



ELLON ACADEMY COMMUNITY CAMPUS

PUPIL VOICE POLICY

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1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child*, underpins all Ellon Academy policies, procedures and practices to ensure that pupils' rights and responsibilities, along with respect for all are promoted. This links into our *United Nations Rights Respecting School Framework*.

As a rights respecting school, we want to create as many ways as possible for our pupils to have their voice heard and take an active citizen and leadership role in whole school matters. Educating young people in ways that prepare them for being effective and responsible members of society is vital to the well-being of that society. School is a microcosm of society and it is here that young people should be enabled to develop the capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in school life as a preparation for wider society.

To promote this aim schools should provide all young people with opportunities to take on responsibilities and exercise choice. This requires the development of an open participatory ethos, and management and organisation that recognises the importance of involving young people, where appropriate, in the key decisions which affect them.

No less a body than the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child embodies the principle of participating in the decision making which affects them and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that "each child who can form his or her views on matters affecting him or her has the right to express those views".

With a growing number of pupil voice groups in Ellon Academy, this policy has been produced to explain the roles of each and how they work with each other, staff, pupils, parents and other partner links. We wanted to make sure there was a set written policy for all to follow in relation to the various pupil groups instead of relying on a "customs and practices" approach. *This policy hopes to enable all pupils to:*

Participate meaningfully in decision-making and be able to contribute effectively to the development and operation of whole school policies and other matters which affect them

and

Be able to reflect and be consulted with real purpose on their experience of formal education and participation in the school community.

2. SCHOOL AIMS

1. Achievement and Attainment

We have the highest expectations for every single young person who enters Ellon Academy. All our young people are given every encouragement to aim for the highest possible levels of achievement in education, attainment and life skills.

2. Framework for Learning

We aim to provide quality learning and teaching experiences for all our pupils, based on their unique aptitudes, needs and abilities, delivered by a professional and highly dedicated staff. By constantly reviewing and evaluating our curriculum we aim to ensure that the needs of all learners are addressed. We see each individual as unique and make every effort to make them aware of the school's responsibilities to them and also their responsibilities to the school, fellow pupils and the local community. We also have very

high expectations for the learning that takes place in every classroom, and for each pupil's contribution to this. Good classroom relationships are crucial to developing a positive school ethos, firmly built on positive relationships between all partners – pupils, staff and parents.

3. Inclusion and Equality

Ellon Academy has a tradition of being a fully inclusive school. We aim to help every individual pupil to benefit from education, and take pride in the support we continue to provide for pupils of all abilities and needs, within a framework of equal opportunities. We aim to be a caring community, providing the highest possible levels of support for all pupils. All members of the Ellon Academy community are valued and respected.

4. Values and Citizenship

Promoting Education at Ellon Academy is firmly founded on a partnership that aims to teach pupils respect for themselves and one another. It also aims to make pupils aware of their rights and responsibilities both within the school community and in society generally, thus developing effective skills of citizenship and an awareness of the need to care for and value our environment.

5. Learning for Life

Ellon Academy aims to create a learning environment that enables pupils to develop creativity, ambition, enterprise, and the skills and attitudes required for success in life in the 21st Century.

3. POLICY AIM(S)

This policy specifically relates to the following School Aims; 3 and 4.

In this *Ellon Academy Pupil Voice Policy* we aim to provide a wide range of leadership opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities through all the different pupil voice groups, their remits and relationships with each other / staff / pupils/partner links. This will be achieved through:

- Agreed procedures for elections for the various groups / positions
- Clear remits for each group
- Clear communication structure showing who each group reports to
- Link staff for each group
- Procedures to raise issues at various whole school groups (Pupil Senate, Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team)
- Procedures to communicate pupil voice groups' work to all pupils and staff

This section is generally concerned with practice in relation to QIs 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4 in 'How Good is Our School 3' in relationship to Leadership and Management but also 5.6 "Equality and fairness² for all.

“ We work with learners, parents and other partners to develop and shape a common vision for our school and community through reflection, debate and ongoing consultation” (9.1)

Some Expected Future Practice

- Future reviews of all school policies to involve the Pupil Voice
- Minutes of meetings to circulate to wider audience
- Induction process for S1 to include activities which develop skills, values and attitudes required for including the Pupil Voice

4. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Each of House Captains, Sports Captains, Pupil Senate, Committees, Prefects, UNRRS Pupil group etc will have a remit sheet written down in a similar way to the one for the Executive Team. DHT with remit for Pupil Voice groups will check to ensure each group has distinct areas of leadership.
- Each Pupil Voice group will be given a copy of Pupil Voice Communication Structure (Appendix 1) as well as this policy.
- Each Pupil Voice group will have a sheet to explain how pupils are selected for their group (eg election information etc).
- Each Pupil Voice group will take formal written minutes at each meeting in an agreed format to show: what is being achieved; actions; who is completing the actions and when. (See Appendix 2 for pro forma). All minutes will be sent to the Executive Team and SLT link for the Executive Team to ensure they maintain a whole school Pupil Voice “big picture”. The Executive Team will manage a Pupil Voice noticeboard to display these minutes.
- All Pupil Voice groups will consider how they might be able to offer leadership roles to younger pupils even if it is just to shadow senior leaders.
- All Pupil Voice groups’ members will ensure they gain Saltire Award hours for all the voluntary hours they commit to.
- All whole school committees and working groups will contain pupil representatives.
- To provide more devolved leadership opportunities for staff, DHTs will offer a shared staff link role. This will facilitate pupil voice groups being able to meet more often.

Examples of Good Practice in Pupil Voice in Leadership and Management in Ellon Academy Include:

- PPB Committee includes and involves pupils
- SLT responsible for ensuring that all school developments embrace the Pupil Voice policy
- Needs of pupils with regard to pupil participation identified and supported
- Participative culture and ethos
- Communication between pupils, staff, parents and all partner links must be a priority

Evidence of the Pupil Voice in Decision Making in Leadership and Management

- PPB Committee and other Committees have pupil representatives.
- Pupils involved in numerous questionnaires at faculty and whole school levels regarding learning and teaching matters.
- Pupil Voice approach incorporated into all new developments (eg UNRRS work)
- Pupil Conference, Class Representative, Pupil Senate , House Captain, Executive Team Meetings
- Head Boy/Girl and Prefect voting system
- Class representatives, House captains, Sports captains and Senate Representatives elections
- Pupils involved in Peer Education
- Pupil helpers in the library
- Pupils involved in leading / participating in a wide range of committees

- Pupils communicating with pupils through assemblies, notice boards, bulletin, facebook etc

5. POLICY CONSULTATION PROCESS

This School Pupil Voice Policy has been subject to consultation with pupil voice groups, Guidance, SLT and the Parent Council. This School Pupil Voice Policy will be reviewed as required and formally as part of the Ellon Academy policy review cycle as outlined in the School Improvement Plan. This policy will be formally reviewed during session 2019/20

6. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

The main resource implication for this policy is;

- Staff and pupil familiarisation with this policy
- Time for minutes to be shared with all in school without becoming burdensome – explore use of school website, notice boards, Facebook etc. (tbc)
- Finances to support identified school improvement, CPD and leadership priorities (Senate/Executive Team Fund for Pupil Voice Groups to bid into)

7. POLICY EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Evaluation and review of this policy will help the school to identify how the Pupil Voice groups to assist us in our continuous improvement drive towards excellence.

8. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Usual Communication Structure for Ellon Academy Pupil Voice Groups
- Appendix 2: Pro forma for Pupil Voice minutes