



ST. OLIVER POST PRIMARY SCHOOL

STUDENT VOICE POLICY

March 2022

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INTRODUCTION

'There is a need for greater awareness of the fact that representing children's views is not just a model of good pedagogical practice...but a legally binding obligation', (Lundy, L, 1997)

Students have a valuable contribution to make to the effectiveness of the school and active participation in an appropriate manner in the operation of the school is a valuable dimension of a student's educational experience; it provides preparation for citizenship and fosters mature behaviour.

The following policy is proposed in response to the growing demand for an accountable leadership and problem-solving learning opportunity for the young people under our care.

RATIONAL

St Oliver Post- Primary School provides many opportunities for young people to develop leadership and representation skills and we entrust pupils with responsibilities commensurate with their strengths and abilities. Formal pupil leadership provides important benefits for both the pupil and the school.

It has been proven that when children actively participate in leadership in school life, and their ideas and opinions are listened to and valued, they feel respected and encouraged to make further contributions. The benefits to the school and the pupils include:

- A. Improved communication skills;
- B. Enhanced academic performance for students involved;
- C. Greater commitment to the school from the wider student body;
- D. Positive influences on the climate of the school;
- E. A strengthened school spirit;
- F. Increased co-operation from all pupils; and
- G. A network of support for the pupil body.

Looking at Our Schools 2016: A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools states that leadership and management should "foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and holistic development of each student". The board of management and principal should "foster students' holistic development by providing a very broad range of curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities".

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Oliver Post Primary School is committed to quality education. It seeks to enrich students' lives and empower them for life's many challenges. This is done in a caring atmosphere of good order and discipline and in partnership with parents.

In our daily life we value the principles of justice, mutual respect, equality, and tolerance leading to promotion of a positive self-image and the confidence to achieve the highest levels.

GOALS

- To represent the student voice matters of general concern to students in St. Oliver Post Primary School;
- To support the management and staff in the development of the school;
- To enhance communication between students, management, staff and parents;
- To promote an environment conducive to educational and personal development;
- To promote friendship and respect among pupils;
- To contribute to the development of school policies;
- To nurture a range of important skills among students, such as participating in meetings, negotiating, responsible leadership and collaborative problem solving.

STUDENT VOICE STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Student Council

The Student Council has responsibility for:

- Working with the staff, Board of Management and Parents' Association in the school;
- Communicating and consulting with all the students in the school;
- Involving as many students as possible in the activities of the Council;
- Planning and managing the Council's programme of activities for the year;
- Managing and accounting for any funds raised by the council;
- The student council shall promote the interest of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the board of management, parents and teachers; and
- The council should be as far as is practicable, representative of each class or year group in the school.

Prefects

- To be a role model for other students, including punctuality, attendance, and behaviour;
- To demonstrate good work habits in all aspects of school life;
- To be competent in self-management and have good personal organisation skills;
- To be aware of the needs of fellow students and be aware of school expectations regarding behaviour;
- To be aware of situations which may affect student welfare;
- To help meet the needs of others by giving care and assistance to the pupils in the school;
- To act as friends and buddies for those who need support;
- To carry out other tasks and jobs as may be directed from time to time by staff; and
- To carry out 'meet and greet' functions under staff guidance.

Class Captains and Vice-Captains

A Class Captain and Vice-Captain is a role of responsibility in St Oliver Post-Primary School. Class Captains and Vice-Captains are representatives of their tutor group and have a series of roles and responsibilities.

Each class elects a Class Captain and Vice-Captain.

The position of class captain carries respect, responsiveness, and responsibility. The class captain reports on important matters to their Tutor and to their Year Head.

A class captain is different from a prefect insofar as it is a specific set of responsibilities to a class, whereas a prefect takes on responsibilities in a broader way around the environs of the school.

Cara Peer Mentors

The Cara peer mentoring programme enables students to support each other in terms of their wellbeing and mental health. Students from every year group meet regularly with their support teachers with a view to assisting the school in creating a caring and supportive school environment.

Digital Leaders

Our Digital Leader Team is chosen annually on application. Students are selected on their technical and problem-solving merits.

Successful students are chosen from non-exam years. Digital Leaders are generally tech savvy and assist Staff and fellow Students with IT related matters. The programme gives students a chance to share and develop their ICT skills.

MONITORING PROCEDURES

Management (Senior Management, B.O.M., and Assistant Principals) will monitor the implementation of this policy.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

As part of the review procedure, this policy will be circulated to all relevant stakeholders. The policy will be reviewed in light of suggestions received, relevant legislation, resources available to the school, and the best interests of the school community.

TIMEFRAME

The policy will be reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management every 2 years.

BOM & LMETB Ratification/Resolution Process for This Policy

BOM Ratification

<i>Date Ratified by the Board of Management:</i>	
<i>Proposed By:</i>	
<i>Seconded By:</i>	
<i>Signed:</i>	<i>(Chairperson, BOM)</i>
<i>Signed:</i>	<i>(Secretary to the BOM)</i>
<i>Scheduled Date for Review of the Policy:</i>	

LMETB Ratification/Resolution of the ETB Board

<i>Date of Resolution of ETB Board</i>	
<i>Signed</i>	<i>(Chairperson)</i>

Board of Management Policy Consultation Log

Please present this form to your BOM when considering the policy at BOM level for ratification

<i>School:</i>	<i>St Oliver Post Primary School</i>
<i>Policy:</i>	<i>Student Voice Policy</i>

Staff Consultation:

<i>Date of Final Consultation:</i>	<i>9th March 2022</i>
<i>Proposed By:</i>	<i>Conor Brady (Staff Member)</i>
<i>Seconded By:</i>	<i>Ailis NiAinle (Staff Member)</i>

Student Consultation:

<i>Date of Final Consultation:</i>	<i>9th March 2022</i>
<i>Proposed By:</i>	<i>John Ryan (Student)</i>
<i>Seconded By:</i>	<i>Ciara Quinn O'Brien (Student)</i>

Parents Consultation:

<i>Date of Final Consultation:</i>	<i>9th March 2022</i>
<i>Proposed By:</i>	<i>John Hetherton (Parents Association Member)</i>
<i>Seconded By:</i>	<i>Lesley Gleeson (Parents Association Member)</i>