



Arun Court School: Policy 14B

Arun Court School – STUDENT VOICE – last updated September 2020

Ratified by EMAT sub-committee meeting on:.....

Signature (+ date) Chair of EMAT Pupils, Families & Community Committee.....

Signature (+ date) Proprietor:Mrs Beverley-Sarah White

Signature (+ date) Associate Principal of SchoolHannah Ebling Reviewed every 3 years

Context Statement

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. Due to their educational special needs and anxiety, many of our young people have been previously over-looked in settings and do not feel that their voices have always been heard. That is why we aim to fully involve to students not only in curriculum decisions but during pathway (IEP) meetings, annual reviews and through a negotiated learning approach. Putting the student at the centre is very much at the heart of what we do.

During COVID 19 and Lockdown, student voice continued to be a vital aspect of school life, with students suggesting the support they needed, attending discussion forums and still shaping the curriculum.

Student Voice in Learning



We have a negotiated approach to learning where the main focus and objectives are set, but at the start of each unit young people can make further suggestions to be added to their particular learning web. It is very important that students feel that it is their school.

When young people are dis-engaged, usually due to high anxiety, we will re-negotiate the task giving them a choice from 3 options. Through growth mindset activities and Solution focussed coaching the young people learn to push themselves to not always choose the easiest option, and to regulate their emotions productively. By the end of their journey they are able to suggest ways of modifying a task to help them but also most importantly, accept that in some circumstances modification is not possible – essential prior to college transfer.

Student Representatives in the School

We have student representatives that hold 5 positions in the school each year. These members then sit on the fortnightly school council meetings, as well as working with their 'staff member partner' in heading up an aspect of the SDP. With only 20 students, all of whom are vulnerable, we are proud that 25% of the school is at the point that they can meaningfully participate in this level of activity – and through them, even the most vulnerable and uncommunicative students can still have a voice. All our representatives are holding roles linked to future career options available locally.

	<p>Eco Rep</p>	<p>The Eco school award</p> <p>Helping to structure our Forest and outdoors bounds curriculum</p> <p>Involved in fundraising and community events</p>	<p>The rural jobs market is high in this locality, with not only agriculture as an option. We have two vineyards, several SSIs, woodland Trust and NT sites, many garden centres and there is also the market for high end at home services.</p>
	<p>Crafts and the arts Rep</p>	<p>Encouraging representation in the curriculum</p> <p>Linking to wider health and mindfulness benefits</p> <p>Community events and exhibitions</p>	<p>Both Dorking and Farnham are huge local centres for the arts and traditional crafts industries. Everything from leathercraft and blacksmithing, to art galleries and fashion houses are represented with of course the University for the Creative Arts being based in Farnham too.</p>

	<p>Health & Safety Rep</p>	<p>Working to ensure the school is safe</p> <p>Supporting young people to assess risk</p> <p>Contributing to the life skills and careers programmes</p> <p>Ensuring the curriculum meets the needs of those who want to enter emergency and support services</p>	<p>Due to the large number of public buildings, services and shops there are many companies locally providing health and safety jobs. In addition there are many active associations locally such as the large YMCA in Guildford, St Johns Centre in Woking as well as large retained emergency services. There are local army barracks in both Guildford, Aldershot and Farnborough.</p>
	<p>Mentoring Rep</p>	<p>Official coaching and mentoring training program</p> <p>Supporting students earlier in their journey – particularly with self-cursing or self-defeating behaviours</p> <p>Ensuring the curriculum supports those wishing to enter the care sector</p>	<p>Mentoring is an excellent skill to have on your college entry CV as it encompasses a wide variety of ‘soft skills’ wanted by employers such as strong listening skills, commitment, professionalism and loyalty.</p> <p>Locally there are many large care home providers, youth support providers and care charities.</p>
	<p>Physical and mental health Rep</p>	<p>Healthy schools award</p> <p>Promoting physical activity in the school</p> <p>Supporting students with physical and mental health needs as appropriate</p>	<p>This area is relatively wealthy and there is huge demand for personal fitness instructors and specialist sports coaching, in addition to the many gyms. Classes for children aged pre-school and above are also flourishing and are run on a franchise basis. Locally we are near the Chelsea Football academy (Cobham) and also have world leading facilities for speed skating in Guildford, as well as being on major cycling competition routes.</p>

Student School Council

- Each year the school council will meet initially on the school site, and then provided the attendees are able to do so, meetings will be held in local cafes and eventually on college campuses and larger sites. In this way the attendees are challenging and working on their social anxiety as well as purposefully contributing to the school.
- Meetings will take place at least twice every half term.
- Minutes will be taken at each meeting, with students taking it in turn to carry out this role – another great skill to have on a CV
- School council members will carry out research and discussions with their peers ready to bring to the council to make proposals. Where costs are likely to be incurred, they need to have researched these too.
- In addition to the meetings, the reps must work with their designated staff member to help fulfil the aims of the SDP – and report back on progress at the meeting
- Prior to the meeting the group must set the agenda with Jess, and this must be published on the student voice noticeboard
- The school council has its own page within the strategic school development plan
- School council members take part in interview panels for new staff members

Other ways in which we monitor student Opinion

- Daily conversations
- Surveys and evaluation forms
- Discussing the learning taking place with students during observations and learning walks
- A marking and feedback policy that promotes student involvement in the process of learning