



pupil voice



respect



independence



dignity



entitlement



PUPIL VOICE POLICY

Date Published	March 2018
Version	1
Approved Date	March 2018
Review Cycle	Every 3 Years
Review Date	March 2021

An academy within:



“Learning together; to be the best we can be”



Rationale

We believe that children and young people need to be active participants in their own education and to feel that their opinions will be heard and valued by the wider school community.

At Kelford School, we actively seek ways to listen to the views of our pupils and involve them in decision-making so that they are engaged as partners in the life of the school. We believe that this will make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.

This policy is in line with the school's philosophy that all children have the right to be 'the best that they can be' and is deeply rooted in the school's P.R.I.D.E values for pupil voice.

P.R.I.D.E. Values

P upil Voice - enabling all learners to communicate their needs, choice and control

R espect - respect for one another and our environment

I ndependence - encouraging all learners to be as independent as possible

D ignity - implementing the highest levels of care and concern at all times

E ntitlement - the right to receive a broad and balanced, high quality, personalised learning programme school values.

Benefits of pupil involvement

There is a range of benefits in greater participation. For pupils these include increased self-confidence and feelings of empowerment, and a greater sense of responsibility. Behaviour has the potential to improve with pupils taking greater responsibility for their own behaviour, as well as improved learning.

We believe that there is a positive impact of pupil participation on their own work and the school environment.

Children and young people's insight into the ways they learn best and the ideas that they have for lesson content and style as well as their ideas on the life of the school should be welcomed. Pupils' experience of school will improve when their views are taken into consideration. This can only have a positive impact on raising standards.

Developing a whole school approach

To encourage a consistent, positive attitude to pupil participation at Kelford School, the whole staff team should understand the benefits of pupil participation, be clear in their role in terms of supporting pupil participation and be kept well informed about issues being discussed and proposals put forward by the school council and other pupil representative groups. During staff induction, staff will be asked to read and sign a copy of the Bill of Student Rights (Appendix 1). Training will be offered to



staff through briefings and reminders given about our values and the Bill of Rights each school year.

A Total Communication approach is used throughout the school day. The daily routines and interactions will develop many of the fundamental skills of communication, choice making and control. It is a whole school responsibility to use adapted forms of communication to support children's ability to express their, needs, feelings, choices, etc. (see Bill of Rights)

In order to promote the use of AAC the following communication strategies may be employed.

- Giving the AAC user TIME to initiate and respond.
- Encouraging the use of AAC everywhere and at all times.
- Looking at the total communication that the pupil is using, e.g. body language and facial expression as well as the use of their communication aid.
- Finding time to just "chat" informally without the adult controlling the subject matter.
- Leaving class AAC resources lying around, so that they may be used casually by any pupil.
- Encouraging school staff and others to use the class/individual AAC resources themselves to find out how it feels to use it and to encourage pupils and others to regard it as a normal means of communication.
- To sign all the time and everywhere not just when speaking to a signing pupil.



Pupil Voice

The term pupil voice refers to a way of listening to the views of children and young people and/or involving them in decision making; at Kelford School we promote the use of modified and adapted devices to ensure ALL pupils are provided with the opportunity to express opinions and to communicate, in all aspects of their own lives.

The aim of Kelford School is to ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunities to communicate, in all areas of their school day, that all pupils have access to the school curriculum at the level appropriate to their development, and taking into account their individual communication needs and preferences. Where appropriate they will have access to AAC resources and teaching approaches. We aim to provide a "total communication" environment where all modes of communication are equally valued and pupils are given opportunities to make choices, initiate conversations, and express their own ideas and opinions.

Curriculum

We believe in embedding pupil voice into the curriculum, with teaching and learning activities being used to enable pupils to focus on how to make informed decisions about their learning, lives, their health and well-being, and the environment. Pupil participation in their own learning means a range of different things in the classroom. It includes developing projects to reflect interests and needs as expressed by pupils; encouraging pupils' reflection on their own and others' learning and being active learners rather than passive recipients. Assessment for Learning encourages a view of assessment as an essential part of everyday classroom practice involving teachers and learners in reflection, dialogue, decision-making and target setting.

There are a wide range of activities that we are developing at Kelford School beyond the taught elements of the curriculum to support pupil participation and promote student voice including:

- School Student Council
- Class Council Forums
- Student Focus Groups
- Sports Coaching / sport leaders / playground buddies - peer to peer support
- Fundraising campaigns (both teacher and pupil initiated)
- Pupil contributions to Education, Health and Care planning
- Pupil questionnaires

All outcomes from pupil / student voice activities are used by the Senior Leadership Team in School Improvement evaluation and planning.



School Council

One of the principle means by which pupil voice activity is progressed in school is by the use of the School Council. We believe that our school council will have a strong, influential voice which contributes to the future direction and activity of the school.

School Council will

- Be a positive forum
- Provide an opportunity for all children to be heard
- Provide a forum for the leadership of the school to listen to children's knowledge and opinions
- Aid communication throughout the school
- Build the children's confidence and self-esteem
- Encourage the children to be active citizens
- Provide the children with a democratic model

School Council will also be used to assist the school with its self-evaluation procedures and enable us to be more accountable to the whole school community.

School Council in Practice

At present the School Council consists of elected representatives from the Secondary Phase of school. The school council have identified that we need to secure the voice of our Primary aged pupils and we are currently discussing the option of holding Class Council Forums, whereby a shared agenda is discussed within each class and then reported to the School Council. School Council meetings are scheduled on the school calendar and take place each term throughout the school year. The Headteacher attends all meetings and there is a Link Governor who oversees this work.