



# Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Constitution

## DEFINITIONS

*Parent: The definition of the term parent, as used in this constitution, is that provided by the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: "parent includes guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) in relation to, or has care of a child or young person".*

*Parent Forum: All parents who have a pupil enrolled at Linlithgow Academy are automatically a member of the Parent Forum.*

## 1. AIMS

- a) to promote close co-operation and communication between parents and school staff
- b) to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and fairness
- c) to study and discuss matters of mutual interest relating to the education and welfare of pupils
- d) to engage in activities which support and advance the education and welfare of pupils attending the school

## 2. POWERS

The Parent Council shall have the power to do anything considered by them to support the aims but remembering that they are there to represent the views of the Parent Forum.

## 3. MEETINGS

### 3.1 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held in September each year. The notice calling the AGM shall be sent to the Parent Forum at least two weeks in advance. The outgoing Chair will chair the AGM until the election of members for the next year. Once the new Chair has been appointed the new chair will chair the rest of the meeting.

The business of the AGM shall include:-

- a) a report on the work of the Parent Council and any of its committees for the previous year;
- b) approval of any accounts

- c) a report by the Headteacher for the previous year;
- d) a report by the pupil representatives co-opted to the Parent Council;
- e) nomination (and election if necessary) of members to serve on the Parent Council;
- f) nomination of Office Bearers of the Parent Council; and
- g) any resolutions submitted by the Parent Forum.

### **3.2 Special General Meetings (SGMs)**

Special General Meetings (SGMs) can be called by the Chair or at the request of 10 members of the Parent Forum, to discuss issues falling within the Parent Council's remit. Requests for an SGM should be made, in writing, to the Parent Council Chair. The Parent Council shall give all members of the Parent Forum 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.

At all AGMs and SGMs:

- a) voting shall be one vote per member of the Parent Forum.
- b) the quorum shall consist of 8 members of the Parent Forum.

### **3.3 Meetings**

Meetings of the Parent Council shall be held at least twice in every school term in addition to the Annual General Meeting. At all meetings of the Parent Council 6 Parent Council members shall form a quorum.

Meetings of the Parent Council shall be open to the Parent Forum, unless the Parent Council is discussing an issue which it considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis. In such circumstances, only members of the Parent Council and the Headteacher, or their representative, can attend.

Each member of the Parent Council shall have one vote and resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority vote of those Parent Council members present. The Chair shall have both a deliberative and casting vote – one vote as a Parent Council member and one vote as Chair. The Chair's casting vote shall be used only in the event of a tie.

## **4. PARENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

Parent membership of the Parent Council shall be a minimum of 6 from the Parent Forum.

Members of the Parent Council shall be appointed at an AGM, SGM or any Parent Council meeting. Any parents of a pupil at the school can volunteer to be a member of the Parent Council. Parents can nominate themselves or others by email, by post or in person. Appointments will be approved by majority affirmation from those parent forum members present.

Members of the Parent Council shall serve for a two-year term and be eligible for re-selection. The maximum continuous term of serving on the Parent Council is 6 years. Parents shall always form the majority of the Parent Council.

The Headteacher or their representative has a right and a duty to attend meetings of the Parent Council. The Headteacher attends meetings in an advisory capacity and does not have voting rights unless these are given by the Parent Council.

A member of the Parent Council failing to attend three consecutive meetings without reason or apologies may be deemed to have retired from the Parent Council. Any member of the Parent Council wishing to leave the Parent Council should notify the chair in writing.

A member of the Parent Council can be removed at an AGM or SGM by approval of two-thirds of the Parent Forum members present.

All members of the Parent Council are referred to the Parent Council Member Guidelines for expected standards of conduct.

## **5. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS**

The Office Bearers will be Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk, and such others as may be required. The Office Bearers will be elected by the Parent Council at the AGM by acclamation after the appointment of members of the Parent Council. Nominees must be from the parent members of the Parent Council. Where there is more than one candidate for each position, the Office Bearer will be elected by majority vote of the Parent Council members present. The Headteacher will chair the meeting of the Parent Council if no office bearers are elected.

Upon resignation of any office bearer e.g. the Chair, the Parent Council members present shall elect a new Office Bearer for the remaining term until the next AGM. The Headteacher shall chair the Parent Council meetings if the Chair resigns until a new Chair is appointed.

The Clerk to the Parent Council is an independent support role. Ideally, the Clerk should not be a member of the Parent Council and they will not have voting rights. However, a member of the Parent Council is not excluded from the role of Clerk provided any conflict of interest between the roles is declared before casting a vote.

The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping accurate minutes of all meetings. Approved minutes shall be published on the Linlithgow Academy website.

## **6. CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

The Parent Council may co-opt up to 6 persons to help carry out its functions at any time. The Parent Council shall determine at the time of appointment whether the co-opted member has any voting rights. The co-opted members can retire at any time by notifying the Chair.

## **7. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Changes or additions must be made at an AGM or SGM called for the purpose. The proposed change shall be specified when calling the meeting and be approved by at least two thirds of those members of the parent forum present.

## **8. DISSOLUTION**

In the event that the Parent Council ceases to exist any remaining funds pass to the Local Education Authority to use for the benefit of the school.



## Linlithgow Academy Parent Council Member Guidelines

Member Guidelines are to help parent council members.

### **MEMBERS SHOULD**

- Support the ethos and values of the Parent Council and make it a welcoming place for all parents/carers, co-opted members and guests
- Be aware of equality, diversity and fairness
- Feel like their work makes a difference to the school community
- Treat everyone as an equal and always be respectful towards each other
- Ensure guests leave meetings with a positive view of the Parent Council and what it is trying to achieve
- Respect and keep to the decisions made at Parent Council meetings
- Be involved and help out wherever possible
- Work with the utmost integrity, specifically in dealing with financial matters
- Declare any conflict of interest and avoid situations which could cause improper conduct
- Comply with the demands of external regulatory bodies
- Be aware only members of the Parent Council have a right to vote.

### **MEMBERS SHOULD NOT**

- Discuss personal issues relating to children, parents or school staff
- Post content on social media that is negative or abusive towards the school or members of its community
- Discuss issues with the media without prior agreement.

### **PARENT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- Time should be used effectively
- Everyone should be given a chance to speak and to be heard, directed by the Chair
- All speakers should respect the guidance of the Chair
- Members should contribute constructively at meetings

- Each contribution should be valued and respected
- No member of Parent Forum/guests should leave feeling belittled or excluded
- Decisions will be made in the best interests of the whole school community

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