

**CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
STUDENT VOICE POLICY**

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

In the City of Rochester School, the term 'staff' is inclusive of all staff and it also applies to pupils on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, the Trustees and Board of Trustees.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher, being responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum, monitoring the weekly lesson plans for all staff, ensuring all planning is appropriately differentiated with relevant, appropriate learning objectives.
- The Headteacher along with the whole school teaching and therapy team review the long-term and medium-term planning and ensure that appropriate targets and strategies are in place. It is intended that the ongoing review and development of the curriculum will support enthusiastic and inspirational teaching. The process of review plays a key role in the continuing professional development of all staff at City of Rochester School.
- The Trustees undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so requires. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay.

Signed:

Date Reviewed: July 2020
Date of Next Review: July 2021
Version No. 2
Policy No 18:004



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher



Claire Cooper
Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Trustee

This policy will be reviewed no later than July 2021, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

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1. Purpose: Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the rights to express their views in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. The purpose of the Student Voice is to make sure that pupil views are heard and taken into consideration when adults make decisions about the school. It is a partnership between City of Rochester School and its pupils and ensures that pupil views are heard in relation to issues that affect academic progress, achievement and personal wellbeing. All pupils at City of Rochester School have a diagnosis of ASD and many have an additional learning disability. The areas of difficulty specific to ASD affect relationships, communication, understanding and imagination. These difficulties impinge on how our pupils learn and view things. In addition, the majority of pupils with ASD do not understand that other people have their own plans, thoughts and points of view. They have difficulty in understanding the beliefs, attitudes and emotions of others. City of Rochester School understand these issues and the difficulties that our pupils face and endeavour to find a balance of supporting the needs of the pupil and ensuring their voice is heard. At City of Rochester School, it is understood that our pupils can give valuable insight into the classroom experience and are therefore partners in developing a positive pupil experience. There are a number of initiatives at the school by which pupils share their views, and this policy details the systems for gathering feedback through:

- The School Council
- Student Questionnaires
- School Council meetings with the Headteacher.

2. Remit and Scope: To act as School Ambassadors and represent City of Rochester School in a positive and polite manner:

- To seek the views from pupils on their experiences at City of Rochester School.
- To propose initiatives for improving the School experience.

3. School Council

3.1 Membership:

- One member of the Senior Leadership Team
- One representative from each class.
- One member of teaching staff
- One support worker/teaching assistant.

3.2 Election Procedure: There are two ways in which pupils can be elected for the School Council:

- Pupils can be nominated by their peers.
- Pupils can nominate themselves. These pupils need to submit their names to the Deputy Head for validation.

Once names have been verified, nominees will then be asked to address their class with the reasons why they should be elected for school council. Pupils will then be asked to vote for their preferred candidate. Teachers will collect the votes and results will be announced at an assembly and school council badges will be given to each successful candidate. The School Council should reflect a balance of both British and international pupils.

3.3 Roles of responsibility: Pupils will:

- Participate fully in the School Council.
- Nominate suitable candidates to represent their class.
- Discuss genuine issues in a constructive manner.
- Support the work of Council members.

Elected class representatives will:

- Represent their class in mature and constructive manner.
- Attend all meetings.
- Make a genuine effort to improve the school.
- Work hard to become a positive role model for the rest of the School Council.
- Wear their badges at all times as an indication of their role as a pupil Council member.

Parents/carers will:

- Encourage pupils to participate in the school council

Teachers and support staff will:

- Facilitate pupils in participating fully in school planning and decision making.
- Encourage full class participation.
- Facilitate nominations and signing off on prospective candidates.
- Allow elections to be held during PSHE lessons.

Senior leadership team will:

- Review the running of the School Council.
- Respond to any queries or issues brought before them by the School Council.
- Encourage and promote the School Council.
- Ensure that the pupils feel they have an important and proactive role to play in the running of the school.

3.4 Frequency of Meetings: The Council will meet once every term. The minutes will be taken by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will be made available to the Pupils. Notes and actions from the previous meeting should be available and reflect the value of attendance and responsiveness to feedback and the actions taken.

3.5 Agenda Items: The agenda should be balanced between general feedback and at least one higher-level theme for review. Items for discussion should also include, but not be limited to:

- Teaching, content and assessment
- Personal development, wellbeing and welfare
- Curriculum
- Pupil behaviour and wellbeing
- Diversity calendar events

4 Student Questionnaires: Pupil questionnaires will be administered twice per year and will gauge pupils' opinions of:

- Specific teaching, content and assessment.
- The wellbeing and welfare of pupils.

5. Governing Board Meetings: School Council views will be presented at Governing Board Meetings at least once a year. Pupil views will be discussed/shared at Governing Board meetings as a standard agenda item.

6. Lesson Observations: As part of the Teaching and Learning Policy, pupil views will be canvassed as part of the lesson observation process. Pupil views will be shared with teaching staff and will contribute to the final grade of the lesson.

7. Pupil Grievances and Complaints: Pupil grievances and complaints will be managed in accordance with the school's Grievance and Complaints Policy.

8. Success Criteria: The success of the School Council will be judged by the evidence of improvements to academic performance, pupil personal welfare and behaviour.

9. Monitoring: Compliance with the policies and procedures laid down in this document will be monitored by the Trustees. The Trustees are responsible for the monitoring, revision and updating of this document on an annual basis or sooner if the need arises.

10: Equality Impact Assessment: This document forms part of City of Rochester School's commitment to create a positive culture of respect for all staff and service users. The intention is to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice in relation to the protected characteristics, as well as to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities. As part of its development this document and its impact on equality has been analysed and no detriment identified.