

Beyond Tokenism –

promoting effective consultation and
a participatory ethos in schools

Hilton Dunblane Hydro

ANTI-BULLYING
NETWORK

THOS
network

December 2003



ORGANISATION

School Councils UK

FOCUS

Effective Student Councils – Improving your School

Can you describe briefly any initiatives or projects in place that illustrate the focus of our conference i.e. Collective Participation?

School Councils UK has a network for student councils. This is a web-based system for supporting individual schools with establishing effective structures for participation. It is supported by a school council magazine, voicebox which is an opportunity for schools to share good practice and be kept up to date with developments in the field. It is an easy way for students to get ideas and inspiration for the development of their student council.

How these initiatives are being monitored and evaluated?

We get feedback and input from teachers and students about the network to help guide the choice of information that is provided.

What are some of the biggest challenges faced by teachers and young people or members of your organisation, in implementing the initiatives or projects?

Generally there is a lack of understanding of the potential of active student councils in schools. Teachers and students are often limited by their own experience. So the purpose of our resources and training is to enable everyone to see the great potential for school improvement that can take place through the initiative of the student council.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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What has worked well?

Student councils nationally have a positive impact in all of the following areas:-

- .. Supporting vulnerable peers
- .. the environment
- .. school facilities
- .. teaching and learning
- .. selection of new members of staff at school

What did not work & lessons learned?

The process of developing effective student councils is a gradual one and needs to be built into the way the school works. School leadership has to genuinely believe that student ideas and input make the school a better place and they must create opportunities for that input to be heard in appropriate places.

Future plans?

School Councils UK has a new Training the Trainer programme for 2004. It is aimed at local authority professionals who have a responsibility for supporting schools with the establishment and maintenance of effective student councils. If you are interested in this training programme then contact our office.

Any materials the school/organisation is willing to share or relevant publications that are for sale

School Councils UK has the following popular resources for schools:-

- Primary pupil councils DIY resource pack (Toolkit and video)
- Secondary school councils DIY resource pack (Toolkit and video)
- Primary class councils wall chart
- School councils wall planner
- School council caps
- School Council Badges
- Secondary student councilor handbook
- School councils and pupil exclusions research report

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