Children, Young People, Education and Skills

School Council Network

This is your future, you should have a say, make sure you're heard, and change it today!

A guide to engaging with the School Council Network

Contents

1. About this guide

2. What is the School Council Network?

3. Why the School Council Network matters

4. How the sessions are structured

5. What good engagement looks like

1 About this guide

This guide supports anyone planning to engage with children and young people through the **School Council Network.**

It sets out:

- What the School Council Network is
- How to engage meaningfully
- Expectations based on participation standards for children and young people
- Information for planning sessions

The guide ensures that all engagement:

- Is child-centred and rights-based
- Reflects best practice in participation
- Delivers meaningful impact and outcomes

2 What is the School Council Network?

The School Council Network was created following a recommendation from the **Independent Jersey Care Inquiry**, ensuring children's voices are heard, valued and taken seriously.

The Network brings together representatives from primary and secondary schools and colleges across Jersey to:

- Share experiences and ideas
- Discuss issues that matter to them
- Inform policy and decision-making
- Learn from each other
- Uphold Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) "Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously"

The Network also provides a structured pathway for children and young people to share their views with the Children's Outcomes Executive Committee

For more information about the impact of the School Council Network, previous projects, current projects and reports please visit gov.je/schoolcouncilnetwork.

3 Why the School Council Network matters?

Engaging with the School Council Network helps to:

- Hear the views of children and young people directly
- Test ideas and policies
- Improve services that affect children and young people
- Meet Participation Standards when engaging with children and young people
- Align with Jersey's Children and Young People's Plan

> **"Children and young people must be seen as partners, not just participants."**

The School Council Network exists to:

- Ensure children's voices are heard, valued and taken seriously
- Enable children and young people to contribute to policies and decision-makers across government
- Support participants' development and leadership skills
- Provide a safe and inclusive forum for discussion

> **"Engaging with children and young people is not just about listening, it is about acting on what they say and showing them, it matters."**

4 How the sessions are structured

Primary School

- Time: 9.30am to 11.30am
- Age: 8-11
- Capacity: 120 students
- Length: Up to 50 minutes per session

Secondary School

- Time: 12pm to 2pm
- Age: 11-18
- Capacity: 120 students
- Length: Up to 50 minutes per session

Meetings take place in The Great Hall, Highlands College. There are four meetings per year as well as networking events. Refreshments are provided.

Roles and responsibilities

Participation & Engagement Team

- Plan and facilitate sessions
- Ensure standards are met
- Support stakeholders
- Share outcomes with decision-makers

School Council Leads

- Prepare students before sessions
- Support student participation
- Manage consent and safeguarding

Stakeholders

- Design meaningful engagement
- Deliver accessible sessions
- Act on feedback
- Provide clear follow-up

Safeguarding, consent and wellbeing

Participation is voluntary and requires consent.

Schools are responsible for: supervising children and young people, media consent and data protection arrangements.

If a young person becomes distressed support will be provided. Counsellors from the Youth Enquiry Service (YES) attend the sessions to support wellbeing.

RAIN BOW
RAIN BOW
the colour that Represents Jersey as Red and
Red
Red
Red

5 What good engagement looks like

Good engagement is:

- Clear and purposeful
- Inclusive and accessible
- Well-facilitated
- Respectful and safe
- Influential in decision-making
- Followed up with feedback

Useful link - a toolkit for engaging with Children and Young People

Co-created by the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills and hundreds of children and young people, this toolkit provides interactive activities and frameworks based on Jersey's Participation Standards.

Contact

For help planning or attending a session please contact schoolcouncilnetwork@gov.je.

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