



Northern Counties School

Pupil Voice Policy

The term 'pupil voice' refers to ways of listening to the views of pupils and / or involving them in decision making.

At Northern Counties School we believe that children should be active participants in their own learning that their opinions should be heard and valued both in school and the wider community. We therefore actively seek ways to engage pupils and encourage them make a contribution.

Student Voice and Pupil Participation at Northern Counties School

There are a wide range of approaches used across school to support pupils of all ages and abilities to engage in pupil participation and promote the student voice:

- School Council
- Student contribution to annual review
- 1:1 therapy
- Conversations
- Self-assessment of learning
- Consulting pupils on their therapy targets and IEPs
- Deaf advocate visits to school
- Pupil questionnaires

Therapy

Therapies (Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy) form an integral part of pupil's education at Northern Counties School. Where appropriate, students are asked to provide input into target setting by identifying their own priorities for improvement and discussing the impact of this work. This allows pupils to work on areas they value and increases motivation.

The Curriculum

Embedded into the curriculum are teaching and learning opportunities where pupils are asked to consider and share their own opinions. They have opportunity to plan their own activities within a topic remit and to share work with the rest of the school in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and identify future goals in collaboration with teachers and support staff.

School Council

School council promotes democracy, leadership and mutual responsibility throughout the school. Elected class representatives meet at least termly. The process of school council provides:

- A positive forum for student voice
- Structured opportunity for pupil-leadership dialogue
- Pupils with an insight into democracy
- A forum for pupils to instigate change in respect of elements of school life, e.g. school meals, social areas, outdoor equipment
- A feeling of self-worth and mutual respect for pupils

Whole School Approach to Pupil Involvement

Staff understand the importance in involving pupils in all aspects of their education and learning. Pupil views are valued and time is always given to seeking out and listening to the views of individuals and to taking these views into consideration in any decision making. Pupils routinely give their own contributions to their annual review meetings and take a central role in transition planning. Opportunities for peer mentoring and support (e.g. reading buddies) are provided, as are extra-curricular clubs and lunch time activities, many of which are run in response to pupil requests.

Charity events and fundraisers for the school and for local and national charities (e.g. Children In Need) are planned in collaboration with pupils, thus giving them ownership and pride in what they achieve.

Northern Counties School is committed to the promotion and protection of children's rights in line with the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. We believe that all children and young people should have opportunities to express their opinion in matters that affect their lives and strive to ensure that they are provided with teaching and opportunities that equips them to do so as effectively as possible.