**Title**

**Student Council Policy**

**Introductory Statement**

* We, the children in the Convent Primary School,Newport, want to make a difference in school.  The School Council will help us to do that.  We will involve all the children in the school by using their ideas.  We can help the adults to make the school even better than it is.  This constitution will help us to do that successfully.

**Scope**

* Whole school (students, parents, teachers, and management.

**Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school**

* Convent Primary School, Newport seeks to enable each student to develop his/her potential by:
* Creating a positive and caring school environment, which is supportive and inclusive.
* being dedicated to the care of the whole school community.
* Enabling student participation.

- Having a beneficial impact on issues such as discipline, bullying and staff-student relations.

**Goals/Objectives**

The objectives of the student council are:

* to represent the views of the students on matters of general concern to them;
* to support the management and staff in the development of the school;
* to enhance communication between students, management, staff and parents;
* to promote an environment conducive to educational and personal development.
* to promote friendship and respect among pupils.
* to contribute to the development of school policy.
* to nurture a range of important skills among students, such as participating in meetings, negotiating, responsible leadership and collaborative problem solving.

**Key measures**

**Assisting the establishment and operation of a student council**

**Setting up a school council**

The Education Act (1998) Section 27 states that Boards of Management must

encourage and give all reasonable assistance to students in the formation and

running of student councils. As a result in September 2010 work began on the

establishment of a student council in Convent Primary School, Newport.

**Election procedure**

* Elections will take place in September.
* Each class group elects two representatives

Each student interested in representing their class at Student Council must nominate themselves .

* Once names have been ratified students can start their campaign, which would include an address to their class during SPHE class to outline the reasons they should be elected.
* Students will then be able to vote on official ballot paper for their chosen candidate.

**SCHOOL COUNCIL POLICY**

The Student Council at work:

**Where to start?**

* Designate a member of staff to act as the link teacher. The link teacher in our school is Ms. Berkery.
* Set time aside for class discussion on the subject of School Council – what do the children think of the idea and what differences do they believe it could make the school?
* Spend assembly time working through the qualified that make a ‘good’ councillor-maybe invite a guest speaker such as a local councillor or chair of governors to speak on the subject.
* Discuss with children what they would do to make their happier and safer.
* Make a whole staff decision about the timetable of start-up activities and decide when council meetings could take place.

**Initial programme of events to set up school council:**

* Plan to use school assembly and class time to prepare and discuss with pupils
* Set a date for the nomination process
* Prepare the ballot papers for each class or pupil group
* Set a date for the election.
* Make sure that you have a suitable ballot box for collecting the voting papers
* Select pupils who have not been nominated to act as impartial vote counters/polling clerks
* Choose a suitably high profile time to announce the results of the election.
* Make sure that parents and teachers are aware of this timetable.

**Members of the Students Council:**

* Each class from 2nd-6th will have a representative.
* They will then elect a chairperson and a secretary.

**Role of the chairperson:**

* She will have to take control of our council meetings, making sure that all the councillors are present
* She will have to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and try to teach everyone to wait their turn whilst listening to what is being said.
* She will make sure that the secretary makes a note of anything important so that we keep a record of our meetings
* She might have to encourage the quieter councillors to join in
* She might have to invite other people to attend our meeting from time to time to help us decide something
* She will have to remind the councillors to report back to children and staff so that we all know what is going on
* She might need to write a list before our meetings – an agenda – so that we know what we will be discussing.

**Role of the secretary**:

* She will have to write down some notes at our council meetings so that we keep a record of what we talk about – these motes are called ‘minutes’. I might write rough notes at the meeting and then copy them out neatly later.
* She will need to listen carefully and also take my turn to speak
* At the start of each meeting she will read out the minutes from the last meeting
* She will check that all the councillors are present and write down their names at the beginning of each meeting before I start my notes
* She might be asked to write letters
* She might be asked to write reports about meetings for a newsletter or for governors and parents
* She might be asked to use the telephone

**Rules for the establishment of a student council***.*

* The student council shall promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the board of management, parents and teachers.
* The council should, as far as is practicable, be representative of each class group in the school.
* The board of management shall at all times retain the right to dissolve a council or remove a council member, in accordance with these guidelines.
* Students should:
* Participate fully in the student council.
* Nominate suitable candidates to represent their class.
* Discuss genuine issues in a constructive manner.
* Support the work of council representatives.

**Links to School Policies and to Curriculum Delivery**.

The following policies may be among those considered:

* Code of Behaviour
* Anti-Bullying
* Child Protection
* Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
* Health and Safety
* S.P.H.E

**Links to curriculum delivery:**

S.P.H.E

**Ratification & Communication**

When the finalised policy has been ratified by the board of management, it becomes the school's agreed student council policy. It should then be circulated to ensure that everyone in the school community is aware of it.  The entire staff, students and student council must be familiar with the policy and ready to put it into practice in accordance with the specified implementation arrangements.

The policy should be communicated to other members of the school community, as appropriate, including students, representatives of parents etc

**Implementation Date**

The policy will be implemented from the 1st September 2010.

**Monitoring the implementation of the policy**

The implementation of the policy will be monitored.

The principal Mrs. Foley, link teacher Ms. Berkery and the councillors will make sure that the policy is being implemented.

**Implementation Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities**

The core committee and the link teacher Ms.Berkery will be assigned the role of co-ordinating the implementation of the policy.

**Reviewing and evaluating the policy**

The policy will be reviewed with a view to amending it, if necessary when

* the student council is involved in the affairs of the school
* students are aware of the activities of the student council
* principal, board of management, teachers are aware of the activities of the student council
* the student council has achieved its goals and objectives for the year
* positive feedback is received from teachers, students, parents/guardians.
* It will be evaluated by:
* A confidential survey of students and staff
* Feedback from the student council
* comment/suggestion box.

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