

FRIENDS OF NEWTONHILL SCHOOL CONSTITUTION

Last Updated: November 2021

Approved: January 2022



Introduction

1. There shall be a “Friends of Newtonhill School” (FON) which will act as the Parent Council and Parent/Teacher Association for Newtonhill School).

In this document, where the word ‘parent(s)’ is used it shall be read as being inclusive of carers of children attending Newtonhill School.

Appendix B includes a Glossary of Terms.

Objectives

2. The objectives of the “Friends of Newtonhill School” are:
 - To work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school which is inclusive for all pupils and parents.
 - To promote collaborative working between parents, families and the school
 - Develop ways to actively engage parents to support children’s education, the welfare of the pupils and improve their outcomes
 - To identify and represent the views of all parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and well-being of the pupils.
 - To raise funds to support the school and make decisions on how these funds are spent.

Membership

3. The FON committee (Parent Council) will be at least 5 parents from the Parent Forum, attending committee meetings.
4. The headteacher has the right and duty to attend Parent Council meetings. The headteacher is there in an advisory capacity and does not have voting rights unless you choose to give them.
5. There shall be a quoracy of 5 parents plus the Headteacher (or their representative) at each FON Meeting.
6. Any parent of a child at the school can volunteer to be a member of FON and/or any sub-committees. Parents will serve on a voluntary basis for no fixed term.
7. FON may invite additional people including people from the local community who have an interest in supporting the school to assist it in carrying out its functions.

8. FON may form sub-groups by inviting members of the Parent Forum to carry out specific roles and tasks.
9. The Headteacher of Newtonhill School shall sit as an ex-officio member.
10. Co-opted members can be drawn from school staff (including teaching and support staff in the school) by FON onto the Committee.
11. FON may co-opt any number of other volunteers to assist it with carrying out its function. The number of parent members on FON and its sub – committees must always be greater than co-opted members.
12. Co-opted member(s) will not have voting rights on the FON Committee.

Office Bearers

13. There shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary acting as the office bearers of the Friends of Newtonhill School.
14. The Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary of FON will be elected on an annual basis (at the Annual General Meeting).
15. The office bearers shall be parents of children attending Newtonhill School.
16. If an Office Bearer resigns whilst in office or the child of an office bearer ceases to be a pupil, then a replacement can be elected by and from the Friends of Newtonhill.

These provisions are also applicable to any sub-committees of FON.

17. The role of the office bearers will be as outlined in Appendix A.

Accountability

18. FON is accountable to the parent forum of Newtonhill School and will make a report to it at least once a year on its activities on behalf of the all the parents.

If 15 members of the parent forum request an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to discuss issues falling within the FON remit, then a meeting will be arranged. All members of the Forum should be given at least 2 weeks notice of the meeting and, at the same time, circulate notice of the matter, or matters, to be discussed at the meeting.

Annual General Meeting & Meetings

19. The Annual General Meeting will be held in September of each year. A notice of the meeting including date, time, and place, will be sent to all members of the Parent Forum at least 2 weeks in advance. The meeting will include:
 - A report on the work of the FON
 - Selection of the new Office Bearers of FON

- Discussion of issues that members of the Parent Forum may wish to raise
- Approval of accounts and appointment of the auditor.
- A review of the sub-committees

FON will meet at least once every school term. Meetings will be held face to face when this is possible. If and when this is not the case, FON will arrange virtual meetings using Google Meet or another appropriate platform, to ensure continuity of Parent Council discussions.

Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, each parent member at the meeting will have one vote, and the Chair will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

Any two members of FON can request an additional meeting be held, and all the members of FON will be given at least one weeks' notice of the date, time and place of the meeting.

If a member of FON acts in a way that is considered by the other members to undermine its' objectives, their membership of FON shall be terminated if the majority of the parent members agree. Termination of membership will be confirmed in writing to the member.

20. Copies of the minutes of all meetings will be available to all parents of children at Newtonhill School, and to all teachers at the school. Copies will be available from the Secretary of FON and from the school office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

21. The work of FON will be open and transparent. Should there be occasions where matters of a confidential nature require to be discussed it is acceptable that part of the meeting will be closed to the Parent Forum.
22. Matters relating to issues of a confidential nature will not be recorded in an 'open' minute, but will be recorded and retained in a 'closed' minute by the Chairperson and Head Teacher. In such circumstances, the 'closed' minute should carry an appropriate protective marking.
23. Data held as part of FON's work will be held under appropriate GDPR (EU) 2016/679 guidance.
24. Matters relating to individual teachers, children, parents and school issues will NOT be the subject of discussion at FON meetings.

Finance

25. The Treasurer will open a bank or building society account in the name of the "Friends of Newtonhill School" for its funds. Withdrawals will require two signatures from the identified signatories.

The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure, and will provide a summary of this for each meeting of FON and a full account for the Annual Meeting.

FON shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies are used in accordance with the objectives of the parent council.

The funds raised by FON will be donated to the school to support development/initiatives and enhancement of school resources of educational activities.

Constitutional Change

- 26.** FON may change its constitution after obtaining consent from members of the Parent Forum. Members of the Parent Forum will be sent a copy of any proposed amendment and given reasonable time respond to the proposal before further action is taken.

Dissolution

- 27.** Should "Friends of Newtonhill School" cease to exist any remaining funds will be passed to the school to be used for the benefit of the children of the school (or schools) where this continues, and/or Local Authority as necessary.

Appendix A

The following gives an outline of the responsibilities of the Office Bearers for the Friends of Newtonhill School. The roles are given to support understanding of the major roles for each position but should not be considered exhaustive and are subject to change as the Friends of Newtonhill parent Council see fit

Chair

The Chair shall:

- Lead and enthuse the volunteers making up the FON Council
- Support, coordinate and lead on the development of parent engagement strategies and events, working closely with the Headteacher as appropriate
- Chair all Parent Council meetings and the Annual General Meeting
- To ensure the views of the Parent Council and actions to this end are carried out in an effective manner
- Represent the Friends of Newtonhill at all appropriate external events/meetings and
- Liaise regularly with the Head Teacher to ensure good communication and relations exist between the school and FON
- Be responsible for all FON marketing inc website and social media
- Produce an End of Year Report to the AGM

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair shall:

- Deputise in the absence of the Chair
- Coordinate and lead on the coordination of FON Fundraising activities and events
- Lead and enthuse the volunteers making up the FON Council
- Contribute to the End of Year Report to the AGM

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- Undertake day-to-day management of accounts, including issuing bills and receipts on behalf of FON and making payments.
- Prepare and update financial accounts on a regular basis.
- Complete banking transactions on a regular basis.
- Organise floats for fundraising events, collect and reconcile monies raised at these events and report totals raised to the appropriate stakeholders.
- Prepare and report financial statements at all FON Meetings.
- Prepare a concise Financial Report for the Annual General Meeting.

Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- Monitor and respond to email correspondence
- Arrange meetings and prepare and distribute agendas
- Take the minutes of meetings and distribute them
- Ensure that enough committee members are present to make the meeting quorate
- Preparation and distribution of newsletters and other communications to parents
- Responsible for managing the storage of files held regarding FON

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

- FON - Friends of Newtonhill School
- The School – Newtonhill School, Newtonhill, Aberdeenshire
- Parent – any parent, guardian or career of a pupil attending Newtonhill School
- Ex-officio – by virtue of them holding another position i.e. the Headteacher will always be a member of the Friends of Newtonhill only by virtue of being the Headteacher
- Co-opt – the ability to invite non parents to support the delivery of FON objectives
- Parent Forum – All parents of children attending Newtonhill School
- Parent Council – All parents attending FON Committee meetings