



Scoil San Carlo Senior

Roll No 19857V

Draft Student Council Policy

June 2020

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### 1. Rationale of a Student Council

A Student Council is a representative structure through which pupils in a 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 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12* states: *Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*
- *Towards 2016 (Section 30 – Children)* includes a commitment to promote “*the establishment and operation of democratic student councils in schools, in accordance with the Education Act 1998 and the National Children's Strategy*”.
- *The National Children's Strategy*, published in 2000, emphasises the importance of student councils as a mechanism for giving young people a voice in schools.

**Scoil San Carlo Senior and its Board of Management believe that our pupils should play an active, positive role in the life of the school and our Student Council helps to achieve this.**

In doing so, we intend that they are listened to and respected for their ideas and concerns and that they feel these are both valued and valuable.

We want to involve the pupils in many of the decisions which are made regarding the day-to-day running and management of the school.

Discussions in classes and at the Council meetings help to develop social and learning skills in many areas such as speaking and listening, problem solving and the decision-making process.

Assuming roles on the council increases pupils' experience, and their confidence.

## **2. Mission Statement**

The mission of the Student Council is to build responsible leaders within our school community and promote the values that represent good character in all students.

It will create a better sense of responsibility and cooperation among students as they take ownership of school issues.

It will provide students with an environment in which they have the opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills, and also to actively problem-solve.

It will present pupils with the opportunity to learn and practice the democratic process.

It will serve as a positive form of communication between pupils and staff where efforts and ideas are shared.

It will help to improve school spirit through the organisation of school and community projects.

## **3. The Role of the Student Council**

- To play a very important role in improving our school and the lives of pupils in our school
- Be a voice for all pupils by consulting with them on aspects of school life and by informing them of issues of importance within the school.
- Discuss issues relevant to the school and encourage and promote initiatives from the pupils
- Support other initiatives within the school including Green schools, Active Flag etc.
- Encourage pupils and their parents, to be involved in events central to the life of the school
- To support our curriculum
- Organize events to raise funds for charities or for specific school equipment which may not be the responsibility of the Board of Management.

## **4. Responsibilities of the Student Council**

Student council members must conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times.

They must act responsibly and with integrity.

They should be positive role models for other pupils.

They must try to uphold and promote our school motto at all times:

*Samhlaíocht, Saothar agus Cúram – Creativity, Hard work and Compassion*

## **5. The Electoral Process**

Each October students in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class will be addressed at assembly where the role of the school council will be outlined.

Pupils in 3<sup>rd</sup> class will be consulted on and informed of all relevant issues as they arise by representatives of the council.

Within the same week, classes are encouraged to discuss the role of the council and pupils who wish to stand for election may prepare and deliver a manifesto/ speech to their classmates.

One boy and one girl are selected from each class 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> through Class Elections with “first past the post” selection by secret ballot.

Existing student council members are entitled to re-apply for election if they so wish.

Student Council members are elected in October for one school year.

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.

Failure to do so may result in being replaced on the council.

In the instance of a council member being unable to continue in office, a class assistant councillor (who will have finished in second place in the election process) will take their place- boy replacing a boy, girl replacing a girl.

Each member wears a student council badge so that they are instantly recognisable as a student representative.

## **6. Council Meetings**

Members must attend monthly meetings to be held at different intervals including lunchtimes or after school. On occasion, it may be necessary to hold meetings more frequently, i.e. before a planned event.

Prior to meetings, the Student Councillors collect ideas and suggestions from all classes for discussion at the meetings.

1. The role of Chairperson will be shared on a rotation basis by the 6<sup>th</sup> class councillors. The Chairperson will be responsible for running the meeting.
2. The role of Secretary will be shared on a rotation basis by councillors at the other class levels.
3. Minutes will be taken at all meetings by the secretary and read at the beginning of any further meetings.
4. The Liaison teacher(s) who are members of the ISM (In-school Management team) will act as assistant chair to help in the running of meetings

5. As well as bringing matters to the council for discussion, all councillors will be responsible for being Communications Officers to report the outcome of meetings to the school in general, to their own class and to the 3<sup>rd</sup> classes.
6. A majority in favour will be used to decide on actions.
8. Representatives will be chosen as required to report or to bring issues to the school principal.
7. Where there is a deadlock on an issue the school principal will be consulted.

Examples of topics that may be discussed by the Student Council include:

- Anti-Bullying/ Friendship
- Lunchtime games and activities
- Behaviour and discipline
- School Rules & Policies
- Homework
- Care for the building
- Promotion of new or existing initiatives
- Health and Safety
- Uniform
- Fundraising
- Special Presentations

**Initial Meeting:**

The first meeting will be an information meeting where the obligations and duties of student council members will be outlined by the Liaison teacher(s).

Councillors will be asked to sign a commitment document to accept the obligations and duties (see below)

**San Carlo Senior Council Commitment:**

As Student council members we will conduct ourselves in a proper manner at all times.

We will act as positive role models for other pupils.

We will do our best to uphold and promote our school motto at all times:

*Samhlaíocht, Saothar agus Cúram – Creativity, Hard work and Compassion*



We will accomplish our mission through:

- Leading by example in our classrooms and in our school community by being respectful, responsible, and safe.
- Helping others in our school community and our local community by being involved in charity work.
- Engaging our friends and classmates in their education by helping to organise and support positive initiatives and projects in the school.
- Serving as a source of communication between the students and management of the school.

## **7. Conclusion / Evaluation**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil San Carlo Senior  
on \_\_\_\_\_

It will be due for Review in \_\_\_\_\_ following consultation by means  
of feedback from staff, pupils and the parent body.

