



# **DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT**

**Student Council**

**April 2023**

*Reviewed & updated: April 2023 (Ben Betterton)*

*Next review date: April 2026*

## **DURANTS SCHOOL – Student Council Policy**

### **Our School Setting**

Durants school is an Autism specific setting made up of pupils with varying levels of need. Our pupil population is made up of children and young adults, some whom can communicate using verbal language and some whom require non-verbal communication aids to help them interact effectively.

### **Our Council**

Durants Student Council is a teacher led body of classroom/ staff elected pupils whose purpose is to represent their department in the school. The council meetings should provide opportunities for elected pupils to further develop both emotionally and socially and be a setting for active and constructive pupil input into the daily life of the school.

### **Introduction**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for Student Council at Durants School and its implementation is the responsibility of all members of staff at Durants. Durants Student Council is a vital part of our school ethos as it provides all young people – irrespective of ability, personality, race or class the opportunity to feel valued and safe within an inclusive and caring school community. Schools with an ethos of mutual respect develop into caring communities, which will impact on pupil wellbeing and give each individual the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to their schools actions and environment.

### **Student Council Aims and Objectives**

- Provide the opportunity for pupils to become partners in their own education and to make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos
  - Develop and promote children's self-confidence, social skills and their responsible behaviour towards each other and towards their teachers and adult members of staff
- Develop the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of how to contribute to society as a whole and what it means to be an active citizen.
- Develop pupils effective speaking and listening skills
- Develop the pupil's recognition of themselves as worthy individuals with a right to be heard
- To allow the pupils to have a "voice" and to share their opinions and ideas with others using whichever communication aid is needed
- To allow pupils to become more responsible and actively involved in the decision-making process of the school.
  - To develop important life-skills that promote positive mental health and social welfare, emotional literacy, critical and moral reasoning, self-esteem, self-awareness, communication skills, relationship skills and assertiveness

### **Structure**

- At least three pupils from each department
- All pupils across whole school to have a vote
- One teacher to be school council lead teacher
- Council lead Teacher led sessions – Teacher to offer selection of topics or choose topic for discussion
- One teaching assistant from each department to act as pupil advocates
  - The head teacher may be invited, if required
- Representatives will serve for one year but can be re-elected for the following year if they want to stand
- Clear structure, rules and boundaries to every session

### **Organisation**

- School council meetings will be held at least twice every half term, depending on the length of the half term.
- Council lead teacher should inform all relevant staff of upcoming meetings well in advance of planned session

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- Class teachers and staff should support the processes required to make sure every child's opinion/ vote is heard (creation of resources to support pupil communication during meetings).
- A pupil should be designated where suitable to take minutes of meetings
- Representatives can put forward items for the agenda, which will be drawn up by the link teacher.
- There will be at least one main issue on the agenda for each council meeting as well as opportunities for all representatives to discuss other ideas raised by pupils in their class.