



## Student Voice Policy

### Related documents include:

- 'Who to speak to if you have a problem' poster
- SMSC Policy
- House Meeting Minutes
- Student Council Minutes
- Food Committee Minutes
- Social Programme Calendars
- Student Feedback Templates
- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Citizenship Policy, Scheme of Work and Lesson Plans
- PSHEE Policy and Scheme of Work
- Assembly Notes

### Legal Status:

### Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal
- The Head of Boarding will undertake a formal annual 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 require.
- The next official date for review is **December 2020**

### Introduction

At Abbey College we consider the 'Student Voice' to be **very** important and have a number of groups the students can join to ensure they can comment on how the College is run.

### Student Council

The Student Council is an elected group of up to 12 students who meet formally once a month with the Director of Studies (EFL).

They discuss matters concerning the College as a whole, but are particularly focussed upon:

- academic provision
- the environment
- charity and social events
- and whole school ethos.

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## How can students express their views?

Student Council members may also raise matters which other students have discussed with them before a meeting. Students are encouraged to approach the Student Council with issues they are concerned about, or any ideas they have, and the Council will represent them.

**The agenda for the Council meeting** is advertised a week before the meeting is due to take place so students are aware what is being discussed.

**Minutes** from the meetings are advertised in C Block and are available on the Z: drive.

The Student Council will also be asked to help devise social and excursion calendars, and to participate in occasional assemblies on key issues such as identifying and dealing with bullying.

Whilst we encourage the Student Council to play a full role, we also expect the students to be responsible and realistic in their requests. To help them with this the following guidelines are issued at regular intervals:

- Suggestions will rarely be considered if they affect the set school day; for example, students wishing to stay up late at night (after Bed Check) to watch a movie in the cinema
- Suggestions will not be considered if they break the College Rules; for example, students aged over eighteen bringing alcohol onto the College campus

Dates for the Student Councils are advertised on the Social Programme Calendar, and are announced in that week's assembly.

## Food Committee

The Abbey College actively takes a keen interest in providing students with a well-balanced diet, focusing on variety as well as nutritional needs. The role of the food committee is to convene once a month and discuss any issues concerning food and drink.

The Food Committee is chaired by the College Chef and the Director of Studies (EFL). Any student is welcome to participate and voice his/her opinion and suggestions.

As part of the Food Committee process, a suggestion box is set up in Student Services, where students can place any requests and/or suggestions. These suggestions will be looked at by the Chef at the end of every week.

Dates for the Food Committee are placed on the Student Council notice board and advertised on the Social Programme.

## House Meetings

Residential house meetings take place each week (every Monday at 19:15 in their common rooms). These meetings are chaired by the House Parents and the agenda is agreed in the weekly Student Services Team meeting (usually every Monday at 14:00).

At the end of the meeting the students have an opportunity to raise any issues that concern them; this could be a maintenance issue, an issue regarding the use of the House or a suggestion. The House Parent is then responsible for replying to this suggestion and taking the appropriate action, whether this be entering the

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issue in the Maintenance Book, speaking to another member of staff, etc. Staff are expected to feedback on any suggestions/issues to the students in the following meeting (or before) so students feel confident they have been listened to.

Minutes from House Meetings are kept on the Z: drive.

## Access to Staff

Staff have an **'open door' policy** when it comes to students and they can talk to a working member of staff whenever they please. If it is an emergency or the student has a problem, students are also free to approach staff who are on site, but not officially working.

## Student Feedback

Students are asked to complete feedback forms during the academic year. During the Annual Feedback they are asked to comment on:

- Individual teachers, their teaching styles, marking, homework, etc.
- Excursions
- Activities
- Their personal progress at the College

There may be other more targeted feedback forms handed out as and when required.

## Searching for real feedback

All students are made aware that they can give completed forms directly to the Principal if they wish. Sometimes the Principal may actually request that feedback is collected by the students, put into sealed envelopes and given to the Principal to ensure confidentiality in the hope of receiving genuine feedback without worry.

The results of this feedback are given to the relevant departments and progress is tracked throughout the year.

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