

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

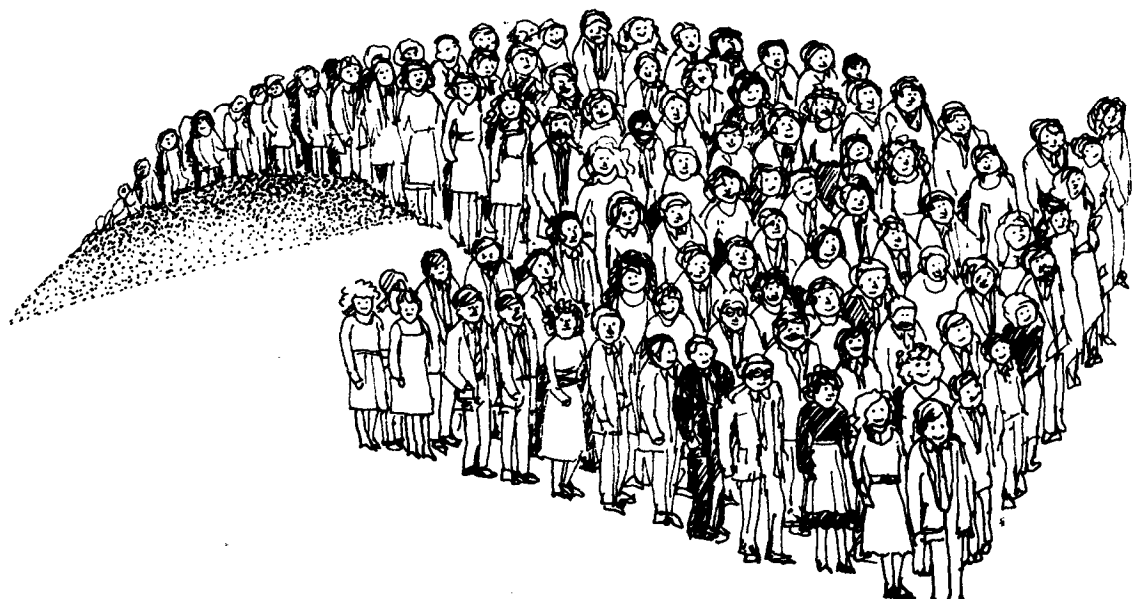
The process outlined in this booklet was originally developed for, and successfully implemented in priority schools. It has since been adopted by many schools throughout the state.

Thanks to the following people who compiled this document.

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WHAT IS A POLICY AND WHY HAVE ONE?

- A policy is both a document and the practice which reflects common beliefs and provides courses of action within the school setting.
- It shows what is happening in the school, why and how. It makes clear
 - i what people think or believe;
 - ii what they aim to do;
 - iii how they go about doing it;
 - iv how they check if it is working.
- Policies are used to
 - i bring people together to establish a common purpose and direction;
 - ii guide decision making;
 - iii act as a reference for planning;
 - iv introduce people to the way things are and how they work.



WHO COULD BE INVOLVED?

In developing a policy it is recommended that all those people who will be responsible for, and affected by its implementation be included in the process.

- eg School Administration
- Teaching Staff
- Ancillary Personnel
- Parent Representatives
- Community Representatives
- Student Representatives

At appropriate stages of the process it is often advantageous to seek support/input from any of the following:

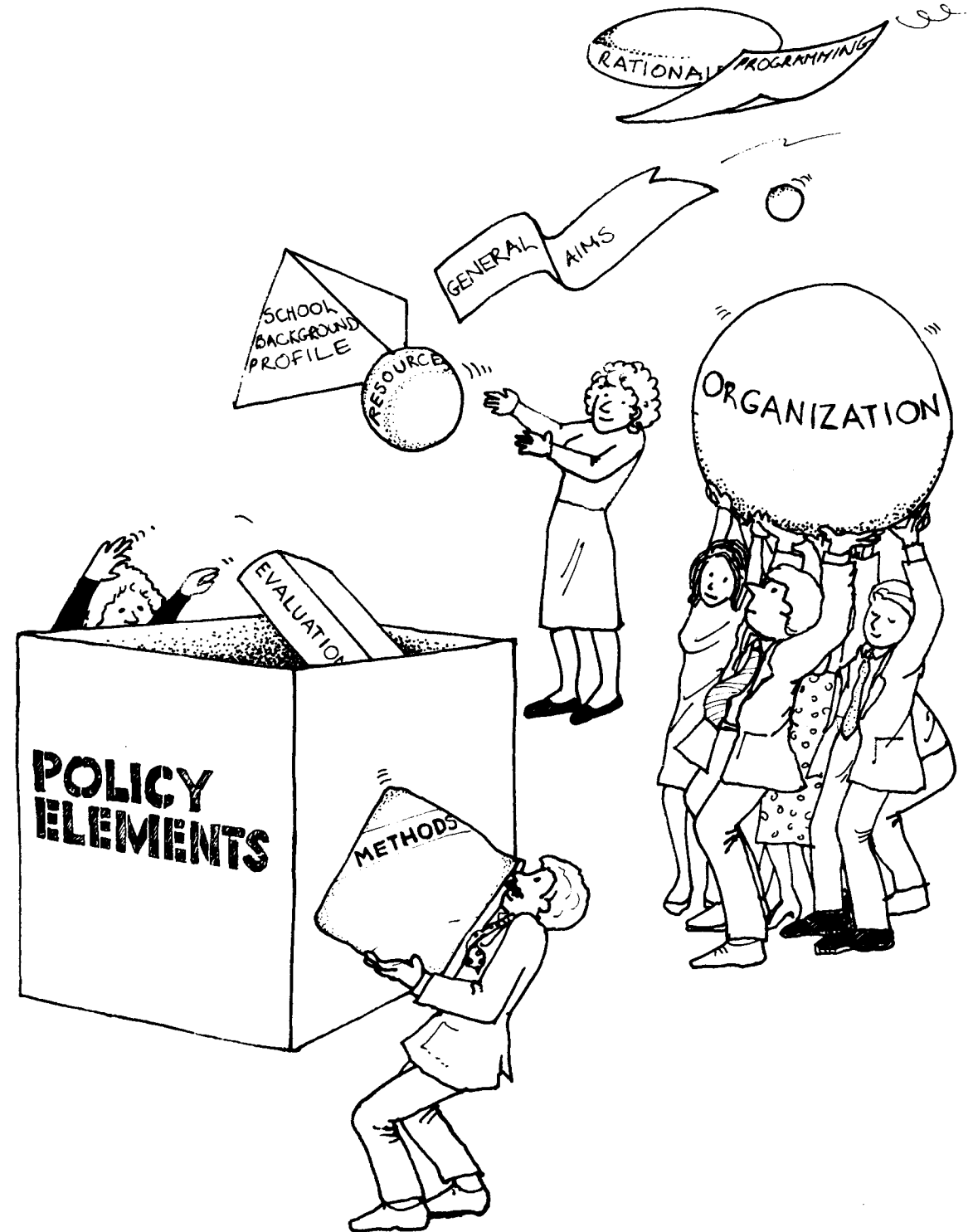
- Superintendents
- Regional/Head Office Advisers
- Regional/Head Office Guidance Officers
- Social Workers
- School Nurse
- CAE & University Personnel
- T.A.F.E.
- Government Agencies eg Community Welfare
- Etc

IN A POLICY?

The following elements are considered to be the essentials of an effective policy. It is important to remember that there must be a relationship between all these areas.

- SCHOOL/BACKGROUND PROFILE What are the particular needs and circumstances of your school?
- RATIONALE What are your common beliefs with respect to the issue under consideration?
- GENERAL AIMS What do you want your students/school to achieve?
- METHODS What are the strategies you need to employ to achieve your aims?
- ORGANIZATION What are the school/classroom structures and procedures necessary to implement the strategies?
- RESOURCES What personnel and materials are available for use?
- EVALUATION How will you monitor and record the effectiveness of the elements of your policy?

THERE MAY BE OTHER ELEMENTS YOU WISH TO INCLUDE EG PROGRAMMING





WHAT PROCESSES COULD BE EMPLOYED?

The strategy described in the following pages is just one way of involving all staff members and/or other interested groups in making decisions which lead to policy statements. In no way is it intended as the 'only' way but rather it can/should be adapted to suit the needs of the school.

A summary of the process is outlined on next page, followed by a more detailed description of the activities involved at each stage. Examples of recording formats are also included.

STEP 1

- SCHOOL BACKGROUND/PROFILE

PROCESS: Individuals collect, record and present information to whole group.

STEP 2

- WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW IN AREA UNDER FOCUS

PROCESS: Complete questionnaire, either individually or in groups, to determine current beliefs, aims, methods, organization, resources, evaluation. Record results.

STEP 3

- DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION/ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

PROCESS: Examine and discuss relevant material in meetings workshops etc. Record information.

MAKING DECISIONS

STEP 4

PROCESS: Participants meet to consider all information collected, and make decisions about the contents of their policy. Results recorded.

WRITING THE DRAFT POLICY

STEP 5

PROCESS: Information from decision making session is written in chosen format, by a representative group or individual.

PRESENTING THE DRAFT POLICY

STEP 6

PROCESS: Participations meet to consider the draft, make any necessary modifications and endorse the policy

WHAT BACKGROUND/PROFILE

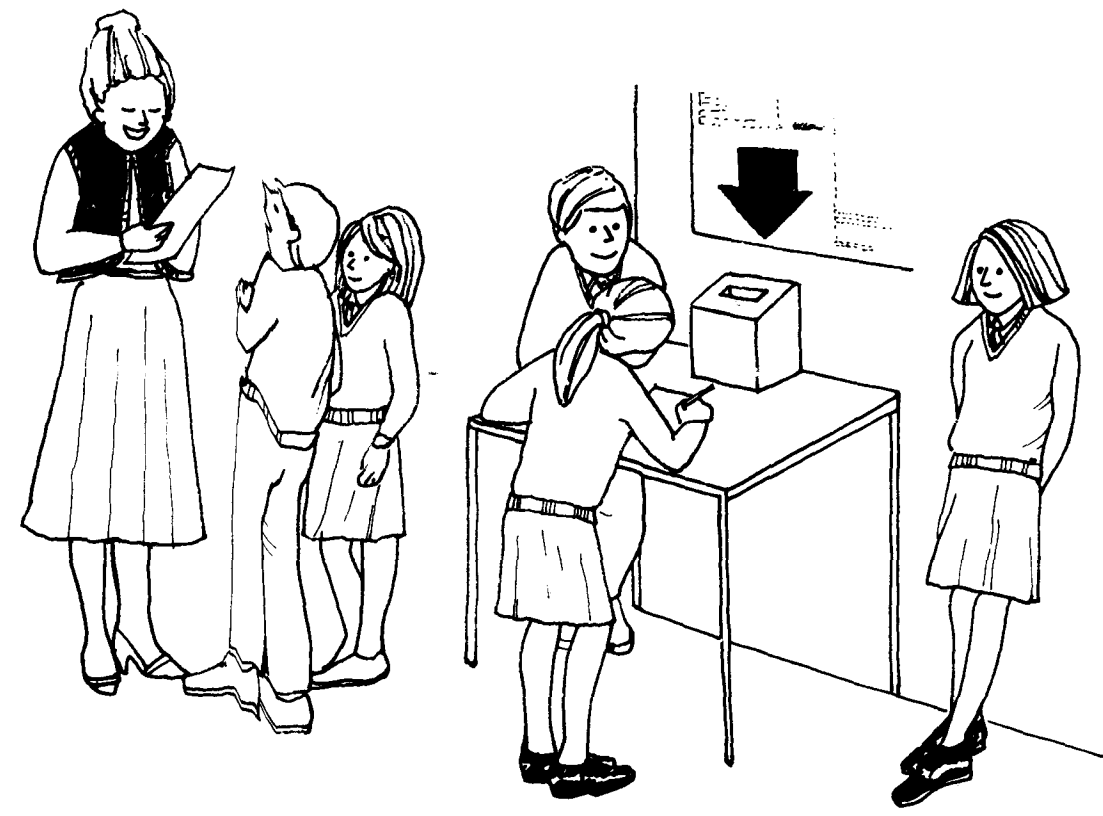
School population
 School environment
 Support Courses
 Home background
 Student performance
 Teacher expertise
 etc

FROM WHERE

Admission cards
 Education returns
 Schools & Staffing
 Attitude surveys
 Class records
 Community support records
 etc

HOW, BY WHOM

Can be gathered by an individual or group, to be presented to all participants



Many of these points are to be considered when compiling a whole school profile.

STAFF:

- Background - age
 - training
 - etc
- Special skills and interests
- Aides and ancillary staff
- Support staff - Education Dept
 - other
- Other comments: _____

THE SCHOOL:

- Enrolment
- Class sizes
- Physical resources
- Locality
- Community use of school resources
- Organization
- Current PSP Programmes
- Comments _____

PUPILS:

- Population present/projected
- Class sizes
- Special classes
- Family background
- Family origins
- Transiency
- Attendance
- Other comments: _____

PARENTS:

- Existing involvement
- Background - unemployment
 - migrancy etc
- Channel of communication between
 - parents and school
 - school and parents
- Other Comments: _____

STEP 2 WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW

WHAT

A policy should both reflect practice and the ideal and therefore it is important that there is shared knowledge of the present school situation in relation to :-

- Rationale
- General Aims
- Methods
- Organization
- Resources
- Evaluation

HOW

- To gather information about this, a questionnaire can be developed. A sample questionnaire used in the development of a language policy is included on the following page.

COLLATED INFORMATION IS THEN RECORDED IN COLUMN I OF THE FORMAT OUTLINED BELOW :

RECORDING SHEET

	COLUMN I	COLUMN II	COLUMN III
POLICY ELEMENTS	WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW	DEPT. INFORMATION/ ALTERNATIVES	DECISIONS
RATIONALE	<i>The majority of staff.....</i>		
AIMS	<i>To increase.....</i>		
METHODS	<i>A variety.....</i>		
ORGANIZATION	<i>Each teacher.....</i>		
RESOURCES	<i>Three series....</i>		
EVALUATION	<i>Individual records....</i>		

The school will be embarking upon formulating a new policy. All members of staff will be given the opportunity to be involved in this process.

A policy is both a document and the practice which reflects common beliefs and provides courses of action within the school setting. It is a guideline which aims at co-ordinating planning, practice and evaluation.

As such it generally contains information related to the following:

- How we believe language learning occurs (RATIONALE)
- What we aim to teach (GENERAL AIMS)
- How we aim to teach (METHOD)
- How we organize for the above (ORGANIZATION)
- How we know how well the children and programming are doing (EVALUATION)

Should there, however, be other areas that you consider important for inclusion, please note these in the space provided in the questionnaire.

In formulating our new policy, we will be using a strategy that allows us to reflect upon our present practice in relation to some standard or framework i.e. syllabuses and needs of our school.

In order to streamline the process the following questionnaire has been designed to gather information about a practice that will be used as the starting point in formulating our policy.

We would be grateful, therefore, if you could complete the following and return to the office by _____.

QUESTIONNAIRE

RATIONALE:	1	What are your beliefs about ...
AIMS:	2	Generally, what do you think your students should be able to do?
METHOD:	3	How do you teach for the subject development? i.e. What are the basic elements of your lessons? e.g. Are materials a focus? Is experience or activity a basic element? How much of the lesson is discussion oriented? How do you cater for language differences?
ORGANIZATION:	4a	Is group work a part of your organization? On what basis do you group?
	4b	Is the subject integrated across the curriculum?
RESOURCES:	5a	What access do you feel you have to resources?
	5b	Do you have any support, e.g. Teacher Aide, Parents, Remedial Teacher, etc.?
EVALUATION:	6	What techniques of evaluation do you use? What do you evaluate? When do you evaluate? What do you use the evaluation for? How well do you think you and your students are achieving the aims/objectives you set?

Step 3 DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION/ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES - WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

WHAT	HOW
<p>Before deciding on policy it is important that schools are aware of the departmental stance, and alternative approaches so that they make the 'best' decisions for their pupils. This information may be obtained from a variety of sources including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstracts of Departmental syllabus and notes • Visiting speakers • Films, videos etc • Readings <p>(refer consultative list, page 3)</p>	<p>Information can be presented by :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inservice/workshops • Inter-school visits • Discussion papers

INFORMATION GATHERED FROM THIS STAGE CAN BE RECORDED IN COLUMN II

	COLUMN I	COLUMN II	COLUMN III
POLICY ELEMENTS	WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW	DEPT. INFORMATION/ALTERNATIVES	DECISIONS
RATIONALE	<i>The majority of staff.....</i>	<i>the teaching of reading.....</i>	
AIMS	<i>To increase.....</i>	<i>To increase.....</i>	
METHODS	<i>A variety.....</i>	<i>Experiential.....</i>	
ORGANIZATION	<i>Each teacher.....</i>	<i>Three strands.....</i>	
RESOURCES	<i>Three series.....</i>	<i>Relevant material.....</i>	
EVALUATION	<i>Individual records.....</i>	<i>Checklists.....</i>	

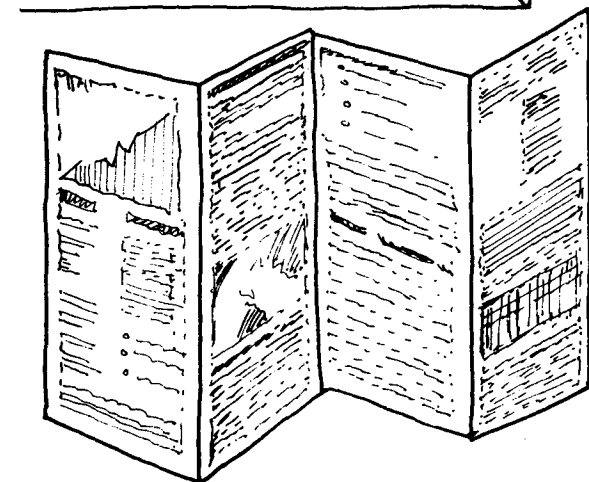
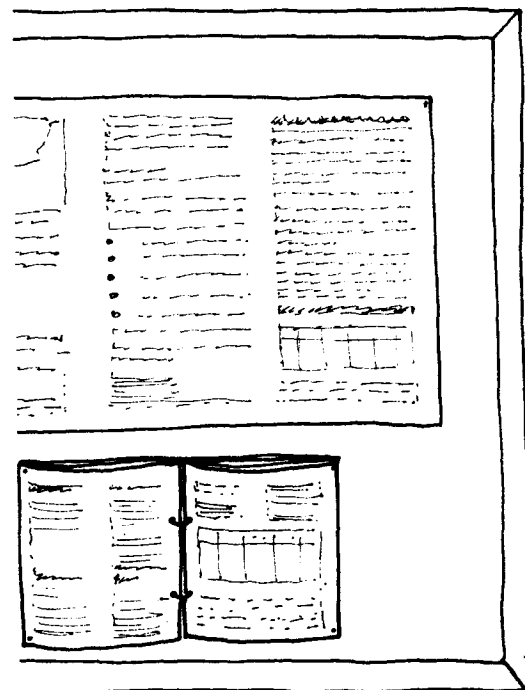
WHAT	HOW
<p>Participants meet to decide upon the contents of their policy. In making these decisions, consideration must be given to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">School Background What's Happening Now Alternatives</p> <p>These decisions are based on information contained in Columns I & II of your recording sheet.</p>	<p>During the meeting the following aspects of participative decision making need to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the role of the decision makers and consider the use of a facilitator for this session. • Consider how your decisions will be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus • Voting

DECISIONS ARE RECORDED IN COLUMN III

	COLUMN I	COLUMN II	COLUMN III
POLICY ELEMENTS	WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW	DEPT. INFORMATION/ALTERNATIVES	DECISIONS
RATIONALE	<i>The majority of staff.....</i>	<i>The teaching of reading.....</i>	<i>We believe.....</i>
AIMS	<i>To increase.....</i>	<i>To increase.....</i>	<i>To increase.....</i>
METHODS	<i>A variety.....</i>	<i>Experiential.....</i>	<i>Several.....</i>
ORGANIZATION	<i>Each teacher.....</i>	<i>Three strands.....</i>	<i>Each class.....</i>
RESOURCES	<i>Three series.....</i>	<i>Relevant material.....</i>	<i>Reading series.....</i>
EVALUATION	<i>Individual records.....</i>	<i>Checklists.....</i>	<i>Each teacher.....</i>

WHAT

From the information recorded in Column III a draft policy is written.



HOW

A format for presentation is decided upon

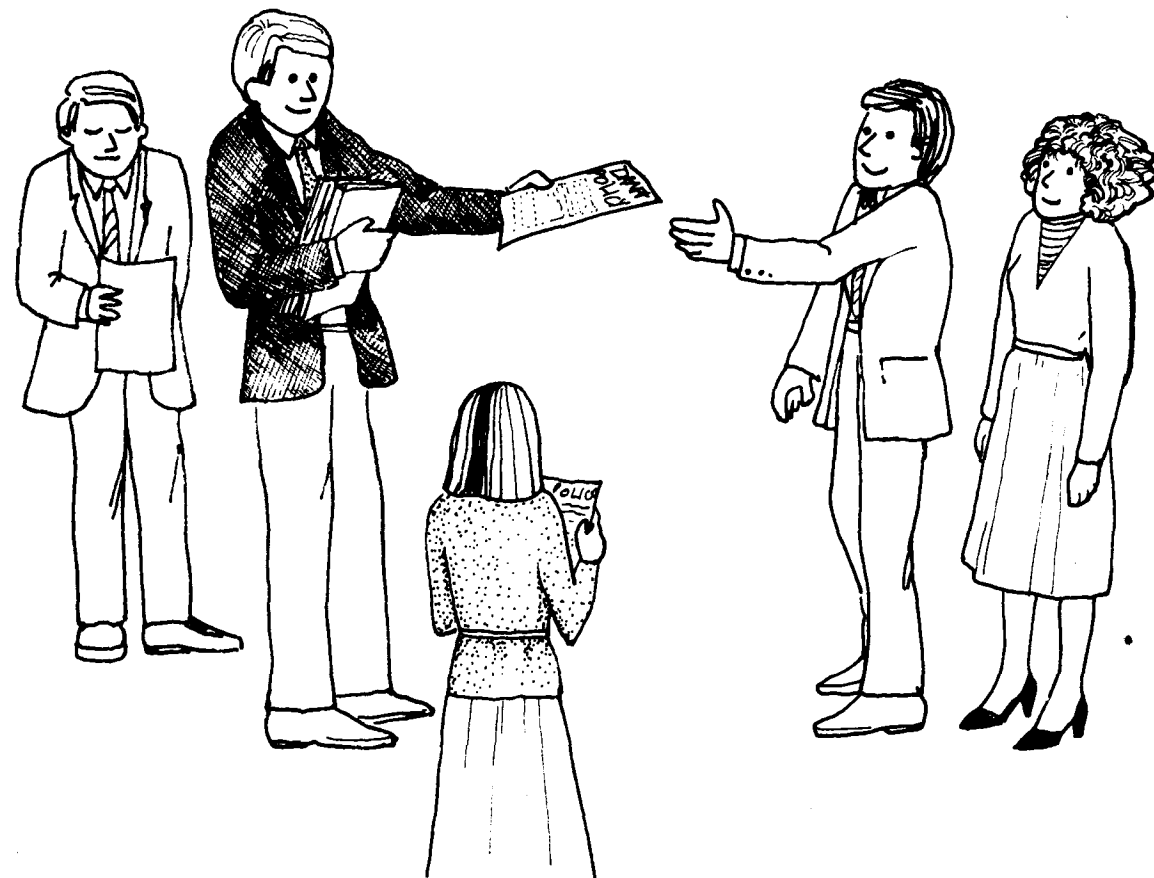
eg

- Staffroom wall chart
- Booklet
- Folding brochure
- A3 sheet

The actual writing may be completed by:

- School Staff with a facilitator
- School Staff
- Representative committee
- Small group
- An individual (least recommended)

RATIONALE	AIMS	METHODS	ORGANISATION	RESOURCES	EVALUATION



STEP 6

PRESENTING THE DRAFT POLICY

WHAT

Draft policy is presented to all concerned (refer to list of people who could be involved, page 3)

Policy is modified where appropriate.

Policy is endorsed.

HOW

A policy of the draft is circulated prior to specified meeting. Meeting to discuss draft.

Participant consensus

Participant consensus

Implementation and review of the policy are vital. Without evidence of the policy being put into effect there is no purpose in the exercise.

Develop an action plan to ensure the policy is reflected in:

- School programmes
- School strategies
- School structures
- Use and purchasing of school resources

