

So, you were wondering about Training.....



Why book Training for your School Council?

Well, Ofsted are looking specifically at judgements for pupils' outcomes, including "the extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community". *An effective and well-trained School Council is the way to satisfy this.*

During an inspection, Ofsted Inspectors are also specifically tasked with talking with pupils, including "...those holding representative responsibilities, for example as members of the school council". *Are you sure that your School Council is running effectively enough to show an Inspector that you value your students' views?*

Why use School Councils UK to deliver your Training?

We only use Trainers that we know can do the job properly. All our Trainers are Licensed by us to deliver Training that has been developed and adjusted over the past 19 years. We have worked with Local Authorities, Infant, Primary and Secondary Schools, and the UK Youth Parliament. The Training we deliver is updated to include new areas of interest for Student Voice and takes into account the comments we receive via our Training Feedback Forms.

Our Trainers are ex-teachers with a passion for Pupil/Student Voice and Citizenship. They know how to relate to children and young people. They use tried and trusted techniques to ensure all participants are focussed and, most of all, they make it fun!

The Students know what they are doing, but I'm a newly appointed Link Teacher, can you help me too?

Certainly! Our Trainers are equally happy delivering one-to-one Training to teachers new to School Councils as they are training groups of students. They will spend time with you going over any areas of concern, ensuring that you feel confident enough to guide and advise your Council and SLT. Remember also, that following your Training, there is always someone here at our offices from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, who can provide phone support if you feel unsure about something.

I'm working hard with our School Council and they are doing a fantastic job, so why can't the rest of the staff understand how important it all is?

Sometimes school staff don't understand how a really effective School Council can help Whole School Improvement. It may be that instead of embracing Student Voice, they find it threatening. Our Trainers can provide Inset or Twilight Training for staff. Frequently, once staff members understand how a School Council fits into the jigsaw of opinions and suggestions they are keen to expand the Council remit even more!

We can give you a quote..... *"Teachers have nothing to fear and everything to gain from research on the effectiveness of pupil participation. Young people's active engagement in school life is the best way of preventing alienation and disruption and enhancing achievement."* Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of the NUT 2004-2008.

Why not make the most of your (these days limited) budget, and book Training for the School Council with an add-on Twilight for staff?

Okay, I understand why I should book Training, but what do I ask for?

Depending upon your own experience as a Link Teacher and the experience of the School Council you can choose a variety of options. The following are just suggestions and the list is by no means exhaustive. Your Trainer will talk with you beforehand to ensure that the Training covers the areas most relevant to your school and your pupils/students and is appropriate to the length of time you wish to book.

- ▶ **Start from Scratch:** For a brand new School Council, or one that is being re-vamped, you may wish to "start at the very beginning".
 - What is a School Council for?
 - How do we elect Representatives?
 - What do we talk about and who decides?
 - Who is in charge?
 - How do we let the rest of the pupils/students know what we are doing?
 - Decision making
 - Whose view is right or wrong?
 - What areas of school life are we allowed to influence?

- ▶ **Improve effectiveness & explore deeper issues:**
 - How to set up sub-committees
 - From class councils to year councils to executive council
 - Profile raising
 - Project management
 - Negotiation
 - Meeting skills

- ▶ **Advanced Issues:**
 - Peer mentoring / Buddies
 - Teaching & Learning (including students as observers)
 - Student Governors
 - Getting the School Council involved in writing Policies

- ▶ **For Staff:**
 - Why School Councils are vital to school improvement
 - How to support Class Reps
 - The importance of allowing Reps time to gather views and give feedback
 - Why School Council meetings should be timetabled as part of the curriculum
 - How you can make the most of involving pupils/students in staff interviews, lesson observations, behaviour, etc
 - How School Councils can improve relationships between staff and pupils

- How being involved in a School Council can help rebels and “rabble-rousers” learn skills to help them become Leaders.

► **For Link Teachers:**

- How to support the School Council without running it for them
- Liaison with the SLT
- How much assistance to give the School Council
- How to advise, guide & provide basic internal training

Right, now I have an idea of what Training I/we need, what happens next?

We have drawn up a short questionnaire for you to complete. It was probably emailed to you with these details, as a word document. Please go through the questionnaire and fill it in as fully as you can. Then, email back to sallypage@schoolcouncils.org. We will look through the questionnaire and appoint the most appropriate Trainer for you. This decision will be made according to the type of Training you have requested, and your location. As all our Trainers are very versatile and experienced, we expect to be able to appoint the Trainer closest to your location.

The Trainer will be given a copy of your questionnaire together with your contact details so that they can be in touch with you direct. We will inform you who the Trainer will be, so that you can expect their call or email. If you do not hear from the Trainer within three working days please let us know.

When you liaise with the Trainer, they will draw up your Training Programme, specific to your needs. They will also discuss with you whether you need a half or whole day. Sometimes we find that schools request a half day, but then want to cover more than would be ideal in a whole day! Your Trainer will advise you how to make the most of the time you wish to book which may mean including less content in order that the most important areas can be dealt with properly. Please remember that our Trainers are used to setting up Training Programmes and their advice is valuable. We want you and your pupils/students to enjoy the Training and gain the maximum benefit.

This all sounds great, but I’m worried about committing to something before it is approved by my Line Manager!

We understand completely that your SLT or Department Head is going to want to know in detail what you are requesting funding for. We know that you may want to progress to discussing your requirements with a Trainer before you can get funding approval. Don’t worry! Until you agree a date with the Trainer and we send you a Booking Confirmation, you are under no obligation. Obviously, we have to trust you not to take advantage of our Trainer’s time and goodwill, but we haven’t been let down yet. Usually, by the time a Link Teacher has discussed what they need with the Trainer, they and their Line Manager are excited by the possibilities and want to firm up all the details as soon as they can!

Oh..... I forgot to ask the important question – what is this going to cost?

No problem. The prices and details are listed below. These costs include:

- Liaison with Trainer to set up your specific training programme
- Time booked for the training

- Resources for you and your School Council, typically:- badges, pens, handbooks/pupil booklets, training pack (so you can refresh & reinforce what is covered), year planner. There may be extra specific items included depending upon what is being covered during your training, these will also be included in the cost.

The details:

- Each of our Trainers work with up to 25 pupils/students and at least one teacher.
- A full day (maximum of 6 hours, including lunch provided by the school, between the hours of 9am–4pm) costs £700.
- A half day (maximum of 4 hours between the hours of 9am-4pm) costs £400.
- Staff twilight sessions (as an add-on to a half or full day training, up to 2 hours, finishing no later than 6pm) costs an additional £150.
- Stand-alone staff sessions are charged as a full or half day depending upon the timing.
- The earliest our Trainers start is 9am and the latest they finish is 6pm, unless specifically negotiated.
- Trainers' reasonable expenses will be extra (travel and subsistence). Train/taxi fares are recharged at cost, mileage is charged at 40p per mile.
- In the majority of cases, pre-training planning can be done by telephone and email. Where meetings in person are required they will be charged as an extra. Please check with us before arranging meetings so that you don't incur more costs that you are expecting.
- All prices are (unfortunately) subject to VAT at the current rate.

Brilliant, all sounds really great to me, now I'm going to move on to the Questionnaire.....

OR

I don't think I'm going to get those costs approved. Is there any way I can still access your Training?

Yes! You could consider organising Cluster Training. Many schools are part of a cluster, a pyramid or a federation. This works really well for small schools with less pupils on the School Council. Contact two or three other schools to arrange a joint training session and split the costs between you. Our costs are slightly higher for this, as the requirement for Resources is often different and the Trainer will have to adjust the programme to fit. However, even split between two schools it makes a difference.

- The Trainer will work with up to 30 pupils with a minimum of two teachers to assist.
- For a full day, please add £200 to the costs given above.
- For a half day, please add £150 to the costs given above.

We simply ask that we liaise with only one of the schools so that administration and organisation is easier. We are happy to issue multiple invoices splitting the costs however you request us to. We will need a questionnaire completed for each of the schools taking part in the Training session.

This won't work for us, we don't have links with any other appropriate schools, what do I do now?

In 2012, for the first time since the new Management took over in 2009, we are starting to set up Regional Training Days. Currently we are looking for schools wishing to attend a Regional Training Day in the Birmingham area and will shortly be distributing details of a proposed Regional Training Day in Devon. If this is more appropriate for you, please email sallypage@schoolcouncils.org and request details.

Thank you for enquiring about School Councils UK Training. We are passionate about Pupil/Student Voice and look forward to working with you and your School Council.

Sally Page