

Student Council - Policy Document

Corran College Mission Statement

Corran College by excelling in teaching and learning creates opportunities for excellence for all its students through an all embracing well balanced education. We aim to achieve the highest standards of learning and behaviour in a caring atmosphere where all students feel valued.

Introduction

In keeping with section 27 of the Education Act 1998 a student council is established in Corran College. A student council is a group of students from within the school elected to represent their fellow students. The student council is made up of students elected by their peers, members of staff to act as student liaison officers. The Students Council works with the Principal, co-ordinating teachers, Parents Council and students when organising events. The Board of Management and Staff actively encourage the Student Council to engage in a process of dialogue and consultation. The Student Council must respect the policies of the school in all matters. As soon as possible after the election, the new Student Council meets with the link teacher and Principal who work with the council. Their role is to assist and guide the members in all matters. All decisions must be discussed with both the student council link teacher and the Principal who attend meetings arranged by the members.

Aims

The aim of the student council is to act as a representative body and to liaise with other students, staff, school board and parent's council on matters of importance to students within the school. The Students Council has two main functions:

1. To give more responsibility to the students and allow them to participate more fully in school life.
2. To ensure that students will have say on matters that affects them.

The Student Council is primarily a voice for students and a forum for them to identify and articulate the views of the students. The Student Council may also:

1. Encourage students to act in a democratic manner and be independent.
2. Provide a forum for students to voice their opinions on broader issues of relevance to them.

3. Enhance skills, knowledge and the abilities of students such as participating in meetings, negotiating and problem solving.
4. To encourage partnership.
5. Give students the opportunity to make recommendations in connection with the running of the school.
6. Act as a communication link between the school authorities and students.
7. Organise extra curricular activities.
8. Manage specific services for students.
9. To support management and staff in the development of the school.
10. To contribute to development of school policy.
11. The Student Council has no involvement in the schools grievance or complaints procedures.
12. Provide opportunities for fundraising that can help subsidise extra curricular activities. Encourage an atmosphere of co-operation between students and staff.
13. To promote a two-way flow of information between student council and Board of Management.

Student Council Constitution

Preamble: The Student Council of the Corran College has been established to promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the Board of Management, Parents Council and teachers.

Membership : The Student Council of Corran College comprises:

- a) 12 members i.e. 2 students from each class group (one male and one female)
- b) A liaising teacher.

Election: The election of the members of the Student Council is organised by the liaising teacher in consultation with the Principal and C.S.P.E. teacher. Elections are held using the same procedures as those of the national elections using secret ballot, ballot boxes and returning officers.

Length of Office: Each council runs from *October to October*. The aim is to hold elections on the third Monday of September or as soon as possible thereafter and to have the Student Council up and running by the end of September or as soon as possible thereafter.

Officers: The Student Council shall elect the following officers:

- a) Chairperson
- b) Secretary
- c) Treasurer
- d) PRO
- e) Vice Chairperson
- f) Any other officer the Council thinks is necessary.

The Chairperson will be the principal officer of the council and will ensure that meetings are conducted in an orderly, democratic and business-like fashion. The Vice-Chairperson will act in the absence of the Chairperson. The primary functions of the Secretary will be to keep a written record of each meeting (to keep the minutes) and to read this to the council at the beginning of the next meeting. The names of the persons present should be recorded at the beginning of meeting. The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of the Councils finances and shall be required to submit a written report at each meeting. This will be recorded in the minute book. The Treasurer shall submit a final written report at the end of the year. The Student Council will be required to give a written report at the end of their term to the Board of Management.

Meetings: The Council shall determine its own schedule of meetings. A minimum notice of two school days will be given. It is the role of the Chairperson to call meetings. The Chairperson will declare the meeting open and ask the Secretary to read the minutes. When minutes are read, the Council will discuss any matters arising.

Correspondence is then dealt with. The Secretary reads any letter or any other important information received since the last meeting. The Chairperson and the Secretary will have an "Agenda" prepared i.e. a list of topics to be discussed. In so far as possible the agenda will be agreed upon at the end of each meeting for next meeting. Time should be given to members of the council to discuss matters not on the agenda, under the heading "any other business". - Such matters may be placed on a future agenda.

The quorum for a meeting should be five students.

The Chairperson should ensure that all comments are made "through the chair", i.e. that members should talk to the entire group, not to a person or group who might be sitting beside them. The Chairperson should be careful to ensure that all members are allowed to express their views as fully as possible. Members shall abide by the decision of chair at all times.

Removal of a Member: Members who are absent from three consecutive meetings without good reason (submitted in writing to the secretary) will cease to be members of the council. If the majority of the council agree that a certain member is not co-operating or fulfilling their responsibilities as a member, then any such member may be asked to resign from the council. Where the member does not do so in writing within five school days, the chairman shall refer the matter to the Principal for determination. Also the Board of Management on the advice of the principal may remove a member of the council in accordance with the board's rules and procedures in this regard. The Principal shall have the authority to remove a member of the Council following such a referral.

Any disciplinary action will follow due process and will ensure that all parties affected are given an opportunity to hear any allegations against them and to present a response.

Student Council members represent the student body and are expected to conduct themselves in a way that will not bring disgrace on the Student Council. The Council reserves the right to suspend the membership of any member whose conduct damages the reputation of the Student Council. All Student Council members will be required to sign declaration of conduct.

General

- 1) The Chairperson and Secretary or any delegated members may represent the Council in meetings with the principal or other bodies.
- 2) Where a vacancy occurs the Council may co-opt members onto the Council by majority vote.
- 3) Minutes must be recorded in a minute book and kept of all meetings. All attendance must be recorded. It is the responsibility of the individual that he/she signs the attendance sheet, which shall be circulated by the Secretary.
- 4) Council members may speak on any issue raised, but may not
 - Make any uncomplimentary mention of any member of staff, member of the management of the school or of any student by name or implication
 - Nor raise any matter that is not relevant to the aims of the Student Council.
 - Nor raise any grievance with another student or member of staff. Such matters should be raised with the Principal in the agreed manner.
- 5) The Staff Representative is free to intervene and stop any discussion if these conditions are broken.
- 6) A Staff Representative will normally be present at meetings. She/he should ensure that proper meeting procedure is adopted, particularly in the case of a new Council.

However, in so far as possible, the Council members should run their own affairs on their own initiative. The primary purpose of any Staff Representatives should be to act as a liaison between teachers and the council. If neither Staff Representatives are available to attend, the Principal will nominate another member of staff to substitute for the meeting.

Review

This Policy and Constitution shall be reviewed in September 2015.

Presented to Board of Management on (Date)_____

**Ratified by_____on behalf of Board of Management on
(Date)_____**