

Ingle Farm East Primary School Decision Making and Consultation Policy



- Those involved in implementing and affected by a decision should be involved in making it.
- Decisions must be made in line with DECD policy and our school philosophy and policies.
- Different types of decisions will require different processes of decision making.
- Adequate time and effort needs to be given to decision making and review
- Decisions affecting the whole school should be made by consensus where possible.
- The principal is ultimately responsible and accountable for school decisions, but there is an expectation that consultation and representation will occur.
- All stakeholders have a right to be involved in the decision making process.

Consensus

Consensus means that a decision has been made through widespread agreement. It is a decision that all people can live with. Everyone should be comfortable with the way the decision has been made

Those involved in implementing and affected by a decision should be involved in making it

- Everyone affected is listened to and feels their opinion was heard, valued and considered and that they were consulted in the decision making process.
- If a person is affected by a decision, they need the opportunity to be included in the process.
- If a person is not affected, then they need to be kept informed anyway.
- Groups need to check with each other to ensure effective communication occurs.
- Decision makers should ask – “Who could be affected by this decision?” when making decisions.
- People should be aware of existing decision making structures within the school.
- Classroom meetings with students will occur regularly as part of decision making.

Decisions must be made in line with DECD policy and our school philosophy and policies

- Time will be given for staff to familiarise themselves with school philosophy and policies at the beginning of the school year.
- Parents will be informed about DECD policy and have access to our school documents and policies through workshops, talking to individual teachers and reading our newsletter.
- Developing policies and guidelines is part of the decision making process.
- Sufficient time is defined as “as long as it takes for the majority of people to have access to information to make an informed decision”.
- Decisions must be legal and in line with DECD policies and guidelines.

Different types of decisions will require different processes of decision making

- People will be aware of the different levels and types of decision making, eg, consensus, majority, one person, committee, whole school, class, departmental.
- Time will need to be allocated in relation to the type of decision making process used.
- People are encouraged in decision making through inservice, opportunities to practise, reflection, being on various committees.

Adequate time and effort needs to be given to decision making and review (eg, whole school change requires time, resources, materials, etc)

- Everyone is given the opportunity to voice their opinions.
- Staff meeting agenda must allow adequate time for decision making – where possible, a week’s notice will be given to make a decision. - Formal Motions – maximum of 1 week to make the decision
- All people have the right to have their opinions valued.
- The process of consultation needs to be sensitive to the different needs of different people, cultures and norms.
- The views of minority groups will be actively sought.
- Feedback on draft policies and ideas may be sought in different ways.
- Participants should be aware of the agenda before the meeting (refer staff meeting folder).
- All stakeholders have the right to raise issues through ‘General Business’.
- Opportunities and structures should be provided for parents and children to be involved.
- Provision should be made for the necessary training of all stakeholders to enable them to participate

SCHOOL DECISION MAKING STRUCTURES GOVERNING COUNCIL

- The Governing Council must act in accordance with the Constitution and behave in line with the Code of Practice. The name of the council is Ingle Farm East Primary School Governing Council

Membership

- Members who are elected at the Annual General Meeting by parents.
 - *parent representatives*
 - *community members –* *Nominated by Governing Council*
 - *staff representative*
 - *principal*
- Sub committees may contain persons who are not members of the council.

Time

- Governing Council meets at least twice per term
- Starting and ending time to time to be determined by Governing Council at the beginning of the year
- An extension of time of 10 minutes can be negotiated through the chair

Role of Governing Council

- Focus on improving student learning outcomes in collaboration with the principal and staff
- Develop a cooperative working relationship between the Governing Council, principal and staff
- Represent the whole school community in understanding local educational needs
- Set general directions for the site
- Monitor and report on achievements

Functions of the Governing Council

- Involve the school community in the governance of the school by:
 - providing a focus and a forum for parental and school community involvement and values
 - identifying the educational needs of the local community and the attitude of the community to educational developments within the site
 - ensuring that the cultural and social diversity of the site community is considered and the needs of all student groups are appropriately identified
 - Set the general directions of the site by:
- developing broad site policy statements eg Site Improvement Plan, budget
 - Monitor and report on
 - Site Improvement Plan
 - The sites finances
 - OSHC, Canteen
 - The Councils operations
 - Other
- raise money for site related purposes
- property maintenance
- OSHC/ Canteen

Process for decision making

- Regular meetings (at least two Governing Council meetings per term)
- Agenda items are to be placed on the agenda one week prior to each meeting
- Formal structure and constitution
- Issues raised and discussed through the chair
- Motions proposed by any member, seconded, discussed and voted upon
- Democratic vote – majority rules (The chair must have a deliberative vote only and in the case of a tied vote, the motion must be taken as defeated.)
- Minutes taken and agenda sent to members prior to the next meeting
- Sub committees are elected by council members

Sub Committees

- A subcommittee can be formed by the governing council
- A committee assists governing council to carry out its functions more efficiently
- Sub committees may include but are not limited to : - *finance ,fund raising, canteen ,OSHC*
- The role of each committee is specific to its function
- The term of reference for each committee needs to be determined by the Governing Council at the beginning of each year eg tenure, function, operating powers and reporting
- The principal or nominee must be a member of the Finance committee and OSHC committee

Student Voice

Members

Two students from each class are nominated to be the representatives and two students are nominated to be the proxies for semester one. During semester two the roles are swapped so the representatives become the proxies and the proxies become the representatives. The Senior Leader is also a member.

Time

- Meetings held once a week. – On Thursday at 1:30 in room 4.
- A time set aside in each classroom for representatives to seek information from, and provide feedback to their class. The class meeting is one ideal way for this to occur.

Role of the group

- The classroom representatives will be trained to operate as part of a team, to take on leadership roles and to chair meetings.
- Members will be expected to be able to :
 - listen carefully
 - discuss issues with their class
 - work co-operatively
 - obtain information from the class and relay information
 - represent the views of other students
 - develop and adhere to role statements
- The group will :
 - be a reference group for school matters and curriculum issues
 - be consulted about decisions about issues directly related to students' welfare
 - communicate to staff & governing council via minutes taken at each meeting

Process for decision making

- Elected chairperson, secretary and executive (vice positions).
- Preset agenda that is contributed to by children and teachers.
- Aim for consensus on all major decisions.
- In the event of consensus not being reached, a vote will be taken.
- Decisions / recommendations will then be presented at staff meeting or Governing Council

Staff Meetings

Membership

- All staff

Time

- Meetings once a week on a Tuesday for one and a half hours - 3:20- 4:50pm
- Any extension of time can be negotiated through the chair.

Role of the group

- Information sharing, professional development and decision making.

Process for decision making

- Rotating chairperson and secretary.
- Preset agenda that is contributed to by any staff member
- Aim for consensus of opinion on decisions.
- If consensus cannot be reached, further time may be set for information gathering and discussion and the decision deferred for one week.
- In the event of consensus not being reached, a vote will be taken – two thirds majority is needed to carry the motion. (all voters to be contacted)
- Where advance notice of a decision to be made is given, members may submit an absentee vote (in writing) prior to the meeting, provided that person has been a part of the debate prior to announcement of the voting date.
- An absentee vote is counted as a person being present, for the purpose of the vote.
- If the discussion or meeting becomes deadlocked, the principal shall move a motion to resolve the deadlock and that recommendation shall be voted on.

Committees

- Staff representation on committees across the school is encouraged
- Sub committees include:
 - *OHS&W*
 - *social committee*
 - *Student Review Team*
 - *OSHC*
- Committees make recommendations to be decided on by whole staff
- Agenda items raised for committees should be forwarded prior to each meeting
- Minutes from each committee is taken and reported on at the following staff meeting
- The role of each committee is specific to its function

Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC)

Membership

- Membership for PAC includes
 - Principal (or nominee)
 - AEU member (elected by AEU members)
 - An elected equal opportunity representative (elected by all staff)
 - A member of non teaching staff (elected by non teaching staff)

Time

- Meetings twice per term (time to be negotiated)

Role of the group

- The role of PAC is to work in partnership with the principal in relation to Human Resources (HR) and to perform any function as provided for by Arbitrated EB Award

Process for decision making

- Members of PAC are required to consult with and represent staff in relation to HR matters
- HR decisions will arrive by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached such decisions may be made by majority agreement of the members.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Membership

- Collaborative group with common inquiry focus

Time

- Meetings a minimum of twice a term – (day and time to be determined)

Role of the group

- Draft , monitor ,drive and review Site Improvement Plan
- Work systematically and interdependently to impact their classroom practice in ways that lead to improved student learning outcomes
- Participate in an inquiry process inclusive of critical reflection