

St Catherine's C of E School

Pupil Voice Policy

Listening to pupils who have SEND

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee
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Pupil Voice Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of this 'Pupil Voice' Policy is to assist everyone working at St Catherine's C of E School to become more conscious of the need, and sensitive to practical ways in which the views of pupils with SEND are heard. This will enable their views to be more effectively sought and included, and to increase the influence of pupils in the provision of their own education, by ensuring that their views are included when the school makes key decisions.

2. Rationale

The following legal obligations require that pupil views are gathered:

- Increasing opportunities for pupil views to be both heard and listened to in the context of Special Educational Needs (SEN) has been brought to the foreground by current legislation (Children and Families Act, 2014) and statutory guidance (DfE, 2014).
- The SEN Code of Practice (DfE & DoH, 2014) states that "Local authorities must ensure that children, young people and parents are provided with the information, advice and support necessary to enable them to participate in discussions and decisions about their support" (1.9). This includes consulting children and young people throughout the assessment process for an Education, Health and Care Plan (9.21).
- The views of the pupil should be included in these discussions. This could be through involving the pupil in all or part of the discussion itself or gathering their views as part of the preparation.
- Eliciting pupil voice is a central part of the Person-Centred Planning process and is vital for informing the 'One Page Profile' section of an Education, Health and Care Plan, whether it be statutory or non-statutory.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1990) outlines key rights for children and young people, including their right to information and advice and the right to express an opinion on all matters affecting them.

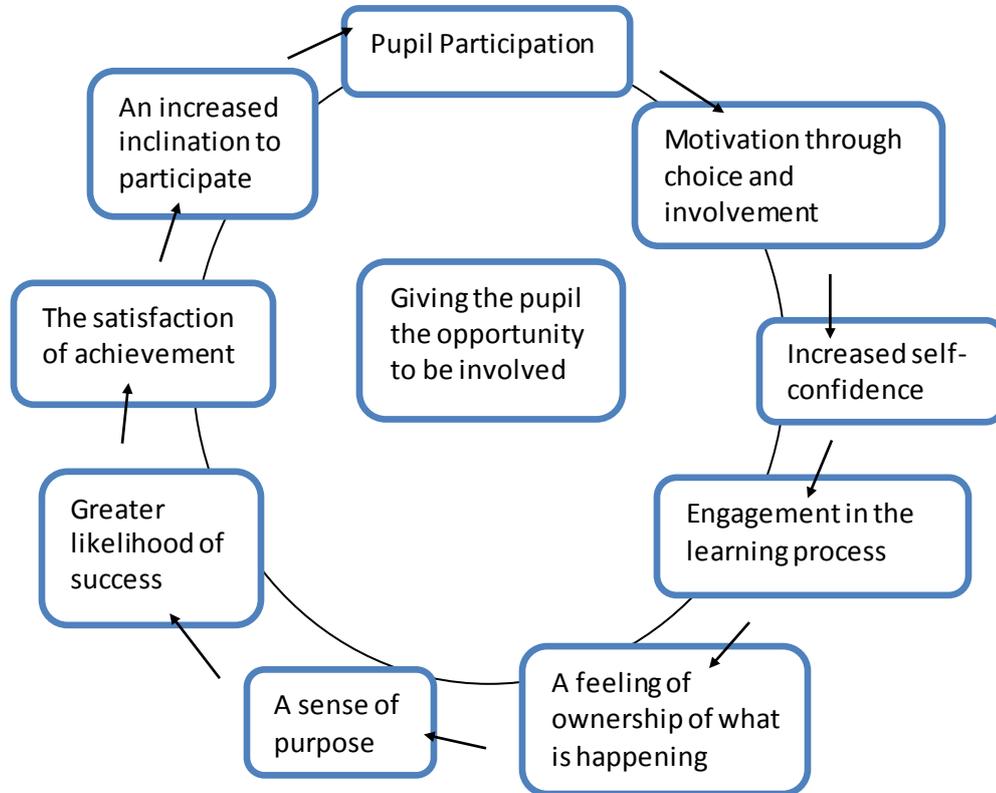
The fundamental principle of Pupil Voice at St Catherine's is that all pupils of school age, regardless of age or ability will learn more effectively if their views, expressed by whatever means appropriate, are taken into consideration in planning and delivering their learning programme.

Every pupil needs to be happy and comfortable with their learning environment and curriculum in order to enjoy success. The young person's perception of their life in school, their learning environment and their interactions with others will be unique to them and may well be very different to those of the adult observer. As adults, we must guard against

making assumptions about what pupils think. We must give them the principal voice in describing their learning world as they see it and let that voice inform provision.

3. Giving each pupil the opportunity to be involved

At St Catherine's C of E School, we believe that:



This cycle is self-perpetuating and is underpinned by the opportunity for pupils to grow in self knowledge which, in itself, will make their participation in their own education more productive.

Motivation is essential for all learners, including those with SEND and complex learning difficulties. The sharing of learning objectives is now a widely recognised feature of high quality teaching. At St Catherine's, written format or symbols may be used to support pupils to understand the objectives of a lesson and individual education plans.

At St Catherine's we acknowledge that involving all pupils with special needs meaningfully in the processes around their own education is not easy. The more significant their individual need, the more difficult this essential task becomes for teachers. The more their provision is shaped by their particular needs, the greater the sensitivity needed in discussing their needs with them. This document offers guidance on promoting pupil participation in several areas:

Individual education planning, including:

- identifying and describing the pupil's individual needs and potential barriers to learning
- recognising strengths and capabilities which can be built on
- setting appropriate targets and objectives for learning
- planning suitable activities and tasks for the pupil

- deciding on the most helpful additional support for the pupil and, where appropriate, who best to provide it

SEN Review meetings (annually or if an interim meeting is called), including:

- assessing, recognising and celebrating achievement
- enabling pupil involvement
- planning for the future, whether this is in the context of learning in school or
- concerned with the transition to other schools e.g. specialist provision, school move or to a secondary school

Inclusive teaching, including:

- maximising the pupil's enjoyment of learning and their security in the learning environment

Contributing to decision making, including:

- Contributing to planning, opportunities, resources.

At St Catherine's C of E School, we recognise that children with special needs may not be used to exercising choice over things such as clothes and food. We cannot expect pupils to make major decisions in the future if we have not built up a culture of active participation. We may need to start with giving pupils an opportunity to rehearse lesser choices first.

It is the responsibility of each adult to contribute each day to a culture and practice that enables:

- a learning dialogue between adult and pupil,
- an approach to personal and social education, through such activities as Circle Time / SMSC
- pupils see their involvement in whole school decision making as a normal part of school life and as part of their learning.

4. Areas of Participation

Individual Provision Map Planning:

For the individual education planning process to be worthwhile and for it to fully enable the participation of pupils, it needs to be far more than the production of the Individual Provision Map.

- At St Catherine's, class staff value diversity and openly recognises different learning styles.
- Each Individual Provision Map should consider 'what's in it for the pupil' and how the target will improve his or her experience of school.
- Teachers involved need to work with each pupil to recognise his or her strengths and successes, drawing upon a wider variety of means of praising and celebrating pupils' achievements.
- Wherever possible, targets should involve or imply clearly understood strategies for the pupil so that they know what to do to achieve the target.
- Individual Provision Maps are processes which pupils may initially only contribute to particular aspects of the process.
- At St Catherine's, pupils contribute to their Individual Provision Maps in a number of ways and discuss their progress individually with an adult. They give their view on the progress they think they have made with their targets and what they think their future targets should be.

- St Catherine’s strongly believes that some pupils will be able and should be supported to contribute to planning and evaluating their learning targets, and know what they want to achieve, thus being more likely to succeed.

SEN Reviews

St Catherine’s C of E School enables pupils to participate in their reviews in a variety of ways:

- Questionnaires,
- Consultation about what photos, video clips may be included in the PowerPoint presentations,
- Presentations of their learning and achievements.
- Completion of ‘My Views’ with support from a familiar adult to help them make their views known

Inclusive teaching

Educational inclusion is about ensuring that the learning provision made for all identifiable groups of pupils is effective in raising standards for those pupils and enabling them to achieve and make progress. There are many aspects which should promote strategies for inclusion, including effective use of pupil performance data and the selection of an appropriate curriculum. However, in terms of ‘participation in learning’ and the voices of pupils being heard and included in lessons, the single most important aspect of provision is the quality of teaching.

At St Catherine’s C of E School, teachers must ensure that lessons and learning activities are relevant and accessible to all pupils, drawing upon their experience of their world

- Ensuring that pupils understand and can articulate how their work relates to prior learning and to things which they might go on to learn – that they are aware of the ‘big picture’ rather than classroom tasks in isolation
- Ensuring that pupils are aware of how aspects of their current work relates to their targets and strategies
- Use interactive methods which ensure participation from all pupils
- Assess their understanding and give them opportunities to give appropriate answers and thereby strengthen their self-esteem.
- Enabling effective peer support and paired work in order to provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning at their own level
- Find ways of ensuring that all pupils can contribute to a plenary discussion, perhaps by rehearsing their contribution with a teaching assistant
- Allowing pupils, as appropriate, to be able to opt from time out from the classroom when they are beginning to find self-control difficult.

5. Contributing to the decision-making process

- At St Catherine’s pupils are given the opportunity to influence their school and aspects of provision.
- A flexible approach has been adopted in order to reflect the changing needs, abilities and interests of pupils. This has included the provision of a school council.
- A variety of ways are used to gain the views of pupils including: questionnaires, structured and informal meetings with senior staff, small group discussions.
- Pupils are encouraged to raise concerns and make suggestions.
- Pupils contribute to a range of decisions including the choice of activities e.g. Golden Time.

- Pupils are enabled to reflect upon the school identifying what they like dislike as well as aspects they may wish to change.

6. Publication and availability of the policy

The Pupil Voice Policy will be made available on the website

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Local Governing Advisory Board.

Plan approved by the full Local Governing Advisory Board: **Summer 2018**

Next review will be: **March 2021**

Signed:..... Chair of the Local Governing Advisory Board

Date:.....