



## School Council and Pupil Voice Policy

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An academy within:



"Learning together; to be the best we can be"

We Are Kind, We Try Our Best and We Prepare For A Better Future.

### **Introduction:**

The core purpose of our school is to ensure the best possible education and provision for our pupils, enabling them to be highly successful learners, to achieve their full academic potential and to experience high levels of emotional and physical well-being.

Our pupils are the heart of our school therefore we believe, that it is best practice to seek every opportunity to hear the views of our pupils about their school. How they perceive it, what they like about it and how they would like it to improve.

Issues raised by pupils will range from the everyday for example, arrangements at lunchtime to more strategic issues such as developing the outdoor environment or stronger links with local community.

We believe that we should seek pupils views and opinions wherever possible and respond to pupils' views, thereby enabling them to play a part in shaping our school's future development.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the School Council at Coppice School and its implementation is the responsibility of all staff and pupils within the Coppice community.

### **Definition:**

A school council is an elected body of pupils, whose purpose is to represent their peers and be a forum for active and constructive pupil input into the daily life of the school.

### **The Importance of School Councils:**

"All young people – irrespective of ability, personality, race or class – should feel valued and safe within an inclusive and caring school community throughout their school years. Schools with an ethos of mutual respect develop into caring communities where each individual understands that they can make a valuable contribution..." (Teddy Gold, Honorary director. Schools Councils UK, June 2000: taken from "Primary School Councils toolkit, 2000", page 5).

A school is a community and the School Council will help to make Coppice School a more harmonious and positive community for all.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- Provide the opportunity for pupils to become partners in their own learning, development and education and to make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.
- Develop and promote pupils self-confidence, communication and social skills.
- Develop the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of how to contribute to society as a whole and what it means to be an active citizen.
- Develop pupils effective communication, speaking and listening skills.
- Develop the pupils recognition of themselves as worthy individuals with a right to be heard.
- To allow the children to have a "voice" and to share their opinions and ideas with others.

- To allow children to become more responsible and actively involved in the decision making process of the school.
- To develop important life-skills that promote positive mental health and social welfare, emotional literacy, critical and moral reasoning, self-esteem, self-awareness, communication skills, relationship skills and assertiveness.

### **Structure:**

- Pupils to register their interest in becoming a School Council representative with their class teacher.
- All pupils to have a vote.
- Candidates may vote for themselves.
- One member of the Senior Leadership Team to be allocated to authorise actions.
- One staff member to be named as the School Council link lead.
- Teaching assistants to attend and support pupils in School Council meetings.
- The Headteacher, School Governors and Parents (that form the Friends of Coppice group) may be invited, if required.
- Representatives will serve for one year but can be re-elected for the following year if they want to stand again.

### **Organisation:**

- School council meetings will be held once a week.
- The meetings will take place on the same day each week and at the same time (Monday 1.15pm)
- The named link lead will initially model leading the meetings, resulting in time to the meetings being led by the Pupil Chair Person.
- A Pupil Chair Person will be elected by members of the School Council.
- His/her role will be to directly work alongside the link lead and to lead meetings where appropriate.
- All representatives of the School Council will be encouraged to offer opinions and ideas.
- Representatives can put forward items for the agenda, which will be drawn up by the link lead and the Pupil Chair.
- There will be at least one main issue on the agenda for each council meeting as well as opportunities for all representatives to discuss other ideas raised by pupils in their class.
- Other teams may be formed from points raised from the School Council representatives, these may include School Council representatives and other pupils within the school, members of staff and members of Friends of Coppice parents group.
- A copy of the agenda will be provided for every School Council Representative for them to follow during the meeting.
- The named link lead will take the minutes and copy them to all the representatives, team leaders and headteacher.
- Minutes will be communicated with others via the schools shared area in the folder Student Council, Pupil Voice.
- The School Council will decide on the Action Plan as a collective.
- The School Council Action Plan will be displayed on the schools shared area in the folder Student Council, Pupil Voice.

- The Action plan will be broken in to smaller chunks, with focus points for each term. These focus points will be decided by the level of importance to the representatives. The Action plan will be displayed on the School Council display board.
- The School Councils level of involvement will be monitored using an adaptation of Roger Harts ladder of participation.

### **Additional Information:**

The Council will be under the direct oversight of the head teacher and the council cannot:

- Intervene in the control or management of the school
- Intervene in the educational instruction of pupils
- Intervene in the management or operation of a school day
- Exercise authority over teaching staff or other persons employed at the school.

