



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Committees

Curriculum Guide:

Social Studies, Health and Wellbeing,
Religious and Moral Education

Teaching Levels: 1, 2 and 3 (P4 - S3)

Citizenship Themes:

Political Awareness,
Enterprise, Diversity,
Equalities



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INTRODUCTION

This activity shows how the committees work in the Scottish Parliament by using topics pupils can easily relate to.

The class should be divided into groups (committees) and each group given one particular issue to discuss. The resource notes include several possible issues but teachers may wish to adapt these to be more relevant to their particular school.

The issues suggested include:

- Bullying
- Tuck shop
- School lunches
- Playground
- Uniform
- Fundraising

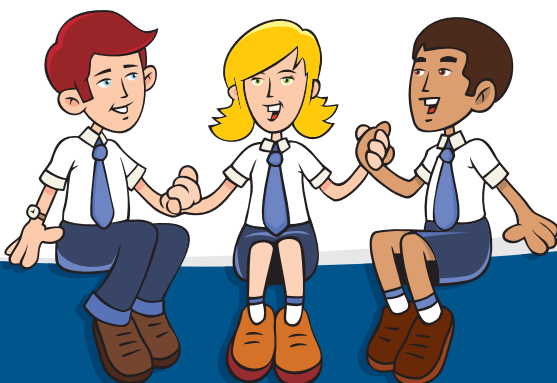
Each group should:

1. Use the committee inquiry planning sheet to discuss their issue, and identify any problem areas and possible solutions.
2. They should also make up a questionnaire which will help them find out people's views on the subject.
3. They might also want to interview relevant people, e.g. a dinner lady, the person in charge of the tuck shop, the head teacher etc.
4. The group should then write a report on their investigation. Page 5 has some pointers.
5. The report can then be shared with the class. It could be an oral presentation, a display, or done through ICT.

The whole class should then discuss which issues are the most important.

The class (or teacher) should then select one issue and hold a debate.

If the debate ends with a successful motion then the class could put the ideas to the school council through their class representatives.





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WHAT ARE COMMITTEES?

In the Scottish Parliament committees play an important part in making decisions about new laws.

What are committees?

Committees are small groups of MSPs who are responsible for looking at one particular issue, for example, Education or Transport or Health or Housing.

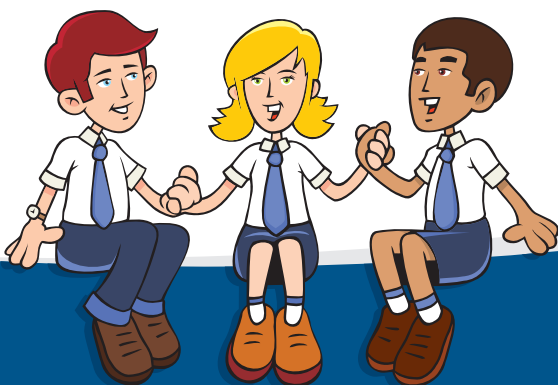
What do committees do?

Committees hold inquiries. They investigate issues to find out if there are problems and if changes are needed.

Committees call witnesses to find out what people think.

Committees discuss issues.

Committees report to Parliament and make suggestions of how to make things better. Parliament decides if a new law is needed.





COMMITTEE INQUIRY PLANNING SHEET

Name:

Class:

The subject for research is:

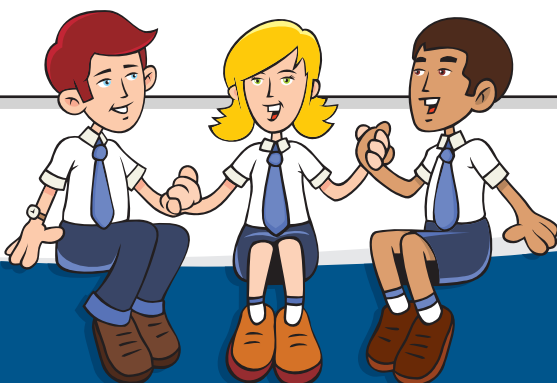
The issues I need to look at are:

The problems are:

Some solutions to the problems are:

Where can I find out more about these issues:

How can I find out what other people think?





COMMITTEE INQUIRY AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Committees in the Scottish Parliament hold inquiries and ask people to give evidence to find out what should be done. They then report to the Parliament and ask the Parliament to change the law.

In your group carry out an inquiry to find out what other people in the school think about the issue your group has been discussing.

One way of finding out what people think is to make up a questionnaire to find out their views, and another is to interview people in your school who know about the area you are looking at.

QUESTIONNAIRE HELPFUL HINTS

1. It is easier for you and the person answering the questions if you give them a choice of answers and then ask them to tick a box.

For example, which class are you in?

P1 P2 P3 P4 P5 P6 P7

Please tick



2. Keep your answers fairly short.
3. Make sure the choices you give are easy to understand.

What to ask

Ask some questions about the problems you have discussed in your group. Find out if other people think these are problems.

Ask about the kind of changes they would like to see.

REMEMBER TO...

...**introduce** yourself at the start. Let people know what your survey is about.

...say **thank you for answering the questions** when they have finished.

RESULTS

For each question you must count up the number who gave each answer.

Put your results into tables or graphs.

Discuss the results with the rest of your group.

INTERVIEW HELPFUL HINTS

Write a letter to them telling them what you are doing and asking if you can interview them. If they agree, you can set up a date and time.

Before your interview, prepare some questions that you would like to find out the answers to.

Remember at your interview to introduce yourself and say thank you at the end.

REPORT

Write a report to present to the whole class.

Your report should include:

1. An introduction:
What issue did you find out about?
How did you carry out your inquiry?
Did you use a questionnaire?
Did you have any interviews?
2. Your results:
What do people think?
Include any tables or graphs you have made.
3. What changes would you like to see made?





BULLYING COMMITTEE

The job of the Bullying Committee is to find out if there are any problems in the school with bullying and to suggest ways to stop bullying.

Things to think about

Here is a list of possible things to discuss. There may be other things you want to include.

- What types of bullying can happen?
- Where does this happen? (playground, classroom, corridors, walking home etc.)
- What is already being done to stop bullying?
- How well does this work?
- Is there anything else you can think of?

Make up a list of any problems you have discussed.

Make up a list of things that could stop bullying happening.

Continue these lists on a separate sheet if required





FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

The job of the Fundraising Committee is to find out if there are ways to improve how the school raises funds.

Things to think about

Here is a list of possible things to discuss.

- In what ways does the school already raise funds?
- Is this all for the school or also for charities?
- Should the school only raise money for itself?
- Are parents involved?
- Do local businesses help with school fundraising events?
- Is more fundraising needed? Does the school need anything but can't afford it?
- Can you think up new ways to raise money?
- Is there a charity you think the school should support?

Make up a list of any problems you have discussed.

Make up a list of ways in which you could raise more funds.



Continue these lists on a separate sheet if required



PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

The job of the Playground Committee is to find out if there are any problems in the playground and to suggest ways to make it better.

Things to think about

Here is a list of possible things to discuss. Remember, however, that it is your playground and you will know some of the things that concern the pupils in the school.

- Is it big enough?
- What condition is it in?
- How is it used at break times?
- Are there different areas marked out?
- Does everyone get a fair share of the space?
- Are there things to do?
- Is there a problem with litter?
- Is there enough supervision?
- Is there shelter in bad weather?
- Do you have neighbours? Do they get disturbed by noise/footballs?

Make up a list of any problems you have discussed.

Make up a list of things that would make the playground better.

Continue these lists on a separate sheet if required





SCHOOL UNIFORM COMMITTEE

The job of the School Uniform Committee is to find out if there are any problems concerning school uniform and to suggest ways to make it better.

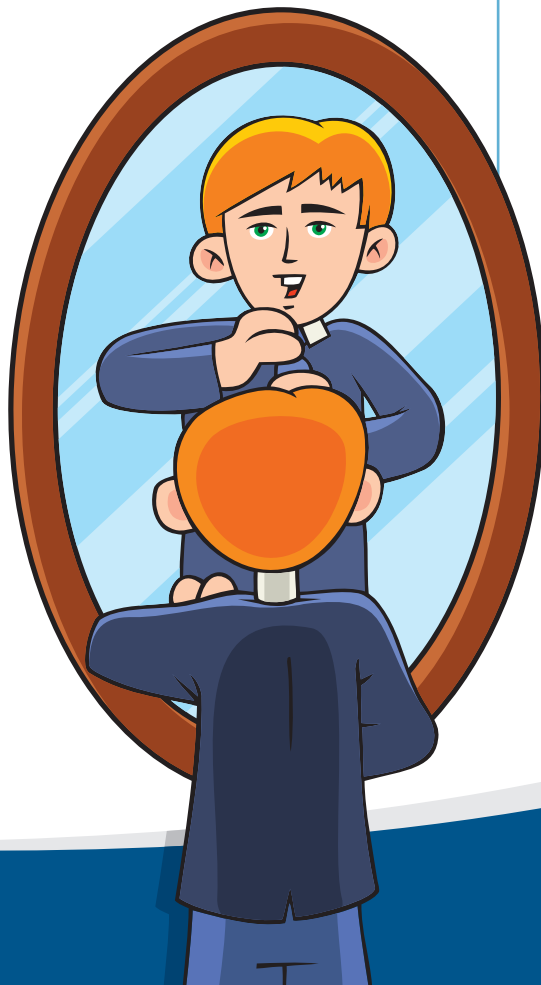
Things to think about

Here is a list of possible things to discuss.

- Why do we have school uniforms?
- How comfortable are they?
- Do you like the uniform?
- What parts of the uniform do you like best?
- What do you like least?
- How expensive is it compared to your other clothes?
- Would you like to change anything about it?
- Does wearing uniform mean anything special to you?
- Do you think wearing uniform helps the school or the pupils in any way?

Make up a list of any problems you have discussed.

Make up a list of things that would improve the school uniform.



Continue these lists on a separate sheet if required



TUCK SHOP COMMITTEE

The job of the Tuck Shop Committee is to find out if there are any problems with the tuck shop and to suggest ways to make it better.

Things to think about

Here is a list of possible things to discuss. Remember, however, that it is your tuck shop and you might think of other things to discuss.

- What types of things are sold?
- Do you get value for money?
- What should the tuck shop sell?
- What should the tuck shop not sell?
- Do you think your parents/teachers would agree? Why?
- Do you get long enough to buy things?
- Do you get long enough to eat what you buy?
- Do some people spend too much? Should there be a limit?
- How often should the tuck shop be open?
- Does the tuck shop create a litter problem?
- Are there any health issues to think about?

Make up a list of any problems you have discussed.

Make up a list of things that would make the tuck shop better.



Continue these lists on a separate sheet if required