

# School Council Policy

<b>Review Date</b>	October 2015	<b>Leader of Policy Review</b>	Mr G Hughes
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The belief that

“Pupils themselves have a huge potential contribution to make, not as passive objects but as active players in the education system”

Hodgkin Partnerships with pupils 1998

underpins the aim of student voice activities, which serve to give pupils the participation that they need in their own education.

“Students can and should participate, not only in the construction of their own learning environments, but as research partners in examining questions of learning and anything else that happens in and around school.”

Edwards and Hattam - Using Students as Researchers in Educational Research 2000

Student voice is an essential way to develop mature and confident students who have multiple opportunities to contribute actively to shaping their educational experience.

Hawarden High School is committed to providing opportunities for students to be consulted within the classroom and become responsible for their own learning and to provide opportunities for students to be consulted about wider school issues and become responsible for their school.

## Aims

- To encourage active student engagement in learning and in life at Hawarden 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 design appropriate opportunities for students to voice opinions both within lessons and beyond.
- To promote active citizenship.
- To contribute to whole school improvement.
- To improve communication between staff and students and ensure that there is a free and constant dialogue between the two.

## Principles

Student voice activities have a direct impact on the individuals who have their voices heard. They:

- Enable pupils to make a positive contribution to their learning environment.
- Increase engagement with school and learning and counter disaffection.
- Give a better understanding of young people’s insights and capabilities.
- Form the basis for developing democratic principles and practice.

Opportunities to gather student voice permeate and inform all areas of school life gathered through:

- Consultation with student groups about things that matter in school.
- Evaluation of the learning experience.

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- Systematic collection and evaluation of the views of pupils, across the spectrum of their school experience.

## **Organisation**

- School Council meetings are scheduled on the school calendar and take place periodically throughout the school year.
- Members of the School Council represent the school at community meetings and at meetings of the Leadership Team and Governing Body.
- School Council organise their own activities and liaise to accommodate these activities on the school calendar.
- Members of the School Council take part in staff recruitment, forming part of the interview process. Student feedback is also gathered, following sample lessons.

## **School Council**

The school council comprises student representative from each of the Key Stages within each of the four Houses. Each House will choose/elect 2 KS3 representatives and 2 KS4 representatives. KS5 will choose/elect a representative from each House. The school council will therefore number 20 students in total which is a manageable forum and ensures all student cohorts are represented.

The Council's aims are to provide communication between students and staff, to provide a forum for discussion of issues important to students, to represent students and to undertake/organise projects on behalf of students. Council officers are elected by Council members on a yearly basis and include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Press officers etc.

## **House Councils**

House Councils consist of form representatives in each year group, including the Sixth Form (two per form class). Form representative will chair discussions held by their form class. They then meet with the other form representatives from their House to discuss issues important to individual forms, to provide communication between students and House Teams and to represent their House. Members are elected by form groups and/ or tutors.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### **Learning Conversations**

All students should receive a one-to-one learning conversation with their teachers in each term. Learning conversations focus around students' achievements, and areas for progression. The written feedback given to students can form the basis of this conversation.

### **Surveys**

Representatives of the student body are regularly surveyed/interviewed by the Senior Leadership Team. Students are asked for their opinions on a variety of aspects of teaching and learning and school life.

Students are also interviewed in conjunction with work scrutiny, they are asked specific questions in relation to target data, how their work is marked and how feedback helps them to learn.

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## Faculty Student Voice

All faculty areas should research the most effective ways to use student voice to represent each department, provide communication between students and the teachers in the department, undertake research for the department and provide close links between staff and students within departments.

### Curriculum, Evaluation and Review

- Student voice feedback is gathered during departmental self-review; it is analysed and published in the report which forms the basis for action points for the departments' development.
- Students contribute to school evaluation through completion of a questionnaires and surveys; the analysis of their responses informs the school's self-evaluation process.
- Students should be encouraged take the lead role in lessons in several subjects, creating and presenting resources for their peers e.g. revision CDs, presentation of topics, etc.
- Students evaluate their learning experience during Personal, Social & Education, and during Revision Skills sessions designed to foster students' awareness of how they learn.
- Pupils have the opportunity to talk about their own learning during a one-to-one or small group learning conversations with teachers once a term.
- Peer and self-assessment for learning takes place across curricular areas to strengthen pupils' commitment to their own learning and that of their peers.
- CM's are encouraged to use pupil observers as part of the department self-review programme.
- Opportunities for young people to get involved in leadership are embedded within the curriculum in courses such as sports leaders and outside the curriculum in extended school activities/events.
- Pupils also have the opportunity of representing the school in formal evenings and events in the local community.

### Transfer and Inclusion

- Students act as hosts to Year 6 pupils, during their induction to the school.
- Older school students may act as mentors to younger pupils within their House.
- Year 7 pupils write to their old primary school during the spring term to reflect on their experiences and provide a role model to younger pupils.