

Student Council Policy

Rationale

School of the Holy Spirit considers it important that the students should play an active, positive role in the life of their school and believes that our Student Council helps to achieve this. The Senior School Student Council was established in 2024 and in September 2025 , following interest expressed by Primary School students, a Student Council was initiated and piloted in the Primary School.

Aims

The role of the Student Council is to:

- provide an opportunity for students to voice their opinions and offer suggestions in relation to many aspects of school life.
- discuss issues relevant to our school and encourage and promote student initiatives.
- offer an opportunity for all students to voice their opinions on proposed changes and thereby play a very significant role in improving our school.
- act as a channel of communication within the school organisation between students and between home and school.
- encourage students to organise events central to the life of the school.
- provide an opportunity to raise funds for charities or for school funds.

The Election Process Senior School

- Every September, representatives from each senior class are elected by secret ballot and take a seat on the Student Council for the duration of that academic year.
- A student cannot be elected more than two years in a row to give other students the opportunity. They may run again after a break in service.
- The student who comes second in the election will act as the sub representative for that class. Depending on class size or Council activities both representatives from a class may be on the Council.
- Nominees are invited to make public presentations in classes to explain why they should get a vote, prior to election.
- The elected students are required to be active participants in the Council, to attend meetings regularly, participate in activities and be a role model for other students.
- If a Council representative fails to comply with the school code of behaviour they may be removed either temporarily or permanently.

Procedures

- Members meet a minimum of twice a month, in the Library or Sacred Space. Council meetings are facilitated by Mrs Lulias.
- Prior to these meetings, the Student Council representatives collect ideas and suggestions from their own classes, for the agenda.
- These issues are then discussed, brought to the attention of Mrs Butler (Principal) or Mrs Lennon (Deputy Principal), if necessary.
- The work of the Council is also shared at Staff Meetings for further deliberation. As well as bringing matters to the Council for discussion, the members are required to report the outcome of meetings to their own classes.
- Mrs Lulias emails a copy of the minutes to class teachers detailing any updates or responsibilities the student rep in their class may have.

- The Council is also responsible for communicating their work by putting a notice on the Students Council Notice Board and Mrs Lulias will post it on the school website.

The Election Process Primary School

- The election process ensures that Student Council representatives are chosen fairly, democratically and transparently, giving all students an equal opportunity to participate.
- All classes in the Primary School are eligible to elect a representative in September.
- Each class teacher will explain the work of a Student Council, outlines the responsibilities and discusses the qualities of a good representative.
- Where possible a student may nominate themselves and candidates may prepare a short speech and campaign poster for the election process.
- Voting is by secret ballot in each class.
- Representatives serve for one academic year.
- The election process will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fair, inclusive and effective.

Procedures

- Meetings are held approximately once per month and facilitated by the Teacher Coordinator (Mrs. Kirwan).
- Student Council representatives collect ideas from their class before each meeting.
- The Teacher Coordinator prepares an agenda in advance.
- After each meeting representatives report back to their class.
- Key points may be shared via school noticeboard, email or at Assembly.

Responsibilities

The Council has an important role to play in the organisation of special events; special presentations of Flags/Awards/Certificates etc. and having an input into relevant school policies.

Through our Student Council we hope to give our students a more active role in the organisation of our school and ensure they are listened to and respected for their ideas and concerns. It involves the students in many of the decisions that are made regarding students in School of the Holy Spirit. Discussions in classes and at Council meetings help to develop social and learning skills in many areas including speaking and listening, problem solving, brainstorming and the decision-making process.

Discussion Topics and Activities

Topics that come under discussion at Student Council meetings may include the following:

- School rules, behaviour and discipline
- Wellbeing- health promotion, active school, friendship/ anti bullying,
- Health and safety- including Internet Safety
- Seasonal events eg Seachtain Na Gaeilge, Active Schools Week
- Lunchtime games and activities
- Fundraising
- Students' yearbook, School tours.

Fundraising

In an effort to give back to the community and the wider world the Student's Council will help in the organization of a fundraiser for one or more charities each year. Fundraisers include- Jersey day, Odd Socks Day, Sponsored Walk.

The funds raised from their end of year Yearbook sales are used to fund the Council's activities the following year.

Activities

These include board competition prizes, Quiz Prizes, Halloween Fancy Dress prizes, Christmas activities.

The Council has also used its funding to finance purchases of updated library books, lunch time recreational area games, balls etc.

Student Voice & Communication

In addition to their role in communicating and problem solving, the Student Council acts as an agent for school news, as journalists and reporters through notices for the School Newsletter, posting to our website and facebook page and putting notices on their Student Council Notice Board. It is hoped that this makes school news more student orientated and more engaging for the student body.

The Student Council will give a brief report of its work for the year at the end of each school year.

Each year the Student Council will be treated to an end of year meal for their hard work throughout the year.

Conclusion

School of the Holy Spirit is very proud of the role played by our students in contributing to our school development and believe that we achieve a happier and more vibrant learning environment as a result of collaboration with students.

Implementation and Review:

This policy was implemented in September 2024 and reviewed in 2026. The Student Council will give a brief outline of work carried out in the academic school year in June. The policy will be reviewed and amended as needed every two years.

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____