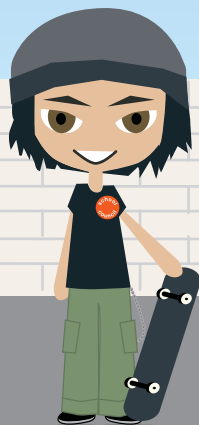


# School Council Handbook for Primary Pupils

Everything you need to know about  
being a great School Councillor

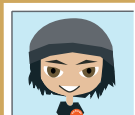
school  
councils  
UK

[www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)



# St Dereks School Council Noticeboard

Why do we need School Councils? [page 6](#)



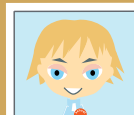
Chairperson



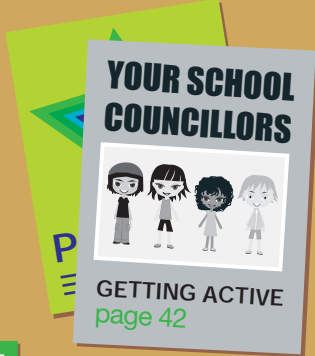
Vice-Chair



Treasurer



Secretary



How to be a School Councillor [page 10](#)

Running the School Council [page 16](#)



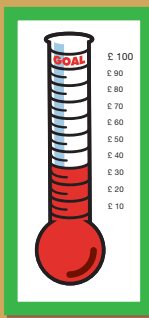
Spring Fun Fair

Don't forget!  
Food meeting  
Tuesday 12pm  
Meetings [page 18](#)

Agenda	
Meeting of St Dereks School Council	
Place	Library
Date	25 February
Time	12.45 - 13.15
Apologies for absence absent	
Minutes of the meeting held on 13 February	
a) Are they agreed as an accurate record	
b) Members signing from last meeting's minutes	
This meeting's business	
1	Buddy Bounced in the Playground (20 min)
2	Healthy Eating Week (20 min)
3	Computer at Lunchtime (10 min)
4	
Any Other Business	
Date of next meeting	



Toilets [page 48](#)



Fundraising [page 58](#)



School travel [page 52](#)



Bullying [page 64](#)

Contacts [page 69](#)  
Index [page 70](#)

My name

Class

School

You may want to fill this in together when the Council first meets.



## Our School Council

The officers of the Council are: Chair

Vice-Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

The names of the other members of the Council are:

The name of our link teacher is:

We meet every

at (time)

in (place)

## Vision Statement

Our School Council is a group of people who:

This explains what the Council is for.

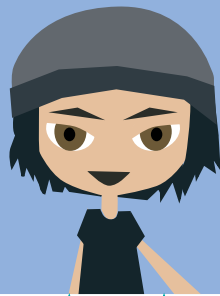


1.

2.

3.

I've always wanted to be on the School Council...



1

If my class vote for me I'll be the best School Councillor EVER...



2

**I WON...**  
I'm so excited!

3

...Now what?

4

Being on the School Council is a serious job. You're one of the most important people in your school, and you can help make it a nicer place to be for pupils, teachers and other staff. This is your book to help you be a great School Councillor.

Welcome to St Dereks Primary School. We will be showing you how our School Council works, and we will also be giving you lots of ideas about things your School Council can do. By the way, my name is Raj!

I'm Rachel!

I'm Aleesha!

I'm James!

Woof!



5

## Why do we need School Councils?

For many years, all the decisions about children were made by adults.

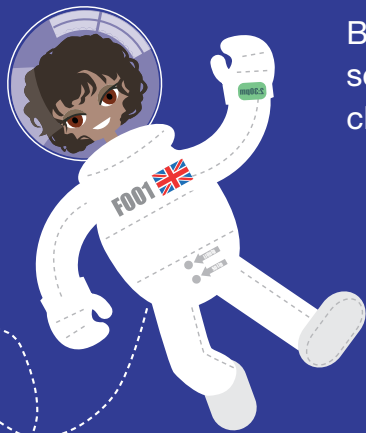


This was thought to be best because adults are older and have experience, training and qualifications.

But adults didn't always make the right decisions, sometimes because they hadn't talked with the children about the issue.

All the countries of the world got together and agreed that children must be given rights. Plus, sometimes their ideas are actually better than adults!

So the government decided that adults must listen to children before making a decision about them.



## Rights

There is an international law called The Convention on the Rights of the Child which nearly all the countries of the world have agreed to practice.



There are many articles in the Convention like the following.



You can read all of the articles on [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

### Article 12

Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

### Article 13

Children have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.

### Article 15

Children have the right to meet together and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.



Think of all the decisions that are made about your school...

- When does school start and finish?
- What shall we do when pupils have a fight?
- How can we make lessons more interesting?
- What equipment should we buy for the playground?
- What outing should we organise?
- How can we help pupils make friends?

You probably have ideas about these questions, and so will other pupils in your school.

**FACT :** The average number of pupils in a UK primary school is 174.

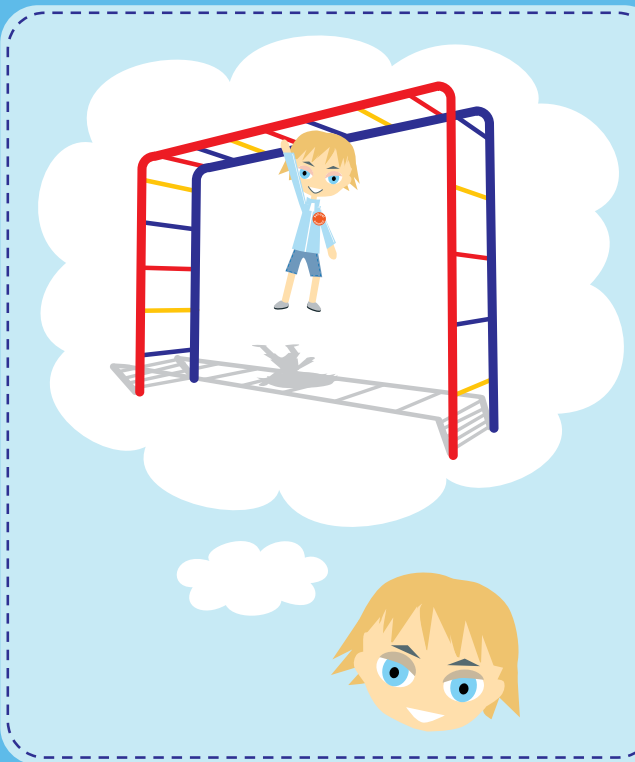
But how can the teachers listen to all the ideas? That would take too long, and **nothing** would get done. Pupils need a way of discussing issues, and making decisions which will help everyone in school. Schools work better when **pupils and teachers are working together and listening to each other.**

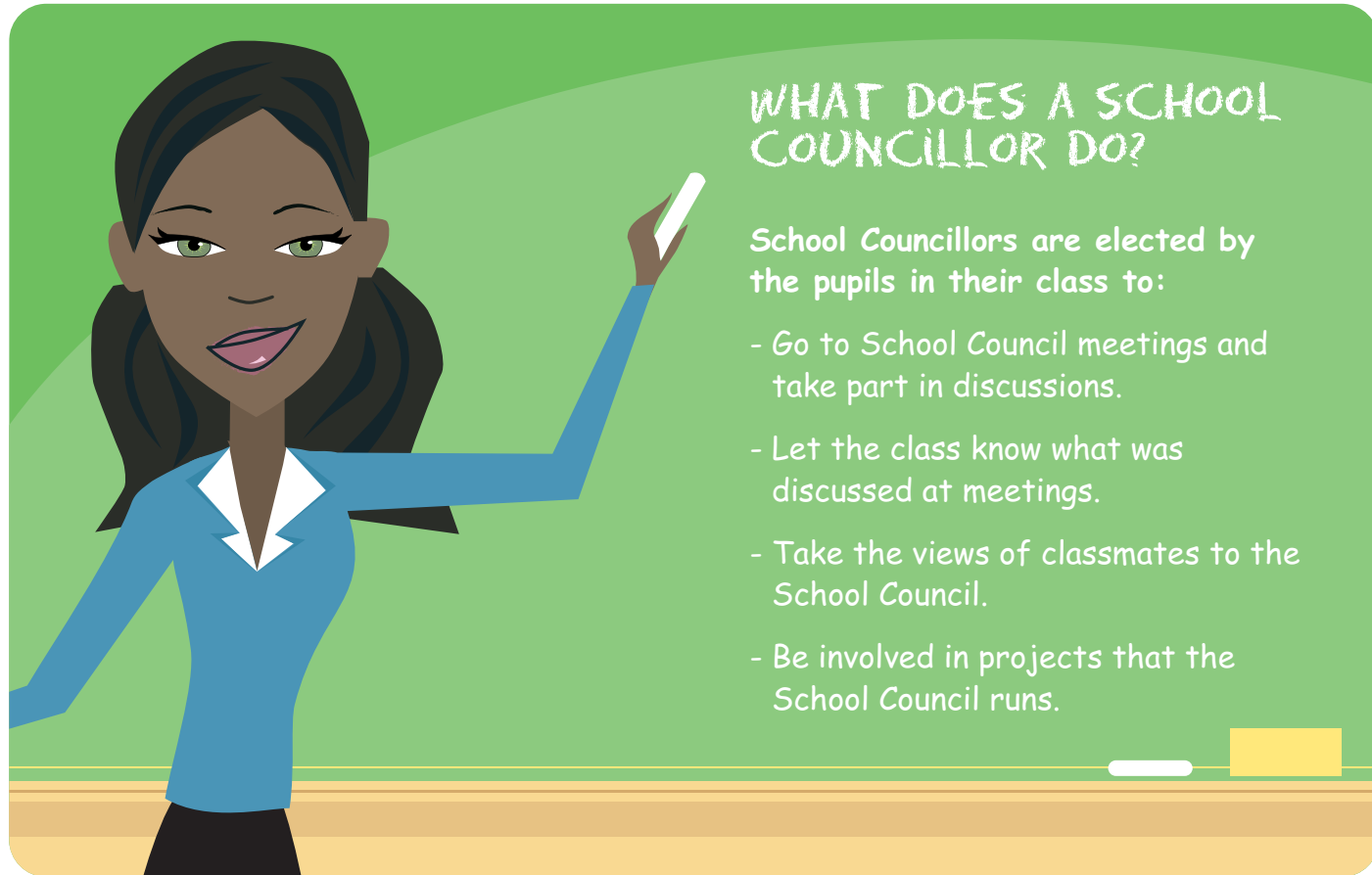
That's why we need School Councils!



### What would you like to achieve in your school?

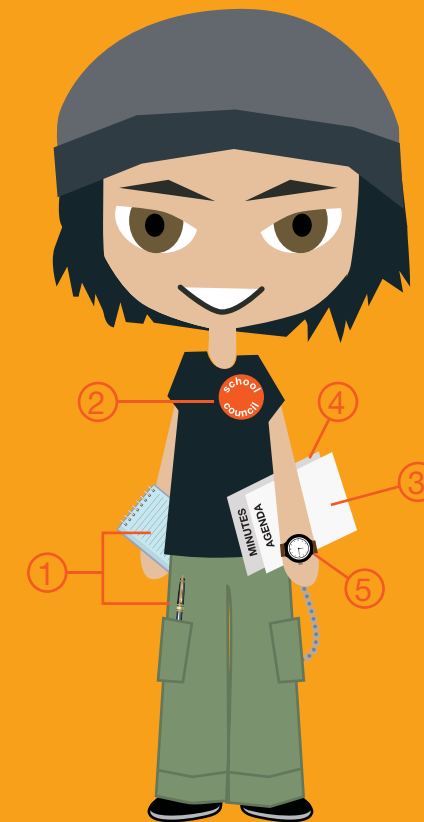
- Set up a healthy eating tuck shop.
- Design new school toilets.
- Run a lunchtime cinema.
- Visit the town hall and meet the mayor.
- Produce a School Council website.
- Raise money for Comic Relief.
- Run an anti-bullying campaign.
- Get new playground equipment.
- Make a School Council video.





### What does a School Councillor look like?

- ① Pen and notebook to take notes and be organised.
- ② School Council badge.
- ③ Agenda for next meeting.
- ④ Minutes of last meeting.
- ⑤ Watch to help be on time.



## Inside the brain of a School Councillor

**Committed & determined**  
to make a difference

**Learning**  
new skills

**Thinking**  
about ways to  
improve the school

**Ideas**  
about things the  
School Council can do

**Looking**  
out for issues to  
deal with

**Listening**  
to other pupils' views  
& understanding them

**Talking**  
to pupils & staff about  
the School Council

**Caring**  
about school &  
wanting to improve it



## Who will do what? The School Council officers

Officers are usually elected by the School Council at the beginning of the year. When you have chosen your officers, write their names on page 3.

**I'm Raj, Chairperson.** I run meetings and talk to governors about the Council. I make sure everyone is involved and help the Secretary prepare the agenda.



**I'm Rachel, Vice-Chairperson.** I help the Chairperson prepare the agenda and help them to lead meetings. I also take over when the Chairperson is away.



**I'm James, Secretary.** I take minutes, write them up and distribute them. I sign letters from the School Council and let people know when meetings are.



**I'm Aleesha, Treasurer.** I Look after School Council money and give reports on the financial situation. I also suggest ideas for fundraising.







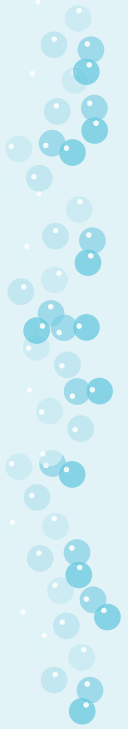
### Who will do what?

Opposite are some of the tasks that need to be done to run a successful School Council.

Which ones do you think you could do, either on your own or as part of a team?



TASK	No thanks	I'll give it a go	Easy!
01 Put chairs out for a meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
02 Talk in front of my class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
03 Talk in front of a staff meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
04 Chair a meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
05 Prepare an agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
06 Take minutes and write them up.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07 Write a letter from the School Council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
08 Find a phone number or address.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
09 Use a photocopier.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Look after School Council money.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Organise a fundraising event.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Write a questionnaire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Explain to the youngest pupils about the Council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Create a School Council website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Write an article for a newsletter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Run an assembly about the School Council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Look after the School Council noticeboard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Design a poster about the School Council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Co-ordinate School Council elections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Train other members of the School Council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Meet the staff** Other people around the school who are involved with the Council.

16



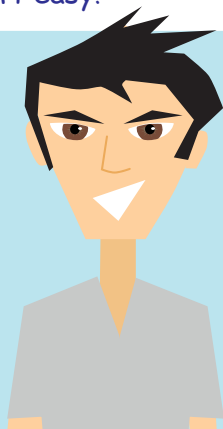
I am responsible for running the school and making sure everyone is happy and safe.

I help the Council by coming to meetings and giving information. I also teach a class so I can get quite busy.



Headteacher

My job is to look after the school buildings and equipment. I also try and keep the school clean, which isn't easy!



Caretaker

Link Teacher

Write the name of the link teacher at your school on page 3.

17



I cook lunch for pupils, and I try to make sure the food is healthy and tasty.

Cook



I'm a member of the Parent Teacher Association. We organise events like the summer fete and let parents know what is going on in the school.

Parent



I'm a school governor at St Dereks which means I help make big decisions about the school. I'm also a local councillor - I help run the town.

Governor

## Meetings & communication

To be successful, meetings need the following:

- 1 Ground rules
- 2 Agenda
- 3 Minutes
- 4 Chairperson
- 5 Reporting back
- 6 Action planning



## Ground rules

A meeting is like a **team**, where everyone is working together to solve a problem or make a decision.

All the members of the team need to be **focussed** on what the issue is, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

It is useful to agree **ground rules** for meetings and make sure all members know what these are. They could include putting your hand up before you speak, or arriving on time.



Write your School Council's ground rules opposite.

Our School Council ground rules:  
example: Put your hand up before you speak

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



## Agendas

An agenda is a list of what is being discussed at the meeting. It should also say where the meeting is and what time it is starting and finishing.

The agenda should be given to members a few days before the meeting so that people can think about the issues and talk to their class about them.

The agenda is usually prepared by the **Chairperson** and **Secretary**.

Download blank agenda sheets from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

Agenda	
Meeting of	St Dereks School Council
Place	Library
Date	25 February
Time	12.45 - 13.15
Apologies for absence Aleesha	
Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February	
a) Are they agreed as an accurate record	
b) Matters arising from last meeting's minutes	
This meeting's business	
1	Buddy Benches in the Playground (10 mins)
2	Healthy Eating Week (10 mins)
3	Computers at Lunchtime (10 mins)
4	
Any Other Business	
Date of next meeting	

## Minutes

Minutes are notes of what decisions are made at the meeting. They are written by the **Secretary** and typed up after the meeting. The minutes should be given to all members, and to staff so that they can find out what the School Council has been doing. Minutes should be kept together and brought to meetings in case they're needed. All members need to read the minutes, so they can check if they have promised to do anything. At the start of every meeting, the **Chairperson** will review the last set of minutes.

Download blank minutes sheets from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

## Minutes

Minutes of meeting held on 25 February 2005

Chairperson Raj

Names of the people present Raj, James, Rachel (plus others...)

Apologies for absence Aleesha

	Action	By Whom
Minutes of the last meeting	Sign the minutes	Chairperson
a) Are they agreed as an accurate record		
b) Matters arising from last meeting's minutes		
Item 1 Buddy Benches in the playground not working...	It was decided to have two...	James, Melanie
Item 2 Healthy Eating Week - try healthier food in canteen...	Arrange meeting with catering...	Rachel, Arthur
Item 3 Pupils not allowed to use computers in lunch break...	We need to discuss this...	Raj
Item 4		
Any Other Business		
Items for the next agenda		
Date of next meeting 12 March, 12.45pm		

## The Chairperson

I've been elected as **Chairperson**. My job is to help the meeting make a **decision**, using the **agenda**.

It is a difficult job, and sometimes a **teacher** will help me.

I often have my own **opinion**, but all the other members' views are just as important. So I need to make sure **everyone** gets to have their say.

The agenda helps me to know how much **time** to give to each subject. If time is running out, I will encourage the meeting to make a decision, or decide to discuss the subject again at the **next meeting**.



### WHAT HAPPENS IN MEETINGS?

- 1 Call the meeting to order
- 2 Remind everyone about ground rules
- 3 Tell everyone to look at the agenda \*
- 4 Discussion
- 5 Decision time
- 6 Let's vote
- 7 Action plan

### WHAT THE CHAIRPERSON SAYS



- Er ... can we make a start?
- Remember the ground rules. No moaning allowed. Positive suggestions only. No put-downs.
- You can see that we are going to discuss ... and we have allowed ... minutes for the discussion.
- Points of view, please.
- Does anyone want to make a proposal about what we should do? Anyone want to second that?
- How many agree? Disagree? Don't know?
- Now we've agreed to ... How are we going to get started? What steps do we have to take? Who will offer to do it? When must it be done by?

\* Begin again at point 3 for each new item on the agenda

## Reporting back

After going to a School Council meeting, Councillors need to tell their class what happened so that other pupils know what the Council is up to. This is called **reporting back** and it can be done straight after the meeting, when it is easier to remember what was decided. If it is done later, you will need a copy of the **minutes** of the meeting to help you remember.

**Reporting back** is for telling the class:

- What was discussed at the meeting
- What was decided
- What is going to be done
- What will be discussed at the next meeting

24

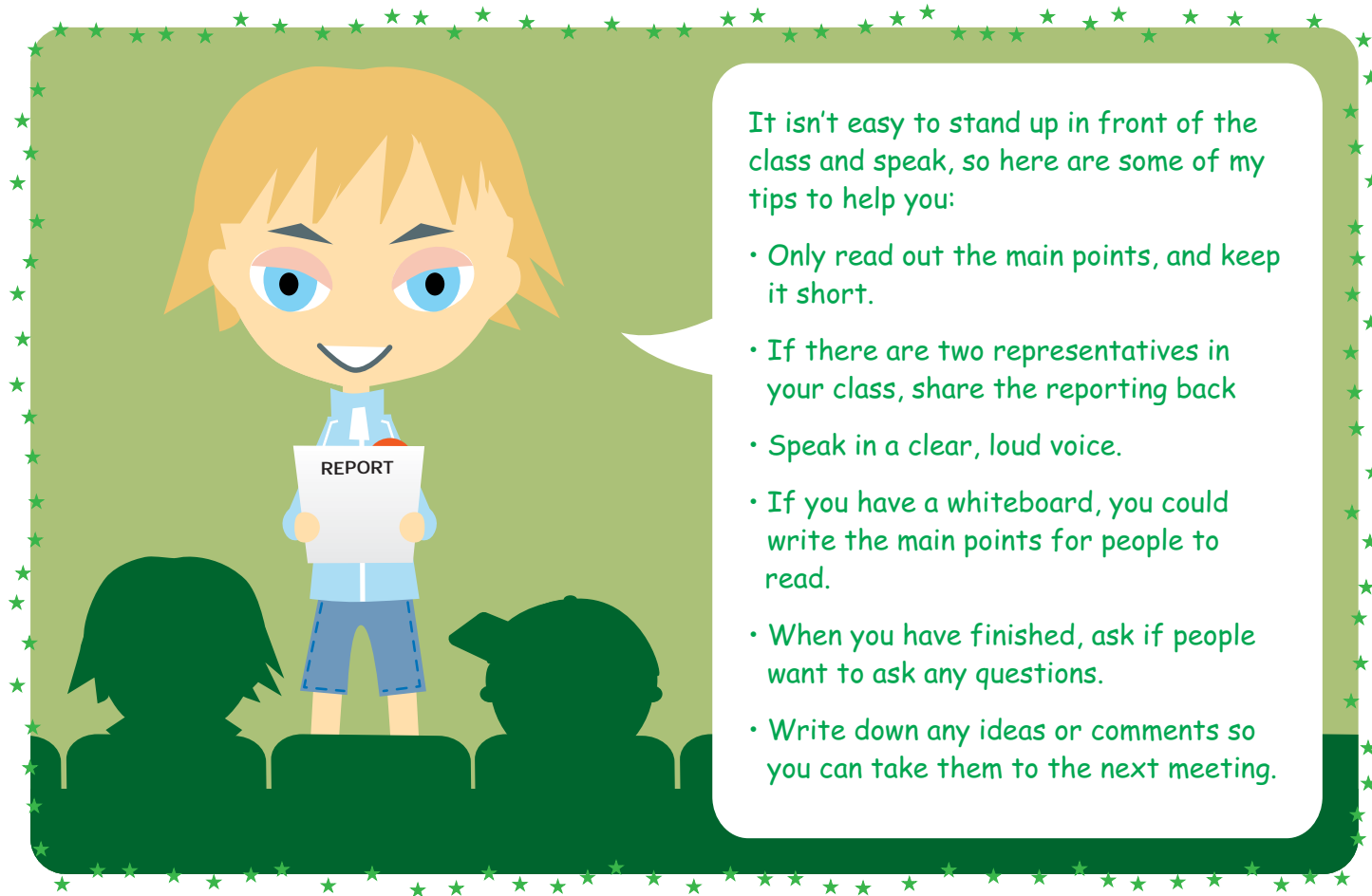
After reporting back you can ask the class if they have any questions or ideas.



Practice by using the minutes on page 21 and reporting back the main points.

It isn't easy to stand up in front of the class and speak, so here are some of my tips to help you:

- Only read out the main points, and keep it short.
- If there are two representatives in your class, share the reporting back
- Speak in a clear, loud voice.
- If you have a whiteboard, you could write the main points for people to read.
- When you have finished, ask if people want to ask any questions.
- Write down any ideas or comments so you can take them to the next meeting.



25

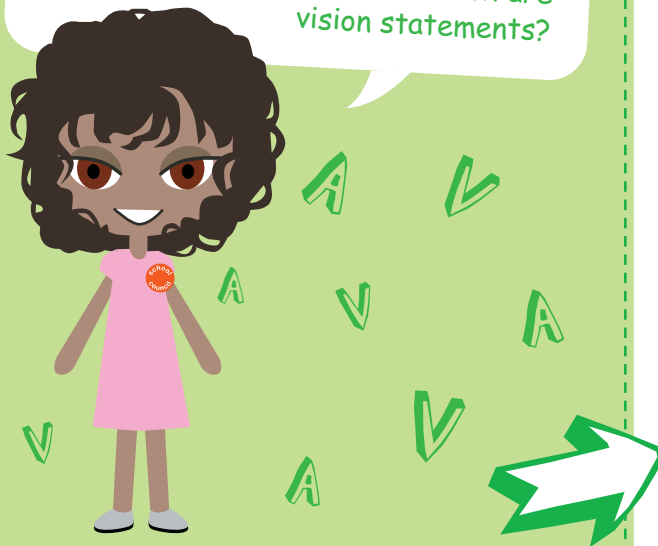
## Action planning

Meetings are only successful if they actually make things happen. Decisions that are made will need someone to take **action** and the minutes should show who will do what.

Action points in the minutes should be clear tasks that can be easily **measured**. This means that you know when it is done. If the **action point** is to 'make sure everyone knows about the Council' then how will you know when you have done it? This is more of a **vision statement** as it says what you hope will happen eventually. An action point might be 'to send a letter to the headteacher asking for a bigger noticeboard' as you know when it has been done and you can see what happens.

26

Look at the chart opposite. Which of these are action points and which are vision statements?



Put an 'A' or 'V' sticker in the circle which you think is right.



Write a letter to the Chair of governors.

Raise money for charity.

Design a poster about healthy eating.

Arrange a meeting with the catering staff.

End bullying in school.

Phone a coach company to find out about booking a coach.

Clean up the toilets.

Make the school better.

Find information on the internet about playground equipment.

Buy some notebooks for Council members.

Photocopy minutes and give to Council members.

Get better playground equipment facilities.

Improve school meals.

27

The **vision statements** are still important because they are all things we would like to do. But on their own they look quite hard - where do you start?

The way to do it is to take one vision statement and turn it into **action points** so everyone has smaller, easier jobs to do.

You can use an **action planning form** to help you **measure** the tasks and know who is doing them.

Lets take the example of improving school meals.

Download blank action plans from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

**Action planning form**

**Name of project** Improving school meals

<i>What needs to be done?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>When should it be done by?</i>	<i>Tick when done</i>
Design questionnaire to find out what pupils think of school meals.			
Discuss questionnaire and get the School Council to approve it.			
Get questionnaire photocopied and ask pupils to fill it in.			
Look at results of questionnaire and write a short report.			
Discuss report in Council meeting and make suggestions.			
Arrange meeting with catering staff to discuss recommendations.			
Report back and find out from pupils if food has improved.			



## Does everyone know about the School Council?

Letting everyone in the school know what you are up to means that you will get more feedback about the work you are doing.



It will mean that more people appreciate the School Council and this in turn will make us members of the Council feel more valued and motivated.



Some of the things you might want to let people know about are:

- Letting visitors to the school know about the School Council.
- Requesting ideas for a design to brighten up the dinner hall.
- Letting pupils know the names of all the School Council members.
- Encouraging people to take part in School Council elections.
- Asking for acts to enter a talent show.



## Who needs to know about the School Council?

Tick once you've informed the following people and anyone else you think you need to tell.

Parent



Governor



Teacher



Pupils



Caretaker



Cook



## Informing people

How does your school inform pupils, staff and parents?

Does your school use any of the following?

- Assemblies
- Noticeboards
- Class announcements
- School newsletters
- School website

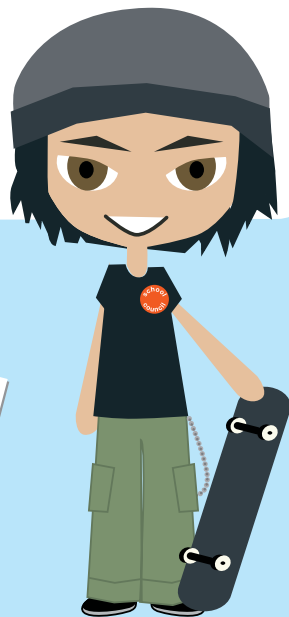


Why not include information about the School Council in them?

32

You can also produce your own publicity such as:

- Suggestion box
- Posters
- Surveys
- Videos
- Assemblies
- Noticeboards



The **suggestion box** is a popular way of getting ideas and comments from people. But it needs to be in the right place – it's no good having it tucked away in a corner.

Make it clear that the box is for **suggestions** and it doesn't mean every pupil will get what they ask for.



You could also have an **email address** which people can send ideas to - a sort of electronic suggestion box.



Ensure the box is **secure** so it can't be tampered with.



SUGGESTION BOX

33

# Posters

Posters are useful for raising awareness about a specific issue or event. They can also be used to publicise the School Council generally.



Think about the best locations. These tend to be where people are waiting, eg. by dinner queues or in classrooms.



Always make spare copies as posters will usually get damaged.



If the poster is advertising a specific event, remember to take it down after the event has happened.



Think visually - pictures have much more impact than lots of text.



# Survey

Boy

Girl

Year 4

Have you ever been bullied?

Yes

No

Did you tell anybody?

A friend

A teacher

Mum / dad

No-one

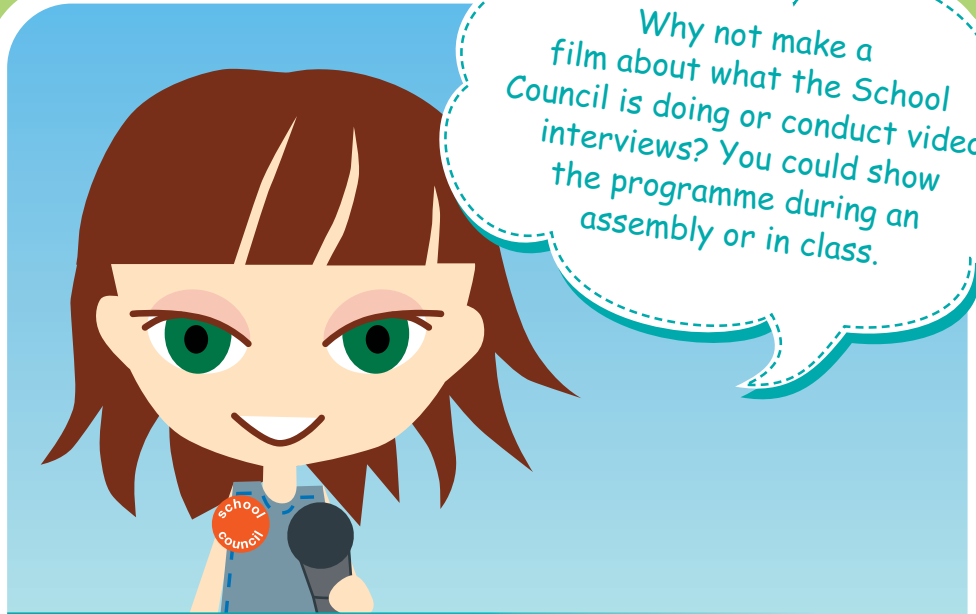
Surveys can be used to find out what people think about specific issues like school uniform or bullying. They can be done face to face or in people's own time.

Remember to ask permission and be polite. Make the questions clear and easy to understand. Try them out on a few people. Don't forget to include a middle option like 'don't know'.

Check that your answers will give you the information you need. For example 'is there a lot of bullying?' won't be as useful as 'have you ever been bullied?'.

Encourage people to complete them by entering them into a raffle for a prize.





Why not make a film about what the School Council is doing or conduct video interviews? You could show the programme during an assembly or in class.

**BREAKING NEWS**  
Raj elected School Council Chairperson

### Meet the School Council

You could have a rota where a small group of Councillors sit on a stall during lunchtime or morning break. Pupils can come and speak to you.

It's a good way of meeting the pupils and they can find out who is on the School Council.



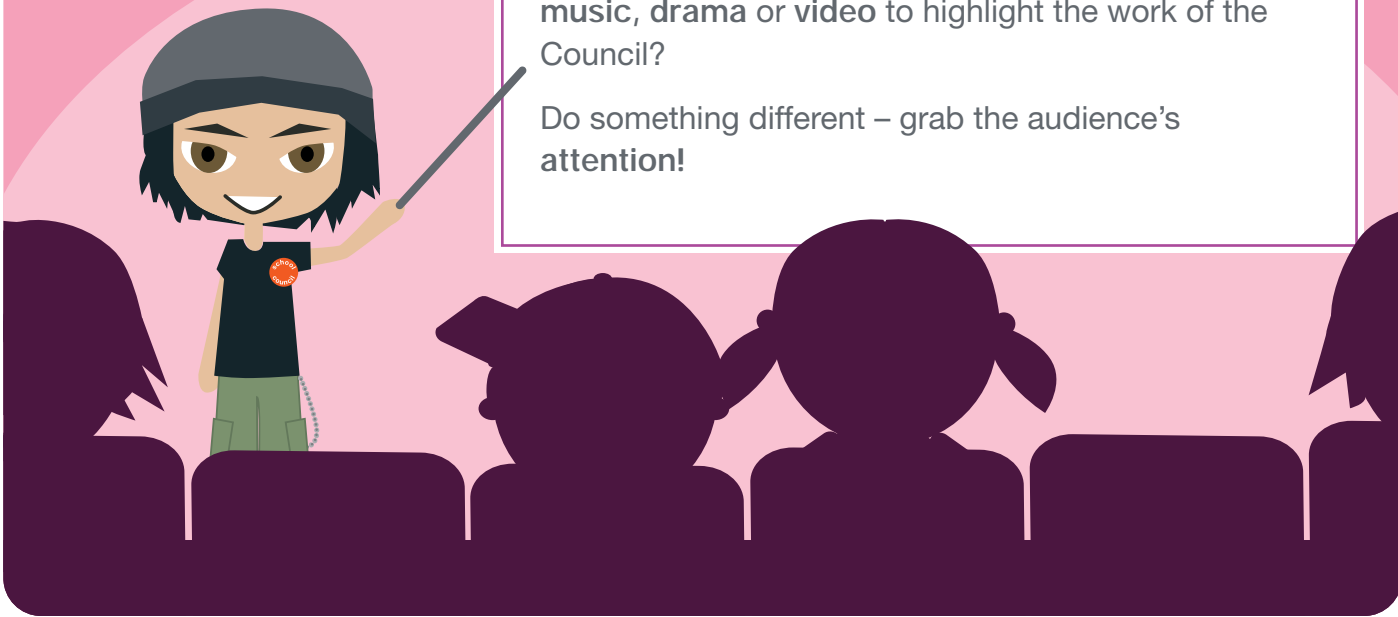
You could give out stickers as an incentive.



Hi! We are your School Councillors. We want to hear your views.



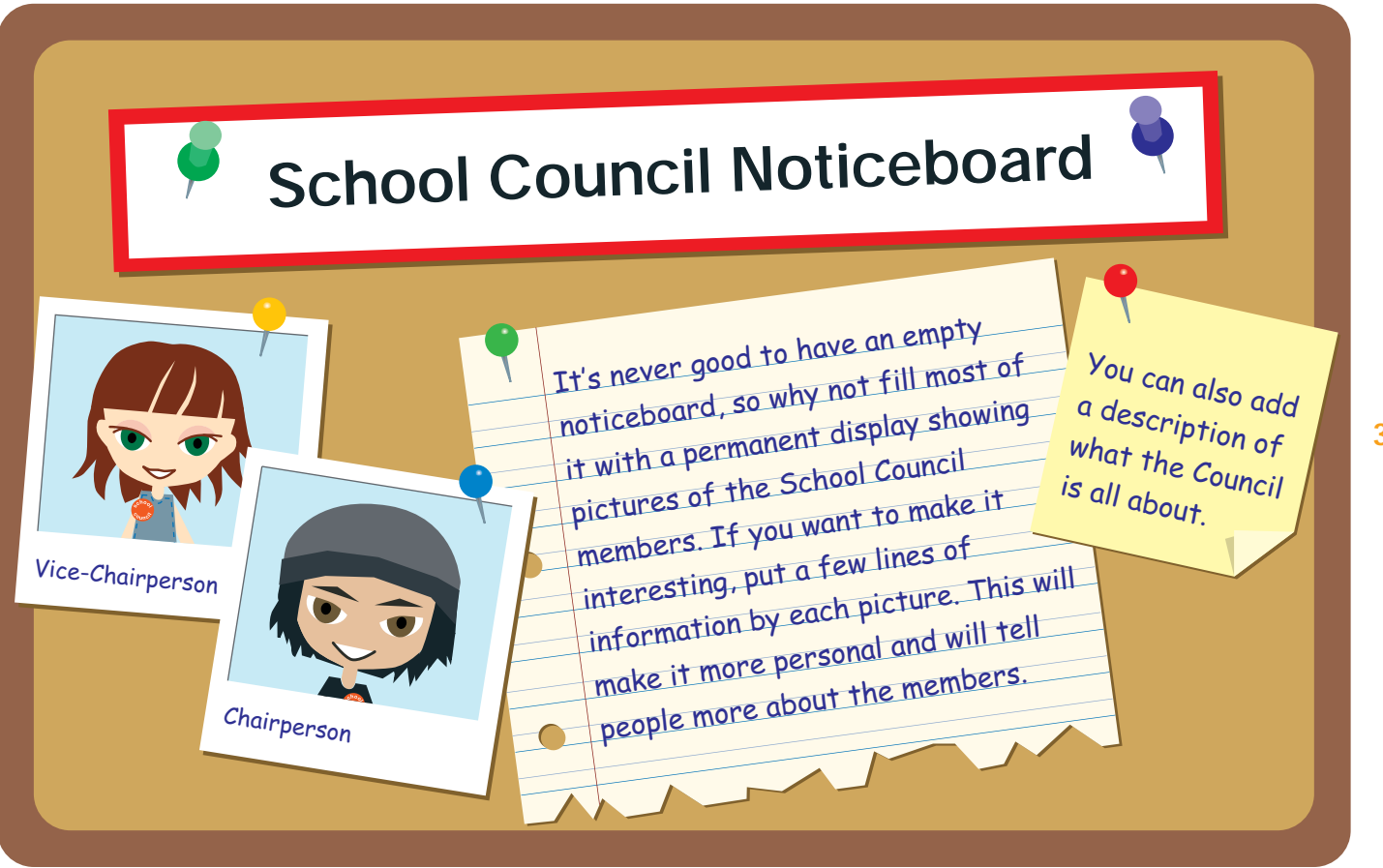
# Assemblies



If your first thought of assemblies is 'boring, having to listen to people speak' then you've got a great opportunity to prepare a School Council assembly.

Why not have a TV chat-show style debate, or use music, drama or video to highlight the work of the Council?

Do something different – grab the audience's attention!



# School Council Noticeboard



*It's never good to have an empty noticeboard, so why not fill most of it with a permanent display showing pictures of the School Council members. If you want to make it interesting, put a few lines of information by each picture. This will make it more personal and will tell people more about the members.*

*You can also add a description of what the Council is all about.*

## How are we doing?

A School Council is like a machine – if one part isn't working well then it can affect the whole thing.

It's a good idea during your time on the School Council to check that everything is **running smoothly**, then you can fix anything that needs fixing.

This table will help you, and the Council should fill it in together **three times**, maybe in October, January and April.

Write a number in each circle depending on how things are going. 1 means **yes**, 2 means **sometimes**, and 3 means **no**.

Filling in this table will give you an idea of what the Council is doing well, and what needs more work.



More of these charts are available from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

 Issue	October	January	April
Is the Council meeting regularly?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is the Council working well as a team?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do all Councillors understand their role?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Are all the meetings well-run?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Are all classes holding Council meetings?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do pupils know about the School Council?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do staff support the School Council?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Do governors know about the Council?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Is the Council making a difference in the school?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>



## Getting active

Now you know how to be a School Councillor, how are you going to make your school better?

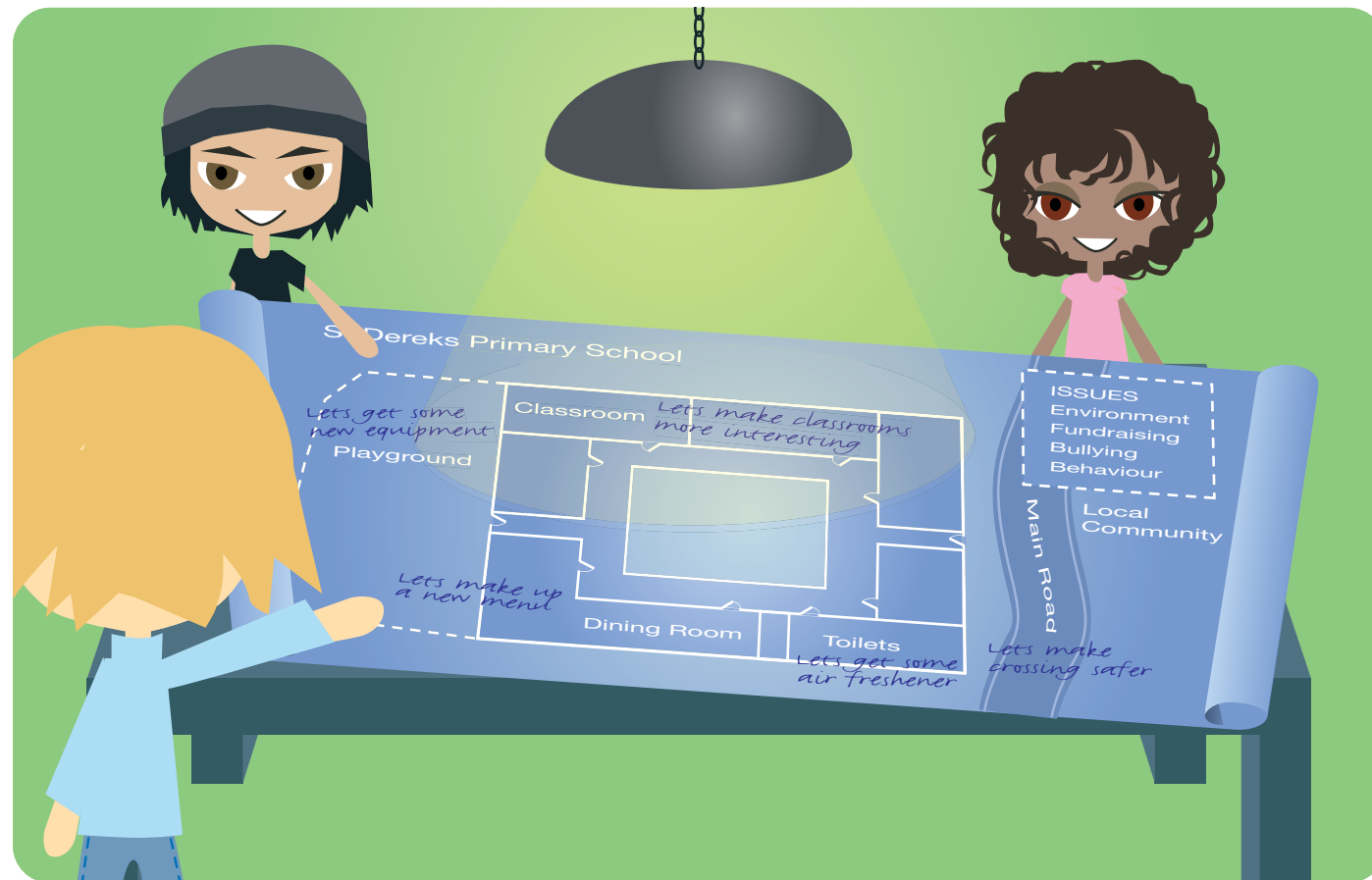
Find out from pupils and staff what their ideas are and decide on which issues you need to tackle.

If your Council is working well, you can use meetings and action planning to get things going.

Get organised! Download worksheets from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

There are **places** in the school, like the playground which you can improve. There are also **issues** like bullying, which you can try and do something about.

Let's take a look around St Dereks Primary School and see what we can do.





## Playground

Welcome to the playground. It's my favourite part of the school because we get to do what we want. Our School Council often discuss the playground and we have a lot of ideas about how to improve it. Can you see what the problems are?

I have no one to play with.

There's not enough space to play football!



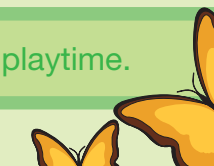
Ouch!

Ha ha!



### How would you improve your school playground?

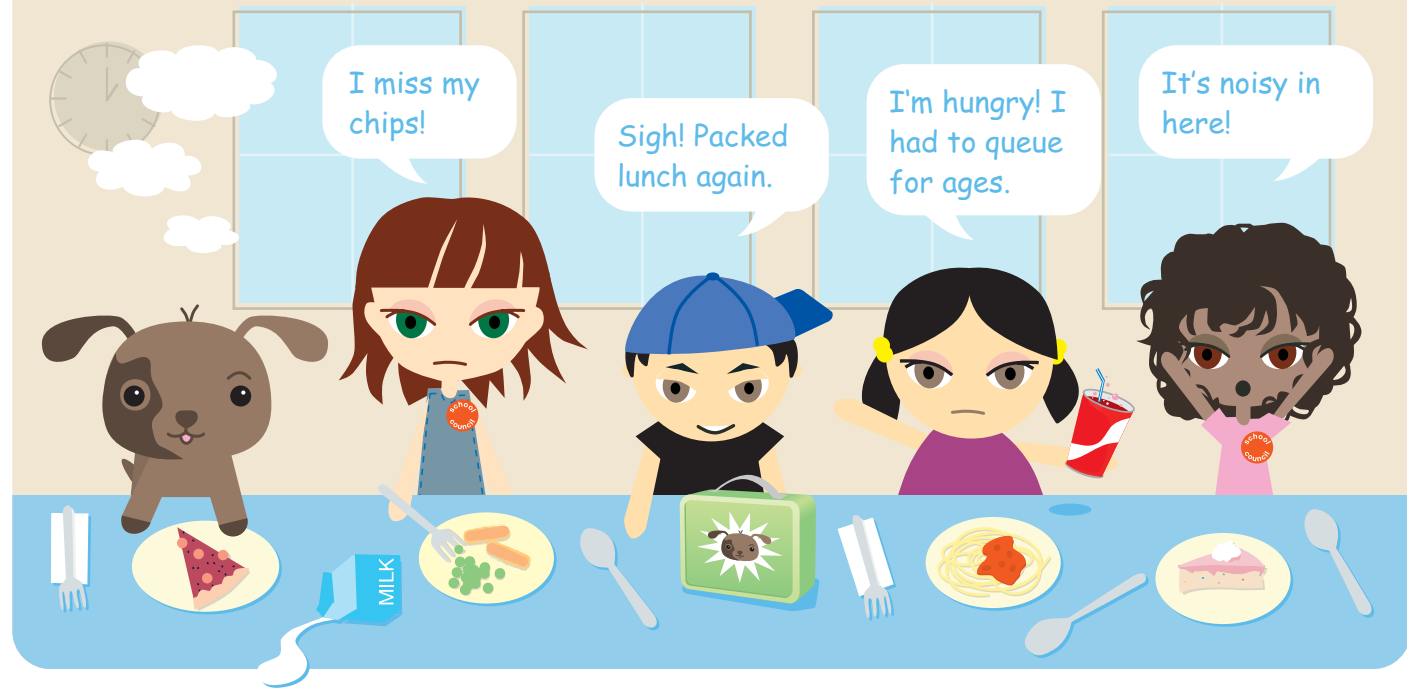


- Playground patrols – pupils who look out for problems such as bullying.
- School gardens – growing flowers or even vegetables to eat. 
- Learn new playground games, or raise money to buy more playground equipment.
- Outdoor art projects - mosaics, murals or sculptures. 
- Friendship bench – where pupils can go and talk to someone if they feel lonely.
- Put more seats in the playground for lessons outdoors and sitting at playtime.
- Make a wildlife area and grow plants that birds and butterflies like. 

**FACT :** Markethill school in Aberdeen, Scotland set a **WORLD RECORD** in their playground when 202 people 'hula-hooped' continuously for 2 minutes.

## Dining room

This is our dining room - I love it here because I like eating. When the pupils don't finish their lunch, I get the leftovers.



I miss my chips!

Sigh! Packed lunch again.

I'm hungry! I had to queue for ages.

It's noisy in here!

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### How would you improve the dining room?



- Start a healthy tuck shop serving snacks at morning break.
- Do a survey to find out what food pupils like. 
- Get all the pupils to drink milk and eat fruit every day. 
- Have different year groups queuing at separate times to reduce the queues.
- Breakfast club for pupils who don't eat before they come to school. 
- Talk to the cook about menu ideas for special occasions.
- Make the dining room more interesting and relaxing with music. 
- Healthy eating campaign with assemblies, posters, lessons and other events.

47

**FACT :** The Government gives each primary school 45p per pupil to spend on lunch.

## Toilets

Hold your breath - these are our toilets, and they don't smell too good. We have quite a few problems with toilets as you can see. Some pupils say they hang on until they get home, but that's not good because you can't concentrate in lessons if you're bursting to go!



48



### How would you improve your school toilets?



- Do a survey asking people what they think about the toilets.
- Go and find out exactly what the problems are e.g. how many toilets don't work.
- Talk to the caretaker and cleaners about improving the toilets.
- Write to local businesses asking them to decorate or donate equipment for the toilets.
- Run a campaign encouraging pupils to treat the toilets better.
- Decorate the toilets by adding colour or pictures.
- Find out costs then write to the headteacher asking for money to improve toilets.



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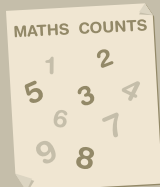


**FACT :** The government now wants adults to listen to pupils' ideas when new schools are built. Find out more at [www.bsf.gov.uk](http://www.bsf.gov.uk)



## Classroom

This is my class, and we're doing a maths lesson. Maths is my favourite but some people are not so keen. The School Council can't decide what the pupils learn, but we can give ideas about how we are taught and what kind of activities we do.



I don't get this!

Finished! Now what do I do?

Zzz Zzz

50



### How would you improve your classroom?



Have some lessons outside.



Make or buy artwork to brighten up the classroom.



Have activities like games in the lessons.



Change the position of desks so it's easier to learn.



Organise trips to learn more about subjects like history and geography.



Try different books to see which ones pupils prefer.



Have bottles of water for pupils, which helps your brain work.



Observe lessons in other classes to see different teaching styles.

51

**FACT :** By the end of year 6, you will have spent 7200 hours in the classroom!

Although there's plenty to sort out inside the school, we also look at areas outside school that affect pupils. Everyone travels to and from school every day and we want to make sure it's safe. We also want pupils to get exercise and learn about road safety.



Road outside school



How would you improve the road outside school?



Find out how pupils travel to school and if they feel safe.



Organise a **Safe Routes to School** scheme, encouraging pupils to walk or cycle safely to school.



Start a **'Walking Bus'** where groups of pupils walk to school together.



Run a **'travel safety'** campaign where pupils learn about getting to and from school safely.



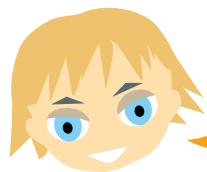
Ask the local council for funding to buy **storage** for bicycles.



Organise **cycle training** for pupils who want to come to school by bike.

**FACT** : 40% of primary pupils are driven to school – that's almost twice as many as 20 years ago.





This is our town, and when pupils aren't at school they need places to go and things to do which are fun and safe. Our School Council can help by finding out what pupils think and giving ideas to the people in charge.



## Local Community

54



## What could we do in the local community?

- Visit **town hall** to see what the local council do, or invite a councilor to visit the school.
- Set up after school clubs, with sports, music and arts. 
- Ask the **library** to get more books and facilities for children (PC games, DVDs, music).
- Ask the **cinema** and other local businesses for discounts or free entry for children.
- See if **local sports stars** will come to the school or donate prizes for raffles. 
- Ask the **council** to provide more for children to do (football goals, skateboard ramps).
- Find out where children feel **unsafe** and take your ideas to the **police**.
- Encourage pupils and their families to **recycle** at home. 
- Ask the local **Health Service** to provide health information to pupils (diet, drugs, exercise).

55



## School environment

Our Council wants to help keep the school looking nice. We also want to reduce waste and reduce the impact on our environment. This can also save the school money and improve our health.



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## Litter

We could go and see how much litter there is around the school. We can also check where the worst areas are and what types of litter we find. It might not be the pupils fault if other people are using the school in the evenings or weekends.

## Recycling

Can we reduce the amount of paper we use? Can we use both sides before throwing it away, and do we need to print so many copies of things? Can we re-use envelopes?

We can find out about our local recycling scheme and start collecting paper, glass and plastic. How much waste is produced from our packed lunches? Even things like apple cores and banana skins can be used to make compost.



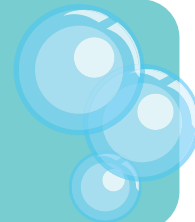
## Energy

There are lots of ways to reduce the amount of energy we use. This could be by using heating, hot water, lighting, TVs and computers more carefully.



## Water

We can make sure people turn taps off properly, or change the type of taps we use.



## Transport

We could look at the way we get to and from school and see if we can reduce traffic jams and pollution. There are more ideas on page 53.



## School Grounds

How does our school look? We can ask pupils to take photos of their favourite and worst parts. We can also make the school entrance look nicer and more welcoming for visitors. What about classrooms, corridors and the playground?

When we have looked at all these things, we hope to become an Eco-School.



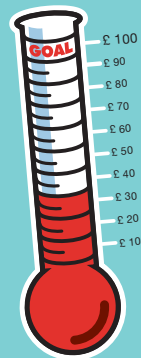
To find out how your school can be one too, see [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk)

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# FUNDRAISING

One of the best things about our School Council is that we raise money for charities. Organising fundraising events is fun, and we get to support good causes too.



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We raise money in lots of different ways, and some are easier than others.



When we need extra help we can ask the Parent-Teacher Association who also run events.



Opposite are some of the different things we have done.



## Non-uniform day

Pupils pay £1 to not wear their uniform, or wear fancy dress for the day.



## Bring & Buy sale

Pupils can bring things to sell, like unwanted games or CDs. You can also sell things like cakes, which pupils have made.



## Sponsored silence

The teachers' favourite! Pupils ask friends and family to sponsor them to keep quiet for the whole of lunchtime. You can be sponsored to do anything: walk, run, hop, sing, skate...

## Games competition

Organise a games competition at lunchtime or after school. You could get sponsored to see how many penalties you can score or baskets you can shoot in 10 minutes.



## Quiz show

Run a quiz in the style of your favourite TV show, and have prizes for the winners. Each class could play, and the winners go into a 'grand final' at lunchtime.



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For the event to be successful, it will need to be well organised. Here's what you need to decide:



### Which event?

This will depend on how much **time** you have, what **help** you need and **where** you are going to have it.

### Who does what?

You will need a team to organise an event. Certain people will have **key roles**, but everybody can have a part to play in making the event a success.

### Key roles

**Project managers** make sure everything is running smoothly and help everyone get their jobs done.

**Publicity managers** create posters, leaflets and anything needed to let people know about the event.

**Promoters** get the word out and make sure everyone knows about your event.

People will be needed to manage things like ticket sales, food, money, music and equipment.



### When, Where and Why?

It's important to choose a date that doesn't **clash** with other big events like school outings or plays. Make sure the place where you have the event is **suitable** and pupils can get there easily. Finally, don't forget why you are doing it. Which **charity** will you choose, and how will you let people know where their money is going?



### Get some help

There will be people who can **help** you by giving you equipment or helping out on the day. You could also ask people to **donate** things that can be used as prizes for competitions. The best ways of asking for help is either to **write a letter** or make a **phone call**. Remember making contact might get you almost anything!



## Writing letters

You should be brief and try to keep your letter to one page if possible.

Use their title e.g. Mr/Mrs unless you know them well.

A good headline will get their attention.

Say why you are writing.

Make it personal. Make the person feel like you are writing only to them.

Tell them what's in it for them.

Download guide to writing letters from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

St Dereks Primary School  
34 Hill Road  
Fulchester  
F04 2LR

Mr B Smith  
Smith's Bouncy Castles Ltd  
18 High Road  
Fulchester  
F02 9JL

Date

Dear Mr Smith

**ST DEREKS NEEDS YOUR HELP!**

On March 28th, pupils at St Dereks Primary school are running a day of fundraising activities, to raise money for cancer relief.

We want to run activities which pupils will pay to take part in, and having a bouncy castle would be fantastic because everyone loves them.

Would it be possible for us to hire one of your bouncy castles at a special rate so that we can raise funds on the day?

We would be happy to promote your company by putting your name on the programme, and we're sure that lots of pupils and parents would hire from you for birthday parties!

If you are able to support this event, we would be very happy.

*Yours sincerely,*

James, Raj, Aleesha  
St Dereks School Council

## Making phone calls

Using the phone is the quickest way of contacting people, but it can be scary. Before you call, write down any details you need to remember so you can look at them while you talk.

- ① If possible have the name of the person you need to speak to.
- ② Always start by telling them who you are and why you are calling.
- ③ Be clear about what you're asking for.
- ④ If you have agreed anything, repeat this to make sure they understand.
- ⑤ When you finish the call, remember to thank them.

- ① Hello, can I please speak to Mrs Kelly, the Catering Manager.
- ② My name is Raj from St Dereks School Council, and I'm calling about our school dinners.
- ③ Would you be able to come to a meeting with our School Council so we can tell you our ideas for improving school dinners?
- ④ Just to confirm, you will be coming to the school to meet us on Wednesday May 14th at 12.30pm.
- ⑤ Thank you for your time Mrs Kelly, and I look forward to meeting with you.



## Bullying

Although St Dereks is quite a friendly school, we still have some bullying. Pupils can be nasty or hurt each other and we need to find ways of **stopping** it.

We wanted to find out more about bullying at our school, so we did a survey. We asked all the pupils to fill in a **questionnaire**.



### Types of bullying

**Physical bullying** (hitting, kicking, stealing)

**Verbal bullying** (name calling)

**Indirect bullying** (spreading nasty stories about someone, ignoring people)

Have you ever been bullied?

Yes  No

How many times?

Once  2-5 times

More than 5 times

Where did it happen?

In the classroom  In the corridors  
 In the playground  Journey to/from school  
 In the toilets  Somewhere else

Who were you bullied by?

A boy  A group of boys  
 A girl  A group of girls  
 Mixed group

Did you tell anyone about it?

Staff member  Family  
 Friends  No one

Have you seen other pupils being bullied?

Yes  No

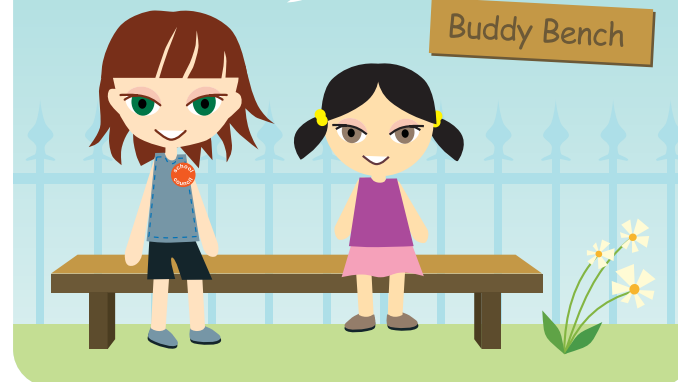
Did you report it?

Yes  No

Have you any ideas how we can stop bullying?

We found that most bullying happens in the playground, and people are most likely to tell a friend about the bullying.

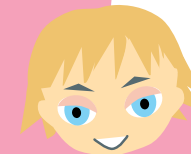
We did some **research** on the internet and found out about playground buddies. These are members of the School Council who are on duty in the playground during morning break and lunchtime. They get special training and if people need someone to talk to they can listen.



The buddies wear a special badge so people know who they are, and they have a **'buddy bench'** where pupils can sit down to talk or play a game. Our team of buddies take turns so each day there are four buddies on duty.

After having the buddies for one term, we will ask pupils what they think about them. We hope the buddies will make people feel they have someone to talk to and **feel safer** in the playground.

We might not be able to **stop** all bullying, but we can make sure anyone who gets bullied **knows they are not alone**.



## Behaviour

Our School Council has been thinking of ways to improve behaviour in school.



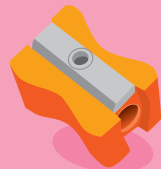
66

### Types of bad behaviour

- Being rude or swearing.
- Arriving late to a lesson.
- Damaging property.
- Not doing homework.
- Missing school without a proper reason.
- Disrupting a lesson.
- Fighting or shouting at people.
- Not wearing your uniform (if your school has one).

### Reasons why people misbehave

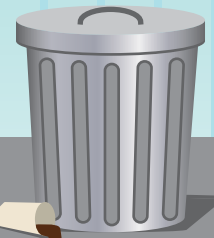
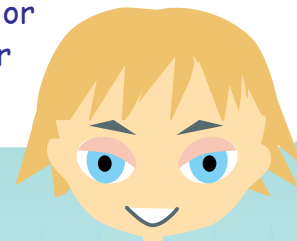
- When I was bored in class.
- When I was hungry.
- When I couldn't understand a lesson.
- When our team lost the football match at lunchtime.
- When my mum told me off before school.
- When my friend wouldn't lend me her pencil sharpener.



When we talked about it, we realised that most of us had misbehaved at some time.



When someone misbehaves, they will usually get told off and sometimes sent to stand outside the headteacher's office. Sometimes they have to stay inside during lunchtime or help pick up litter in the playground.



So we've got lots of punishments at our school, but what about things to encourage pupils to behave well?



### Ideas to improve behaviour

- Points for good behaviour, with a prize when you get a certain number.
- Badges or stickers which pupils can wear when they behave well.
- Certificates for good behaviour.
- Lunchtime clubs or playground games for pupils who are bored.

Are there any behaviour issues that your School Council could look at?

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## School Rules

Our School Council also looked at the school rules. Every school has a behaviour policy which says how pupils should behave, and what the punishments are.



But ours is really long and boring, so we re-wrote it in a language the pupils could understand.



Download classroom rules posters from [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

### Classroom rules Key Stage 1

- We listen carefully.
- We work quietly.
- We are polite and friendly.
- We tell the truth.
- We always do our best.

### Classroom rules Key Stage 2

- We listen carefully and follow instructions.
- We show respect for others, treating them as we would like to be treated.
- We work quietly without disturbing our classmates.
- We look after our own belongings and keep the classroom tidy.
- We tell the truth.
- We do our best at all times.

## Contacts

### School Councils UK

Advice on School Councils.  
[www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)  
[info@schoolcouncils.org](mailto:info@schoolcouncils.org)  
 T 0845 456 9428

### Childline

Helpline for young people.  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[info@childline.org](mailto:info@childline.org)  
 T 0800 1111

### NHS Direct

Confidential health advice.  
[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)  
 T 0845 46 47

### Kidscape

Help and advice about bullying.  
[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
 T 08451 205 204

### NSPCC

Helpline for anyone worried about child abuse.  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[info@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:info@nspcc.org.uk)  
 T 0800 77 66 00

### Children's Legal Centre

Free legal advice.  
[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)  
[clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk)  
 T 01206 873820

### Comic Relief

Fundraising resources.  
[www.comicrelief.com](http://www.comicrelief.com)

### Equal Voice

Drama resources to increase self esteem.  
[www.equalvoice.net](http://www.equalvoice.net)

### Fax your MP

It's easy – you don't even need a fax machine!  
[www.faxyourmp.com](http://www.faxyourmp.com)

### Bog Standard

Improve the school toilets.  
[www.bog-standard.org](http://www.bog-standard.org)  
[info@bog-standard.org](mailto:info@bog-standard.org)  
 T 0117 960 3060

### Eco Schools

Advice on how to make your school 'green'.  
[www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk)

### Groundwork UK

Helpful local advice on improving school grounds.  
[www.groundwork.org.uk](http://www.groundwork.org.uk)  
 T 0121 236 8565

### Bicycle Association

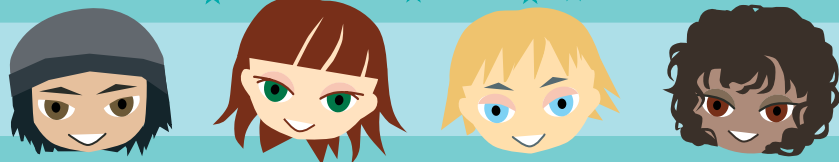
Make more of cycling.  
[www.ba-gb.com](http://www.ba-gb.com)  
 T 02476 553838

### UNICEF

Find out more about children's rights.  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)



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The DfES Innovation Unit works with everyone in schools to find new ways to improve learning. We look for ideas from all the schools in England as well as businesses and other organisations which do things in interesting ways. We want to help schools to keep getting better and for learning to be exciting for every single pupil. If you want to find out more about our work, please visit our website [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit). There's a special section for you that tells you all about our work and how you can send us your own ideas.



Being on the School Council is an important job, and it isn't easy!

This handbook will help you by explaining:

- Why we need School Councils
- How to be a School Councillor
- How to run a School Council

It will also give you lots of ideas for projects like raising money, improving behaviour and sorting out the toilets!

Join the pupils and staff of St Dereks Primary as they show you how their Council has made a difference both inside and outside of their school.

ISBN 0-9535639-5-2

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department for  
**education and skills**



School Councils UK provides training and resources to support pupil participation.

Website [www.schoolcouncils.org](http://www.schoolcouncils.org)

Email [info@schoolcouncils.org](mailto:info@schoolcouncils.org)

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