

Meetings - basic rules

Here is a solid basic structure for most types of meetings. This assumes you have considered properly and decided the aims and what sort of meeting to hold:

1. **if possible, have a pre-meeting with the Head Teacher**
2. plan - use the agenda as a planning tool
3. circulate the meeting agenda in advance
4. run the meeting - keep control, agree outcomes, actions and responsibilities, take notes
5. write and circulate notes - especially actions and accountabilities (the clerk/secretary may do this)
6. follow up agreed actions and responsibilities

Meetings come in all shapes and sizes, and for lots of purposes. These include:

- giving information
- training
- discussion (leading to an objective)
- generating ideas
- planning
- workshops
- consulting and getting feedback
- finding solutions/solving problems
- crisis management
- performance reporting/assessment
- setting targets and objectives
- setting tasks and delegating
- making decisions
- conveying /clarifying policy issues
- team building
- motivating
- special subjects - guest speakers

A pre-meeting with the Head Teacher is a very useful tool in planning the meeting. You can agree items for inclusion and support each other in maintaining "one voice". This can also be useful for deciding whether suggested agenda items are appropriate for discussion at the Parent Council meeting. Issues such as individual complaints are just that and should be made to the school to be dealt with under procedure, not raised at a Parent Council meeting.