



Code of Conduct & Constitution

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to clarify the important roles and responsibilities that Parents' Council has within our integrated school community.

On an annual basis all serving Parents' Council members are asked to demonstrate personal commitment to Omagh Integrated Primary School by signing this document thereby signifying agreement to uphold the principles of this Code and also those for Integrated Schools as defined by NICIE (see Appendix 'A').

CONDUCT DURING MEETINGS

Parents' Council Members should -

Attend all regularly scheduled meetings, insofar as possible.

Maintain confidentiality and trust.

Review essential facts, consider others' ideas, and then present personal opinions during deliberations but, once a vote has been taken, support Council decisions regardless of individual positions.

Act as a member of the Parents' Council and do not assume any individual authority outside of meetings.

Be aware of and/or seek prior guidance on formal school policies and procedures before making decisions.

Maintain professional working relationships with staff and governors.

Maintain a priority **Parents' Council focus on the interests of the whole school** and not allow individual agendas to dominate the work of the Council.

ADMINISTRATION RELATIONS:

Recognise that it is a council member's responsibility is to support the work of the school.

Encourage and mobilise parents into action in pursuit of Parents' Council annual objectives/targets which will be negotiated with the Board of Governors, the Principal and the staff.

Bring parents together to consider matters brought to them by the Board of Governors, the Principal or the staff.

Channel communications with the Board of Governors via a link Governor which shall be nominated by the Board of Governors.

Avoid making commitments that may compromise the decision making ability of the Parents' Council.

COUNCIL RELATIONS:

Voice opinions respectfully and maintain good relations with other Board members, the Principal, staff, the wider school community and members of the public.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Do not use Council membership for political, personal or financial advancement.
Do not solicit or receive directly or indirectly any gift or compensation in return for making a recommendation or casting a vote.
Formally declare (see Appendix 'B') any potential conflict of interest regarding any item of Parents' Council business.

DECLARATION by Parents' Council Members:

I agree to abide by the principles outlined in this OIPS Parents' Council Code of Conduct & Appendices and also NICIE's Statement of Principles for Integrated Education and will do everything in my power to work as a productive member of the Parents' Council.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

DATE: _____

NICIE – Statement of Principles for Integrated Education

DECLARATION OF ETHOS:

The integrated school provides a learning environment where children and young people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, as well as those of other faiths and none, can learn with, from and about each other. The promotion of equality and good relations extends to everyone in the school and to their families regardless of their religious, cultural or social background. Integrated education is value-driven and child-centred. It is delivered through a holistic approach with an emphasis on developing every aspect of a child's or young person's potential.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION.

The 4 core principles of integrated education represent the cornerstones of the integrated ethos. The integrated school demonstrates its distinctiveness and vision through a commitment to these principles.

1. EQUALITY:

The integrated school promotes equality in sharing between and within the diverse groups that compose the school community. This occurs structurally at every level amongst pupils, staff and the board of governors, as well as culturally within the overt and hidden curricula of the school. To achieve these ends each integrated school aspires to the following:

- a) an annual intake of at least 40% pupils from a perceived Catholic background and at least 40% pupils from a perceived Protestant background;
- b) a board of governors comprising at least 40% members from a perceived Catholic background and 40% from a perceived Protestant background; and
- c) the active recruitment of teachers whose cultural or traditional background reflects that of existing or potential pupils.

Furthermore, the integrated school subscribes to:

- d) maintaining high academic and vocational standards within an all-ability framework and providing equal access to the curriculum for all its pupils;
- e) supporting the personal and professional development of all members of staff, with particular emphasis on enhancing the integrated learning experience of each pupil;
- f) ensuring that all policies developed by the school reflect and respect the diversity within the school community; and
- g) taking a democratic approach to all relationships between pupils, staff, parents and governors.

2. FAITH AND VALUES:

The integrated school provides a Christian based rather than a secular approach. It aspires to create an environment where those of all faiths and none are respected, acknowledged and accepted as valued members of the school community. In this context:

- a) pupils will learn together all that can reasonably be expected for them to learn together;
- b) the school will facilitate specific provision, where necessary, for Catholic pupils whose parents wish them to undergo sacramental preparation. It will also seek to acknowledge significant religious and cultural celebrations which are representative of other faiths;

- c) the school will encourage religious and community leaders to visit and participate in school activities;
- d) pupils will be introduced to the ideas, beliefs and practices of the major world religions and humanist philosophies, in a manner appropriate to their age and ability, and in line with the NI curriculum; and
- e) alternative provision will be made for those pupils whose parents do not wish them to participate in any religious activities or classes.

3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

The support and commitment of parents is a fundamental element of Integrated Education and historically, parents have been central to the development of integrated schools.

The integrated school therefore seeks to encourage and sustain effective parental involvement in the life and work of the school by:

- a) maintaining significant levels of parental representation on the board of governors (i.e. in accordance with legislative requirements and structures);
- b) creating a forum for parents which cultivates and focuses parental support for the school;
- c) establishing appropriate arrangements and procedures for individual and collective communication between parents and:
 - (i) the Principal
 - (ii) other members of teaching staff
 - (iii) the governing body; and
- d) ensuring that parents are made fully aware of the school's integrated ethos.

4. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

The integrated school delivers the curriculum on an all-ability inclusive basis to all of its pupils. It respects the uniqueness of every pupil and acknowledges his/her entitlement to personal, social, intellectual and spiritual development in the attainment of individual potential. This philosophy affirms that pupils should be encouraged to:

- a) understand and engage with the use of non-violent means of conflict resolution;
- b) demonstrate mutual respect and understanding towards others and develop tolerance and trust of those who are different;
- c) nurture self-confidence and self-respect; and
- d) appreciate the interdependence between society and the natural environment it inhabits.

Furthermore, the integrated school:

- e) will deliver the curriculum in a way that reflects its particular ethos. Where possible the subjects and activities offered, and the resources complementing their delivery, should reflect the diversity within the school's own pupil population;
- f) has a duty to be open in its relationships with schools, learning partnerships, churches and other local institutions;
- g) should present itself to the wider community as a shared civic space.



REGISTER OF INTERESTS

NAME: _____

	Nature of Interest	Date on which Interest was disclosed	Date on which Interest was changed or ceased
a			
b			
c			
d			
e			

To the best of my knowledge the above information is complete and correct. I undertake to update the information as necessary.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

POLITICAL ACTIVITY QUESTION

This question is asked because it enables the monitoring of political activity of those appointed to a public body, in so far as it is already in the public domain. Neither activity, nor affiliation, is a criterion for appointment (except where statute dictates specific representation). It is for monitoring purposes only.

Please indicate which of the following activities you have undertaken during the past five years by ticking the appropriate box and by providing details of your involvement. Name the political party or body for which you have been active. If you have been, or are an Independent, or have sought or obtained office as a representative of a particular interest group, you should state this. You should tick all relevant categories.

- a. Obtained office as a District Councillor, MP, MEP, MLA etc
- Stood as a candidate for one of the above offices
- Spoken on behalf of a political party or candidate
- b. Acted as a political agent
- Held office such as Chair, Treasurer or Secretary of a local branch of a political party
- Canvassed on behalf of a political party, or helped at elections
- Undertaken any other political activity which you consider relevant
- c. Made a recordable donation to a political party¹
- d. None of the above activities apply

Details of involvement:

Name of Party for which activity undertaken:

NAME: **SIGNATURE:** **DATE:**

¹Part IV of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 imposes restrictions on the sources of donations and loans to political parties registered in the UK. The Electoral Commission is required to publish a register of reportable donations and loans made to political parties in Great Britain [i.e. donations/loans from any individual or organisation totalling more than £7,500 (or more than £1,500 if made to an accounting unit) in any calendar year]. Reportable donations and loans to Northern Ireland political parties are confidential until 28 Feb 2013. Only tick this box if you have made a recordable donation to a political party **not** on the register of political parties for Northern Ireland.

PARENTS' COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

1. The Association shall henceforth be known as:
Omagh Integrated Primary School & Nursery Parents' Council.
2. The aims of the group shall be:-
 - To promote the school and its ethos in the community
 - To develop positive relationships between staff, parents and others associated with the school.
 - To engage in agreed activities which support the school and benefit the education of the pupils attending it.
 - To provide and assist in the provision of facilities for the school.
 - To encourage parents and friends to support the school and school activities.
 - Through the link Governor, advise the School Management and/or the Board of Governors of matters of concern to the general parent body.
 - To consider any matters brought to the Parents' Council by the School Management or the Board of Governors.
3. The group will not involve itself in curriculum matters, as these are the direct responsibility of the Principal and Board of Governors.
4. The Parents' Council will elect from its number its own officers. There will be a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, vice-treasurer and PR/Information officer. The quorum should be more than 50% of the council.
5. The membership of the group shall be made up of the parents, guardians or friends of children attending the school and nursery.
6. The council may appoint sub-committees as it deems fit and shall prescribe their function. All acts and proceedings of any sub-committee shall be reported to the committee as soon as possible.
7. A **minimum** of 1 meeting should be held per term. All apologies and items should be forwarded to the secretary as soon as possible prior to the meetings. Meetings shall strictly adhere to an agenda and minutes will be recorded and forwarded to the principal within one week of the meeting for accuracy and approval prior to distribution. Extra meetings may be necessary prior to planned events and will be agreed at previous meetings or via the WhatsApp group chat.
8. The AGM shall be held in the 1st school term. At the AGM chairperson or in his/her absence, the vice-chairperson shall preside. At the appropriate time the chairperson shall deem all elected positions vacant and hand over to the school principal to chair the election of officers.
9. The management and control of the council shall be vested in a committee that should make every attempt to elect a representative from each year group. The council should strive to get an equal gender and religious balance among its members. The school staff will assist with this aim.
10. A person may only remain on the council as an office bearer for four terms of office, where one term of office equates to one year.
11. The committee shall liaise with the integration officer and the principal regularly to pass on and receive information regarding the school activities.
12. The principal of the school and any teacher of the school deemed a non-voting member of the council.

- 13.** An auditor who is not a council member shall be appointed annually to audit the accounts of the group.
- 14.** Special General Meetings may be called at the request of a minimum of 6 members of the council.
- 15.** The treasurer shall be responsible for keeping account of all income and expenditure. Up-to-date accounts should be available at each meeting if requested.
- 16.** Bank accounts shall be operated in the name of the committee and withdrawals shall be made on the signature of any two named officers of the group.
- 17.** The financial year shall coincide as much as possible with the AGM.
- 18.** Any matter not provided for in the constitution and concerning the organisation and activities shall be dealt with by the office bearers who will make an appropriate decision having consulted with the Principal and/or Link Governor.
- 19.** The council may be dissolved by a resolution presented at a Special General Meeting called for this purpose. The resolution must have the assent of two thirds of those present and voting.
- Such resolutions may give the instruction for the disposal of any assets remaining after the satisfying of any outstanding debts and liabilities.
 - These assets shall not be distributed among the members of the committee but will be given to the school for the benefit of the children of the school.
 - In the event of a school closure, they shall be given to the school to which the majority of the children will go.
 - If effect cannot be given to this provision, then the assets shall be given to Drumragh Integrated College or NICIE.
- 20.** The council shall liaise with the school principal to plan and agree targets for fundraising as early as possible each academic year. The money which has been raised towards these targets shall be given to the principal who will, with the assistance of School Management, apportion the funds appropriately.
- 21.** The council will strive to work in partnership with the pupils' council to facilitate activities in the school.

Agenda for Parents' Council Meetings

1. Apologies
2. Adoption of minutes
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
4. Review of Councils' Targets
5. Financial Report
6. Correspondence
7. Events Management / Fundraising
8. Matters brought to Council from School Management or Board of Governors
9. Any Other Business
10. Date of next meeting

Openness, Trust, Collegiality, Fulfilling Potential

Specific Roles within Parents' Council

Chairperson / Vice Chairperson

- ensures agenda followed
- ensures all can speak
- keeps speakers to the point
- maintains impartiality, fairness
- summarises before decisions
- strives for consensus
- ensures tasks are allocated and carried out
- is responsible for and monitors the work of all other office bearers
- acts as a spokesperson for the group in support of the school and its ethos when required to do so

Secretary

- prepares venue, agenda, minutes
- circulates minutes to the principal within one week of the meeting and within one week of all scheduled Board of Governors Meetings
- records decisions
- keeps letters, answers and files them
- helps prepare annual report
- assists with photocopying etc

Treasurer

- keeps bank account, and money
- records all income and expenditure
- lodges money in the bank
- prepares annual accounts and has them audited
- gives annual account to AGM

Members

- attend meetings
- take part in decisions
- carry out allocated tasks
- be loyal - keep confidentiality – this applies to meetings and WhatsApp group chats
- realise responsibilities

CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Correct procedures are the key to a successful meeting. No-one wants to attend meetings that go on until midnight, that do not have a practical outcome or where one person dominates the entire proceedings. Badly conducted meetings will not encourage regular attendance or increase the productivity of the Parents' Council.

The following advice is offered as a guide to ensuring successful meetings.

1. Have a clear timetable so that all members are aware of when meetings are to be held.
2. Ensure that there is an agenda for each meeting so that members know the issues to be discussed. Agendas should be circulated at least one week prior to the meeting.
3. Minutes of each meeting should be taken by the Secretary in order to record details of decisions made and actions to be carried out. Minutes should be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting to remind individuals of any designated responsibilities.
4. If a member cannot attend a meeting, the protocol is to send apologies for recording in the minutes. This can be done via the WhatsApp group chat.
5. A quorum of greater than 50% is acceptable for meetings of Parents' Council.
6. Where possible, decision making should be by consensus. If a vote is necessary, then the Chairperson has the casting vote.
7. **An agreed finishing time for the meeting is recommended.** It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that all items of the agenda are dealt with during the allotted time.
8. It is the responsibility of all members to ensure that the agenda is adhered to and that the Chairperson's directions are followed.

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS**Helpful Behaviour**

- Speaking briefly
- Supporting another speaker
- Explaining something
- Summarising an argument
- Pointing to implications
- Asking a question
- Rephrasing what someone else has said to make it clearer
- Asking others for their views
- Talking about feelings
- Expressing doubts
- Encouraging others to speak
- Expressing approval of other people's views
- Empathising
- Asking for support
- Talking about what's going on in the group
- Listening with attention
- Showing interest in others

Unhelpful Behaviour

- "Pour cold water" on every proposal
- Changing the subject
- Talking only about yourself or your personal agenda
- Hurrying the group along
- Judging other people
- Showing excessive interest in others
- Chatting to a friend
- Using sarcasm to make a point
- "Pulling rank" to make a point
- Cracking jokes
- Attacking individuals
- Speaking before you've worked out what to say
- Poking fun at people's ideas
- Confronting other people
- Disapproving of everyone else's ideas.
- Expressing doubts
- Picking holes in an argument
- Demanding the group's attention
- Interrupting people
- Allow discussion to deviate from the agenda

What do PC do?

- Promote the school and its integrated ethos
- Help with Newsletter
- Help with Sports' Day / Open Day / Information Events
- Organise social events
- Link with the Student Council
- Fundraising
- Assist with extra curricular activities
- Assist on school visits
- Find out how other parents can help the work of Parents' Council
- Find out about any specialist Parents' skills
- Organise refreshments for school activities and events
- Through the link Governor, advise the School Management and/or the Board of Governors of matters of concern to the general parent body.
- Consider any matters brought to the Parents' Council by the School Management or the Board of Governors.

What do PC not do?

- Discuss cases involving individual staff or pupils.
- Get involved with the specific day-today running of the school.
- Become a forum for complaints and grumbles.

Parents' Council Strategic Targets 2023-24

1. Maintain membership of Parents' Council, with assistance from school staff, with positive determination to address:
 - a) new members
 - b) gender balance
 - c) religious balance
2. Recruit parent/guardian volunteers for occasional events.
3. To raise money for the targets agreed with the school principal, to include, but are not limited to: ???
4. To organise the School's Summer Fete to provide an opportunity for social cohesion and fun across the school and wider community.
5. To continue to increase the profile of the Parents' Council and its activities within the school and the wider community.

Openness, Trust, Collegiality, Fulfilling Potential