackmannanshire Council
Gillian Brydson, Director of Education, Skills and Learning, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Linda MacCaulay-Griffith, Director of Education, East Ayrshire Council
Audrey May, Director of Education, Dundee City Council
Des Dickson, Operations Manager, South Lanarkshire Council

Michael Wood, Secretary ADES
Laura Caven, Chief Officer, Children and Young People Team,, COSLA

Andrea Bradley, General Secretary, EIS
Jennifer MacDonald, Director, General Teaching Council for Scotland
Fiona Robertson, Chief Executive, SQA
John Booth, Director of Communications, SQA

Gillian Hamilton, Chief Executive, Education Scotland
Janie McManus, Chief Inspector, Education Scotland
Gill Ritchie, Strategic Director, Education Scotland
Patricia Watson, Strategic Director, Education Scotland
Nicola Sykes, Senior Education Officer, Education Scotland
Dr Beverley Ferguson, Senior Education Officer, Education Scotland

Clare Hicks, Director of Education Reform, Scottish Government
Graeme Logan, Director of Learning, Scottish Government
Lisa Bird, Deputy Director Education Reform, Scottish Government
Hazel Bartels, Former Head of Curriculum Unit, Scottish Government
David Roy, Head of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment,
Scottish Government

Graeme Hutton, General Secretary of School Leaders Scotland
Patrick McGlinchey, Director, Connect
Lorraine Glass, Interim Director, Respectme
Kathryn Farrow, Quality Improvement Officer, Glasgow City Council

In addition, a meeting was held with Ruth Jays and Ciaran McDonald, Scottish Government policy sponsor team to discuss the review.