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Positivity

Respect

Determination

Diversity



Duncanrig Secondary School

DRAFT Pupil Voice and Participation Policy

'Learner participation in schools and early years settings includes all the ways in which children and young people engage in practices and dialogue with educational staff, parents, carers, and community members to create positive outcomes and changes'

(Education Scotland, 2019)

Our Vision

In Duncanrig we work together to build positive futures for all. Our school community is a place where learners develop respect for themselves, for those around them and for the school environment. Values are established and skills developed, allowing pupils to build their confidence, achieve their potential, contribute successfully to society and play an active part in shaping the future for themselves and others.

Underpinning everything we do is the desire to raise attainment, provide opportunities for achievement and celebrate success.

Our Values

Respect for self, respect for others, respect for our community, respect for the school environment.

Contribute when and where you can – be **positive** and give all you can give.

Show tolerance towards others and celebrate **diversity**.

Don't settle for less than your best – be **determined** to be all you can be.

Our Aims

Working together, we encourage all pupils to become:

Successful Learners – who take responsibility for their own learning and self-development

Confident Individuals – who have a high self-esteem and value their own worth

Responsible Citizens – who show respect and care for each other and their community

Effective Contributors – who make a positive contribution to society

Working together to build positive futures for all

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Underpinning Principles of Pupil Voice and Participation

The involvement of pupils in all appropriate aspects of school life is central to our ongoing development as a learning community. As part of all educational experience, it is young people's right to have a say in matters that affect them.

Education Scotland (2019) states all young people should have opportunities to:

- learn about their right to participate voluntarily in decision making
- be enabled to participate through a variety of ways of expressing their views
- have a say in shaping educational provisions in their setting and beyond
- learn through participating in decisions within a wide variety of educational activities and processes leading to meaningful impacts and outcomes
- be involved in monitoring and evaluating young people's participation and its impacts

Principles for Learner Participation:

- **Equal opportunities for inclusive, voluntary participation**
- **Respect for children and young people's rights and differences**
 - All children and young people – including those with disabilities, minority groups, and those in need of support for learning – are afforded both the right to an education and the right to have a say in shaping that education.
 - We are mindful of our duties under the Equality Act (2010) and the protected characteristics groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation)
- **Transparency and accountability in decision making**
- **Intergenerational power sharing**
 - Intergenerational dialogue requires adults, children, and young people to engage in communications which are two-way, voluntary, sustained, deal with real concerns, and be based on mutual respect and children's rights. Through participation, staff, learners, and other community members will plan and act together
- **Relevance of content, purpose and outcome**
 - For participation to be relevant and authentic, participatory dialogues must be influential and consequential rather than tokenistic. Effective participation should lead to new practices, relations and meanings. The processes and outcomes of these actions should be monitored in ways that include young people.

(Education Scotland, 2019)

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Four Arenas of Participation

The 'Four Arenas of Participation' provides a framework to help us understand and develop when, where, and how learners can have a say in schools and ELC settings. Importantly, learner participation will not be limited to the work of formal pupil councils but will be richly and deeply experienced across the four arenas by all children and young people. Learner participation must not be considered as an 'add-on' but be experienced as intrinsic to everyday ways of working.

- ***in Learning, Teaching, and Assessment***
- ***in Opportunities for Personal Achievement***
- ***in Decision Making Groups***
- ***in connection with the Wider Community***

(Education Scotland, 2019)

Regarding consultation, the following principles underpin the policy:

- the requirement to listen to and consult with all children/young people
- the right of children to express the views that they have and for their views to be listened to in anything that affects them (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 12) (Children Scotland Act 1995)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- due regard to be given to the child's view about their own education including children with additional support needs - [The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004]
- UN Convention on Rights of the Child (1989), Children Scotland Act (1995), Human Rights (1948) and sections detailed within this document from the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000)
- the right to freedom of expression, to hold views and to impart information and ideas (Human Rights Act, Article 10)
- the right of children to participate in and be consulted about the school development planning process (Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000), (Section 6)
- Scottish Government (2013). Getting It Right For Every Child
- Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland. (2013). 'Golden Rules of Participation',
- Education Scotland (2015). How good is our school? (4th ed.).
- Education Scotland (2019): Learner Participation in Educational Settings (3-18)
- Education Scotland (2019): An Introduction to Learner Participation in Educational Settling

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Benefits of Pupil Voice and Participation

'Pupil participation is a strong feature of our approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. Through regular and effective collaboration our community has a shared understanding of the school's strengths and improvement needs. We have developed very effective mechanisms to consult with stakeholders and can show how their views inform change and improvement.'

(HGIOS: Education Scotland (2015))

Pupil participation is about developing a culture in schools where all children and young people have a voice and have the opportunity to play an active role in decisions that affect their learning and well-being. Participation is a process rather than an event, with varying degrees of involvement from being consulted on a predetermined issue to young people choosing their agenda, making their own decisions and taking them forward.

Effective pupil participation can result in:

- Improved pupil-teacher relations
- Improved peer relations across the school age ranges
- Improved teaching and learning
- Improved guidance and support
- A better school ethos and a greater sense of shared community
- A reciprocal sense of feeling valued, trusted and respected
- Life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and citizenship
- Improved engagement, empowerment, and commitment to education
- Improved achievement and attainment
- An addressing of the 'attainment gap' between learners from different backgrounds

(Education Scotland, 2019)

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Pupil Participation at Duncanrig Secondary

Pupil participation is about all the different ways you can get your voice heard and take part in making decisions in the school. Young People at Duncanrig Secondary are given the opportunity to be involved in the 'four arenas of participation'

Learning, Teaching, and Assessment

- Departmental questionnaires focus groups and/or learner conversations (ongoing dialogue) to consult with young people about learning experiences (topics, contents, assessments etc.) to inform improvement planning. This should also be discussed at DM's to ensure
- Whole school questionnaires are used on an annual basis where a cross-section of pupils in each year group are surveyed using the HMIE pupil Questionnaire.
- Departmental Pupil Leaders. These are young People who have volunteered to take on a leadership role within a subject area. These young people support work collaboratively with staff to support younger pupils, advise on departmental planning, positively promote their subject area and provide opportunities for other young people to engage. Current Pupil Leads:
 - **Sports Captains**
 - **Home Economic ambassadors**
 - **Design and Technology Ambassadors**
 - **Philosophy and Ethics Ambassadors**
 - **Music Prefects**
 - **Drama Llamas**
 - **English Prefects**
 - **Computing Science Ambassadors**

Opportunities for Personal Achievement

To meet all learners' needs and promote a positive ethos we currently provide opportunities for young people to participate in:

- Volunteering (S6)
- Buddy schemes
- Work Experience (S4 to S6)
- Extensive range of clubs which provide opportunities to participate, compete and perform at a variety of levels e.g. sports, music, drama, craft, debating, gardening, board games etc.

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- DYW Departmental and whole school opportunities to work with employers. E.g. barista, water bottle production, nail bar, smoothie bar etc.
- Saltire award for volunteering.

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Further opportunities to be explored and consulted on such as:

- Wider achievement accreditation (John Muir award, YPI, etc.) Introducing a focus for each year group.

Promotion of opportunities and celebration of achievements is publicised through social media, PSE classes, registration, our school app. Additional promotional pathways to be consulted on.

Decision Making Groups

Across the school we also have a number of whole school leaders who consult, promote and support in their elected area to drive school improvement.

Current whole school Pupil Leaders:

- **School Captains and Vice Captains**
- **House Captains (Currently S6 only, junior captains to be considered)**
- **Anti Bullying Ambassadors**
- **LGBT+ leaders**
- **Pupil Support Captains**
- **Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors**
- **My World of Work Ambassadors**
- **Communication Support Base lead**

These high-profile whole school leaders meet regularly, with school staff, in their respective groups and have been involved in:

- Policy consultation
- Leading and supporting whole school events
- Leading staff professional learning
- Creation of clubs, groups and opportunities for other young people in our school community
- Training to support young people in their role
- Raising the profile of issues which affect young people through assemblies, speaking to younger pupils, presentations and social media

Further consultation required to discuss:

- Structure of whole school council to be discussed. E.g. representatives from each class, subject and whole school pupil leaders make the council, staff working groups have pupil equivalent so they can work collaboratively e.g. Learning and Teaching, Ethos etc.
- House System
- Pupil Voice and Participation Events

Connection with the Wider Community

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We aim to build strong community links and develop and sustain positive relationships within our wider community. Currently we:

- Organise, promoting and deliver Family Learning events across several curricular areas (Maths, Design and Technology, Music etc.)
- Raise funds for local charities (foodbank, SAMH)
- Whole year community litter pick, to demonstrate respect and responsibility as part of our local community
- DYW links across the school community to provide and promote opportunities to meet all learners' needs
- Are an LGBT+ inclusive school through our work with the LGBT Charter
- Comprehensive PSE programme working with a range of partners to support pathways into employment, training and further education
- Our local community Police and Fire services work closely with us with regard to all our responsibilities within our community
- Promote our school and young peoples' achievements through our app and social media

<https://www.cypcs.org.uk/ufiles/rule-cards.pdf>



Seven Golden Rules for Participation

1



Understand my rights

2



A chance to be involved

3



Remember – it's my choice

4



Value me

5



Support me

6



Work together

7



Keep in touch