



DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT

Student Council

July 2026

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Next review date: July 2029

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.
 - Promote a sense of community and togetherness amongst pupils.
- 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
 - Students will have a structured platform to represent their peers, voice opinions to school staff, and actively participate in making decisions about school life.
 - To allow pupils to become more responsible and actively involved in the decision-making process of the school. Giving pupils a sense of ownership and responsibility for themselves and their peers.
- 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
 - To continue to promote the school council so that all pupils, parents and members of staff are aware of the school council and the work that it carries out.

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
- Pupil-directed with adult facilitation – ensure student council members can propose topics independently and teacher to provide resources to enable this
 - One teaching assistant from each department to act as pupil advocate - The Teaching Assistant (TA) role: their primary duty should be facilitating the pupils' voices rather than speaking on their behalf

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- 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 once 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. Time allowed before formal meetings for advocates and class teachers to review the agenda, gather and record individual student votes, and prepare contributions.
- 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 - minutes and council feedback can be recorded in multiple formats (e.g., photographs, object boards, AAC devices)
- 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.
- Council representatives will regularly gather feedback from their class peers and report back on actions taken, ensuring transparent communication across the student body. Implement a standardized "You Said, We Did" feedback loop to show pupils that their contributions lead to tangible school changes.