



School Council Constitution Pupil Voice

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Review date: January 2023

Signed: _____

Chairperson schools governing body, on behalf of the governing body

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Headteacher Date: _____

Distribution: Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers

Background

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that it is the right of children and young people to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken in to account when decisions are being made on any matter that affects their lives.

At Ysgol Ty Coch pupils have a variety of options to choose from in becoming involved in the decision-making processes in the school. The School Council is one of these options.

School Council Constitution

The School Council operates in line with the School Council (Wales) Regulations 2005.

At the start of the academic year, staff in each class, explain the role played by the School Council and how members of the Council are elected. Pupils are then given the opportunity to say if they want to take part as a member of the Council or to give the name of a pupil that they would like to be on the Council. Each class has the opportunity to make nominations. If there is more than one nomination in each class pupils have a vote to choose their candidate. In support of this process, pupils are also provided with a pupil friendly guide (see appendix 1).

There is a member of staff nominated to facilitate the School Council's activities and act as a go-between for pupils. This member of staff is currently Mrs. Ashlie Holland.

There is a nominated governor who liaises with the School Council. This governor is currently Mrs. Janice Stuckey, Chairperson.

At the first meeting of the School Council, following the election of Council members, Mrs. Holland explains the need for a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary to be chosen. The School Councillors then decide who will take on these roles.

Pupils are told of the opportunity for those members of the Council who represent the secondary pupils to go to the governors' meetings. Their decision is noted in the minutes.

Agendas are produced for each meeting. The items on the agenda come from pupils and others.

The Chairperson of the School Council leads the meetings. Each Council member is given the opportunity to give a view on the items under discussion and to give an update on any ongoing projects that they might be involved in.

Meetings are held during the school day in a formal setting with Mrs. Holland taking minutes, noting the discussion between the pupils and their invited guests.

The minutes are placed on the school's website and forwarded to meetings of the school's governing body for consideration of the points raised. The content of the minutes is shared with the pupil population.

The School Council are involved in aspects of the decision-making processes throughout the school including those relating to:

- Staff appointments
- Health and safety issues
- School toilets
- School lunches
- School projects to develop/improve the environment
- Community based projects

Pupil Voice/Pupil Participation

Pupil voice/pupil participation means pupils having their voice heard when decisions are being made that affect their lives and them being actively involved in the decision-making process.

Where learners are actively involved they are more likely to be engaged in school life, leading to improved learning and well-being.

Ethos

At Ysgol Ty Coch Special School we are dedicated to giving all pupils as many opportunities as possible to participate in whatever way, or through whatever sphere they are able, to develop their skills and make their mark on their learning environment.

Good communication is key

At Ysgol Ty Coch pupils voice their views and opinions through the School Council. The School Council uses the school website, display boards and the school's governing body to communicate their operations.

A member of staff and a member of the governing body attend the meetings of the School Council. The Headteacher is also a regular attendee at the meetings of the School Council. Other members of staff and people from the wider school community are also invited in line with items under discussion.

The governing body has the School Council as a standard item on the agenda for their termly meetings.

Avenues for Participation

Pupils are fully involved in their learning process. Staff engage pupils in planning their learning, assessing their outcomes and the next steps to be taken.

In addition to the School Council there is an established Eco Council. Pupils have gained a Silver award and are working towards a Gold award.

The school has gained the Healthy School Status. Pupils are very active in maintaining and following this ethos. They have been in contact with the Children's Commissioner and the Local Authority (who provides the school lunches) in the pursuance of resolutions to issues that they have identified.

Pupils are involved in projects within the local community. This currently includes the establishment of a butterfly colony, the planting of flowers and the distribution of the local newsletter. This contact is overseen by school staff and the Vice Chairperson of the school's governing body.

Pupils participate in school fetes and fun-days by making crafts for sale and manning stalls (supervised by staff).

Pupils regularly hold events to raise funds for charities in the UK and abroad.

The school has links with a school in Africa. Pupils share learning experiences and fund raise to help support the pupils there.

Pupils offer services to local residents in the form of hairdressing and hospitality. Both of these ventures are supervised by staff and take place at dedicated locations in the school setting.

Pupils are actively involved in designing and constructing pupil friendly murals and art work to adorn the school. This activity is undertaken in conjunction with a local artist and supervised by school staff.

Outcomes

Pupil involvement in their formal learning allows them to have their say, learn at their pace in a way that fits their needs.

Involving pupils in practical undertakings and community based projects alongside their formal learning experiences helps to prepare them for the world outside school by making them aware of other people, other avenues for expressing themselves and by involving them in activities they might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience.

Staff are able to use these experiences as part of the learning process.

The school becomes involved with the wider community and the community gets to know, and become involved with, the school.

School Council – What's it All About?

- When you come to school after the Summer holiday your class teacher will tell you all about the School Council. They will explain what it is and what it does.
- One pupil from each class will be able to have a place on the School Council if they want to.
- The School Council is a group of pupils who meet to talk about things to do with the school. The things that pupils would like to change, different things that they would like to do and how they feel about what's going on in school.
- There are different types of School Councillor. These are:
 - a) Chairperson – in charge of the meeting
 - b) Vice - chairperson - who takes over if the Chairperson is away
 - c) Treasurer – who looks after any money the Council is allowed to spend
 - d) Secretary – who helps organise things
 - e) Class representatives – who speak at the meeting to say what they and their classmates are concerned about
- Your teacher will ask if there is anyone in the class who would like to be a School Councillor.
- If you would like to be a School Councillor, or if there is someone else in your class that you would like to be a School Councillor, tell your teacher.
- If more than one pupil in the class wants to be a School Councillor the teacher will ask everyone in the class to vote to decide which pupil they would like to be the School Councillor.
- After each class has decided who their Councillor will be, all the Councillors will have a meeting. At this meeting there will be vote to decide who will be the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- Mrs. Holland goes to the meetings and she writes down what is said.
- Mr. Jenkins and Mrs. Stuckey go to the meeting to listen and to try and help to sort out the things that pupils talk about.
- There are two meetings every term. Pupils will be told the times of the meetings and the place where the meetings will be held.
- Everyone will be told about what happens in the meetings. The information will also be on display boards and on the website.

- If you ever have something you want the School Council to sort out, tell your teacher or your class Councillor and they will pass it on to be talked about at the next meeting of the School Council

Pupils' Statement

Our overall aim is to have our voices heard and to help make our school even better so we have decided that if someone isn't doing their job well, as a School Councillor, we may decide to have a vote of no confidence and choose someone else.

“Participation means that it is my right to be involved in making decisions, planning and reviewing any actions that might affect me. Having a voice, having a choice” - (Welsh Government – Pupil Participation, Pupil Voice)