**Newtown N.S. Student Council Policy**

What is a Student Council?

A Student Council is a representative structure for students only, through which they can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management, staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students. The student council works with a teacher, who is the link person between students and staff and management in the school.

**Role and Purpose of the Student Council**

Newtown National School considers it extremely important that our pupils have a lot of valuable opinions on a wide range of topics and issues that affect our school, and therefore, should have a voice and a platform on which to express it. The Student Council consists of members from every class in the school, from Junior Infants to 6th Class, so that every class is represented and their opinions and suggestions are given equal weight.

**The Role of the Student Council**

The role of the Student Council is to:

* provide an opportunity for pupils to voice their opinions and offer suggestions in relation to many aspects of school life
* discuss issues relevant to our school and encourage and promote initiatives from the pupils
* offer an opportunity for all pupils to voice their opinions on proposed changes and thereby play a very significant role in improving our school
* act as a channel of communication within the school organisation, between pupils and between home and school
* assisting in school sporting or cultural activities
* encourage pupils, and thereby their parents, to organise events central to the life of the school
* provide an opportunity to raise funds for charities or for our School Fund.
* ­ To support the management and staff in the development of the school
* ­ To promote friendship and respect among pupils

**The Election Process**

Every September, two representatives from each class level are elected by secret ballot and take their seats on the Student Council for the duration of that academic year. Nominees can put themselves forward and are invited to canvass prior to election. Each class can decide how best to go about canvassing, perhaps by designing posters, giving a speech to their class on why they feel they would make a good Student Council member, and so on. Each class will vote anonymously for their class representative(s). The elected pupils are required to be active participants in the Council, to attend meetings regularly, participate in activities and be a role model for other students. All Student Council members wear specially designed badges for easy identification.

Members meet once a month, on average, at lunchtime, in 5th & 6th Classroom.  Council Meetings are facilitated by a teacher. The teacher will not run the meeting, this is up to the Student Council. The teacher’s role is simply to supervise and facilitate the meeting. Prior to these meetings, the Student Council representatives collect ideas and suggestions from all classes, for the agenda.  There is also a Student Council Suggestion Box inside the main school door for pupils to submit ideas. These items are then discussed with the relevant people. As well as bringing matters to the Council for discussion, the members are required to report the outcome of meetings to the other classes.

The Student Council shall elect a Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary at their first meeting of the school year. A Vice-Chairperson, Vice-Treasurer and Vice-Secretary will also be elected in case of absence. The Chairperson is responsible for drawing up the Agenda and keeping meetings on track.

The Treasurer will keep track of all funds raised by the Student Council, keep a copy of all quotes and pricelists collected, and liaise with school secretary to lodge all funds raised.

The Student Council Secretary is responsible for recording minutes from every meeting and for drawing up of any letters or correspondence necessary. The President and Secretary will speak to the Principal about any matters arising from meetings. All other members of the Council will serve as Communications and Public Relations Officers to ensure they are communicating the work of the Council to Staff, Parents and Pupils.

Through our Student Council we hope to give our pupils a more active role in the organisation of our school and ensure they are listened to and respected for their ideas and concerns. Discussions in classes and at Council meetings help to develop social and learning skills in many areas including speaking and listening, teamwork, confidence, public speaking, problem solving, brainstorming and the decision-making process

Decisions of the Student Council

All decisions or ideas put forward to the Student Council must be voted upon and a majority must agree. In the case of a 50/50 tie, the idea will be voted upon by each pupil in the school in order to reach a decision.

Role of the Teacher Facilitator

The teacher facilitator will be to supervise meetings during lunchtime.

Role of the Board of Management

The Board of Management may wish to offer advice, support, encouragement or assistance to the Student Council as they see fit.

Role of the Parents’ Association

The role of the PA is also one of support and encouragement.

Ratification and Review Date:

Drawn up by the pupils of Newtown N.S. in November 2015 and ratified by the Board of Management in December 2015.

Review date: 2019, or earlier if need arises.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson BOM)

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Council Meetings Teacher Facilitators:**

2016:

Jan-Elaine

Feb-Niamh

Mar-Róisín

April-Nuala

May-Substitute for Elaine

June-Niamh

2016-17:

Sept: Róisín

Oct: Nuala

Nov: Substitute

Dec: Niamh:

Jan: Róisín

Feb: Nuala

Apr: Elaine

May: Niamh

Jun: Róisín

2017-18:

Sep-Nuala

Oct-Elaine

Nov-Niamh

Dec-Róisín

Continue each month in the same order as above.