

# Lough View Integrated Primary School



## **School Council Information Booklet.**

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## What is a School Council?

### A school council .....

- is one way of giving pupils a say in the way the school is run.
- gives pupils a VOICE in school matters.
- **provides children with an opportunity to discuss their feeling about matters which affect them.**
- gives pupils a chance to make changes for the better in their school.
- gives pupils a forum for discussion.

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### Lough View's School Council

We have one representative per class on our School Council (Y5-Y7). We also have a Chairperson, vice-chairperson and a secretary who are Y7 children. All children have been elected by their peers.

Y1-Y4 children have regular class meetings where they have the opportunity to discuss their ideas for our school.

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## School Council Roles.



**The Chairperson** is an important person who ensures things get done and everyone is doing his/her job and keeping promises:

### The Chairperson

- manages the meetings using the agenda.
  - makes sure everyone who wants to speak gets the chance.
- keeps a close eye on all matters.

### The Secretary

- collects the main points for discussion.
- ensures all classes and representatives have a copy of the agenda.
- takes notes at the meetings and writes out the minutes.
- gives each class and representative a copy of the minutes.

**The Class Representatives** (Ordinary members) have an important job.

They must put forward the views of the class they represent.

### The Class Representative

- listens carefully to others.
- attends meetings.
- makes suggestions.
- brings ideas to share.
- takes on responsibilities and gives own time.



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## **Why have a School Council?**

### **Children have Rights.**

The United Nations convention on the Rights of the child states in article 12- "children have the right to express the views they have and those views should be listened to in anything that affects them".

- gets us involved - education should be done with us not to us.
- gives all pupils a chance to talk about things and make positive changes
- gets good ideas from pupils.
- helps to make us pupils feel we are part of the school team.
- helps keep us happy.

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### **Making changes**

A pupil council must be realistic about what it can do. Some things we can change, some we can't. Also, we can't change all the things pupils want at once - we have to prioritise (i.e. most important things that affect most pupils). This involves a lot of negotiation.

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## Things we can't change

- wearing uniform (maybe change style in the future).
- bikes in the playground - throws up safety issues.
- no homework? !!!

Council often has to discuss, negotiate and make compromises.

That's what it means to work as a team!

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## What kinds of things does a School Council discuss?

The discussion points are varied. Class councils will be asked to discuss a particular issue. They will then ask their class representatives to feedback their ideas to the school council. E.g.

- Identifying a charity to support
- After school clubs choices
- Playground issues

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## School Council Meetings

**When?:-** We have our meetings at lunch time, usually once a month, fitting around the school timetables of holidays, Christmas concerts etc.

**Where?:-** Mrs Black's classroom.

**How long?:-** usually 15-25 minutes, depending on number of items on the agenda.

**Who is there?:-** All the representatives from classes and Mrs Black

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## How do Class Council and School Council meetings work?

### The Chairperson

- Welcomes everyone.
- Introduces visitors.
- gives out previous minutes.
- checks all is well.
- goes through items on agenda. (These items have been organised in order of priority by the vice-chairperson and the secretary).

Items are discussed one by one by representatives.

### The Secretary

- takes notes of action to be taken and points discussed.

At the end of meetings, the Chairperson closes the meeting and (if possible) the date of the next meeting is decided.

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## What is an Agenda?

An agenda is the list of items that will be discussed at meetings. It includes time and date of meeting.



## What are minutes?

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Minutes are a record of what was discussed at the meetings. The minutes should tell you what was decided about the items pupils wanted discussed and any items which are to be actioned.

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## **Electing a School Council**

### **Nomination**

To be considered as a pupil council representative you must write a manifesto and present it to your class.

You must be reliable, a good listener, not selfish, have good ideas and many other things.



### **The Manifesto**

All candidates put forward for election have to give a speech (a manifesto) about why their class should vote for him/her and what he/she will do if they are elected. (2-3 minutes should do it)

### **The Election**

The class then votes for one person to represent them. The successful candidate should give a **very short** thank you speech to everyone who voted.

