

Student Voice Evaluation Report

Thank you to the Head, link teacher, link governor and school council who welcomed the visit. The visit included an observation of a school council meeting, formal discussions with school council members and senior staff and opportunities to speak to 15 pupils informally.

Pupil participation has a high priority throughout the whole community in Holy Name RC Primary School, with an effective system in place for ensuring all pupils are involved in the process of decision making, leading to a large number of improvements to the school for all pupils. There was evidence of teachers and pupils working collaboratively together at the highest level of the “Hart’s participation ladder.” A particular strength of this school was the maturity and level of pupil participation skills demonstrated by all pupils observed and interviewed.

Key recommendations:

The school should complete the self-assessment to gain the kitemark for the National Participation Standards, in order to celebrate the school’s success in promoting pupil voice.

Good practice observed	Areas for development
Standard 1 - Information <ul style="list-style-type: none">All pupils interviewed were very well informed about all of the different ways in which pupils can get their voices heard. “You are able to speak your mind,” “If there is ever a problem you talk about it in class council,” “Hearing pupil voices from their point of view.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Although children in the school are well empowered, they could not tell us about specific children’s rights. Super Ambassadors and prefects could take the lead in raising more awareness of the UN

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a school council display board with pictures of school council members, date of the next meeting, agenda and a reminder notice to pupils about using suggestion boxes. • School and class blogs have been successful in keeping parents and governors informed directly from the pupils themselves. • The school is a member of the Children’s Commissioner Super Ambassador Scheme and there is a noticeboard displaying information about the Children’s Commissioner. 	<p>Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>
<p>Standard 2 – It’s your choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School council and class council meetings take place regularly and are well led by pupils. Staff ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to chair class council meetings. • The role of the link teacher is well established and pupil voice mechanisms have been embedded across the school. The headteacher leads the whole process effectively. • In the school council meeting observed, all pupils participated in discussions well, with a high level of maturity. The Year 6 Chair led the meeting skilfully, using appropriate meeting language, with little prompting from the link teacher. • The agenda is pupil led, with evidence of SLT and pupils working together in shared decision making. Examples include a pupil-initiated behaviour policy for supply teachers, the new Maths scheme, etc. Safeguarding issues are raised in class councils and resolved. Children are involved from the start of developing new initiatives. • Elections are high profile and run by secret ballot, with a high number of children putting themselves forward in each class. • Class council folders include all information necessary and assist the children in their roles. 	
<p>Standard 3 – No Discrimination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was clear that all pupils are fully involved in the pupil voice ethos of the school, with numerous opportunities to get their voices heard. • Membership of the school council is inclusive, with vulnerable groups represented. • Staff were able to give clear examples of individual children who had “blossomed” 	

<p>through the pupil participation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classes, from Reception to Year 6, are represented on the school council. • In discussions and the meeting observed, the older pupils supported younger members to contribute their views and were very keen to tell us about initiatives such as an animation club run by Year 5 & 6 pupils for Year 1 & 2 pupils. • There are suggestion boxes in all classes, allowing everyone to have a voice. • There have been various fund-raising activities for charity. Eg Year 3 children had organised a charity Bring & Buy sale. They had the idea, they sent out letters to parents, they organised and ran the day, which raised £681 for the Holy Child charity. 	
<p>Standard 4 - Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was evident that there is a great deal of respect for the role of the school council. Many children in each class wanted to stand for election and all the children interviewed agreed that it was very important. • The Headteacher and link teacher clearly take children's views and suggestions seriously, helping them to resolve issues, eg children worked together with the Headteacher and building contractors to design toilet refurbishments and to resolve an issue with the placing of mirrors in the Boys toilets. The pupils used apps for design, held votes with all pupils on design options, had site meetings, spoke to contractors on the telephone and in person and oversaw the whole project. • The children were very aware of the financial process and implications for their ideas. They regularly have discussions with the Headteacher on financial issues, eg they persuaded the Headteacher to purchase a green screen for their IT projects. • The Headteacher ensures that the governing body are aware of the achievements of the school council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was little awareness by the school council of what the governing body's function was. The school council should develop stronger links with the governing body, eg pupils attending meetings, link governor to attend school council meetings and support projects and proposals
<p>Standard 5 – You get something out of it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils told us about many of the benefits to them that the school council has brought. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider carrying out a consultation with all pupils on the benefits of the school council and how it can be improved. • Introduce a reward system for school council members to recognise their achievements throughout the year.

<p>Standard 6 - Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback to pupils is given in class council meetings, which take place every 2 weeks and is well monitored by the Headteacher and link teacher. • Children have minutes to help them feed back and the link teacher supports the younger classes. • Actions and solutions are clearly identified in the school council minutes to aid feedback. • Minutes of the school council are emailed to the Headteacher at the end of the school council meeting; the Headteacher responds to the pupil secretary promptly. • All pupils interviewed were very clear about what the school council issues were and the decisions made. 	
<p>Standard 7 – Improving how we work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we observed the school council we saw excellent meeting skills demonstrated by all pupils. When asked about training, they said they hadn't received this because they "always do it in class like this." This demonstrates that the skillset required is already well embedded in the whole school. • The link teacher demonstrated very good skills in supporting the meeting and has a good understanding and knowledge of pupil participation. • The Chair and Secretary of the school council managed the meeting well, which included the use of an iPad by the Secretary to take minutes which were emailed to the Headteacher at the end of the meeting. • Pupils were able to give many examples of improvements to the school which had been instigated by pupils, eg toilet improvements, a new climbing wall, Greta's Garden, Adventure Trail repairs, etc. They stated, "You can have your own ideas for school," and "Sometimes there's a split decision, so we vote." • There are numerous pupil voice based groups in the school, including digital leaders, book buddies, JRSOs, eco Club and Crw Cymraeg. All of these give 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The link governor should attend pupil participation training. • Consider meeting with another school council to share ideas and good practice.

children opportunities to develop skills relating to pupil voice and leadership.

Signed: Rose Davis Kathy Young-Powell

Copies to: LA Head of Service, Headteacher and Chair of Governors

Date: 23rd November 2014