

School Council Constitution

Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

(The Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12)

At St. Matthew's CE Primary School our school council have a clear mission:
'working on behalf of our fellow students to improve our school and community'

Aims:

The Aims of the school council are to ensure that all pupils have:

- A voice
- A safe, happy, fair learning environment.
- A forum to voice their concerns and act upon them.
- An opportunity to take an active part in the management of the school, and to help make school a better place.
- A sense of ownership over policy and practice (Article 13 children have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.)

Purpose:

The school council's purpose is to bridge the gap between teacher and student; adult and child; individual and community.

Councillors:

Our school council is made up of a male and female member from each year group in the school with the exception of Nursery and Reception. It is the responsibility of the head boy and head girl to speak with these children and represent them. We ensure that minority students are properly represented by encouraging a fair election process where children regardless of ethnicity, gender special educational needs, disabilities or family background can stand for election. We ensure that the interests of all students are properly represented by each council member through:

1. Class discussion before/after council meetings
2. All class councillors will encourage class mates to share their concerns, ideas and needs
3. All councillors will voice all class members needs in weekly council meetings
4. All councillors being vigilant and anticipating the needs of others

Elections for school council:

Our Council Member Election process takes place in the first 2 weeks of September, when the children start the new school year. The process is;

1. Class teachers encourage a fair voting process within their own class
2. Representatives from the previous year's election stand before the class describing the role and responsibilities of a Class Representative
3. Students, once fully informed of the role and responsibilities, are encouraged to stand for election stating their reasons before the class.
4. Under no circumstance will a student be excluded from the election process
5. The applicants then prepare a speech or picture that they can talk about in front of the class describing what they would do if they were elected.
6. Class members are asked to write down the names of one female and one male who they think will be the best school councillor in their class. They are not to discuss this choice.
7. The slips are then handed to the class teacher to be counted up.
9. In the event of a draw the teacher will recount then ask for a re-vote for the drawing applicants only
10. Elected members will be announced by the respective teachers within each class and names will be confirmed in the school celebration assembly and the school newsletter.

Councillors:

Our School Council is made up of the below positions (a full description of roles and responsibilities can be found in our School Council Folder):

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Publicity Officer
- Class Representative

Elections for officers:

Signed by and in agreement

St Matthew's CE Primary School Councillors:

St Matthew's CE Primary School Staff Representative:

St Matthew's CE Primary School Headteacher:

St Matthew's CE Primary School Chair of the Governing Body:

The children are provided with information describing the roles within the school council, they then take around 2 days to decide if they want to apply for any of these roles and at the next meet they explain to the other members why they would suit this role. The council then discusses the applicant/applicants and decides if they feel the member will be suitable for the role.

Responsibilities:

The Responsibilities of council members, officers and staff within the school council are published to the whole school and can be found in the School Council Folder (kept in the School Council Meeting Room)

Removal / Resignation of officers:

We believe that being a member of the school council is a privilege not a right! A School Councillor is there to represent the voice of children in their class / school. Any member can be removed from the council if they are found not to be fairly representing the needs of others, i.e.

1. Missing more than 3 consecutive meetings
2. If a member continually disrupts or disrespects council members / meetings they will be given a warning by the Chair.
3. If behaviour continues then offending member will be given a written warning by Chair.
4. If behaviour continues then the Chair will ask the council to vote on 'removal of the offending member' or 'further warning'.
5. The headteacher also has the right to remove any child, where behaviour and/or actions have been deemed unacceptable.
6. If any member of the council wants to resign, we ask them to speak to the Chair or another member of the council who may be able to find a solution to the issues. If no resolution is found, then resignation will be accepted by the Chair.

If under any of the above circumstances a member is removed, his/her class must be given the earliest opportunity and notice in order to re-elect another representative from their class.

Meetings:

Our School Council meets every three weeks in the library. Meeting dates and times are decided at the end of each meeting but generally are held on Tuesdays at 12.10pm (allowing members time to relay information if needed during the rest of lunch and the afternoon break.). In order to give every child in this school a voice all members are expected to attend unless giving valid apologies beforehand i.e. sickness or exams. Also there is a designated time the end of each term for the councillors to feedback to the head teacher and their class what they have been doing during each term. Towards the end of the school year the councillors will take part in an assembly where they feedback to the whole school and parents about what they have been doing throughout the year and their plans for the last term.

Boundaries:

Our School Council has agreed that under no circumstances will any names will be used that could cause embarrassment or offence to any member of this school or in the locality. Confidentiality will be observed and adhered to at all times. All members are informed of what we can and cannot discuss, and what actions we can and cannot take.

Finances:

At present there is no bank account set up for the Student Council however we have our own budget provided by school and the details are kept by the school's finance officer. The school council retains all monies raised for all events it organises and has the independence to spend this. All spending must be costed and a plan delivered to the Headteacher for approval. It is the intention of the school council to raise money for improvements that will benefit all of the children within the school.