

Foreland Fields School

Pupil Voice Policy



Governing Body Approval and Categories

Date of Last Review / Scrutiny	15 th May 2023
Date (Month / Year) of Next Review /Scrutiny	15 th May 2026
Date Policy was Ratified	5 th July 2023
Category of the Policy	Teaching and Learning
Named Lead for Writing the Policy	Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)
Named Governor for Scrutiny	Chair of Learning and Development
Approval Body	Strategy Team
Display on Main Web Site	No
NOTE: IF THIS POLICY HAS BEEN SCRUTINISED BY A DIFFERENT LEAD GOVERNOR OR BEEN RATIFIED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNING TEAM PLEASE STATE WHICH TEAM	
Signed – Chair of Governors	Date 5/7/23

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Foreland Fields School is a Rights Respecting School thereby this policy ensures that the following rights are acknowledged:



Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 23 (children with a disability)

A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

Signed (Chair of Governors):

Date:

5/7/23

Foreland Fields School

Pupil Voice Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with Foreland Fields School's:

- Mental Capacity Act Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Online/Computing Acceptable Use Policy
- Food Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Careers Education Policy

Introduction

Every effort is made to ensure that pupils at Foreland Fields School are able to communicate. This is commonly through the use of Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC). The term AAC is used to describe the different methods that can be used to help people with disabilities communicate with others. As the term suggests these methods can be used as an alternative to speech or to supplement it.

At Foreland Fields School we aim to provide a Total Communication Environment for all of our pupils where all forms of communication should be accepted and used interchangeably e.g. Makaton/British Sign Language alongside a Communication Book alongside Speech, etc. All classroom environments are set up for all forms of communication. Needs-led base classes may also have additional systems set up for the whole class to support and value their specific communication needs.

Pupils and students' Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) detail what individuals require both as standard and 'above & beyond' to ensure that their communication needs are met across all aspects of school life.

At Foreland Fields School, we endeavor to consult pupils, individually and collectively, on a range of issues affecting them, whilst ensuring all our pupils have a voice, regardless of age, need or ability.

We ensure that questions asked of pupils are accessible to them, both in terms of the complexity of questions and the language used, and use photographs, symbols, objects of reference and other means to support understanding. Where pupils are unable to engage with the questions asked, advocates, who are class staff that have a particularly good knowledge of particular pupils, answer questions on the pupils' behalves, based on their observations, knowledge and understanding of them. For example, in response to the question, "What is your favourite lesson", an advocate could respond "Food Technology, as this is the lesson in which the pupil shows the most positive reactions, smiling at the various tastes given".



5/7/23.

Pupil Questionnaires

We regularly ask for the views of pupils and students on a wide range of issues including safeguarding, online safety, their favourite and least favourite lessons, playtimes/breaks, foods, how they travel to school, what makes them happy in school and what makes them sad or frightened in school? We use this as an opportunity to monitor our standards and procedures which can then lead to the identification of whole school areas of focus and/or targets.

Pupil Involvement in Annual Reviews

We involve the majority of pupils at their Annual Review meetings. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and above fill in a short questionnaire prior to the meeting, some with the help of an advocate. They are able to say what they like and dislike about school and what lessons they are good at and, where able, suggest possible areas they would like to do better in. Most pupils attend at least part of the meeting, many greatly enjoying being told about their progress, whilst some pupils are now attending the whole meeting.

Pupils in Year 9 and above are invited to participate in their Transition Reviews in which their views about their future, both within school and beyond, form an integral part of the meeting.

At Foreland Fields School we ensure that our pupils and students are consulted and have a voice, individually and collectively, about matters that affect them.

As our pupils move towards adulthood, big decisions have to be made about a range of issues including their future education/work, where they will live, leisure activities and decisions related to medical or therapeutic treatment. In line with the Mental Capacity Act (2005), wherever possible, our pupils should participate in these discussions and be involved in the decision making process.

Pupil Choice

Pupils are offered the opportunity to make choices throughout the school day. This includes a choice of lunch for those who have school dinners, a choice of enrichment activities and, for pupils in Key Stage 4 and 6th Form, choices related to areas of study. We believe that a child who is skilled at consciously making choices will better understand their own needs and gain a sense of control over their own life. As they get older children make bigger decisions that often involve their family, their friends and their schoolwork. The kinds of decisions children make affect their wellbeing, their relationships and their success.



School Council

Foreland Fields has an active School Council. The school council has a member from every class in the school. Full School Council meetings are currently held once every term – 6 times a year. Small groups of School Council members meet at other times to engage in projects such as organising Harvest Festival.

All meetings have an agenda, which is distributed to members prior to the meeting, and minutes are kept of meetings to refer back to. All minutes are presented in Communicate in Print in order to ensure they are accessible to pupils and students.

As the wide age range and varying needs of our pupils can make it hard to discuss issues in depth in this forum, some of the discussion on issues we are consulting pupils on will take place in classes, at appropriate levels, with a vote being taken within the class or at a departmental assembly. Class and/or departmental representatives bring the views and votes to the council meeting in order to ascertain the whole school view.

In the past pupils have been consulted on a range of matters including the menus for school lunches, the colour of the Christmas decorations and activities at the summer Sports' Days.

Pupil Involvement in staff appointments

We believe it important that pupils have a say in the staff that support them within school.

~~Pupils~~ School Council representatives regularly take part in the selection of teachers, including the appointments of a new Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers and Leaders of Learning. They are asked what they would like to ask candidates and are given the opportunity to practise asking questions before the interview itself. Even where the questions do not relate strictly to the job, the way that the candidates deal with the questions and interact with, and relates to, pupils gives valuable insight into their character. Following the interview, representatives vote on their favourite candidate and this information is then taken into account by the staff interview panel when making their final appointment decision.

