

# Pupil Participation Policy



*Learning together in a changing  
world, creating success for all.*



TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL and RESOURCE CENTRE

## Policy for pupil participation

**Trinity Fields is a Rights Respecting School, a Healthy School, Investors in Families School, an ECO School, a MOVE school and an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) Flagship School.**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our pupil friendly and adult version of our “**Shared Values and Aims**”.

### School context

Trinity Fields is a **Rights Respecting School**; we are committed to the principles and values of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across all areas of our work. We are a school where pupils are at the heart of everything we do. We successfully achieved UNICEF’s “Rights Respecting School Award” in **January 2017** and we have a well-established record of developing pupil engagement at all levels.

Refer to pupil friendly “**Pupil Participation**” policy and our whole school “**Pupil Participation**” policy for further details.

We are a **Healthy School**; we take responsibility for maintaining and promoting the health and wellbeing of the Trinity Fields team (pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors etc.). This includes teaching pupils about how to lead healthy lives by enabling them and staff to take control over aspects of the school environment that influence their health and wellbeing. We achieved the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award in **March 2018, with re-accreditation in December 2020**.

Refer to “**Health and Well-being for Pupils**” policy and our whole school “**Health and Well-being**” policy for further details.

We are an **Investors in Families School**. We are committed to developing active and effective relationships with parents/carers and families and recognise the value of close partnership working to improve outcomes for our pupils. We were the first Special School in Wales to achieve the Investors in Families Quality Mark, and regularly share our excellent practices with other settings.

We demonstrate our commitment to the Rights to Action agenda and value and support the important role that families play in the education of their child. We strive to promote social inclusion and a sense of wellbeing for families through positive participation in their child’s education.

During the re-accreditation process (2019), the school’s work was judged to be of a very high quality. Family and Community Engagement are fully embedded and it was evident that the school works hard on its journey towards excellence. The assessor was very pleased to award the school the **Diamond Standard**.

We have demonstrated through a national annual assessment that we have the capacity to play a strong leadership role in developing inclusion best practice across a network of schools; as well as being committed to extending those networks and develop classroom-based research.

Refer to “**Inclusion**” policy and to **IQM assessment reports** for further details.

In **summer 2022** we gained our **Platinum ECO Schools Award**; the Eco-Schools programme is designed to be pupil-led and looks at the impact of our actions on the environment.

Our sustained journey towards attaining the Platinum Award showcases pupils’ ideas and helps to inspire others to make the right environmental choices.

More recently (2019), the school started its journey towards becoming a **MOVE school**; successfully accredited at Silver level in **December 2021**. The MOVE Programme is an activity-based practice that enables children and young people with physical disabilities to sit, stand, walk, and transition as independently as possible.

**Our overarching philosophy is summarised in the following statement:**

**“We believe that everyone at Trinity Fields is entitled to have access to the very best learning experiences. These will be provided within a safe, caring and stimulating environment that will enable all learners to achieve their full potential through learning opportunities that meet their individual needs”.**

## **Education in Wales: Our National Mission**

Our work with pupils and their families will be developed building upon Wales’ National Mission. This national mission is ambitious, innovative and confident ensuring that we all take responsibility for all of our pupils to have equal opportunities to reach the highest possible standards.

Trinity Fields will continue to develop as a learning organisation to ensure it has the capacity to adapt to and explore a range of new approaches which results in improved outcomes and well-being for all of our pupils.

In order to realise our shared vision and approaches in delivering Wales’ transformational curriculum that will enable all of the pupils at Trinity Fields to make the progress commensurate with their individual needs we are committed to the 4 key enabling objectives, detailed in “**Education in Wales: Our national mission (2017)**”. These are:

- **Developing a high-quality education profession.**
- **Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards.**
- **Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellent, equity and well-being.**
- **Robust assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements supporting a self-improving system.**

## **Rationale**

We value the views of all members of our school community. This policy outlines how learning and teaching Trinity Fields School is enhanced by supporting pupils to have their say! Pupil Voice is well-embedded into all aspects of school life. We provide all of our pupils with a wide range of opportunities, using many different approaches linked to their individual abilities and needs to contribute to school improvement because we are fully committed to pupils being at the heart of everything that we do.

Equally we are committed to enhancing each pupil’s self-esteem; providing a safe, secure and exciting learning environment in which they are able to work with staff to make decisions, commensurate with their ages, abilities and needs in order to reach their full potential. Through

recognising and celebrating all achievements; we encourage every pupil to see themselves as successful and happy learners.

Our inclusive school ethos and the positive relationships established within our school community promote the value of learning and help support everyone at our school to see themselves as lifelong learners.

## **Key principles**

We believe that:

- Every pupil has an entitlement to access a wide range of personal, social and intellectual development and must be given an opportunity to achieve his/her potential in learning.
- Every pupil is unique in terms of characteristics, interest, abilities, motivation and learning needs.
- Our provision should be designed to take into account pupils' diverse and complex needs.

## **Whole school commitment**

**Our commitment to being a Rights Respecting School means that we will:**

- ensure all pupils have access to a learning environment that is pupil centred, flexible and responsive to individual needs;
- ensure all pupils have a "voice" and that their views are taken seriously and contribute to whole school improvement planning;
- provide an individual and inclusive service to both pupils and their families, with an emphasis on meeting individual needs and developing pupils' strengths; including pupils from across the County Borough as well as the pupils of Trinity Fields;
- provide a broad, relevant, challenging and personalised curriculum that includes all aspects of Routes for Learning, Foundation Phase, National Curriculum, 14-19 Curriculum, Routes to Literacy and Numeracy, the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and Digital Competence Framework;
- acknowledge and respect the individuality of all pupils, where everyone is a valued member of the school community;
- ensure all pupils have access to high quality resources, communication systems and expertise. These will be provided within a safe and attractive learning environment that encourages fun, creativity, respect and enjoyment;
- recognise our staff team as an excellent resource and that valuing, supporting and developing them is central to pupils' achievements;
- work in partnership with parents, carers, governors and other professionals to provide support, guidance and training and extend pupils' learning and achievements;
- develop and sustain effective links with the local authority's mainstream schools and with the local community, encouraging participation and developing our inclusive ethos;
- build upon individual and whole school strengths, celebrating and sharing all achievements;

- ensure all pupils have access to multi-sensory learning opportunities that promote communication, self-esteem, motivation and independence, as well as preparing them for adult life;
- work with all partners to ensure that transition arrangements are well planned and consider the needs of individual pupils.

## Our approaches to pupil participation

**Entitlement:** all pupils have a right to participate and to be listened to. Wherever possible all school policies and procedures must ensure that the needs of pupils are at the heart of all developments and that these have a positive impact upon pupil outcomes and progress.

**Empowerment:** all pupils must be valued and that staff work collaboratively with them to make a difference. Being consulted and allowed to make choices from an early age helps to develop emotional growth and self-awareness. Directly involving pupils in their education enhances their engagement and promotes active learning. This expands their horizons and increases the choices open to them about their future. It helps to ensure that the education they receive is relevant to their needs.

**Equal opportunities:** consulting effectively with ALL pupils can be a challenging and daunting process, particularly when there is a need to communicate with pupils with very complex and diverse needs. Our staff are particularly skilled in this area and use a wide variety of strategies to ensure ALL pupils have a voice. Strategies include: signing, PECS, use of Eye Gaze, specialist switches etc.

**Improving pupil outcomes:** active and relevant pupil participation can help improve pupils' interest in their learning, leading to improved outcomes. Individual progress is also supported by a curriculum that is carefully matched to their individual abilities, interest and needs.

**Safeguarding:** promoting pupil participation also supports their self-protection. Apart from parents and carers, school staff are best placed to notice early signs of distress indicating that something is wrong. A recurrent theme of successive inquiries into child abuse has been the failure to listen to the child.

**Democracy:** involving pupils in decisions about their learning and the school environment will help to prepare them for making important choices as adults. Empowering pupils supports their motivation and engagement. Through whole school groups such as the school council and ECO council pupils develop and refine skills in communication, listening, negotiation and compromise.

**Respect:** all staff are fully committed to pupil participation; our inclusive ethos ensures that staff have a shared sense of responsibility for supporting effective and where all of our pupils are encouraged to build collaborative relationships with their peers and adults.

## Our strategies to promote and sustain effective pupil participation

All staff are committed to ensuring pupils are at the heart of all that we do. Our well-established pupil centred ethos means that we will:

- Regard the involvement of pupils in decisions about their education as essential to good practise.
- Include pupils, wherever possible in assessing and monitoring their own progress. Again where possible pupils will be supported to set targets for their learning and behaviour and be provided with opportunities for on-going review and feedback.

- Foster a whole school ethos in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to express their opinions make decisions from an early age. We will continue to develop and implement a wide range of strategies for listening to pupils and responding to their views; these will be carefully reviewed and monitored as part of our ongoing self-evaluation processes.
- Recognise that pupil participation can only be fully effective in an environment where all staff are valued and involved in decisions affecting the school community. Relationships between adults should act as the model for the desired relationships between pupils.
- Provide ongoing training and professional development to assist staff in developing models of good practise that support the inclusion of pupils throughout the school.
- Support pupils to take an active role in their annual reviews wherever possible, ensuring that they can participate at a level commensurate with their abilities and needs. We will create a positive climate where pupils and parents are made to feel welcome and their contributions valued.
- Ensure all pupils have access to a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum, properly resourced to develop their skills through access to a wide variety of learning experiences.
- Offer guidance and support to both new and experienced staff in managing diverse classrooms and in developing individualised learning programmes.
- Act as mentors and advocates for the pupils equipping them with skills to respect different opinions and diverse cultures. This includes learning how to negotiate with others and to make compromises when appropriate.
- Work in a partnership with parents and carers whilst exercising sensitivity when pupils' views differ from those of their parents/carers.
- Collaborate with other agencies to ensure a 'holistic' approach. Staff will always exercise care and sensitivity when sharing information in order to respect confidentiality without compromising the pupil's safety.

## **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed as detailed in the school's policy review cycle. It may also be necessary to review and amend it sooner to reflect both local and national changes.

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Executive Headteacher</b>
<b>Signed</b>		<b>Chair of Governors</b>
<b>This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review cycle.</b>		

As a Rights Respecting School, we are committed to embedding the principles and values of the United Nation Conventions for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This policy enables our pupils to access and enjoy the following articles of the convention.

**Article 12:** Every child has the right to be heard.

**Article 28:** Every child has the right to an education.

**Article 29:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

**Article 42:** Every child has the right to know their rights.