



Loreto College Cavan

Student Council Constitution

NAME

The organisation shall be known as the Loreto College Student Council.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal reasons for the Student Council are:

- To promote a good working relationship between teachers and students.
- To promote the general welfare of the school and the community.
- To develop leadership qualities and organisational skills within the membership.
- To provide a forum for students to voice their opinions on issues that are relevant to them, giving them the experience of being involved in a consultative, democratic process.
- To promote and encourage a greater school spirit.
- To raise awareness and take an active role in school and extra-curricular activities. This may include the organisation of fund-raising initiatives.
- To encourage a positive involvement of all students in the life of the school.
- To discuss any aspect of school business which involves the students, with the exception of any uncomplimentary mention of any member of staff or management or student by name or implication.

NOMINATIONS

- Nominations will take place in the classroom setting in September (with the exception of first years which will take place in October). Every student nominates two students from their tutor class.
- Should a nominated candidate not wish to go forward to election stage the nomination is void and the next highest candidate will progress to elections.
- Nominees have five school days to canvass for votes in which time candidates may ask their subject teachers' permission to address their classmates and deliver their manifestos

ELECTIONS

- Elections will be conducted one week after nominations by way of secret ballot.
- It is recommended that the election process should take place in a central venue. A committee of students approved by the Liaison Teacher will be formed to supervise the polling stations. This committee will check the identity (by means of the student journal) of those voting and tick off the register of electors (the relevant year group listings). This committee will also assist in the counting of the votes, which will take place immediately after voting closes
- Elections will be by first past the post system, in the event of a tied vote a re-election may be necessary
- The list of elected members will be published not more than ten working school days after the date of the election.
- Results are final and may not be appealed.

MEMBERSHIP

- The Student Council shall sit from September to May.
- The Council membership shall consist of twelve students, elected from the student body as follows:
 - Two from First, Second, Third, Fifth and Sixth Years and two from Transition Year.
 - Election of First Year Representatives to the Student Council shall take place in late October, before the Mid-Term Break. In the interim period, the sixth Year Student Council members will present the interests of the First Years students.
- A student who has already served on the Student Council may be re-elected but students may serve no more than two consecutive terms of office

It is recommended that the outgoing officers on the Student Council should have a role to play in the training of incoming officers.

MEETINGS

- The Student Council shall meet at least-once a month at a time agreed by the officers, Liaison Teacher and/or by all members of the Council in consultation with the Principal and Liaison teacher, typically meetings are held fortnightly.
- Eight members and the Liaison Teacher must be present at a meeting in order for it to be valid.
- The Principal and/or Deputy Principal reserve the right to attend meetings.
- An agenda must be made available to all council members in advance of the meeting
- Any student or member of staff may suggest items for inclusion on the agenda. This may be done by any of the following means, at least one week before the date of a meeting:
 - Using the suggestion box at the student council notice board (Such suggestions must be signed.)
 - Using one's school e-mail account to write to the school e-mail account of any member of the Council or the Liaison Teacher
 - Speaking directly to any member of the Council or the Liaison Teacher
- Where possible, an agenda will include an item of "any other business" (AOB), to allow for the discussion of later submissions
- When making a decision, any member of the Council may call for a vote to be held, and where the votes are divided evenly, the Chairperson will have the casting vote. The final decision will rest with the Principal. (The Liaison Teacher does not have a vote.)
- Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded by the Secretary

OFFICERS

- The Student Council membership shall include the offices of Chairperson, Assistant Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Two Joint P.R.O.s, Website and IT Officer , Equality Officer and Attendance Officer elected annually at the first meeting of the Student Council.
- Vacancies among the officers shall be filled by a special election within the Council.
- It is advised that Sixth Year Members not be elected as officers to the Council, so as to ensure that they are free from any distraction from their studies that appointment as an officer might cause. However, if a Sixth Year Member is nominated to hold a position as an officer to the Council, she has the right to accept or refuse the nomination.

Other roles may be created according to the Council's and the school's needs (e.g. Art Director, Policies Coordinator, etc). Such roles may cease to exist if no longer deemed necessary by the council

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. THE CHAIRPERSON

- Act as chief spokesperson of the council
- Call meetings of the council
- With council members, draw up the agenda for each meeting
- Chair meetings in a fair manner, ensuring that all have an equal say
- Sign any letters, notices, etc that are issued by the council
- Liaise with school authorities
- Ensure that the council is run effectively and efficiently

2. THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- Takes over the responsibility of the chairperson when unavailable
- Assists the chairperson in the running of the council

3. THE SECRETARY

- Take the minutes at meetings and write them up
- Distribute and read out the minutes from previous meetings
- Make progress reports, keep records of all work being carried out, and post those records on the notice board of the council

4. TREASURER

- Keep financial records in order and report to the council regularly on the current financial status of the Council
- Count and sort money raised during fundraising and communicates with school secretary to lodge money
- Pay bills and control petty cash
- Must obtain the permission of the Chairperson before expenditure can take place
- Prepare and present a financial report to the council at the last Council meeting of the summer term and present the financial report to the Principal

5. ASSISTANT TREASURER

- Assist the treasurer in all financial matters
- Be present and assist with all collection and counting of money

6. PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS

- Keep students informed about the activities of the council by means of the school intercom, year group assemblies, posters etc
- Maintain and update the notice board of the council regularly
- Feed information on council activities into student and parent publications where possible

7. EQUALITY OFFICER

- Make sure every student in a minority group is represented equally and ensure facilities and extracurricular clubs are available to all students
- Promote equality on a student level and inform the council of any upcoming events campaigns or other information regarding student level equality
- Be involved in the organisation of Culture Day

8. WEBSITE AND IT OFFICER

- Ensure the student council presence on the website is maintained and updated regularly
- Create and manage online forms that may be required for surveying students/staff
- Feed information on council activities into school social media

9. ATTENDANCE OFFICER

- Keep a record of attendance at every meeting
- Give apologies for council members who are unable to attend a meeting

SUB-COMMITTEES

The Student Council reserves the right to form sub-committees. A sub-committee will consist of at least three members. Any activity proposed by a sub-committee is subject to the approval of the Student Council. Sub-committees must report regularly to the Council on their progress.

FILLING VACANCIES

Where a vacancy occurs on the Council, the vacancy shall be filled by an election within the year group concerned.

REMOVING MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council, in consultation with the Principal and the Board of Management, reserves the right to remove a member, if that member fails to attend three consecutive meetings (without a valid excuse), is not committed to the work or aims of the Council, or is in serious breach of the school Code of Behaviour. Where a member is to be removed, a vote must be held by secret ballot, and must be ratified by the Principal and the Board of Management. A student who is removed from the Student Council shall not be eligible for re-election.

AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATIONS

- The Constitution of the Student Council shall be ratified by the Board of Management.
- Any proposed change to the Constitution must be discussed at a Student Council Meeting before a vote is taken. A vote must then be taken regarding the proposed change. Proposed changes must be circulated to all members of the Council at least one week in advance of the vote. Any proposed change to the Constitution must be discussed in advance with the Board of Management and ratified by the Board of Management.

Approved by Board of Management May 2022