

STUDENT VOICE POLICY

PRESTATYN HIGH SCHOOL

Definition

Student voice is where students get to air their views and discuss the issues that are important to them. Student voice is the individual and collective perspective and actions of students within the context of learning and education.

Student voice work is premised on the following convictions:

- Young people have unique perspectives on learning, teaching, and schooling;
- Their insights warrant not only the attention but also the responses of adults; and
- They should be afforded opportunities to actively shape their education

At Prestatyn High school we believe it is important for pupils to have their say on important issues that relate to school life, but more importantly that relate to their learning.

Rationale

One of the aims for students in Prestatyn High is that we create pupils who are 'participative' i.e. young people who are willing to get involved to improve their community. We aim that student voice in PHS is one way in which pupils are able to reach that aim. We use student voice in order to develop mature and confident students who have several opportunities to contribute actively to shaping their educational experience. All student voice activities should directly have an effect on learning, as that is the core purpose of the school. Therefore there will be a minimum of one teaching and learning item on the agenda for all School Council meetings.

Purpose and principles

The aims of student voice at Prestatyn High are:

- To encourage active student engagement in learning and decision making at Prestatyn high school.
- To nurture the skills required to develop responsibility, independence, teamwork and leadership.
- To embed a culture where students feel consulted and considered in decisions which affect their individual learning and their school as a whole.
- To engage students in their own learning process.
- To promote active citizenship.

Organisation and delivery

School Council/Senedd

The School Council also known as the PHS Senedd meets once per half term. The Senedd is made up of elected student leaders from a variety of parts of school life. It includes the house council representatives, representatives from other councils such as the Eco and sports councils, reps from major groups such as the Digital Leaders and Welsh language forum. The Senedd is the highest level of student voice. All other forms of student voice should feed into the Senedd. The Senedd is chaired by two student chairs who are elected in the first meeting. Points raised by the Senedd will be fed back to SLT in SLT meetings and actions will arise from then these meetings, and will be fed back to the students in the following Senedd meeting.

Year Council

Each form group has two elected house council reps. These reps meet up within their houses to form the year council. Year council meetings should take place the week before the Senedd meetings, and discuss any issues arising from each of the form groups. Time should be given by group tutors for the year council reps to discuss any issues with their form groups.

Other student leadership groups.

We recognise that there are many groups within school where students act as leaders. In particular the eco council and sports council. These groups are run as part of specific areas and as such are run by the member of staff who oversees these areas.

Denbighshire schools council forum.

Prestatyn High remains an active member of this group. Usually the two chairs attend this group with a member of staff, to feedback on Student Voice issues. Each visit allows pupils to feedback developments within the school. It also gives pupils an opportunity to observe other schools and create strengths and weaknesses to develop our student council/school.

Pupil Panels

From time to time pupils will be invited to be a part of pupil panels on a specific topic. For example during departmental supportive reviews. Pupils will be specially selected for these tasks - although often they will be Senedd members. In this instance especially the importance of confidentiality will be highlighted to them and only pupils who can be trusted to talk impartially and confidentially will be chosen.

Interviews

In some cases it may be appropriate to use a pupil panel as part of interviews for staff posts within the school. Pupils whose confidentiality and discretion can be relied upon will be specially selected from the student leaders for this task. Pupil interviews will involve questions relating to the role at PHS and the pupils will discuss which candidate they believe would be best suited to the role with the member of SLT running the panel who will be present at all times during the panel. No candidate will be appointed or discounted based solely on the student panel, although it may be used to aid shortlisting. Confidentiality is again stressed to all pupils involved.

Surveys

From time to time pupils may be surveyed by individual departments, or by groups within the school. This may be on paper or using the school VLE Frog. Those running the surveys will always be ready to share the outcomes with pupils if they want to know.

One off events.

There are a number of one off student voice events. Including competitions and external visitors surveying for external agencies. For records of this student voice usage, please see the student voice log available on Frog.

Pupils will not be asked to: Give direct feedback on the performance of individual members of staff, undertake lesson observations, and make judgement on the effectiveness of departments or teams within the school.

Responsibilities

One member of staff will be given overall oversight of Student Voice (at Mar 2018 Miss K Garside PSE Coordinator) to monitor the usage of student voice around the school. The chairs of the school council will have responsibilities for chairing the meetings. Individual area councils will be run by members of staff with responsibilities for those areas.

Monitoring and evaluation.

The monitoring of the success of student voice will be done primarily by the students. In the last meeting of the year pupils will evaluate their own successes and the successes of how the council has been run. The member of staff with responsibility will then create a development plan for the following school year. Minutes are taken during every meeting and shared with members of SLT. Minutes also allow pupils to create an agenda for the next student council meeting.