

## West Linton Primary School Parent Council – Constitution

- This is the constitution for the Parent Council of West Linton Primary School
- The Parent council will be known as West Linton Primary School Parents' Council (*'the Council'*)
- In this document, the words '*Parent Forum*' mean the parents and carers of children attending West Linton Primary School, and the words '*Parent Members*' mean members of the Parent Forum who are Members of the Council. The word '*Members*' means, collectively, the Parent Members, Staff Members and Co-Opted Members of the Council. The word '*school*' means West Linton Primary School.

### 1. Objectives of the Council

- 1.1 The Council will work in partnership with the school, its pupils, parents, the local community and Scottish Borders Council to help every pupil maximise his or her potential. Specifically, the Council will:
- 1.2 Operate in such a way that it is accessible to and inclusive of all members of the Parent Forum, such that all members are encouraged to interact with the Council and to participate in its activities;
- 1.3 Identify and represent the views of the Parent Forum on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of all pupils;
- 1.4 Oversee the work of a PTA sub-group whose objectives can be found in Section 4 below;
- 1.5 Develop and engage in activities that target best practice in the education and welfare of all pupils;
- 1.6 Where appropriate, take a lead and/or support the school in discussions with Scottish Borders Council and the Scottish Executive; and
- 1.7 Communicate with the Parent Forum on its recent activities and planned future activities and initiatives.
- 1.8 In line with Scottish Borders Council policy, Parent Council members will be involved in the recruitment of senior school staff (Head Teacher and Deputy Head). Only members who have completed the

appropriate staff recruitment training course may sit on a recruitment panel.

- 1.9 The Council will not become involved in matters where formal procedures already exist for dealing with such matters or which are more appropriately dealt with through other means, in particular, issues relating to individual pupils.

## **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The parent membership of the Council will be a minimum of five and a maximum of 25 members of the Parent forum. Any member of the Parent Forum may volunteer to be a Member of the Council.
- 2.2 There will be up to 3 Staff Members of the Council selected from among the staff of the school, including, ideally one Member from among support staff. Staff Members will be nominated by the staff body and will represent the views of all of the staff of the school. Staff members will be selected for a period of two years after which they may put themselves forward for re-selection if they so wish, serving for a maximum of six consecutive years.
- 2.3 The Head Teacher will attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity.
- 2.4 The quorum for the council will be the greater of either two Parent Members and one Staff Member or one third of the total number of Members.
- 2.5 The Council may invite any such persons as may be required to its meetings to assist it in its activities, including members of the Pupil Council.
- 2.6 The Council may establish any such committees or sub-groups, either permanent or temporary, as it sees fit in order to assist in its work. Membership of such groups or committees must consist of at least one Parent Member, who will act as Chair of that committee or sub-group, together with any other persons invited to join by the Council.

## **3. Co-opted Members**

- 3.1 The Council may co-opt further Members (Co-Opted Members) to assist it with carrying out its functions.
- 3.2 Co-opted members could be members of teaching/support staff. They could be members of the local community for example, councillors, business people, church leaders.
- 3.3 Co-opted members do not require to be members of the Parent Forum.
- 3.4 Co-opted members will serve for a maximum of two years after which they may be considered for re-selection if they so wish.
- 3.5 Co-opted members will have an advisory role, will not have any voting rights and do not make up part of the Quorum.
- 3.6 The number of parent members must always be greater than the number of co-opted members.

#### **4. PTA**

- 4.1 The school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) will operate as the fund-raising arm of the Council. The Council will devolve its fund-raising powers to the PTA. The PTA will raise funds in support of enhancing the opportunities for the children within the school.
- 4.2 Funds raised by the PTA will be accounted for within the Parent Council financial accounts.
- 4.3 The Chair of the PTA will be a co-signatory with the Treasurer of the Parent Council to the Parent Council bank account.
- 4.4 The PTA will operate in order to promote fund-raising and social activities within the school community, and will work in partnership with the Parent Council in agreeing fund-raising objectives.
- 4.5 The Chair of the PTA will be a Member of the Council.
- 4.6 The PTA will decide its own membership. Members of the PTA may also be Members of the Council.

## **5. Office Bearers and Responsibilities of Members**

- 5.1 The Office Bearers of the Council will be the Chair, Secretary, PTA Chair and Treasurer. Office Bearers will be selected by Members immediately following the Council's formation, and thereafter at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), via a process of nomination and seconding.
- 5.2 The Chair must be a Parent Member. The second and subsequent Chairs should, where possible, have previously served on the Council for a period of not less than one year before taking up the office of Chair.
- 5.3 Upon the resignation of the Chair, where possible, they should then assume the role of Deputy Chair for a period of 6 months in order to mentor/support the new Chair in their role and to facilitate handover of responsibilities.
- 5.4 The Chair will be selected for a maximum period of three years, a minimum period of one year. Office Bearers (excluding the Chair) will be selected for a period of two years, after which they may put themselves forward for re-selection if they so wish, serving for a maximum of six consecutive years.
- 5.5 A Parent Member of the Council will be responsible for representing the views of parents and carers of children within each class within the School (including Nursery) and for acting, where appropriate, as a point of contact for the Pupil Council member for that class. Nominations for these roles should be sought at the AGM.
- 5.6 A Parent Member may be responsible for representing the views of parents or carers of children with additional needs. Nominations for this role should be sought at the AGM.

## **6. Accountability and Governance**

- 6.1 The Council is accountable to the Parent Forum and will make a report to it at least once each year on its activities.
- 6.2 All members of the Parent Forum and of the staff of the school may attend Council meetings and may request, via the Chair and with no less than 2 weeks' notice, that an item be added to the agenda and discussed at a Council meeting.
- 6.3 Discussion at a Council meeting must relate only to agreed agenda items. Any member of the Parent Forum may participate in a discussion on an agenda item.
- 6.4 Meetings of the Council will be a maximum duration of two hours. If any agenda items have not been addressed in this time, these will be included in the agenda of the next meeting.
- 6.5 The Council will meet at least six times in any academic year and at least once in any academic term.
- 6.6 An additional meeting of the Council may be held if a majority of Members agree that such a meeting is required, and all Members will be given at least one week's notice of date, time and place of the meeting.
- 6.7 An AGM will be held in the Autumn term of each year. A notice of the AGM including date, time and place will be sent to all members of the Parent Forum at least two weeks in advance. The AGM agenda will include:
- A report on the work of the Council and its committees;
  - An invitation to Members of the Parent Forum and of the school staff to volunteer as Members of the Council and to appoint such volunteers as Members of the new Council in accordance with this constitution; and
  - Appointment of Office Bearers.
- 6.8 Prospective Co-Opted Members may be nominated by and Member following the AGM and if a majority of Members agree, such prospective Co-Opted Members will be appointed to the council at the first Council meeting after the AGM, and will serve on the Council until the following AGM.

- 6.9 Should any Member leave the Council, this should be done by notifying the Chair in writing and the remaining Members may, at any time, appoint a replacement Member.
- 6.10 Should a vote be necessary to make a decision at any meeting of the Council, each Member at the meeting will have one vote, with the Chair having an additional casting vote in the event of a tie.
- 6.11 Copies of the agenda and minutes of all meetings will be made publicly available.
- 6.12 Where the Council is discussing an issue which it considers to be confidential, only Members of the Council, the Head Teacher, or his or her representative, and any other persons invited by the Council may attend that part of the meeting at which such an issue is being discussed.
- 6.13 The Council may change its constitution after obtaining consent from the majority of members of the Parent Council. Members of the Parent Forum will be sent a copy of any proposed amendment and given 2 weeks to respond to the amendments.

## **7. Finance & Administration**

- 7.1 The Parent Council shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies are used in accordance with the objectives of the Parent Council.
- 7.2 The Treasurer will look after the Parent Council financial accounts. Bank account withdrawals will require the signature of both the PTA Chair and Parent Council Treasurer. The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure and will provide a full account for the AGM.
- 7.3 The PTA has the power to decide how funds raised are spent in accordance with the PTA's aims and subject to the following conditions (which may be reviewed when and if the Council determines it necessary):
- Up to £300 spending – to be authorised by a majority vote of the PTA members
  - £300 to £1500 spending – to be authorised by a majority vote of the PTA and Parent Council members

- Over £1500 spending – to be authorised by a majority vote of the Parent Forum

7.4 The PTA shall be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the School Trips Fund, the details of which are attached as Appendix 1 to this document.

## **8. Excess Funds**

8.1 If for any reason the Parent Council should cease to exist, any remaining funds pertaining to the Parent Council will be used for the benefit of the School in accordance with guidelines acceptable to Scottish Borders Council.