Student Council

Rationale

The development of an effective Student Council must be seen as an important part of the wider drive within school to develop "Student Voice" which essentially means students having the opportunity to have a say in decisions in school that affect them. We must be attentive to the views of students and responsive to what they have to say. More specifically, the reasons for developing effective and sustained student voice activities are:

- Students have the right to have their opinions taken into account in decisions which affect them. Student Voice can contribute significantly to the development of active citizenship by improving students' knowledge and understanding of social and democratic processes. Similarly, it can lead to the development of important transferable life skills such as communication, inter-personal, taking responsibility, organisational, etc.
- School improvement (eg attainment, engagement in learning, behaviour, attendance, etc) will be more effective and sustainable where students are consulted and their views taken account of.
- Effective Student Voice will ensure that we meet the specific needs of our students and, in doing so, address the issue of personalisation.

Key Issues

1. The school will develop an ethos which commits us, at all levels, to involve students in decision making, listening to their views, and acting on those views where appropriate.
2. Student voice will be given sufficient status to be involved in significant and fundamental issues (such as Behaviour Policy, evaluation of teaching and learning, staff recruitment and appointments and links to the school Academy Council (Governors) if we are to avoid "tokenism".
3. We must ensure that all students feel included in the range of student voice activities and not just those few who feel most confident and comfortable expressing their views. This is particularly important for identified sub-groups within school.
4. Communication of the student voice issues, actions and outcomes must be prompt and effective across the whole school.

The Student Council has a vital role to play in the development of effective Student Voice, because it is visible and tangible evidence of student voice in action. It is both formal and democratic in operation and, run properly, is a transparent and accountable forum for student participation.

School Councils UK defines school councils as "democratically elected groups of students who represent their peers and enable students to become partners in their own education, making a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos".

Purposes of the Student Council

To:

- Create and develop amongst students a belief that their views are important and are taken into account in the drive for school improvement.
- Provide the opportunity for students to contribute to the cycle of planning, monitoring and evaluation within school.
- Enable students to have the opportunity to express their views and ideas at an appropriate time and in an appropriate setting.
- Promote the skills and values associated with thoughtful, structured debate and the development in students of informed opinions.
- Provide an opportunity for individual students to take responsibility within school.

Structure

Year Group Councils

- Two students per tutor group, for each year group
- Half termly meetings led by HOY
- Discussion of school issues and review of implementation and impact of school initiatives;
- Items for discussion generated by:
    - School council agenda and meetings
    - Tutor group suggestions and questions
    - Requests from SLT, Academy Council or staff
- Outcomes
    - Recorded by HOY and sent to Deputy Head

Full School Council

- Two students per year Group. Decided on by identified member of staff and through Year group meetings.
- Led by identified Deputy Head with support from another staff member
- One meeting every half term on a timetabled basis
- Discussion school issues and review of implementation and impact of school initiatives;
- Items for discussion generated by:
    - School council agenda and meetings
    - Tutor group suggestions and questions
    - Requests from SLT, Academy Council or staff
- Outcomes
    - Recorded by Deputy Head and discussed at SLT meetings
    - Feedback to Academy Council as appropriate