



### What is pupil voice and why is it important?

Pupil voice in schools means a whole-school commitment to listening to the views, wishes and experiences of all children. It means placing value on what children tell school staff about their experiences.

A child-centred approach is supported by: The Children Act 1989 (as amended by Section 53 of the Children Act 2004).

Ofsted recognised the importance of pupil voice in education and have incorporated it into their inspection framework. This states that they expect schools to provide opportunities for pupils to have their say on matters that affect them, and that pupils are listened to and that their views are considered. Inspectors are expected to evaluate the extent to which pupils are engaged in their own learning and are given opportunities to influence decisions that affect them.

There is also a clear emphasis during Ofsted inspection on how a school listens to pupil views when it comes to safeguarding. Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook states: "All schools should have an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first."

A true commitment to pupil voice helps to illustrate the value that is placed upon pupils within the setting. Children working alongside staff and leaders, knowing that they have a key part to play, can help further develop effective relationships between pupils and other members of the school community.

### What does pupil voice look like at Wisborough Green?

At Wisborough Green, pupil voice includes:

- Establishing school councils and committees (learning; eco; digital; library; sport)
- Collecting pupil voice within values assemblies (displayed)
- Selecting Year 6 pupils to be Ambassadors
- Appointing sports captains
- Running a school magazine written by pupils
- Sending out pupil questionnaires (in line with Ofsted pupil survey questions)
- Holding student panels on staff interviews
- Circle time sessions within lessons
- Staff training to ensure open questioning is used consistently
- Regular opportunities to share views within our PSHE curriculum
- Reparation techniques with every child heard built into our Positive Behaviour Policy
- Opportunity for pupil voice within annual reports, Individual Learning Programmes (ILPs) and Educational Health & Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Children from families in receipt of Pupil Premium meet termly with the SENDCo or Deputy Headteacher to discuss individual targets and their progress
- Headteacher open door policy for children
- All children can voice their opinions via email ([talk@wisboroughgreenschool.org.uk](mailto:talk@wisboroughgreenschool.org.uk))
- There is a 'time to talk' box in every classroom into which children may put their names if they wish to speak to a staff member privately
- Named person (staff member) allocated for children finding it difficult to communicate their views
- Pupil selection of work for display in Reception Class.

Children who form all our councils and committees are selected by their peers annually, as part of Democracy Day.



## **How do we ensure that pupil voice is collected effectively?**

NASUWT provides [alternative principles](#) to make sure pupil voice is effective and supported by the whole school community. These have been adopted by Wisborough Green.

Their 8 principles are:

1. Student voice activities should make a positive and demonstrable contribution to the life of the school
2. Student voice activities must not undermine teachers' professional authority and must not compromise other fundamental rights of children and young people
3. Student voice and respect of the UNCRC is not and must never be mutually exclusive from a school's ability to secure and maintain positive pupil behaviour
4. Student voice activities should be part of a system that values and respects the views of all members of the school community, including staff
5. Policies and practices on student voice must reflect the capacity of pupils to participate in activities and the extent to which they can reasonably be held to account for the results of their actions
6. Student voice activities and policies must be consistent with, and support work to promote, equality and diversity, while tackling discrimination and prejudice
7. Approaches to student voice must be inclusive and give all pupils an opportunity to participate
8. Student voice activities must not add to teacher and headteacher workload or school-level bureaucratic burdens.

## **How do we ensure that we provide children with equal opportunity to be involved?**

- We take children's age, maturity and understanding into account when deciding how to support them in participating e.g. age-appropriate questionnaires; adapted questioning in council or committee meetings; use of visual aids, physical responses to questions
- Use of committees supports children who lack confidence to speak in a large group, with smaller group discussions used to capture the view of a wider pool of pupils
- Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher analyse the make-up of all committees each year to identify and address the absence of any group of children
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCo) consulted to ensure that we capture the views of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Post box available for those children wishing to speak to an adult by themselves, away from class.

## **How do we meet quality standards for working with children?**

We follow our policies and procedures on confidentiality, data protection and child protection

We have a code of conduct for staff and a positive behaviour policy for pupils

All actions are underpinned by our seven core values (see Appendix 1 for expectations for all members of the school community).



## APPENDIX 1

### EXPECTATIONS

#### TEACHERS WORK TOWARDS THE SCHOOL'S AIMS BY:

- Providing a challenging and stimulating Programme of Study designed to enable all children to reach the highest standards of personal achievement
- Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude
- Ensuring that learning is progressive, continuous and challenging
- Being good role models; punctual, well prepared and organised
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of current Teaching and Learning practice
- Having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise
- Establishing links with the local community, including industry, to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- Working collaboratively with a shared philosophy and practice
- Fostering in every child a lifelong love of learning
- Having an open-door policy for parents and carers to share their questions and concerns.

#### PUPILS WORK TOWARD THE SCHOOL'S AIMS BY:

- Following our school values
- Taking growing responsibility for their own learning, developing resilience and confidence to tackle new challenges
- Attending school in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep
- Attending school regularly
- Being punctual and ready to begin lessons on time
- Being organised; for example, bringing necessary kit, taking letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly
- Conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected code of discipline
- Looking after their own belongings
- Respecting the school environment, ensuring that school is kept tidy and organised.

#### PARENTS/CARERS WORK TOWARD THE SCHOOL'S AIMS BY:

- Modelling and promoting a positive and supportive attitude towards school and its core values
- Ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually
- Supporting the school's decisions regarding discipline
- Being realistic about their child's ability and supporting him or her to develop a positive attitude to learning
- Participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment
- Ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect their child's happiness, progress and behaviour
- Giving due importance, time and space to home learning, facilitating reading, and assisting in learning of tables and spellings
- Encouraging their child to take increasing responsibility for their own learning and belongings as they progress throughout the school
- Be mindful when using social media, making sure comments do not aim to undermine the school, its staff, parents, governors or others affiliated with the school.