

# Tynecastle Parent Council Constitution

This is the constitution for Tynecastle Parent Council.

## 1. Definitions

For the remainder of this document, these terms are defined as follows:

**Parent Council** Tynecastle Parent Council.

**School** Tynecastle High School.

**Parents** Parents or legal carers with at least 1 child attending the school.

**Parent Forum** All parents or legal carers of children at the school.

## 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Parent Council are as follows:

- To support the objectives, aims and policies of Tynecastle High School;
- To represent the parents and provide a forum for discussion of matters relating to the education and welfare of students attending the school;
- To promote the aims, objectives, activities and ethos of the school within the local community;
- To provide a channel for information and liaison between the school, parents and the local community;
- To engage in activities which support the education and wellbeing of students attending the school (including organising events and fund raising).

## 3. Membership

The membership will be a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 25. The Head Teacher (or his/her representative) will serve as an advisor to The Parent Council and has the right and duty to attend meetings.

Members will be appointed at the AGM for a one year term and be eligible for re-election. Anyone not selected to be a member of the Parent Council may still be offered the opportunity to join any sub-groups set up by the Parent Council.

Subsequent to the AGM, at any quorate meeting of the Parent Council, members of the Parent Forum may volunteer to join the Parent Council. Where vacant places exist, the Parent Council, by majority vote, can co-opt such volunteers as voting members of the Parent Council. Co-opted members shall retire at the AGM but shall be eligible for election or co-option so long as they are members of the Parent Forum.

A member of the Parent Council failing to attend three consecutive meetings without reason/apologies may be deemed to have retired from the Parent Council. Members may volunteer to participate in specific functions, eg fundraising, provided they make their wishes known to the chair.

The Parent Council may at any time, by majority vote, co-opt any additional number of parents, students, members of staff (other than the Head Teacher), or members of

the wider community as it believes necessary to advise or assist in the carrying out of its functions, so long as the number of non-parent members does not constitute a majority of the membership. Such members will not be eligible to vote during Parent Council meetings. Co-opted members shall retire at the AGM but shall be eligible for subsequent co-option.

The Secretary will be responsible for maintaining records of membership of the Parent Council, including information about voting and non-voting members.

#### **4. Officers**

The Parent Council will have three formal officers: a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The Chair and the Secretary will be parents. The Treasurer may be a parent or a co-opted member. The Head Teacher may not be an officer.

The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be appointed by The Parent Council immediately following the Parent Council's formation. Officers will serve for a period of 1 year, after which the incumbent office bearer will be eligible for re-election. Officers will be elected/re-elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). There will be no limit on the number of 1 year periods a parent can serve as an officer. If an officer stands down before the completion of his/her 1-year term, or ceases to be eligible to hold the position, a temporary replacement will be appointed at the next meeting of the Parent Council. This appointment will last until the next AGM. The roles of the Chair and Secretary may be shared between more than one but no more than three members.

#### **5. Meetings**

##### **Meeting Topics**

The topics to be considered by the Parent Council will include:

- School Policy
- The curriculum
- School activities
- Extra-curricular activities
- Staff parent relations
- Fundraising for events and facilities
- School community relations

The Parent Council may add or remove topics from time to time.

##### **Meeting Frequency**

The Parent Council shall meet as required: normally at least once in every school term. One meeting per year must be the Annual General Meeting (AGM). One member will be tasked to ensure that all other members of the Parent Council are informed of forthcoming meetings and ensuring that this information is publicly available, specifically to the Parent Forum. If the chair or 2 members of the Parent Council request it, a further meeting shall be called to discuss issues falling within the remit of the Parent Council which have arisen since the previously scheduled meeting and which need to be discussed before the next scheduled meeting; however, at least 7 days notice should be given.

## **Voting and Quorum**

At all meetings, the quorum shall consist of 3 parents of which at least one should be an office bearer.

There will be one vote per Parent Council member present at the meeting. Members of staff or the public attending can express views and advise, but will not have a vote.

Resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority vote of those present. The Chairperson shall have both a deliberative and casting vote. The Chairperson's casting vote shall be used only in the event of a tie.

## **Meeting Minutes**

All meetings and AGMs of the Parent Council will be minuted. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping accurate minutes of all meetings and shall make approved minutes available upon request to any member of the Parent Forum. Copies of the minutes will be circulated to all present at the meeting for review and once approved distributed more widely so that they are in the public domain (eg uploaded on to the school website). However, minutes of special meetings may be kept confidential (see below).

## **Annual General Meetings**

The AGM shall be held during September each year. The notice calling the meeting shall be sent to the Parent Forum at least two weeks in advance.

The business shall include:-

1. the work of the Parent Council
2. approval of the accounts
3. appointment of an individual who will review the next set of annual accounts
4. any resolutions submitted by the Parent Forum
5. election of members to serve on the Parent Council.

At all general meetings, all parents (rather than Parent Council members) have one vote and the quorum shall be three. Otherwise voting proceeds as for ordinary Parent Council meetings.

## **Extraordinary General Meetings**

The Parent Council or 3 parents from the Parent Forum shall have power to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to discuss any urgent issues falling within the remit of the Parent Council including the behaviour and/or activities of the officers, and senior management recruitment process. EGMs will be open to the Parent Forum.

## **Public Access and Special Meetings**

Meetings of the Parent Council shall be open to the public. However, the Parent Council may hold a Special Meeting (not open to the Parent Forum or Public) if discussing an issue which it considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis (e.g. election of parent representatives to assist in recruitment of senior management staff). In such circumstances, only parent members of the Parent Council and the Head Teacher, or his/her representative, may attend. Depending on the purpose of

the meeting, those present will decide on the appropriate level of detail and circulation of minutes, but these should not be expected to be publically available.

## **6. Finances**

### **Signatories**

The Treasurer will open a bank or building society in the name of the Parent Council for all Parent Council funds. Withdrawals will require the signature of the Treasurer and at least one other nominated member of the Parent Council. This may be a co-opted member.

### **Auditing**

The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure, and may be asked to provide a summary of this at any Parent Council meeting. Full accounts will be prepared annually, before the AGM, and will be reviewed by the independent examiner appointed at the previous AGM by The Parent Council. The independent examiner must be independent of the Parent Council and have the necessary skill to examine accounts, but need not be a member of any professional body.

### **Appropriate Use**

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

### **Dissolution**

In the event that the Parent Council ceases to exist, any remaining funds will be passed to the City of Edinburgh Council, as the local education authority, to be used for the education or welfare of students attending the school or living in the catchment.

## **7. General**

### **Changes to the Constitution**

Changes or additions to the constitution must be made at an AGM or an EGM called for the purpose. The proposed change shall be specified in the notice calling the meeting and be approved by not less than two thirds of those present.

### **Contact Details**

Members will be asked to provide contact information which will include telephone numbers and email addresses. This information will not be disclosed to anyone who is not a member of the Parent Council.

### **Behaviour of Members**

Members and Officers, while engaged on Parent Council business, will be expected to behave in a manner that does not reflect adversely on the Parent Council, the School and the local community or undermine the objectives of the Parent Council. Members who fail to do this may be asked to account for their behaviour at a regular or special meeting of the Parent Council, following which their membership of the Parent Council shall be terminated if the majority of Parent Members of the Parent Council agree. Should the behaviour of the chair be called into question, a new chair should be elected for the meeting. Termination of membership would be confirmed in writing to the member. Members who are asked to resign have the right to appeal

to the full membership of the Parent Forum at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting. This rule does not override or infringe upon statutory legal rights.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to acknowledge Ros Sutherland and the SPTC model constitution for providing guidance in updating this constitution.

<http://www.sptc.info/leaflets/model-constitution-parent-councils-charity/>