

St. Eithne's School Student Council.

Vision and Aims

St. Eithne's Student Council was established during the school year 2006-2007 as a pilot project. As a result of interviews with the pupils involved and some of the teachers, it was decided that the council would become a permanent fixture in the school. The principal aim of the council is to provide an open forum to facilitate communication between the teaching staff and the pupils in the school. Fundamental to this open communication is the co-operation and support of the school's staff. A Student Council is also a practical introduction to active citizenship practises, as highlighted in *Developing Citizenship* strand of the curricular area of S.P.H.E.

The vision of the student council very much reflects the vision statement of the school, "Growing and Learning Together" and it is hoped that participating in the council will benefit the pupils by:

- Fostering positive attitudes towards school, which can be crucial in increasing pupils' retention levels in secondary school,
- The pupils feeling a greater sense of ownership over the school and its policies and practises, also a very important element for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds,
- Strengthening already positive relationships between staff and pupils, resulting in the school becoming a more positive learning environment for all.

Practical Elements of the Council

- Pupils from fifth and sixth class are invited to nominate themselves for membership of the council at the beginning of the school year and are anonymously “voted in” by their peers in a class election.
- Meetings of the student council take place on the first Monday of every month during lunch-time and additional meetings and council-related activities may also take place throughout the month.
- Issues discussed during council meetings are decided upon as a result of suggestions placed in the council’s suggestion box and /or issues which are brought to the attention of the council members by other pupils or by staff members.

Communication with the Wider School Community

Minutes of the council meetings are typed and subsequently distributed to class teachers.

Matters which require staff and /or principal consent are discussed at the monthly staff meetings. More urgent council matters are discussed directly between council members and the principal.

Any student council news is displayed on the council notice-board on the main school corridor.

Review

The operation and policies of the student council will be reviewed on an annual basis by the teacher with responsibility for the council. They will be amended as appropriate in favour of the best interests of the school.
