



Villa Real School
together we achieve

Pupil Voice Policy 2022

Responsibility: Jill Bowe

Date: February 2021

Signed and Adopted by the Governing Body:

Chair of Governors

Date: 07.02.22

Date to be reviewed: February 2024

The term 'pupil voice' refers to ways of listening to the views of pupils/ students and / or involving them in decision making.

At Villa Real School we believe that pupils/ students should be active participants in their own learning and that their opinions should be heard and valued both in school and the wider community. We therefore actively seek ways to engage pupils and students and encourage them to make a contribution.

There are a wide range of approaches used across school to support pupils/ students of all ages and abilities to engage in pupil/ student participation and promote the pupil voice:

- School Council
- Fair Trade Development Group
- Sports Council
- Post-16 Extreme Group
- Peer mentoring
- Pupil/ Student contribution to Annual Review
- 1:1 therapy
- Student led enterprises
- 'Thumbs Up' Squad
- Pupil-led Praise Assembly
- Symbols/PECS books
- Big Mack switches
- Eye gaze technology
- Communication aids
- 'Voice of the Pupil' resource
- PODD
- Active Listeners
- Philosophy for Children
- Thinking Schools
- Kidsafe

Therapy

Therapies (OT, Speech and Language and Physiotherapy) form an integral part of a pupil/student's education at Villa Real School. Where appropriate, pupils/students are asked to provide input into target setting by identifying their own priorities for improvement and discussing the impact of this work. This allows pupils and students to work on areas they value and increases motivation.

Behavioural approaches

Management of behaviour (often distressed) forms an integral part of a pupil/student's education at Villa Real School. Distressed behaviour is often a response to an inability to communicate a want or a need. Pupils/ students are 'given a voice' through a range of resources such as 'yes' and 'no'

cards, traffic light cards, 'help' and 'time out' cards, as well as various resources to show different emotions. Pupils/students are facilitated to use a more socially acceptable way of expressing themselves, which allows them to use their individual voice. Self regulation strategies are the corner stone of our policy. The 4cs of Philosophy for Children also give a key focus on collaboration and caring.

The Curriculum

Embedded into the curriculum are teaching and learning opportunities where pupils/students are asked to consider and share their own opinions. They have the opportunity to plan their own activities within a topic remit and to share work with the rest of the school in assemblies. Pupils/students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and identify future goals in collaboration with teachers and support staff. This is enhanced by the use of enquiry and questioning as part of Philosophy for Children and Thinking Schools approaches.

School Council/ Sports Council/Extreme Group

This range of councils promote democracy, leadership and mutual responsibility throughout the school and beyond. Class/Key Stage representatives meet termly to provide:

- A positive forum for pupil voice
- Structured opportunities for leadership dialogue
- Pupils/students with an insight into democracy
- A forum for pupils/students to instigate change in respect of elements of school life, e.g. school meals, social areas, outdoor equipment
- A forum for pupils/students to instigate change in the world outside of Villa Real School
- A feeling of self-worth and mutual respect for pupils and students
- A sense of being a good citizen and having a positive impact on the world

Whole School Approach to Pupil/ Student Involvement

Staff understand the importance in involving pupils/ students in all aspects of their education and learning. Pupil/student views are valued and time is always given to seeking out and listening to the views of individuals and to taking these views into consideration in any decision-making. Pupils/students routinely give their own contributions to their annual review meetings and take a central role in transition planning.

Charity events and fundraisers for the school and for local and national charities (e.g. Children In Need) are planned in collaboration with pupils/ students, thus giving them ownership and pride in what they achieve. Opportunities for peer mentoring and support are available through Kidsafe and the 'Thumbs Up' Squad.

