

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?

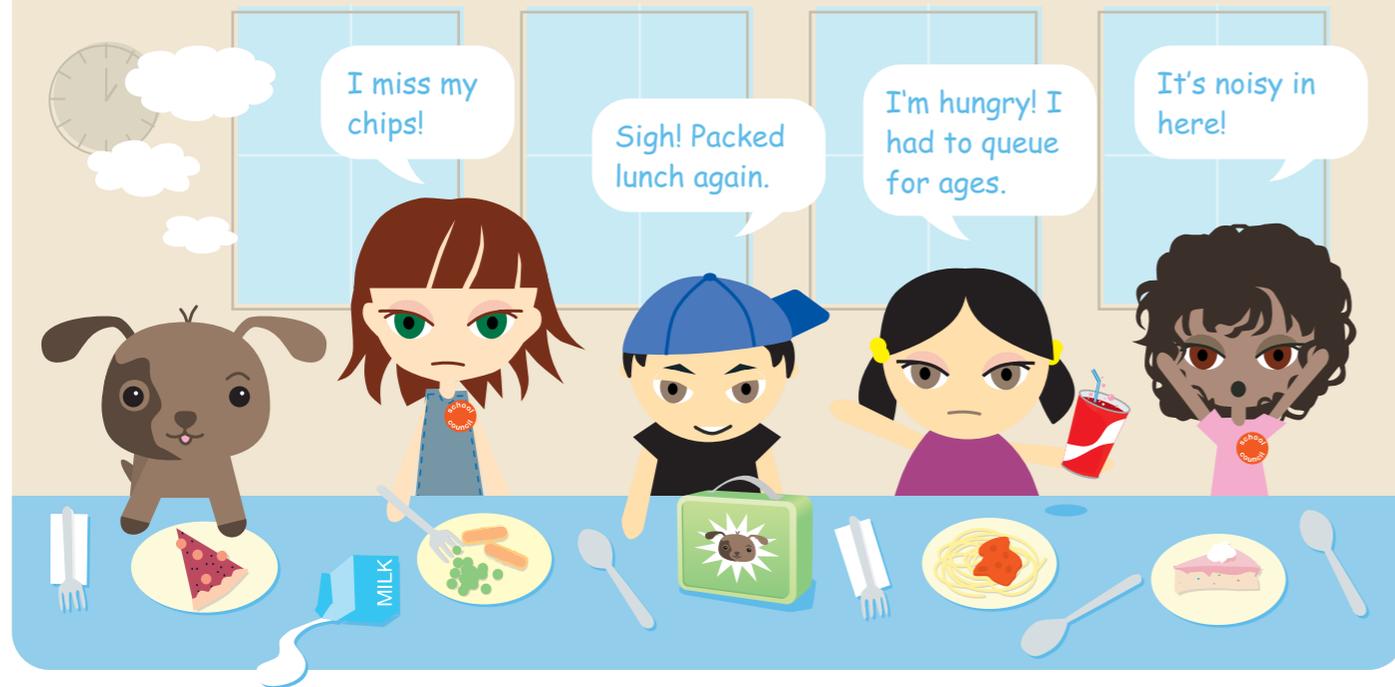


- Playground patrols – pupils who look out for problems such as bullying.
- School gardens – growing flowers or even vegetables to eat. 
- Learn new playground games, or raise money to buy more playground equipment.
- Outdoor art projects - mosaics, murals or sculptures. 
- Friendship bench – where pupils 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.



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.
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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!



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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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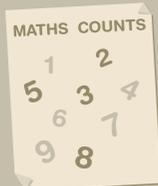


FACT : The government now wants adults to listen to pupils' ideas when new schools are built. Find out more at www.bsf.gov.uk



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

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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.

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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

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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).

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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

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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

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)

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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

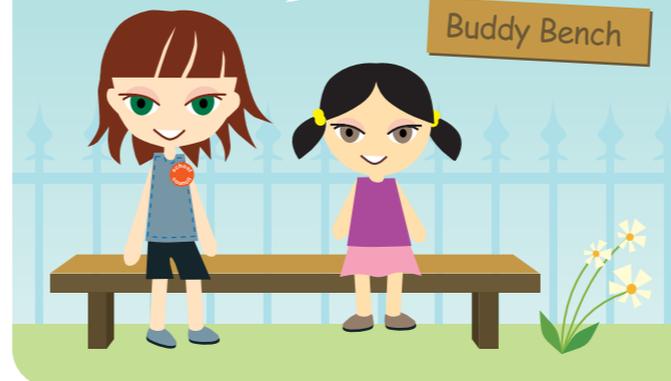
Did you report it?

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**.



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Behaviour

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



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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

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
info@schoolcouncils.org
 T 0845 456 9428

Childline

Helpline for young people.
www.childline.org.uk
info@childline.org
 T 0800 1111

NHS Direct

Confidential health advice.
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
 T 0845 46 47

Kidscape

Help and advice about bullying.
www.kidscape.org.uk
 T 08451 205 204

NSPCC

Helpline for anyone worried about child abuse.
www.nspcc.org.uk
info@nspcc.org.uk
 T 0800 77 66 00

Children's Legal Centre

Free legal advice.
www.childrenslegalcentre.com
clc@essex.ac.uk
 T 01206 873820

Comic Relief

Fundraising resources.
www.comicrelief.com

Equal Voice

Drama resources to increase self esteem.
www.equalvoice.net

Fax your MP

It's easy – you don't even need a fax machine!
www.faxyourmp.com

Bog Standard

Improve the school toilets.
www.bog-standard.org
info@bog-standard.org
 T 0117 960 3060

Eco Schools

Advice on how to make your school 'green'.
www.eco-schools.org.uk

Groundwork UK

Helpful local advice on improving school grounds.
www.groundwork.org.uk
 T 0121 236 8565

Bicycle Association

Make more of cycling.
www.ba-gb.com
 T 02476 553838

UNICEF

Find out more about children's rights.
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. 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.

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