

STRATFORD



COLLEGE

Stratford College
Student Council
Constitution

Ratified: Mr Alan Green, School Manager
Date: 10/5/11

STRATFORD



COLLEGE

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Preamble

This document provides the Student Council with an explanation of its purpose, administration and responsibilities.

It should be consulted before any major decision is made. All members of the council are expected to uphold and obey the guidelines herein. Furthermore the contents of this constitution should be respected by staff and the principal.

Purpose

Definition of a Student Council

A Student Council is a group of students elected democratically. It represents the opinions, ideas and proposals of the student body. The Student Council can meet in the presence of the Liaison teacher or another member of staff.

Aims and Objectives

- I. To discuss matters which are relevant to student affairs and to decide on a course of action to address the matter.
- II. Present any decisions made to the principal at fortnightly meetings.
- III. Aid staff in the organising of school events such as 6th year graduation.
- IV. To provide a link and improve communications between staff, students and parents.
- V. To provide a forum for students to voice their opinions on relevant issues.
- VI. To encourage students to become self-confident, responsible and create a more caring atmosphere.



- VII. Assist with prefect activities.
- VIII. To provide students with support in relation to issues like bullying.
- IX. Amend this constitution in cooperation with the principal.
- X. To uphold the ethos of the school.

Administration

Membership

The student council consists of ten representatives, two people from 1st year and two from 2nd year, as well as one from 3rd year and one from 4th year. They are joined by four elected prefects from 5th year who act as chairperson, secretary, public relations officer (P.R.O.)/mentor liaison officer and green school liaison officer respectively.

The term of office for all members runs from February to February, with prefects being elected first by the outgoing council. The new prefects then organise elections for the new members from the other years.

Voting is in the form of secret ballot, each class will vote separately and first past the post is elected.

Prefect Selection Process

Any 5th year student who wishes to become a prefect must complete an application form presented to them by the outgoing council and submit it to the principal at a predetermined deadline. The students in 4th, 5th and 6th year then vote for the candidates they wish to become prefects. The teachers then vote. The principal retains the right to veto any candidate at his/her discretion. When the prefects are elected and informed of their success they must assign themselves the four roles outlined above.

Student Council Selection Process

Any student who wishes to join the student council must put their name forward when the elections are being organised by the new prefects. Their class then vote on who they would like to represent them. The principal then casts a deciding vote and retains the right to veto any candidate at his/her discretion.

Characteristics of Prefects and Student Council Members

Prefects and student council members should:

- Be mature
- Be sensible
- Be punctual
- Be good communicators
- Be confident
- Be good listeners
- Be approachable
- Be able to take initiative
- Have a good discipline record

Training

Once the new council has been elected the prefects and council members will receive a day long training session organised by the liaison teacher. The aim of which is to inform the council members of their powers, rights and responsibilities.

Furthermore they will:

1. Observe one meeting of the outgoing council.
2. Accept the terms laid out in this constitution.
3. Receive a briefing from the liaison teacher.



Meetings

The Student Council holds meeting twice every month, on every second Friday immediately after school finishes (13:10). If additional meetings are required they must be called by the senior prefects who shall inform the other members and the liaison teacher no later than one day in advance of the meeting. If, for any reason, a meeting has to be cancelled or postponed all members and the liaison teacher must be informed before the meeting in question. If a prefect or member cannot attend a meeting he/she is obliged to inform senior members beforehand.

Additionally, meetings between the chairperson and secretary and the principal will be held on a fortnightly basis, where the meeting occurs the week following a council meeting at a mutually agreeable time. The function of these meetings is to keep the principal informed of progress, developments and intentions.

Responsibilities

Chairperson

1. Take an active part in council meetings:
 - i. Call meetings
 - ii. Chair meetings
 - iii. Assist in the creation of agendas
 - iv. Discuss the minutes of the previous meeting with the principal at regularly scheduled meetings.
 - v. Follow agenda
 - vi. Allow for other business
 - vii. Involve members
 - viii. Follow a democratic procedure
 - ix. Delegate tasks
2. Generate interest, enthusiasm and involvement in creating programmes.



3. Organise actions to be taken by the council.
4. Evaluate and reflect on previous tasks.
5. Promote good internal relations and co-operation with staff.

Secretary

1. Take an active part in council meetings:
 - i. Assist in the creation of agendas
 - ii. Write agendas
 - iii. Take minutes that include:
 - a. Absences*
 - b. Proposals made*
 - c. Decisions made*
 - d. Action plans*
 - e. Any Other Business (A.O.B.)*
2. Manage the council's internal and external correspondence such as letters and E-mails.

P.R.O./Mentor Liaison Officer

1. Organise visits from guests:
 - i. Welcome guests
 - ii. Introduce guests
 - iii. Help guests
2. Organise Student Council Notice board:
 - i. Update notices
 - ii. Examine suggestions made using the suggestion box
 - iii. Maintain notices
3. Contribute to the online student council blog
 - i. Ensure council activities are show on the school website
 - ii. Update the blog



4. Assist the Guidance Counsellor in the application, interviewing and training of 5th year mentors:
 - i. Organise applicants in April
 - ii. Meet 1st years on orientation day
 - iii. Monitor progress between 5th and 1st years

Green Schools Liaison Officer

1. Preside over the foundation and development of a Green Schools Committee:
 - i. Call meetings of the committee
 - ii. Co-chair meetings with the liaison teacher
 - iii. Generate interest and enthusiasm for the committee
2. Provide a link between the committee, staff and student council

Representatives

1. Follow the guidelines set out in this constitution.
2. Respect and follow the decisions made by the prefects, liaison teacher, principal and the council as a whole.
3. Voice the opinions, views and issues affecting their year and the student body in general.
4. Contribute to council discussions.
5. Assist in the organising of school events.
6. Attend meetings punctually.
7. Carry out, to the best of their ability, tasks which are assigned to them.



Activities

During a term of office student council is expected to perform certain key tasks, they are:

1. Assist in the organising of Seachtain na Gaeilge:
 - i. Liaise with the principal Irish teacher on the organisation of events during the week.
 - ii. Raise the Irish flag each morning of the week before or during the first class.
 - iii. Welcome entertainers to the school.
 - iv. Decorate and setup the hall prior to a show.
2. Assist in the organising of Israeli Independence Day:
 - i. Welcome entertainers to the school.
 - ii. Decorate and setup the hall prior to a show.
 - iii. Liaise with the principal about organising an event.
3. Assist in the organising of the annual Awards Ceremony:
 - i. Decorate and setup the hall.
 - ii. Welcome any guest speakers.
 - iii. Liaise with the principal about organising the event.
 - iv. Deliver a speech during the ceremony.
4. Assist in the organising of 6th Year Graduation:
 - i. Decorate and setup the hall.
 - ii. Deliver a speech during the ceremony.
5. Assist in the organising of 6th year Debs Reception:



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- i. Decorate and setup the hall.

Aside from the activities stipulated above the council can and are expected to undertake others, such as surveys.

Appendix

I. Privileges:

- Senior prefects have permission to leave the school grounds during lunch time (13:10 – 13:45 Mon-Thurs).

II. Punishment:

- If a member of the council is in violation of the guidelines laid down in this constitution then he/she is subject to punishment. The nature of the punishment should be discussed and decided upon by the prefects, liaison teacher and principal before action is taken.

III. Review:

- This constitution may only be changed in consultation with all members of the Student Council and the liaison teacher. It must then be referred to the principal for agreement.