



School Council

Fairfield school aims to inspire and facilitate the development of pupil-led councils appropriate to the age of the children – giving them the opportunity to experience empowerment rather than learning to act as if they are unable to make informed decisions for themselves, always needing others to do and decide things for them.

The school council will build upon the positive ethos already evident in our school, bringing a greater spirit of co-operation between pupils and teachers: through valuing and nurturing pupils' contributions and enable them to participate in school decision-making.

Pupil councils contribute to positive changes in the life of every child in the school. All pupils develop their listening and discussion skills as the processes are practised across the curriculum. Involving pupils in real issues through class and school councils helps them to develop important life-skills that promote positive mental health and social welfare – emotional literacy, critical and moral reasoning, self-esteem, self-awareness, communication skills, relationship skills and assertiveness.

Developing these life-skills has a positive impact on pupil behaviour. When children can contribute their views, and know that these will be listened to and taken into account, they do not feel the need seek attention in other less appropriate ways.

This is already in place within our school through PSE and Circle time activities.

School Council Constitution:

School councils provide a structure for all pupils to participate in school through a system of elected pupil representatives from every class.

Aims:

- A school is a community and pupil councils help to make this community harmonious and a good place to live in.
- Pupils make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos;
- Every child learns to listen to others and to recognise themselves as a worthwhile individual with a right to be heard.
- Children learn self-confidence and social skills.
- From a young age, children are challenged to be responsible for their behaviour towards each other and toward their teachers and helpers.
- Contributing to their class and school community allows children to grow in self-esteem.
- Every child learns from their own experience how to contribute to society as a whole and what it means to be an active citizen.

Fairfield school will provide:

- A commitment throughout the school to listen to, respect and respond to, pupils' ideas and contributions.
- Active support from the senior management
- Regular communication between the "constituency" of pupils in each class and their elected representatives: the pupils from every class who are members of the school council.
- Commitment from class teachers to allow regular pupil-led discussions through class councils or class meetings, linked to their PSE work or through Speaking and Listening activities.
- An understanding by everyone in the school community of the part the council plays in school life.
- Regular meetings to allow the pupils to discuss the issues, ideas raised in class meetings.

Membership:

- Two representatives – a girl and a boy - from each class from Year 3 to Year 6.
- Link teacher representative.
- Pupils from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes will be involved through their Circle time activities when the discussion will be teacher led based upon pupil thoughts with a pupil "link" from Year 5 or Year 6.

Meetings and information.

- Meeting will take place on a monthly basis.
- The school council notice board will display photographs of the class representatives to the school council, and post notices and information relating to activities and progress of the school council.

Class Representatives: Class meetings

- Provide a structure for learning about meetings; how to participate in them and how to lead them.
 - To discuss class issues, on a regular basis, every few weeks.
 - Pupils recognise them as a time when they can talk about issues that affect people in their own class, and sometimes people in the rest of the school. Some of which may be taken to the school council through the class representatives.
 - Leading the meeting: one pupil leads the discussion, another takes notes. Different children can take these chairperson and secretary roles each time.
 - Agenda: Pupils should suggest topics for the agenda. For instance, the children can write or draw pictures of their ideas for the agenda and post them on a class council notice board.
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- Two, a girl and a boy, from each class, Years 3 to 6
 - Must attend all school council meetings
 - Tell other members of the school council what their class has been discussing.
 - Take part in school council discussions.
 - Report back to their class what the school council has said.
 - Take turns as Chairperson and secretary.

During a whole school assembly the link teacher will explain the role of the school council to the pupils and explain that we will be holding democratic elections within classes for the class representatives to the school council.

Candidates for the class representatives can be nominated using ballot papers. Candidates should tell the rest of their class why they would like to be elected and what they will do to make sure they represent everyone in their class.

Voting: Ballot boxes within the classes or a show of hands.

Results of the elections can be announced in assembly or in each class.

Roles and responsibilities:

Link teacher representative:

- Must attend all council meetings
- Be prepared to follow up issues raised at meetings.
- Help the pupils to raise the profile of the council in as many ways as possible
- Keep an overview of the council's progress and direction.
- Keep the council on the current school agenda.
- Ensure that the pupils' requests and ideas are appropriate and relevant.
- Give guidance on the school decisions they can influence.
- Report any issues arising to the Head teacher.

The link teacher should also:

- Give feedback on the school council at staff meetings
- Keep parents informed about the council
- Tell governors' meetings about school council business.

Class teachers:

- Allow regular time – every few weeks – for class meetings.
- Encourage and support (even participate in) the discussion.
- Arrange for the election of class representatives to take place on the day agreed.
- Explain the procedure for arriving at a class agenda and make sure that this is part of everyday practice and awareness in the classroom.

Whole staff commitment:

The staff as a whole needs to be committed to the principles underpinning the existence of democratic pupil councils. This commitment can be demonstrated by:

- Having a regular slot in staff meetings to update everyone on school council issues and give them a chance to raise concern or offer suggestions.

- Telling parents about some of the activities, achievements and discussions of the pupil councils at parents' evenings and events.
- Making sure that caretakers, midday supervisors and other non-teaching staff are told about any pupil council issues or activities, and that everyone knows the system for raising and following up any issues.
- Incorporating information about the school council into the introduction to school systems and structures for new members of staff.
- Governors should be kept informed of school council business on a regular basis, and members of the school council should be aware of the role of governors in school.

Government initiatives relevant to pupil councils:

- Estyn
- Foundation Phase curriculum
- Key Stage 2 National curriculum
- Excellence and enjoyment – A Strategy for Primary Schools
- National Healthy School Standard
- Every Child Matters: Change for children in schools
- Investors in people
- Welsh Assembly
- Curriculum Cymreig