



Schools Council Policy

Adopted by the governing body on

Date 18/1/16

Signed by

Chair of Governors

Due for review on

Date

October 19, 2015

We believe that pupils should have a voice at Newton Burgoland Primary school and that that voice should be properly exercised via the forum of a schools council.

Aims:

- To give all pupils the opportunity to contribute to school life
- To give all pupils access to the learning opportunities available to members of a properly organised and democratically run schools council
- To foster a sense of pride and community
- To provide opportunity for pupils to develop leadership skills
- To support the development of British Values

Organisation

Executive officers:

Chair: 1 post

Vice chair: 1 post

Secretary: 1 post

Treasurer: 1 post

- The numbers of any additional posts will be determined by the number of pupils in years 5 and 6 and will be subject to change according to need.
- All pupils in years 5 and 6 will automatically be members of the schools council but each member's role will be decided through democratic process.
- Trained members of the schools council shall take turns at being play leaders.
- Pupils wishing to stand as executive members or ordinary members will inform the head teacher
- Executive members will be elected by majority vote (the school community will cast one vote each: teaching and non-teaching staff each receive one vote, parents and governors are not entitled to vote)

Budget

The head teacher will allocate a budget of £100 annually to the schools council. This may be supplemented by an allocation from the PTA.

Schools Council Charity

All members of the school community are entitled to ask for a particular charity to be supported at the start of the academic year. The decision as to which charity/ charities to support is made democratically by pupils in Years 5 and 6.

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Roles and responsibilities

Chairperson's Role

The Chairperson has the role of setting the agenda, leading the meeting and making sure that everyone has a fair chance to air their views. It is not just a figurehead job. A good Chairperson must be sensible and mature, and also skilled in all of the following:

- listening;
- speaking;
- keeping order;
- perceiving other people's needs;
- seeing fair play;
- making decisions;
- organising;
- timekeeping.

Job Description

1. Setting the agenda

The Chairperson is responsible for deciding which items will go on the meeting agenda, which order to place them in and how much time to allot to each, with support.

2. Controlling the meeting

The Chairperson leads and controls the meeting, making sure that the agenda is adhered to and that everyone is able to express their opinion.

3. Reaching a decision and holding a vote

The Chairperson also has the responsibility of summing up the main points after a discussion, and, if a decision is needed, holding a vote.

4. Timekeeping

The Chairperson is also responsible for making sure that the agenda is covered within the time allowed for the meeting.

Vice-Chairperson's Role

The role of the Vice-Chairperson is naturally quite similar to that of the Chairperson, as it largely involves supporting and shadowing.

If the Chairperson is unable to attend the meeting, then the Vice-Chair runs the meeting.

A good Vice-Chairperson must be sensible and mature, able to play a supporting role without seeming to take over, and also, like the Chairperson, skilled in all of the following:

- listening;

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- speaking;
- keeping order;
- perceiving other people's needs;
- seeing fair play;
- steering people towards decisions;
- organising;
- timekeeping.

Job Description

1. Collecting information for the agenda

The Vice-Chairperson would be responsible for collecting discussion items from each class representative in good time for the Chairperson to set an agenda before the next council meeting. She or he then helps the Chair to sort out an agenda, with timed items, for the next meeting.

2. During the meeting

The Vice-Chair supports the Chair in running the meeting and keeping order. In particular, the Vice-Chair keeps a careful eye on who has addressed the meeting and who has not, and discreetly alerts the Chair if anyone is not getting a fair hearing.

Secretary's Role

The role of the Secretary is to produce a copy of the agenda for each councilor, to keep minutes during all meetings, to write letters on behalf of the council, and to design and distribute newsletters, posters and notices. This job requires competence in these areas:

- taking reliable notes;
- listening while writing;
- designing and drafting;
- ICT and photocopying;
- finding time to get things done.

Job Description

1. Producing the agenda

The Secretary is responsible for writing up the agenda (as received from the Chairperson) before meetings, and making sure everyone gets a copy. The agenda should be distributed well in advance of the meeting, so that people come prepared. At the bottom of the agenda there should always be an item 'Any Other Business', meaning that at this point things could be discussed that are not already on the agenda. If the agenda has been distributed well in advance, then the Secretary can set a date for these extra items to be submitted by. It may then be possible for the Chairperson to adjust the timings of the other agenda items in order to make time for something else that is particularly important.

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2. During the meeting

During the meeting, the Secretary must listen carefully and make the notes which will later form the basis of the minutes – the indispensable record of discussions held and decisions taken. At the beginning of each meeting the Secretary will have read the minutes of the last meeting, and two councilors will have signed them to testify that they are a true and fair record.

3. Letters, newsletters, posters and notices

Sometimes the council will need to send letters or newsletters, or put up posters and notices. The Secretary will have the responsibility for getting the posters and notices designed and displayed, and for drafting and sending the (news) letters.

Treasurer's Role

The Treasurer's job essentially is to keep accounts of the council's income and expenditure. At each meeting the Treasurer makes a report on the financial situation which he or she will receive from the bursar. The treasurer needs to be:

- honest and reliable;
- sensible and mature;

Job Description

1. During the meeting

During council meetings, the Treasurer makes a detailed report on the state of the council's finances, distributing copies of the accounts and explaining any changes in the financial situation since the last meeting. The Treasurer also has to take note of any plans that are made during the meeting to spend or raise money at some future date.

2. After the meeting

If a decision is made to spend money, for example on playground equipment, then the Treasurer is responsible for obtaining the best price for this equipment and ordering it. When the ordered equipment arrives, the Treasurer checks that the order is correct, arranges for settlement of the invoice, and enters the transaction into the accounts. If there are any fund-raising events in the near future, then the Treasurer will be responsible for collecting in the money, counting it, ensuring that any cash is banked or otherwise kept safely, and updating the accounts.

Meetings

The schools council will meet at least once a fortnight with the support of a teacher or the head teacher. The agenda for that meeting will be published in advance. All representatives will be given time to meet with their group/ class to discuss the agenda items.

Minutes

Minutes will be kept and agreed at subsequent meeting