



# Child Participation Policy

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## Child Participation Policy

At The Small Schools Multi Academy Trust we believe that actively promoting the participation of children in the decision-making process creates a sense of partnership and benefits everyone: children, staff and parents. We therefore involve the children whenever decisions are made that affect them.

We follow the principles set out in Articles 12 and 13 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* which state that:

- A child's opinion should be taken into account in anything that affects them.
- Children should have information disseminated in a way that enables them to make choices and decisions.

Involving and consulting children helps them to develop new skills such as negotiation, sharing, and understanding the perspectives of others. It helps them to understand how decisions are made, and shows them that their opinions are important.

At the Trust we actively consult the children and encourage them to participate in making decisions about school life through:

- Asking questions and paying full attention to the child's response, listening to what they are saying verbally (or through use of visual aids) and also observing their body language
- Group discussions
- Regular questionnaires and gathering other feedback on activities
- Noticeboards
- Regular School Council meetings, between children and staff

The age and maturity of each child, together with the type of the decision being made, determine the extent and nature of their involvement, however, the basic assumption is always that children will be involved.

If a child's view conflicts with that of their parents, the Trust will discuss as a Senior Leadership Team. The issue would be escalated if there was a belief that the child was in danger. The Trust would liaise with parents as part of this procedure, unless Safeguarding issues prevented this.

We make sure that we act on any consultation with the children so that they can see that their input has had visible outcomes. If children suspect that the consultation is just window-dressing they will disengage from the process.

### Care Club

At the Club the children have the opportunity to participate and make decisions on a day-to-day basis. We actively consult the children and encourage them to participate in making decisions about the running of the Club through:

- Choosing freely what type of play to engage in
- Choosing what snacks to eat, as well as when and where to eat them
- Preparing snacks themselves
- Selecting new equipment for the club
- Drawing up club rules
- Using our resource library to select toys or activities that are not already set out
- Using our suggestion box [or wish tree] to request new resources, activities or other changes
- Activity planning [e.g. 'What do you want to do today?' whiteboard]
- Conducting risk assessments

Care Club will ensure a range of activities are on offer for the benefit of all children, such as story time, worship groups and so on.

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014): Learning and Development Requirements [1.8]*