

Constitution for St Columba's High School Parent Council

1. Name

This is the constitution for St Columba's High School Parent Council. Hereafter known as the Council.

2. Functions

The Council is established in accordance with the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. The functions of the Parent Council are –

- to work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school which is inclusive for all parents*
- to promote partnership between the school, its pupils and all its parents*
- to develop and engage in activities which support the education and the welfare of the pupils*
- to identify and represent the views of the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils*
- to ascertain the views of the Parent Forum and report these to the Head Teacher and the Education Department*
- to participate in consultation regarding school improvement planning*
- to ensure effective communications between parents and the school*
- to raise funds to support extra-curricular activities organised by the school*
- to promote links between the school and its associated parishes*
- to further develop and strengthen links between the school and its associated primaries*

3. Membership

The membership will be a minimum of 6 parents (see Note 1) of children attending the school. The maximum number of parent members should be set by the Council.

Any parent of a child at the school can volunteer to be a member of the Parent Council. In the event that the number of volunteers exceeds the number of places set out in the constitution, members will be selected by drawing lots. Anyone not selected to be a member of the Parent Council may be offered the opportunity to be part of any sub-groups set up by the Council.

Parents can also be nominated by other parents to join the Parent Council.

Parents will be a member of the Parent Council for a period of 4 years, or until a parent's youngest child leaves the school, or until a member gives notice of resigning position.

The Parent Council may co-opt up to (number to be agreed by the Parent Forum and will depend on the size of the Parent Council) to assist it with carrying out its functions. Co-opted members could include school staff both teaching and non-teaching. In denominational schools one such co-opted member must be nominated by the Church or denominational body in whose interest the school is conducted.

The Head Boy and Head Girl will be invited to represent pupils' views.

The number of parent members on the Council must always be greater than the number of co-opted members.

The Council may appoint such special or standing committees as it deems necessary and will determine their terms of reference, powers, duration, and composition. All proceedings of such special committees will be reported to the Council.

The Council currently has 3 sub-groups with agreed responsibilities. These are –

- *Communication*
- *School Improvement*
- *Fund Raising*

4. Officers

The Chair and Vice Chair will be agreed by the Parent Council members immediately following its formation. Office bearers will be reselected by the Parent Council on an annual basis.

Only a person who is a member of the school's Parent Forum may chair the meetings.

5. Accountability

The Parent Council is accountable to the Parent Forum of St Columba's High School and will report to the Forum at least once a year on its activities on behalf of all parents.

If 5% of members of the Parent Forum (approximately 30) request a Special General Meeting to discuss issues falling within the Council's remit, the Parent Council will arrange this. The Parent Council will give all members of the Forum at least 2 weeks notice of the meeting and, at the same time, circulate notice on the matter, or matters, to be discussed at the meeting.

6. Meetings of the Council

The Annual General Meeting will be held in April of each year. A notice of the meeting including date, time, and place will be sent to all members of the Parent Forum at least two weeks in advance. The meeting will include –

- *a report of the work of the Parent Council and its sub-groups*
- *selection of the new Parent Council*
- *discussion of issues that members of the Parent Forum may wish to raise*

The Parent Council will meet at least once every school term. The date and time of meetings has to be agreed by members of the Council.

Two thirds of the Parent Council should be present to provide a quorum.

The Head Teacher, or his / her representative, has both a right and a duty to attend Council meetings.

Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, each parent member and co-opted member will have one vote, with the Chair having a casting vote in the event of a tie.

One third of the members of the Parent Council can request that an additional meeting be held, and all members of the Council will be given at least one week's notice of date, time and place of the meeting.

Meetings of the Parent Council shall be open to the public, unless the Parent Council is discussing an issue which it considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis. In such circumstances, only members of the Parent Council and the Head Teacher, or his or her representative, can attend.

If a Parent Council member acts in a way that is considered by other members to undermine the objectives of the Parent Council, their membership of the Parent Council will be terminated if the majority of the members agree. Termination of membership would be confirmed in writing to the member.

Copies of the minutes of all meetings will be available to all parents at St Columba's High School and to all teachers at the school. Minutes of each meeting are published within one week of the meeting. Copies will be available from the Secretary of the Parent Council and from the school office. Copies of the minutes will also be available via the school website.

Agendas for meetings are available one week before the meeting, members of the Council are asked to identify items for the agenda.

7. Finance

The Council may raise funds by any legal means, other than borrowing, and may use these funds to carry out its functions at its discretion and in line with appropriate

legislation and in accordance with the functions of the Council. The Council may also receive gifts.

Funds raised by the Parent Council, or fund raising sub-group will be deposited in a dedicated budget line in St Columba's High School School Fund.

The school will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure, and will provide a summary of this for each Parent Council meeting and a full account should be presented at the Annual Meeting. The Parent Council's funds will be audited by the auditor appointed to audit St Columba's High School School Fund account.

8. Constitution

The Parent Council may change its constitution after obtaining consent from a majority of members of the Parent Forum. Members of the parent Forum will be sent a copy of the proposed changes and given reasonable time to respond to the proposal.

9. Winding up

Should the Parent Council cease to exist, any remaining funds will be passed to the school to be used for the benefit of the school, where this continues.

Note 1

The Act uses the broadly framed definition of 'parent' set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes –

- *non-resident parents who are liable to maintain or have parental responsibilities in respect of a child*
- *carers who can be parents*
- *others with parental responsibilities eg foster carers, relatives and friends who are caring for children and young people under supervision arrangements*
- *close relatives, such as siblings or grandparents caring for children who are not looked after or are under home supervision arrangements*