

GIVING CHILDREN A VOICE

A Student Council At Work

WHAT IS A STUDENT COUNCIL?

- ◉ A Student Council is a representative structure for students which sets out “to promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school in co-operation with the board, parents and teachers” (Education Act).
- ◉ It gives a voice to students to express and share their ideas, interests and concerns.

ROLE OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

- ◉ Provide an opportunity for students to play an active, positive role in the school
- ◉ Represent the views of the students on matters of general concern to them
- ◉ Encourage and promote initiatives from the pupils
- ◉ Act as a channel for communication between students, management, staff and home.
- ◉ Encourage pupils to organise events
- ◉ Provide fundraising opportunities
- ◉ Play a role in policy development
- ◉ Collaborate with other groups in the school

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- ◉ school rules
- ◉ Anti Bullying Policy
- ◉ friendship
- ◉ healthy lunches
- ◉ behaviour and discipline
- ◉ making the yard a happy place
- ◉ care for the building
- ◉ vandalism
- ◉ health and safety
- ◉ uniform
- ◉ homework
- ◉ fundraising

SOME BENEFITS

- ◉ Empowers students
- ◉ Communication and respect between students, management, staff and parents are enhanced
- ◉ Creates an opportunity to acquire communication, planning and organisational skills
- ◉ A sense of ownership
- ◉ Taps in to leadership potential
- ◉ Students learn to negotiate and compromise
- ◉ Students are actively involved in problem solving and decision making
- ◉ Students feel valued
- ◉ Enhances self-esteem and confidence
- ◉ Promotes friendship and respect among pupils

OUR APPROACH

- ◉ Exploratory discussions - gather support and build a team.
- ◉ Principal plays an important role
- ◉ Proposal - staff, students (Assembly), Board of Management, parents
- ◉ **Process and procedures**
 - Resource pack - lesson plans
 - Nominations
 - Elections
 - Training

LESSON PLANS

- ◉ Rights and Responsibilities
- ◉ Images of Democracy
- ◉ The School Community
- ◉ Democracy in a Meeting
- ◉ Functions of a Student Council
- ◉ Election Steps
- ◉ Choosing Representatives

STRUCTURE

- ◉ 18 reps.
- ◉ Officers
- ◉ Teams (Display, Journalism/Media, Photography/Intercom - student leader, teacher co-ordinator)
- ◉ Meetings - format, location, organisation, agenda, minutes, planning template
- ◉ Action Plan - agree activities
- ◉ Communication
- ◉ Evaluation

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

- ◉ Basketball rings and backboards repaired or replaced
- ◉ Soap in bathrooms
- ◉ Curtains for the stage area
- ◉ Organised an art competition
- ◉ Pyjama Day fundraiser
- ◉ Easter Bunnies - pay it back!
- ◉ Student Voice - SC Newsletter
- ◉ Visit to Ombudsman for Children's Office
- ◉ Strictly- Children Only!
- ◉ Official representatives at school events, receiving awards, meet and greet team, Loreto Debates Finals, Proclamation Day, Official Opening of New Building

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

- ◉ Collaborations: Christmas Colours Day, Family Fun Day - PA
- ◉ Healthy Lunch Policy - surveys and consultation - HPS
- ◉ Be Well Week: Happiness and Activity Ambassadors
- ◉ Lip Sync School Battle! - Presenters, judges, stage managers/directors, sound technicians, hall supervisors

HAVE A LOOK!

- ◉ A few snaps!

