



CS23– Student Voice



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| Last Review Date | November 2024 | Next Review Date | November 2026 |
| Leader of Policy Review | Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, School Council | | |
| Associated Policies | Assessment for Learning | | |

Giving students a voice and listening to what they have to say is an important part of school democracy. The aspiration that students ‘are listened to’ is embedded in the Welsh Assembly Government’s *Seven Core Aims for Children*. Additionally, self-evaluation and school improvement is more effective if there is mechanism for seeing the school experience through the eyes of a student and valuing this contribution.

In this school we aim to engage young people in helping to improve their school community and environment and the learning experience. Therefore, the School is committed to the development of mechanisms whereby students do more than just become involved in teacher-directed policy decisions, instead providing a forum for jointly contributing to school improvement.

What student voice means for the School:

- Valuing all feedback from students
- Providing a forum for students to contribute to policy-making
- Giving students the power to make informed decisions on behalf of the School
- Student involvement in activities such as staff appointments

What students can gain from engagement in such activities:

- Better motivation and a greater sense of engagement
- Greater academic achievement and a positive impact on attendance and behaviour
- Improved negotiating skills and sense of responsibility

Informally, student voice and joint-working occurs in every classroom. The ability of teachers to personalise learning is dependent upon receiving feedback from students, and AfL (Assessment for Learning) strategies contribute to students engaging more effectively with their own learning. In this way subsequent teaching is informed by the contributions of students and former students.

Formally, there are a range of means by which students can contribute to school life and decision-making, including a system of councils. Composition of the councils is decided annually, meetings occur each half-term, and minutes are displayed in school and on the website.

The House Councils have an elected representative from each Tutor Group. The agenda is set by students, but items can also be suggested by teachers. The purpose of the Council is to provide a forum for student discussion and to put forward positive proposals for Heads of House to consider. Members of the House Council are asked to represent the views of their Tutor Group and outcomes of the meetings are reported back in detail within the House. The Sixth Form has a similar council within the post-16 sector of the school.

The School Council consists of at least ten students, including a three from each House and the Sixth Form. They act as a representative group of students to discuss development issues of importance to the school and take on roles on behalf of the student body. The School Council meetings are attended by the Headteacher, an Assistant Head, and a School Governor. The agenda can include items brought forward from House Councils, but the work of the School Council can also include:

- Contributing to the School Development and Improvement Plan (SDIP)
- Engaging in self-evaluation and contributing to self-evaluation
- Reviewing school policies
- Coordinating charity work for the School
- Participating in interviews for appointments of staff

- Attending Governors' Meetings as Associate Pupil Governors
- Representation on Student Working Groups or Support Groups
- Managing a delegated budget arising out of the SDIP