

# Oxgangs Primary School

## Parent Community Constitution

### 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the constitution for Oxgangs Primary School Parent Community Council, which sets out the terms of its function and operation.
- 1.2 Previously, the “Parent Community” was known as the “Parent Forum”, the “Parent Community Council” was known as the “Parent Council” and the “Fundraising Committee” was known as the “Parent Teacher Association” (PTA). The 2010 Parent Council constitution adopted these terms from Scottish Government guidance. Currently, parents regard this nomenclature as arcane and confusing. Consequently, to rectify this perception and to acknowledge and foster the contribution of all parents in the education, safety and support of Oxgangs’ pupils, the 2016/17 Parent Council has agreed that its name as well as that of the Forum and the PTA be changed.
- 1.3 This document is based on the previous, January 2010, Parent Council constitution, and incorporates the amendments required for the changes in names.
- 1.4 This constitution supersedes all previous constitutions.

## 2 Definition of terms

- 2.1 For the purpose of this constitution, the term ‘**parent**’ is used to mean any parent, guardian or carer (as defined in The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006) of a pupil or pupils attending Oxgangs Primary School (the School) and/or Oxgangs Primary School Nursery (the Nursery).
- 2.2 **Oxgangs Parent Community** (the Community) - all parents with a child attending Oxgangs primary, previously known as the Parent Forum (the Forum).
- 2.3 Parent Community **Council** (the Council) – the body of parents elected to pursue the objectives of the community as stated here-within, previously known as the “Parent Council”.
- 2.4 Parent Community **Fundraising and Events Committee** (Fundraising and Events) – the body of parents elected to raise funds on behalf of the Community, previously known as the “Parent Teacher Association”.

### **3 Objectives**

- 3.1 The Council shall promote partnership between the School, its pupils and all its parents.
- 3.2 The Council shall develop and engage in activities that support the education and welfare of the pupils.
- 3.3 The Council shall identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the School and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils.

### **4 Membership**

- 4.1 The quorum of the Council shall be five members. The Council shall have a maximum of twenty-five members, including co-opted members.
- 4.2 Co-opted members are elected to the Council, subsequent to the AGM, to fulfil a function required by the Council. Co-opted members are full members of the Council for the period their services are required. Typically, parents wishing to join the Council after the AGM are officially co-opted members, though they have the same role as members for the period of the Council.
- 4.3 Parent members of the Council will ideally include representatives of each year group and the Nursery.
- 4.4 The Headteacher (or their nominated representative) shall be a co-opted member of the Council.
- 4.5 In addition to the Headteacher, at least one representative of the School teaching staff shall be a co-opted member.
- 4.6 At least one representative from the wider community shall be co-opted to the Council, e.g. Edinburgh City Councillor, Clergy member etc.
- 4.7 A member of Fundraising and Events shall be represented on the Council, as well as any other Community sub-groups.

### **5 Selection of Members**

- 5.1 Any parent with a child attending Oxgangs Primary is automatically a member of Oxgangs Parent Community.
- 5.2 Any member of the Community can seek to become a member of the Council.
- 5.3 A member of the Council will normally serve for a minimum of one year.
- 5.4 Any member of the Council having served for four years shall stand down and may stand for re-selection on a year-by-year basis thereafter.

- 5.5 In the event that the number of volunteers exceeds the number of vacant Council places, priority shall be given to new volunteers over members having served four or more years. Should the number of volunteers continue to exceed the number of vacant places, members will be selected by election.
- 5.6 Any parent unsuccessful in becoming a member of the Council should be encouraged to join any sub-group set up by the Council.
- 5.7 The Council may co-opt additional members as deemed necessary to assist it with carrying out its functions.

## **6 Office Bearers**

- 6.1 The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Clerk and/or Treasurer (if required) of the Council will be agreed by the Council members immediately following the Council's formation.
- 6.2 The Chair must be a parent member of the Council.
- 6.3 Council members seeking to become an office bearer should have a reasonable expectation of being able to serve for a minimum of one year. Office bearers can serve for a maximum of two years without seeking re-election, though may be removed from office at any time under clause 8.7.

## **7 General Meetings of the Parent Community**

- 7.1 The Council is accountable to the Community and will make a report to it at least once each year on its activities on behalf of all the parents.
- 7.2 The Annual General Meeting of the Community will be held in September of each year. A notice of the meeting including date, time and place will be sent to all members of the Community at least two weeks in advance. The agenda of the meeting will include:
- a report on the work of the Council and its committee,
  - reports by the Council's sub-groups on their activities,
  - a review by the Headteacher (or their representative),
  - selection of the new Council members,
  - discussion of issues that members of the Community may wish to raise (notified to the existing Council in writing at least one week before the meeting) and
  - approval of the accounts and appointment of the auditor (if relevant).

- 7.3 If at least ten members of the Community request an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss issues falling within the Council's remit, the Council shall arrange this. The Council shall give all members of the Community at least two weeks' notice of the meeting and, at the same time, circulate notice of the matter, or matters, to be discussed at the meeting.

## **8 Parent Community Council Organisation**

- 8.1 The Council will meet at least once in every school term.
- 8.2 Where possible, the School will note the date of the forthcoming Council meetings in the School diary.
- 8.3 The Council will distribute an agenda at least one week before the meeting and will post these at appropriate locations.
- 8.4 Council members have the right to raise relevant issues themselves. Any member of the Community may request that a Council member raise a relevant issue on their behalf.
- 8.5 Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, each parent member at the meeting will have one vote. The Chair shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.
- 8.6 Any two members of the Council can request an additional meeting. All members of the Council will be given at least one week's notice of the date, time and place of the meeting.
- 8.7 If a majority of Council members believe that an individual parent Council member has acted, or is acting, to undermine the efforts of the Council in pursuance of its objectives, their membership of the Council shall be terminated. The Council will confirm termination of membership to the terminated member in writing and will minute the reason for the termination and the result of the vote to terminate.

## **9 Minutes**

- 9.1 The Council will make the minutes of all meetings publically available after approval at subsequent Council meetings. Prior to approval, minutes shall be deemed to be in draft. Draft copies shall be circulated to Council members prior to the following Council meeting. Draft copies can be distributed to Community members if the majority of the Council agrees, and must carry an indication of their draft status.
- 9.2 Approved minutes will be posted online and electronic or paper copies can be obtained from the Council Secretary (assuming the Community member provides their details for this purpose). The Council will also place a paper copy on the Community Council noticeboard in the school foyer.

## 10 Confidentiality

- 10.1 Meetings of the Council shall be open to the public, unless the Council is discussing an issue which it considers to be confidential. In such discussions, only members of the Parent Council and the Headteacher, or his or her representative, can attend.

## 11 Finances

- 11.1 The Council shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies are used in accordance with the objectives and functions of the Community and/ or Council.
- 11.2 Any expenditure made by sub-groups or sub-committees of the Council must be made in accord with the aims and functions of the Council and/or Parent Community.
- 11.3 The Council may elect a Treasurer (if required). The Treasurer will open a bank or building society account in the name of the Council for all Council funds.
- 11.4 Withdrawals will require the signature of the Treasurer and one other Council member.
- 11.5 The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure, and will provide a summary of this for each Council meeting and a full account for the Annual General Meeting.
- 11.6 The Council accounts will be independently audited by the auditor appointed at the previous Annual General Meeting.
- 11.7 Authorisation for expenditure made by the Council shall be in accord with the following:
- a) Expenditure up to £150 per event/activity can be made by authorised signatories of the Parent Council without the approval of the Council provided that the expenditure is in accord with the aims and functions of the Council and/or School.
  - b) Expenditure greater than £150 per event/activity requires the express approval of the majority of the Council.
- 11.8 Authorisation for expenditure made by any sub-group or sub-committee of the Council (see section 12 below) for accounts/funds held by those sub-groups/ sub-committees shall be in accord with the following:
- a) For expenditure up to £150 per event/ activity this can be made by authorised signatories of the sub-group or sub-committee without the approval of the sub-group/sub-committee provided that the expenditure is in accord with the aims and functions of the Council and/or School.
  - b) For expenditure £150 or more per event/activity but less than £500 this will require the express approval of the majority of the members of the sub-group or sub-committee.
  - c) For expenditure of £500 per event/activity or more this will require the express approval of the majority of the members of the Parent Council.

- 11.9 If there is any doubt the authorised signatories of the sub-group/ sub-committee should seek guidance from the chair of the Council.

## **12 Sub-groups**

- 12.1 The Fundraising and Events Committee (or successor group as agreed by the Council or Community) and other groups of general interest and wide effect within the School (e.g. Playground Development Group) shall be sub-groups/ sub-committees of the Council.
- 12.2 The Council, as deemed necessary by the Council members, may form permanent or temporary sub-groups / sub-committees.
- 12.3 All sub-groups/ sub-committees will report regularly (as appropriate) to the Council on the progress of the work of the sub-group/ sub-committee.
- 12.4 Sub-groups/ sub-committees formed shall include as many parents/ carers, School staff or other members of the community as considered necessary.
- 12.5 Sub-groups/ sub-committees holding accounts/funds shall:
- a) Keep accounts of all financial transactions relating to those accounts.
  - b) Submit annual accounts to the Parent Community AGM for approval.
  - c) Make up to date accounts available to the Council if requested by either the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council.

## **13 Changes to the Constitution**

- 13.1 The Council may change its constitution after obtaining consent from a majority of members of the Community. The Council will send members of the Community a copy of any proposed amendment and will give reasonable time to respond to the proposal.

## **14 Dissolution of the Constitution**

- 14.1 Should the Council cease to exist, any remaining funds will be passed to the education authority to be used for the benefit of the School, where this continues.