

# Orchard Community Primary School



## Pupil Voice Policy

This policy was approved by the Governing Body of Orchard Primary School at their meeting on.....

Signed..... Chair of Governors

| Version | Date   | Author | Reason for Change    |
|---------|--------|--------|----------------------|
| 0.1     | 9/2018 | FS     | New Policy           |
| 0.2     | 5/2021 | FS     | Reviewed and updated |

| Review Frequency | Next Review Date |
|------------------|------------------|
| Every 3 years    | 5/2024           |

## **Rationale**

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

At Orchard, we therefore 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.

## **Student voice and pupil participation activities at Orchard**

There is a wide range of approaches that we are developing at Orchard to support pupil participation and promote student voice:

- School Council forums
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors in Y2 and Y6 – peer to peer support
- Pupil Leadership Councils
- Sports Coaching - peer to peer support
- Fundraising campaigns via the School Council (both teacher and pupil initiated)
- Consultations on teacher/school led projects e.g. re: drafting policies relating to behaviour or anti-bullying; evaluation of learning activities/the creative curriculum
- Pupils with additional learning needs are involved in decisions that affect their learning and well-being through their IEPs. Pupils are also consulted when they have Annual Reviews.
- Pupil questionnaires

Pupils are informed of the outcome of their involvement.

## **Curriculum**

We also 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 lives, their health and well-being, and the environment, for example. Extra-curricular activities, such as Eco Warriors, also gives pupils a scope to explore issues that go beyond academic subjects.

## **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 enhance and influence positive peer leadership and mutual responsibility throughout 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, recruitment and enable us to be more accountable to the whole school community.

### **School Council in Practice**

School Council organise the recruitment of their own members, using a voting system that involves all pupils of the school, ensuring representation of all year groups. Every class elects at least two School Council Representatives. School Council membership will consist of a member of staff, who will generally chair the meeting, the School Council Representatives, and a School Governor Representative.

Every class holds a class council on a fortnightly basis. This is an opportunity for School Council Representatives to discuss the School Council agenda, and to gather feedback. School Council meetings are scheduled on the school calendar and take place periodically throughout the school year.

At each meeting, those present and absent are noted, and apologies read out. Matters arising from the previous meeting are discussed, followed by business for the meeting in accordance with the agenda. A list of main agenda items is set at the beginning of each term.

At some meetings a guest speaker will be invited. This may be another member of staff, or an outside speaker.

Minutes are recorded and circulated to staff and school council representatives to share with their peers.

School Council organise their own activities and liaise to accommodate these activities on the school calendar. Members of the School Council take part in staff recruitment, forming an interview panel. Student feedback is also gathered, following sample lessons. The School Council generates funds and manages how these funds are used. Members of the School Council may also represent the school at community meetings and at meetings of the Leadership Team and Governing Body where appropriate.

### **Leadership Councils**

We like to involve our children in lots of aspects of school improvement. Our Pupil Leadership teams are trained to help in delivering this vision through:

- Working alongside the staff in making key decisions
- Voicing opinions and ideas to improve learning and teaching
- Being visible around the school to promote good behaviour and safety
- Actively seeking the views of other pupils regarding key issues and changes in the school

**Class Ambassadors** – Class ambassadors encourage pupil voice via the School Council. They suggest how learning and teaching at Orchard could be developed further.

**Library Leaders** – These pupils keep the school library tidy by checking books that have been handed in and put them back on in their correct shelves. This makes it easy for others to find the book they are looking for.

**Digital Leaders** – Each year, pupils in KS2 are given the opportunity to apply to become 'Digital Learners' – a responsibility which allows them not only to evaluate the school's ICT and Digital Learning, but also to become experts in computer technology. As part of their role, the children test new iPad and computer software and support children lower down in the school to use computers confidently and safely. They also ensure that our computing curriculum is exciting and creative and enables pupils to learn how to stay safe

online. Our team of digital learners are also given the opportunity to report on whole-school events, lead assemblies and make suggestions to ensure that the children's entitlement to Digital Learning is always changing and improving.

House Captains – As well as collecting the House Cup in assemblies, House Captains are responsible for organising their teams during special themed weeks.

ABA – Our Y2 and Y6 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors have been specially trained to ensure that there are no issues of bullying or intimidating behaviour in school. Pupils lead assemblies to discuss the importance of friendship and tolerance towards others and help KS1 and KS2 pupils to stay safe and happy during break and lunchtimes.

Sports Ambassadors – The children work alongside Midday Supervisors at lunchtimes to teach children new games to play with our equipment, and to organise games. They also work alongside the ABA Team to make sure that all of our pupils are happy and safe.

### **Involving pupils in their own learning**

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; reflection by pupils on the style and content of lessons and opportunities to give feedback to teachers.

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.

### **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'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' learning 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 Orchard, the whole staff, including the non-teaching staff, 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.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Pupil participation and pupil voice are monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher in line with other existing procedures for curriculum development.