

# Pupil Voice within a special school

Based on two sites in the South East, and split between primary and secondary age groups, this school is for students with an Education Health and Care Plan. Ensuring all students at the school have an opportunity to have their views heard is high on the agenda of staff and pupils alike. The schools have moved to an approach that builds evaluation into daily routines and have adapted approaches around children's needs.

## Student survey

Traditionally the schools send a school survey each year to staff, pupils and parents. Every student is included and responses gathered at school with the support of Teaching Assistants (TAs), utilising a range of communication aids. We have taken on feedback for students and have now increased the frequency and focus of the survey. A termly survey will focus on one or two key issues which will tie in with themes considered by the school council. The yearly survey will continue, focussing wider school policy and curriculum issues.

Communication issues are always considered, as there are a wide range of abilities and methods of communication within the school. The senior management team now supports students to complete their surveys, as they have less daily interaction with pupils; senior staff are familiar, but not familiar enough to risk hurt feelings by honest answers!



## Impact

Through valuing the views of students, the school has been able to move towards co-production in some areas of its operation. For example, students approached the Head Teacher with a request for new outdoor play equipment at the school. The school council, which hosts representatives from across the student population, have been awarded a budget to buy and have installed the equipment students would like. The termly survey has found students were confused about options at lunch time, not understanding the food combinations that were available to them. Working with catering staff they have produced menus with photographs of available meal combinations to help students understand the range of choices available to them. This process of problem solving with staff also offered students involved a chance to learn about the health guidelines school staff work to around meal options.

This resource is part of the Making Participation Work programme, a joint partnership between the Council for Disabled Children and KIDS, and funded by the Department for Education. For more information about the Making Participation Work programme, visit us at:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/our-work/participation/practice/making-participation-work>



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