

REPORTING TO YOU!

As part of its accountability, details of pupil participation forum business should be communicated in an open and transparent way, ensuring accessibility of information.

Why

The importance of an open and transparent communication process cannot be over-emphasised.

There should be positive communication between pupils who sit on the forum, and those who don't, and also between the forum and the school management, staff and parents.

An open system helps to ensure that:

- All pupils can submit their views to the forum on issues being discussed;
- All pupils can put issues on the agenda for discussion;
- Pupils can feed into and receive feedback from the school management committee on potential decisions / policies / practices that will have an impact on the student body;
- The pupil participation forum is working for and on behalf of their peers, identifying relevant issues and seeking resolution where needed;
- All actions are accountable; and
- The removal of any secrecy or myths about what the pupil participation forum is, or is not doing.

The members of the forum should be aware of, and understand, that as pupil participation forum representatives they are answerable to their peers.

PUPILS' VOICES: MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

How

There are many practical ways in which pupil participation forum business can be shared within the school:

- Have regular times when members of the forum and fellow pupils can meet, in order to feed into issues for the agenda and receive feedback from previous meetings;
- Use assembly or class time to announce upcoming events;
- Produce a pupil participation forum newsletter or E-newsletter (ezine);
- Carry out surveys to gather views on issues being discussed by the forum;
- The school itself can consult with the forum on issues affecting the operation of the school;
- Ensure there is a communication process between the forum and school management, staff and parents. This should include attending appropriate elements of board/staff meetings;
- The pupil participation forum could provide regular updates to the Board of Governors, principal and Parents & Teachers Associations (PTA) on the pupil participation forum's activities and plans;
- Have a specific pupil participation forum notice board somewhere central, where information on activities can be posted; and
- Develop a communications plan to ensure the flow of information is kept open and up to date.



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Checklist

Have you:

1. Developed a communications plan and shared it with pupils and staff
2. Agreed with all involved how information is going to be shared
3. Identified an area where pupil participation forum information can be posted
4. Identified which training can be provided in house and where specialised support is required

Tick



For further information on exploring issues around accountability and communication you may wish to visit the following websites:

School Council of Ireland Online:

<http://www.studentcouncil.ie/>

School Councils UK:

<http://www.schoolcouncils.org/>

Student Voice (UK)

<http://www.studentvoice.co.uk/>

Smart School Councils Community

<http://www.smartschoolcouncils.org.uk/>

Pupil Voices Wales

<http://www.pupilvoicewales.org.uk/>

Dept. of Education, New South Wales:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studleadsrc/index.php>

Dept. of Education, State of Victoria:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/schoolcouncil.aspx>



You can find out more about NICCY and the Pupils' Voices programme at www.niccy.org, 028 9031 1616 and participation@niccy.org. Please contact the Communications team at NICCY if you require alternative formats of this material.