



FARNEY CLOSE SCHOOL

School Council Policy and Procedure

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School Council

What is the role of the School Council (previously known as School Forum)?

Farney Close is committed to listening to and responding to the voice of all of the children and young people.

The Council gives the children and young people at Farney the opportunity to get together and talk about their school. This would include things that they may like about the school and other things they may like to change.

Our School Council aims to encourage our young people to:

- Develop confidence and responsibility and make the most of their abilities
- Prepare them to play an active role as citizens
- Develop healthy, safer lifestyles
- Develop good relationships and respect the differences between people
- To have a "voice" and to share their opinions and ideas with others

Our School Council aims to ensure our young people have:

- A safe, happy and fair learning environment
- A Council to voice their concerns and act upon them
- A structured opportunity to learn problem-solving skills
- An opportunity to take an active role in the organisation of the school
- An opportunity to experience a democratic process

Our School Council should encourage our young people to develop:

- A sense of ownership over policy and practice
- A consensus over school issues such as behaviour
- A responsibility towards the school community and environment

Our School Council should give our young people the experience of:

- Planning, organising and monitoring small projects
- Speaking and listening skills
- Debating skills
- Mediation and negotiating skills
- A clearer understanding of basic budgeting

Who sits on the School Council?

One young person from each house group and day pupils, this is representation from all age groups, Principal, Head of Care, Head of Education, Catering Manager, Independent Counsellors, Activities Co-ordinator, school Social Worker.

Farney Close School's Primary pupils will meet separately forming their own Primary School Council. This will include all primary pupils and will stand alone from the secondary part of the school.

Who selects who sits on the School Council?

Each house and day pupils will hold an election once a year where house members can put themselves forward to be elected to represent other children and young people on their house and day pupils. The young people who wish to put themselves forward will talk to other young people about why they feel they would make a good house representative, other young people who attend the school will have the opportunity to vote on who they feel they think the best candidate would be. The Head of Care will supervise the election process to ensure the more dominating characters do not use this as an opportunity to pressure their peers into selecting them or use the School Council for their own agenda.

Once selected for the School Council do the young people have to attend?

If a young person is unwell or not in school their place will be held open for them until the next meeting. If they refuse to attend more than one meeting then an election on that house will take place to ensure that there is the correct representation of the young people present. In this way we hope to ensure that a true reflection of the views of the whole school is gained.

When and where does the School Council meet?

The Council meets approximately once a half term on a Thursday between 3pm and 4pm in the meeting room. Dates are set in advance. If it is felt that the Council would benefit from an extra meeting one would be called by the Head of Care.

Who decides on the agenda for these meetings?

Anyone in the school can ask a Council member to place an item on the agenda. Views can be represented by both adults and young people. Items for the agenda are to be given to the Head or Head of Care at least 48 hours before the next meeting.

On each house there is a suggestion box available for all young people to write suggestions. It is the responsibility of the Council representative from each house to take the suggestions to the Council meeting.

At each Council meeting the representatives will decide on a project for each half term and will work together to plan and organise, inviting others in the school community to take part

Who Chairs these meetings?

The members of the Council will elect one young person to chair the meetings, they will be supported by the Head of Care.

Who compiles the minutes of these meetings?

The Head of Care will take the minutes which are then checked for accuracy by a selection of the others who were present at the meeting before being completed and distributed. The previous minutes are looked at and passed at the start of each meeting.

Who feedbacks to other young people?

After each meeting every member of the School Council feeds back what has been discussed at the School Council meeting to their house group in house meetings. This process ensures that all young people at Farney Close are made aware of what is being discussed and are also given an opportunity to talk in a group about what they would like their representative to take to a Council meeting on their behalf. Council members will have involvement in being responsible for following up actions from the meeting and feeding back to the other council members at the next meeting.

Who follows up the actions from the meeting?

The young people will jointly take responsibility to follow up actions from the meeting and feed back to the next Council meeting the outcome from those actions.

Who received the minutes for these meetings?

All members of the School Council, the Principal, who will also share with the Governors, all House groups day pupils and staffrooms will receive minutes of the meetings. This ensures that the information is disseminated to all adults and young people.

Can the young people continue to use others ways of expressing their views?

The Council is in place as an extra opportunity for young people to voice their views. Young people can continue to use the facilities already available to them i.e. Speaking directly to any adults who may work with them, at any point of the day, independent visitors, counsellors and therapists, plus in a group setting via their House Meetings. Their views will also continue to be actively sort through Link Worker time, Tutor time, House Meetings, Care Plans and at their annual reviews.

Who has a copy of this Policy?

All Members of the Council have a copy of the Policy. A further copy will be found on each house group and in all PPP's.