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SPTC INFORMATION & TRAINING SESSIONS

Parent Council Essentials

Parent Council Essentials is one of a range of information & training sessions SPTC offers **free** to all its members. They have been carefully planned to provide parents with the kind of information they ask us for. All SPTC sessions are run by our team of friendly and knowledgeable regional advisors, who are themselves parents with experience of working with parents, schools and local authorities.

All parents are welcome to attend the sessions which are run in an informal, parent-friendly way with plenty of opportunities for discussion and questions. They are a great chance to learn more about how to run your group effectively and also to meet other parents and swap ideas.

Parent Council Essentials is suitable for both new and more experienced Parent Council members. It is a whistle-stop tour of the role and responsibilities of Parent Councils – how they work, what they can get involved in. The session will give you lots of ideas for running an effective Parent Council: along the way we will answer some of your questions and might even bust a few of the myths surrounding parental involvement.

The Programme

Section 1: Exploring Potential

In this first interactive session, everyone is asked to think about what their Parent Council has been doing over the last year.

Everyone is encouraged to chat about their work – what made an activity successful, any problems they came across and what they have planned for the future.

We then look at five themes in greater detail:

Campaigning – how Parent Councils can help make improvements to the school through lobbying and campaigning

Education – the different ways Parent Councils can help and encourage parents and carers to become involved in their child's education

School Matters – advice on how Parent Councils could get involved in all aspects of school life

Social & Fundraising Events – a really important way for parents to contribute to the school community

Communications – how to improve communications with the school and the Parent Forum

Section 2: Your local authority

In this section you learn about:

- The parent officer and other key people within the Council
- The financial support you get from your local authority
- How you can get involved with your Council

Section 3: The legislation and busting some myths

Our famous Mythbusters are fun as well as informative: it's a great opportunity to chat with other parents as you decide what's true and what's false.

Mythbusters is also a great way to cover some useful (if dry!) topics:

- the parental involvement legislation and how it impacts on the running of Parent Councils
- the role and responsibility of Parent Councils
- the role of the headteacher and the local authority
- membership of the Parent Council
- the relationship between the Parent Council and the Parent Forum
- constitutions and committee
- decision-making

Section 4: Feedback and further information

Before we finish, everyone has a chance to give feedback and sign up for our e-updates and the Parents Voice survey group. We give you details of the other free information sessions available to SPTC members.

Finally, no-one goes away empty-handed as there are always plenty of leaflets and other information to take back to your Parent Council/PTA and to display in your school.

Some feedback from parents who have attended Parent Council Essentials:

"It was good to hear from all the other Parent Councils and to let them know what we are already doing in our school." (Parent in Glasgow)

"As a parent it gives me confidence to help and support the Parent Council in other areas rather than just attending meetings." (Parent in Aberdeenshire)

"Found it very informative and gave me a much clearer understanding of Parent Councils. Gave me new ideas to think about." (Parent in Fife)

"Well organized format with good breaks in the session to enable discussion and information swapping. Good presentation and summary of the points raised in each group." (Parent in Fife)

"Very open and interactive. Good sharing of practical examples." (Parent in Glasgow)

"It was great to have an open discussion and discuss the myths. It is now clear how we can move forward." (Parent in Moray)

"I liked the information on how we can sell ourselves to the school and community and how we can involve our local councilors." (Parent in South Ayrshire)

Other SPTC information & training sessions:

Parent Council Essentials 2 – an in depth look at devolved school management, how to run campaigns, school inspections and involvement in school policies.

Focus on Communications – keeping in touch with the Parent Forum, the school and local community; how to use social networking; surveys & questionnaires.

Effective Meetings – looking at agendas and committee meetings, AGMs and improving communication skills.

The Role of Office Bearers & Committee Members – we not only look at the role of the chair, treasurer and secretary but also the responsibilities of committee members. This session is also a great opportunity to share experiences and problem-solve those tricky situations.

Organising Social & Fundraising Events – a chance to swap ideas and learn about licences, risk assessment, publicity and money-handling.

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) – a no-nonsense and non-technical session tailored to the needs of parent groups to give you an understanding of how PVG (the new disclosure system) works and what you need to do.

If you would like to arrange to organize one of these sessions at your school then please contact Eleanor Coner either by telephone on 0131 474 6177 or email: Eleanor@sptc.info Sessions can be organized at a time to suit you – either daytime or evening.

September 2013