

## **Draft Constitution – September 2015 Proposal NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL**

### **Name**

1. This is the constitution for North Berwick High School Parent Council (also known as North Berwick High School Parent School Partnership).

### **Aims and Objectives**

2. The Parent Council is accountable to the North Berwick High School Parent Forum. Its aims and objectives are:

- to work in partnership with the school;
- to promote involvement and partnership between all parents, teachers and pupils;
- to support the school in activities that enhance the education and welfare of the pupils;
- to consult with, and report back to, the Parent Forum;
- to identify and represent the views of the Parent Forum on education and other matters regarding welfare of pupils to the head teacher and the education authority;
- to promote contact between the school (teachers, pupils and parents), associated primary schools and the local community;
- to act within the principles and practice of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 (the Act).

### **Powers and Responsibilities**

3. The Parent Council has the powers and responsibilities accorded to it by the Act and shall not act beyond those powers and responsibilities. The Parent Council may hold and raise funds to cover costs of administration and for the benefit of the school.

4. From time to time the Parent Council may wish to seek the views of the Parent Forum and the school on a range of issues, as set out in the Act. The Parent Council may wish to seek the views and feedback of parents in the form of a survey, circular or questionnaire and it will consult with the Head Teacher about the form, content and timing of any such survey before it is issued. The agreed objective in carrying out any such survey is to receive constructive feedback from as many parents as possible in a credible and reliable context, thus enabling the objectives of the Parent Council to be met.

### **Membership**

5. Any parent of one or more pupils currently attending the school may volunteer to be a member of the Parent Council. Representation should be sought with the aim of having a parent member of a child from each of the six year classes.

6. Membership shall be restricted to only one parent from any one family.

7. The membership will be a minimum of five parents of pupils attending the school and the maximum will be fourteen parents.

8. In the event that the number of volunteers exceeds the maximum number of members set out in this constitution, the following measures (in the order presented) will be used to determine how places are allocated:

- voluntary adjustment (i.e. some people may then volunteer to stand aside);
- representation from each of the school's six year classes (one or two parents from each);
- representation from each of the school's cluster primary school areas;

□ a random selection procedure at the time of the annual general meeting.

9. Non-members will continue to have the opportunity to attend all Parent Council meetings and activities and may be co-opted on to relevant subgroups.

10. Members of the Parent Council may serve for up to two years, after which they may stand for re-selection at an AGM or retire from the Parent Council. The maximum term for any member will be 3 terms (ie 6 years) in office, unless the Parent Council agrees unanimously to extend the maximum period for a particular member.

11. The Parent Council may co-opt associate (non-voting) members. It is expected that the total number of associate members will not normally exceed half the number of parent members.

12. Co-opted members may be drawn from teaching and support staff at the school, pupils, community leaders and others from the school's catchment area.

13. A co-opted member may be represented by a deputy if they are unable to attend any meeting.

14. Co-opted membership will be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting.

15. Local councillors are invited to attend the meetings.

16. For limited periods of time, the Parent Council may establish sub-groups comprising at least one member of the Parent Council with other parents (whether or not they are members of the Parent Council) and co-opted members. Sub-groups will be responsible for taking forward specific objectives identified by the Parent Council and will report to the Parent Council.

### **Termination of Membership**

17. If a Parent Council member or co-opted member acts in a way that is considered by other members to undermine the objectives of the Parent Council, their membership of the Parent Council shall be terminated if the majority of Parent Council members agree. Written confirmation of termination would be sent within ten days of the decision being taken.

### **Office Bearers**

18. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer of the Parent Council will be agreed by the members of the Parent Council immediately following its formation at the Annual General Meeting. Office bearers will be selected or re-selected by the Parent Council on an annual basis.

19. The Chair of the Parent Council will be a parent of a child attending North Berwick High School. If the child ceases to be a pupil, a new Chair will be agreed at the next meeting of the Parent Council. The Chair will have the following specific responsibilities in addition to the generally recognised responsibilities of a Chair:

- To chair meetings effectively, ensuring that a range of views can be expressed in a reasonable and courteous manner and that no one party or group can dominate the proceedings to the exclusion of others
- To encourage all parties to treat one another with dignity and respect and to encourage the aims of the constitution to be met by all parties in their dealings with one another and at meetings of the Parent Council.

To the extent necessary to chair meetings effectively, the Chair of the Parent Council shall have the right to control the agenda of meetings and to request any individual who is not demonstrating the expected standards of reasonable and courteous behaviour to refrain from further participation in meetings.

The Chair shall not serve in office for more than 2 years. Once a Chair has retired from office, he/she will not be re-appointed Chair without the unanimous consent of the Parent Council.

20. An Annual General Meeting will be held in September of each year. A notice of the meeting including date, time and place will be published and made available to all members of the Parent Forum at least three weeks in advance. The meeting will include:

- A report by the Chair on the work of the Parent Council and any sub groups or committees;
- Agreement of the membership and associate membership of the Parent Council;
- Selection of a chair, vice chair and, if required, treasurer;
- Approval of accounts and appointment of auditor;
- Discussion of issues that any parent may wish to raise.

21. Members of the Parent Council and Parent Forum present at the AGM may vote on matters put before the meeting for decision, including appointment of office bearers.

22. A secretary will be appointed who may, unless they are a member of the Parent Council, be paid for their services.

### **Scheduled Meetings**

23. The Parent Council will meet at least once in every school term. Dates will be scheduled at the beginning of the school year.

24. Meetings will be open to the public, unless the Parent Council is discussing a particular issue which it considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis. Closed discussions may be restricted to Parent Council members and the head teacher (or his/her representative) only or may, subject to agreement of the Parent Council, also involve co-opted members and Parent Forum members.

25. Meetings will be attended by the head teacher (or his/her representative).

26. Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, only parent members present at the meeting will be entitled to one vote each. Resolutions will be passed by simple majority. The Chair will have an additional casting vote if required.

27. The Parent Council may, for the purpose of addressing specific issues or areas of interest, invite participation in any meeting from any non-member or group.

28. Notes or minutes of all meetings will be available to all parents and teachers at North Berwick High School. They will be posted on the school website and will be available in hard copy from the school.

### **Special Meetings**

29. Where a majority of the Parent Council wish an additional meeting to be held this shall be arranged. All members of the Parent Council will be given at least one week's notice of the date, time and place of the additional meeting.

30. If at least 5% of the Parent Forum (5% is currently estimated as 60) request a special meeting to discuss issues falling within the Parent Council's remit, the Parent Council shall arrange this. The Parent Council will give all parents at least three weeks' notice of the date, place and time of the meeting and will post and circulate notice of the matter(s) to be discussed at the meeting.

### **Quorum**

31. With regard to scheduled and special meetings, the quorum of Parent Council shall be one third of the current parent members. Proceedings shall not be invalidated by any vacancy in the membership.

### **Finance and fundraising**

32. The treasurer (if appointed) will open a bank or building society account in the name of the Parent Council, withdrawals requiring the signature of the treasurer and one other Parent Council member.

33. The Parent Council may not purchase land or buildings.

34. The Parent Council shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies are used in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Parent Council.

35. All necessary licenses shall be obtained and maintained where required in relation to fundraising activities.

36. The Treasurer will keep a record of all income and expenditure and will provide a summary of this at each Parent Council meeting.

37. A set of audited accounts should be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

38. Should the Parent Council cease to exist, any remaining funds shall be passed to North Berwick High School to be used for the benefit of the school.

### **Amendments**

39. The Parent Council may change its constitution by resolution at the Annual General Meeting of the Parent Council or by extraordinary meeting of the Parent Forum. The Parent Forum will be informed of any changes to the constitution duly approved.