



# School Council Policy

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# **SCHOOL COUNCIL POLICY**

**(And consult them in affairs (of moment)) (Aal `Imran 3:159).**

Shura is one of the basic fundamentals of the Islamic political system. It extends further to include all the affairs of Muslims. Thus, the Islamic state might have preceded the modern democratic systems with regard to the necessity of unanimity over choosing the one who runs its affairs and cares for its interests, something which stresses the value and effectiveness of unanimity among Muslims. Here at Al-Islah Girls' High School we believe that students need practical education about the democracy. To give them the first hand experience of democracy in action, they will be given opportunity to stand for elections for various posts and casting their votes. We also believe that students should be included in decision making.

## **Selection of School Council Representatives**

At the beginning of each school year each form will elect, by secret ballot, their form representative to the School Council. Representatives will put their names forward for the election and be seconded by another member of the form group.

Should more than one representative put their name forward then the form will hold a secret ballot, which will be organised by the outgoing form representative from the last year. Before the election takes place each candidate will need to give a short speech, to the form group, outlining why they should be elected.

To stand as a form group representative a candidate must fit the following criteria: ○

be prepared to attend the School Council meetings

- be prepared to speak out on the form's behalf at School Council meetings
- be prepared to report approved minutes back to the form
- be well behaved and sensible in all aspects of the School Council and in particular during the meetings

Once selected should a candidate fail to meet any of these criteria then they can be deselected and a new form group representative elected.

## **Role of the School Council Representatives**

The School Council representative for each form is responsible for; ○

collecting ideas from the class to put forward as possible agenda ideas ○

organising a class discussion on the finalised School Council agenda

- representing the form's ideas about each of the agenda items at the School Council meeting

Reporting back to the class on the discussions at the School Council and passing on any decisions made at the School Council. The School Council representatives may also be called upon to represent the school in many other ways, e.g. meeting special guests to the school, the representatives may also need to report back to the form group any discussions held with special guests. The School Council representative can also be responsible for representing the pupils' views to representatives from outside the school.

Once the School Council representatives have been elected it would be appropriate for the Chairperson for the School Council to meet with them all and discuss the organisation of a council meeting, and talk through the discussion procedures i.e. not shouting out, putting hands up and waiting to be asked to speak (speaking through the chair). In the way of Inset for

the pupils a brief discussion could be held on a topic agreed in advance, to give the pupils experience at taking part in a formal debate.

### **Principles**

The School Council is a major vehicle in which we involve the pupils in the school's behavior management policies and relevant implementation. The Council also contributes significantly to developing a sense of citizenship as pupils have to consider their own needs and those of others participate in democratic elections and participate in the development of many school policies.

### **School Council Charter**

The purpose of the School Council is to discuss issues considered important to the running of the school by either the pupils or the staff.

The school council will consist of a Chairperson, a Secretary, an advisory teacher and SMT support, along with two pupil representatives from each form. Other members of staff may be invited to advise the School Council regarding specific agenda items.

### **Meetings Pattern**

The full School Council will meet once every month; the meeting dates will be published in advance. The school council meetings will take place during curriculum time in one of the classrooms available held on a different day each meeting.

### **Meetings Protocol**

The School council agenda will be circulated in advance and all classes will discuss the items it contains. The recommendation of the School Council, as recorded on the minutes, will be passed to the SMT for their discussion and referral to an appropriate member of staff for action. The minutes of the School council Meeting will be circulated to all class representatives for them to inform the class of the committee's discussions.

### **Setting the School Council agenda**

Prior to each council meeting each form should hold a meeting to discuss issues of concern to them. From these, an agreed list of suggested agenda items should be put forward by the council representatives.

The suggested agenda items from each form should be passed to the Secretary and, Chairperson or Co-opted Teacher. The two individuals will meet to finalise the agenda. The council secretary is responsible of producing and circulating the agendas and any subsequent minutes. To fully involve and consult the pupils in developing certain school policies the Head teacher may put forward agenda items for consideration by the School Council these must be added to the agenda.

From the suggested agenda items, items of common concern to more than one form will be itemized. These along with any items raised by the Head teacher shall be put forward as the agenda for that meeting. Some items suggested by individual form representatives may not warrant discussion at school council meetings, e.g. the replacement of broken chairs in a classroom are covered by existing Health and Safety reporting procedures. However, a discussion of the causes and ways of reducing the high frequency of broken chairs across the School may indeed be a suitable agenda item.

Once an agenda has been set this will be passed back to the class representatives and before the meeting the class representatives will hold a class discussion on the proposed agenda. From this the representative will obtain views and comments to represent on behalf of the class at the meeting. Following the school council meeting one of the form representatives will read the approved minutes (as soon as they are produced) to the class, answer any questions raised and record any suggestions for the next agenda.

### **School Council Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the School Council is elected (together with the secretary) at the last full meeting of the School Council in any academic year from the existing members of the council. This ensures that they have a good understanding of how the School Council works.

The Chairperson will be in post for one full year.

The Chairperson is responsible for: ○

helping to set the School council Agenda ○

running the School council meeting

○ meeting with the Head teacher on a monthly basis to discuss general issues related to the School council or of significance to the pupils

○ casting a deciding vote

### **School Council Secretary**

The Secretary of the School Council is elected (together with the chairperson) at the last meeting of the School Council in any academic year from the existing members of the council. This ensures that they have a good understanding of how the School Council works.

The secretary will be in post for one full year.

The Secretary is responsible (amongst other things) for: ○

helping to set the School council Agenda ○ circulating the agenda to the School Council Meetings ○ taking the minutes of

the School Council Meeting and typing it ○ circulating the minutes of the School Council Meeting

### **Student Council and decision making:**

Councillors are given extra duties and responsibilities, and should set themselves as examples to their fellow pupils. They are also set the task of monitoring and reporting any inappropriate behaviour they may observe within their student group.

The duties, responsibilities and any powers accorded councillors do not in any way substitute for the presence and authority of adult teaching and non-teaching staff.

Within the school the council system allows students to experience and take on roles of leadership and responsibility.

Councillors have the right, and a responsibility, to raise genuine concerns about abuses of power and trust by anyone within the school community.

A councillor who in good faith reports significant concerns, allegations or suspicions of circumstances, situations or the behaviour of others which is likely to put a child's safety or welfare at risk will never be victimized following their disclosure. The school takes very seriously the need to adopt anti-bullying strategies and the important role that councillors play in this work. Councillors will be given an induction into their councillors' role in existing post holders.

Councillors' vigilance and integrity is one of the most potent deterrents against bullying.

Children and young people who bully will then know that it will be dealt with, and the victims of bullying will have confidence for the same reason.

It is therefore important that within the school we create a culture and communication network where children and young people are easily able to confide to staff if they are being bullied.

In order to minimize the incidents of bullying, councillors are given the authority within the school to challenge and report incidents of bullying within school.