



STUDENT VOICE POLICY

This policy will be kept up to date and will be reviewed once per year as part of the company's Quality Assurance arrangements.

Review Period
1 Year

Approved by
Directors/Governors

Review Carried Out By
Quality Team

Date of Approval
August 2019

Student Voice Policy

Introduction

At Orion we are committed to enabling students to contribute to school life and to take responsibility for their education and development. Students are key stakeholders in our school and as such, have opportunity to contribute to decision making which affects their experience both in and out of the classroom.

As part of the schools induction process, students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities, allowing them to become active participants in school life. At Orion we actively seek the views of every student and believe that they have unique perspectives on all aspects of their education.

Student Voice Opportunities

The student voice opportunities instilled in our daily practice, holistically allow our students to give their opinions and suggestions on their school life in an honest, secure and yet constructive way.

The Student Voice at Orion provides opportunities for students to:

- Nurture their thoughts in a democratic way
- Engage in learning and the wider life of the school community
- Nurture skills and attitudes required to develop responsibility, independence, teamwork and communication skills through positive relationships with staff and peers
- Have high expectations of themselves, their peers and all teachers
- Develop their leadership and decision-making skills
- Contribute to the curriculum and extracurricular opportunities

Creating opportunities for students to share their thoughts, views, experiences, suggest changes or raise concerns is provided through the following mechanisms:

- Student Council
- Student Representatives
- Student Survey's
- Student Forum's
- Student Voice Newsletter
- Student Blog/Social Media

School Council

Students at Orion have the opportunity to be part of a school council which meets each term to enable them to voice their opinions and have their views taken into account on decisions which impact upon them. The council helps improve many aspects of school life and provides additional opportunities for young people at Orion to learn about democracy, citizenship and accountability.

The School Council consists of 2 Student Voice Representatives from each year group and is co-ordinated by a nominated staff member.

The School Councils meet once a half term. Their discussions feed into the agenda for the whole school meeting. This meeting is chaired by Student Voice Co-ordinator and is also attended by the Head of School and link Governor.

Minutes of meetings are recorded, and representatives then feedback to the relevant year groups through their tutorials or assembly time.

Electing Student Voice Representatives

Each year students from each year group have the opportunity to nominate Student Voice Representatives who will then sit on the School Council and attend meetings on a regular basis.

Students are elected by their peers via a formal election process and participate in a campaign to encourage students in their year group to vote them into post. Representatives then meet regularly to discuss issues, solve problems and make decisions and recommendations affecting all students at Orion and school life.

Student Surveys

Our goal is to put students' feedback, insights and contributions at the heart of our decision-making. We want students to know that we value their feedback and ensure they are given the opportunity to participate as partners in the process of shaping education at Orion. A key part of seeking feedback at Orion is offering students the opportunity to complete surveys about their student experience. Whether it's about teaching, or facilities, these opportunities are a chance for students to have their say about what works and what needs improving.

Results from surveys are analysed each term and fed into the school self-evaluation process annually.

Student Forums

During the academic year, consultation groups or student forums are set up through the School Council, to discuss important topics or themes, respond to issues or concerns, gather ideas or contribute to the school evaluation process. Most importantly they represent student voice and cover subjects such as:

- Student rights and responsibilities
- Student opportunity and employability
- Student democracy
- Improving student life
- Green issues
- Community issues e.g. gang, knife crime
- Volunteer projects and charity activities

Role of Student Representatives

As well as attending Student Council meeting and student forums, student voice representatives also hold weekly 'surgeries' for students to drop in and give feedback. Before taking on the role, comprehensive training is provided by a nominated staff member to help them respond appropriately to students who may approach them with any health and wellbeing concerns, difficulties or safeguarding disclosures.

In addition to their role of representing the voice of students, members of the student voice representatives also:

- Represent the school at community events
- Participate in new staff appointment panels
- Help host parents evenings, awards and assemblies
- Help plan, organise and participate in fundraising activities