Participation Framework

"Adults working with children and young people to ensure that their views are heard and valued in the taking of decisions which affect them, and that they are supported in making a positive contribution to their school and community"

This guide aims to support schools working on the priority area of Participation within the local Healthy Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Model. It follows the whole school approach and is intended as a prompt to help set milestones for reaching the meaningful outcomes.

Meaningful Outcomes:

Examples of measurable quantitative outcomes

- Increase in the number of pupils involved in a community activity eg sustainable schools, Dof E, enterprise, buddy scheme
- Increase in the number of pupils that have been involved in school decision making.
- Increase in the number of children who undertake roles and responsibilities in school.

Examples of measurable qualitative outcomes

- Increase the number of pupils who feel they have the opportunity to express their views
- Increase the number of pupils who report that they have a say in how the school is run
- Increase the number of pupils who feel that they are listened to
- Increase the number of pupils who report that adults in school make pupils' ideas happen

Examples of measurable targeted outcomes

A meaningful outcome is required to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups have been addressed. Vulnerable children include, looked-after children, young carers, children representing ethnic groups, children with SEN etc.

- An increase in the number of identified pupils participating in after-school activities
- An increase in the number of identified pupils who feel safe and comfortable enough to share their opinions and concerns

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Leadership and Management	• There is a clear commitment to principle and practice of children and young people's participation by head teacher and governing body, understood by everyone. Eg featuring in school mission or vision statement.	
	• There are effective methods of involving children and young people when the SMT and Governors discuss issues that affect pupils, eg a school council	
	• A link teacher is appointed by the senior management team to support active participation and provide feedback to senior management and governors	
	• Link adult for school council acts as consultant/mentor rather than leader or chair.	
	• The participation agenda links into the School Improvement Plan. Pupils are consulted on the SIP and its development.	
	• The school's self evaluation process contains information on ways in which participation is achieved and are acknowledged in school inspection	
	• The senior management of the school recognises the need for allocated time for pupils to meet and makes that time available with an appropriate venue.Eg a school council that meets regularly, at least once every half term	
	• Time is allowed for pupils to undertake surveys, questionnaires and interviews.	
	• The School Council has a budget to support its work	
	• Senior management feed back to the school council or forum, who then report back to the year or class councils.	
	• The school council or forum are also able to advise the SMT and governors on issues affecting pupils.	
Policy		

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Policy	• There is a clear rationale and success criteria for children and young people's participation so that they are able to identify successes and areas for development relating to participation. Eg. Successes are reported at assemblies/newsletters and School Council has a time at the beginning of each term to reflect on their successes.	
	• The school council has a written policy or constitution including how councillors are elected democratically by pupils and how the student body is heard.	
	• Children and young people work positively to support diversity among the student body and to combat discrimination in any form	
	• Barriers to participation are addressed, eg pupils are given appropriate support with language and confidence building	
	• Pupils are involved in reviewing and implementing policies on discrimination	
	• Pupils are consulted through working groups or the School Council when new policies which concern them are developed eg. drug education, anti-bullying, behaviour or healthy eating.	

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Curriculum and Learning	• The council has an induction and training process for all new councillors provided by staff or external providers.	
	• An induction pack for all new pupils and staff is developed by the pupils.	
	• Pupils are aware of the benefits of positive participation in a democratic society.	
	• Pupils learn about democracy in citizenship lessons and are given chance to participate in elections.	
	• Clear links are made with the wider Citizenship curriculum.	
	• There is a scheme of work which includes citizenship and its links to PSHE and other subjects linked to the QCA programmes of study.	
	• The school council is given the opportunity to visit the council house or talk to local forums. Eg Primary Parliament.	
	• Pupils are consulted on preferred teaching and learning styles through discussions about curriculum issues by school council or sub-group.	
	• Pupils experience participatory teaching and learning styles across all curriculum areas.	
	• The school council or sub-groups are involved in discussions about curriculum issues.	
	• Lessons include developing skills of participation and responsible action. Eg agreeing a class charter/ground rules.	
	• Pupils have agreed on class and individual targets. Eg. Pupils know their role in improving the class environment/behaviour.	

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Assessment and evaluation	• Pupils participate in their own learning through Assessment for Learning principles including feedback to pupils on activities.	
	• Pupils are consulted on the existing system of rewards.	
	• Reward system links to individual and class targets.	
	• Pupils are credited for their contribution to the school eg citizenship log book/ record of school council participation activities/achievement or annual report to parents	
	• There is a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating participation work in school eg. The council has a reports on its findings annually to the whole school, SMT and the governors	
	• There is a review process for how participation criteria are being met. Children and young people are involved in this.	
Ethos and Environment	• Opportunities are offered outside the curriculum for developing confidence and self esteem. Eg. Forest schools, after-school clubs.	
	• It is obvious from the school environment that participation is valued. Eg. the council has a notice board in a prominent place which it uses to inform pupils about its decisions and their outcomes	
	• Pupils have roles and responsibilities within their class Eg, monitors, assemblies, registers	
	• Pupils have roles and responsibilities within school. Eg eco groups, visitors, staff recruitment, assemblies	
	• The children and young people have successfully run projects and initiatives of their choice to benefit the school and local community eg links with the Area Forum or local council, charity fund raising, Nottingham in Bloom competitions, links with local businesses that support work in school, visits to local centres that help elderly people	

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Participation and Engagement	• Most students understand their role in decision making and participation in school and are given first hand experience of how decisions are made and how they can contribute to them.	
	• All decisions of the school council are taken democratically by elected members of the council	
	• All councillors are equal and have the same chance to participate and input their ideas. School council members respect and listen to each other. Everyone has chance to speak in discussions.	
	• Time is allocated for holding class councils/discussions to ensure that all pupils are involved in the decision-making process	
	• There is a system which allows for clear and timely feedback to all pupils about outcomes, not just those who have been involved in the decision making process.	
	• Pupils are given equal opportunities to express their views. No-one is excluded on grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, culture or language.	
	• Younger pupils' views could be sought by older pupils and any decisions fed back to them.	
	• A variety of methods are used for consulting pupils, including surveys, discussion groups, questionnaires and interviews.	
	• People who may be affected by the pupils' decisions will be consulted and their views taken into account eg the cook or caretaker and other adults by invitation to council meetings.	
	• The school widens participation in its work to include all pupils by way of sub-committees and working groups	
	• There are working groups or sub-groups to look at issues such as behaviour, anti-bullying, lessons, policies, fund-raising, playground equipment etc.	

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Participation and Engagement cont.	• There are systems in place for pupils to raise their own issues and concerns Eg suggestion/question boxes school which are regularly checked and ideas taken up, designated adult/pupil/peer mentor	
	• The school council agenda is set by the school council, year council/class councils and wider school communityThe school council agenda is set by the school council, year council/class councils and wider school community	
Support for pupils	• Children and young people are involved in developing peer support systems eg. buddying, mediations system, peer education, peer readers, etc	
	• Pupils are consulted on pastoral provision and support for children and young people in and outside school	
	• Children and Young People are involved in planning when new services are set up in school, eg school based health services	
Training	• School council/link teacher has opportunity to be trained (in house/healthy schools)	
	• All class teachers and tutors promote class councils and allow time for these to happen	
	• All staff aware of participation agenda and vision for the school	

Whole school element	Evidence of Good Practice	Notes
Partnerships	• Pupils contribute to the school's newsletter and website to inform all members of the school community and assemblies about their participation work	
	• The school council links to NCC LA to inform them of ways in which the council believes their locality could be healthier, safer and more peaceful eg. local area forum meetings, local authority surveys.	
	• Pupils have the opportunity to represent the school to other bodies beyond the school	
	• Children and young people are given the opportunity to take action on issues in the community and impact on them	
	• Young people are given the opportunities to volunteer for work in the community	
	• Opportunities are given for children and young people to mix with and learn from and about those from different backgrounds and generations eg.working in local care homes or centres or other schools.	
	• Leadership of specific projects and appropriate services involves both pupils and adults	
	• Secondary school councils are linked to the local youth forum, local area boards or other young people's organisation	