



Scoil Mhuire Student Council Policy



Definition of a Student Council

A student council is a representative structure through which students in a primary school can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management and staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students.

The Role of the Student Council

The role of the Student Council is to:

- Provide an opportunity for pupils to voice their opinions and offer suggestions in relation to many aspects of school life.
- Offer an opportunity for all pupils 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 pupils and between home and school.
- Encourage pupils and thereby parents, to organise events central to the life of the school.
- Provide an opportunity to raise funds for charities and / or the school.

The Election Process

- Every September, 2 representatives from each of the Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes are elected by secret ballot and take a seat on the Council for the duration of that academic year. Students may only be appointed to the role of a class representative once during their time in Scoil Mhuire, but may apply for any of the officer positions in 6th Class.
- If there is only one class grouping, the teacher encourages the class to choose a male and a female representative from the class. If there are two class groupings, one male or female can be chosen from each of the classes.
- 6th Class students wishing to sit on the Student Council as officers -Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, must first submit written applications to the teaching staff. Following this, a cohort of students will be interviewed by staff to complete the selection process. These positions will be announced prior to class representative elections and will be filled based on merit, regardless of whether the students have served on the Student Council previously or not.
- If there is an eligible candidate from Rooms 3 & 4, their teachers may select one member to represent these rooms. This student should be of at least 3rd Class level.
- The elected pupils are required to be active participants in the Council, attend meetings regularly, participate in activities and be a role model for other students.
- At the beginning of each year, an information session is held to discuss the role of the Student Council and the type of person who is best suited to being a Student Councillor. Any student who is interested may take a nomination form. Each nomination form must be signed by an adult and seconded by a peer. Those candidates who successfully obtain the 2 signatures, will have their names entered on a ballot paper.
- Each candidate will speak in advance to persuade their classmates to vote for them. An election is held in September. All children from third class to sixth class are entitled to vote and will number the candidates 1-7 (for example) in order of preference.
- The first two candidates in each class grouping to reach the quota are deemed elected. *(When the papers have been counted and sorted, the quota is calculated by dividing the Total Valid Poll by one more than the number of seats to be filled, ignoring any remainder and then adding 1 vote)*
- The student council meets once every fortnight at lunchtime. Council Meetings are facilitated by a 'Student Council Liaison Teacher', who acts as a non-voting member of the student council to provide assistance to the council and to act as the link between the council and teachers and management.

Scoil Mhuire Student Council Policy

- Prior to these meetings, the Student Council representatives collect ideas and suggestions from all classes, for the agenda. These items are then discussed, and then sometimes brought to 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 the classes.
- The Student Council reports back termly to the staff and the Board of Management. .
- Each member wears a student council badge so that they are instantly recognisable as a student representative.

From time to time the Student Council may discuss, make suggestions and decisions on topics such as:

- School rules & policies
- Anti-Bullying
- Friendship
- Lunchtime games and activities
- Behaviour and discipline
- Making the yard a happy place
- Care for the building
- Promotion of initiatives e.g. frásaí na seachtaine
- Health and safety
- Uniform
- Homework
- Fundraising
- Special Presentations e.g. flag raising

Removal/Exclusion Procedures:

- Student Council members represent the student body and are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.
- The Student Council has the right to remove a member, if that member fails to attend meetings or is not committed to the work or aims of the Council. A new Class Representative will be elected by their class.
- It is expected that all Council members would abide by the schoolCode of Behaviour and failure to do so may lead to a Council member forfeiting their position.

Conclusion

Through our Student Council we hope to give our pupils a more active role in the organisation of our school and ensure they are listened to and respected for their ideas and concerns. The school involves the students in many of the decisions that are made regarding the day-to-day running and management of Scoil Mhuire Leixlip. 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.

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 15/01/19, following its initial ratification on 04/10/16.

Signed:



Date: 15/01/19

Chairperson, BOM