



**Why do we have a School Council?**

- School Council helps to make our community harmonious and exciting to be a part of.
- Pupils become partners in their own education, making a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.
- Children learn to listen to others and to recognise themselves as worthwhile individuals with a right to be heard.
- Children learn self-confidence, social skills and morally responsible behaviour towards each other and adults.
- School Council enhances the influence of positive peer leadership.
- Contributions are made to classes and the school community, allowing children’s self-esteem to grow.
- Every child learns how to contribute to society as a whole and what it means to be an active citizen.

**How does School Council link to our PSHE curriculum?**

- The personal and social development of children is enhanced by a school environment where they feel safe, and for which they have some responsibility.
- Involvement in the running of the school through School Council promotes responsibility and learning about democracy.
- Pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding by working together on projects, making decisions, taking responsibility and reflecting on their experiences.
- Within the classroom, there are working arrangements and rules for discussion, and ways of resolving conflict.
- Curriculum assessment includes how children participate in discussions, carry out group tasks and activities, manage conflict, make decisions and promote positive relationships.

Citizenship	PSHE	Emotional Health / Wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of school life impact on the development of pupils becoming informed, active and responsible citizens.</li> <li>• Pupils are actively involved in the life of their school and their community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of school life have an impact on the personal and social development of pupils.</li> <li>• Pupils are encouraged to recognise their achievements and do their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils’ views inform policy and practice.</li> <li>• An anti-bully policy is implemented and understood by all members of the school.</li> <li>• The school addresses emotional health and wellbeing by helping pupils to understand their own feelings.</li> </ul>

## How does our school support School Council?

Class Teachers	All Staff	Link Teacher
<p>Provide effective support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For pupils to elect their class representatives</li> <li>- To help pupils decide how to organise their discussions</li> <li>- By allowing regular opportunities for counsellors to speak to their classes</li> <li>- By encouraging and supporting discussion so that they are genuinely pupil-led</li> </ul> <p>Help pupils to develop committee skills by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Giving initial training in leading discussions</li> <li>- Making sure notes are read/taken at class feedback meetings</li> <li>- Continuing to reinforce committee skills</li> </ul> <p>Support class representatives by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouraging them to attend school council meetings</li> <li>- Making sure that class representatives are prepared for school council meetings (e.g. reminding them with what to take)</li> <li>- Allowing time for them to report back to the class after meetings</li> </ul>	<p>All staff show an enthusiastic and positive attitude to School Council and class feedback meetings.</p> <p>Give staff the opportunity to discuss any concerns by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Including School Council on the agenda at some staff meetings</li> <li>- Inviting governors and advisors to attend School Council meetings</li> </ul> <p>Teachers let parents know about School Council by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Telling them about class feedback meetings and how their own child participates</li> <li>- Talking about the activities and achievements of the School Council at Parents' Evenings and other events</li> </ul> <p>Staff can enlist the support of site staff, the Parents Association and governors by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Telling them about School Council concerns and activities</li> <li>- Making sure that everyone knows the system for raising and following up issues</li> </ul> <p>New teachers and supply teachers can be told about School Council by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Including School Council and class feedback meetings in any introduction to the school's systems and structures</li> </ul>	<p>The link teacher must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committed to the School Council</li> <li>- Able to give time to supporting School Council and be creative in promoting its interests</li> <li>- Able to facilitate without dominating</li> <li>- Willing to listen and able to communicate</li> </ul> <p>The link teacher is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training elected pupil representatives</li> <li>- Attending all school council meetings and helping pupils to write agendas and minutes</li> <li>- Offering guidance, advice and information</li> <li>- Ensuring that School Council issues are discussed in staff meetings and reminding colleagues that class representatives need to report back after meetings</li> <li>- Making sure that non-teaching staff, governors, advisors and parents are kept informed about School Council</li> <li>- Helping to raise the profile of the School Council</li> </ul> <p>The link teacher should reflect on how the school council is progressing and evaluate its development.</p>

## What makes a School Council effective?

- Regular meetings (weekly)
- A council of manageable size – 6 members
- Class feedback meetings that happen regularly to discuss and deal with issues
- Democratic election of at least two school council representatives from each class
- Good communication between representatives and their class with a report-back to classes after School Council meetings
- Training for School Council members
- Council members who respect and listen to each other
- Pupils understand why there are sometimes limitations on what the council can achieve
- A supportive and effective link teacher
- Supportive headteacher and staff who are easily accessible.

## What knowledge and skills do children need to run School Council?

### *How schools work*

- The structure of the education system
- Who manages the school

### *How School Councils work*

- What a school council is and why we need one
- What we mean by terms such as 'negotiation' and 'authority'

### *Communication skills*

- Becoming confident about putting forward ideas, making decisions and speaking to a meeting

### *Committee skills*

- Chairing meetings, leading discussions
- Learning to write agendas and take minutes

### *Running an organisation*

- Reporting back to their class
- Telling everyone in the school about the council and what it is doing
- Setting up special groups and inviting people to join them
- Making sure all School Council members take an active part in its activities

## What are Class Feedback Meetings?

What?	Why?	How?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An inclusive, structured forum for discussion and decision - making</li> <li>- A means for children to raise issues and concerns</li> <li>- A means for the School Council to consult all pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To help children develop responsible attitudes and better behaviour</li> <li>- To give children hands-on experience of the issues in the school</li> <li>- To create a feeling of belonging, encourage listening to others and develop self-confidence</li> <li>- To improve pupil/teacher relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupils lead the meetings</li> <li>- The class agrees on the layout of the room</li> <li>- Conventional committee procedures are used</li> <li>- Class representatives take issues to the School Council</li> </ul>

## What activities do School Council engage in?

Pupils' behaviour improves when they get support and encouragement through activities such as:

- Buddy schemes or guardian angels that help individual children who have problems
- Listening/friendship benches where everyone can find help

The school environment improves when School Council:

- Work out their own ideas for positive change
- Negotiate with staff and governors to bring about the changes

The local community improves when School Council become involved as active citizens and take up issues such as:

- Traffic outside the school and safe crossings
- The use and care of the local open spaces

Pupil councils and parents can work together to:

- Support school activities
- Learn special skills