Mission statement: Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures.

Student support policies and procedures

Student voice policy

Aim:
- To strengthen teaching and learning and responsiveness to individual need;
- To strengthen student participation and representation;
- To create a culture of student voice and democracy.

Policy authorisation:	Senior Leadership Team (SLT) & Student Council
Date of policy update:	April 2022
Date of policy review:	April 2025
Policy author	Assistant Principal - Student Support

Contents   **Page Number**

1. Introduction

The Blackpool Sixth Form College is committed to involving students in its decision-making. Blackpool Sixth firmly believes that embracing student views and offering an opportunity for students to have direct involvement in assessing and shaping their own learning experience will have a significant impact on maintaining excellent provision and increasing student success. Student participation and representation bring to life the British value of democracy.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy is applicable to all staff employed by the college and all students enrolled at the college.

3. Benefits of student voice

There are many benefits of effective student voice to Blackpool Sixth and to the students.

3.1 Benefits to students:

- improved participation, retention, achievement and progression
- better feedback on the students' experience informs quality improvements
- students become empowered, more self-confident and motivated
- students learn the British value of democracy
- students have the opportunity to become directly involved in social action for the benefit of others
- services and facilities are improved to better meet the needs of students
- identification and sharing of good practice
- promotion of an environment of mutual respect
- enhanced CV for entry into higher education or employment with training

3.2 Benefits to college:

- improved participation, retention, achievement and progression
- students who are more expert and independent
- better quality information about the students' perspective so improvements can be made
- better decisions about resource allocation and investment
- students who feel more involved, see college as a place where they belong and are motivated to put something back into the college
- improved responsiveness to individual need and the student experience
- create a listening culture and a culture of democracy
- enhanced college reputation within the community

4. Mechanisms of student voice

4.1 Involving students individually

Blackpool Sixth aims to create an ethos that fosters dialogue with students, enabling them to take a full and active part in their learning experience in a way that delivers success. A focus on individual student needs is at the heart of our college's Pastoral Mentor and Progress Review systems. Students receive 1:1 reviews with their Pastoral Mentor during their time at college and have access to a booking system to arrange a one-to-one meeting with their pastoral mentor based on their needs. Students also have a formal progress review during the academic year when subject teachers ask students to evaluate their learning experience for each course they take.

The main focus of 1:1s and formal progress reviews is to assess progress against individual targets and to tailor support for students to meet their own personal needs and objectives.

Students who receive a significant amount of Additional Support have at least two support reviews each year where they have the opportunity to give feedback on their progress and support.

4.2 Involving students collectively

College has a range of established routes through which students are engaged in a variety of quality processes across the college.

4.2.1 Student Directors

Two students each year are selected to become college directors through a formal application and interview process; one student is selected from Lower Sixth (L6) or Route3 (R3) and the other from Upper Sixth (U6). It is usual that a L6 Student Director continues in role as they progress from L6 into U6, thus providing consistency in the Governing Body and allowing the more experienced Student Director to mentor and support the new student.

Student Directors receive director training and induction and participate fully in Corporation and Standards Board meetings and the annual conference. The U6 student also sits on the Finance and Administration Committee. The responsibility for the recruitment of Student Directors lies with the Principal.

4.2.2 Student Council

The Student Council is composed of a mixture of Route3, lower and upper sixth students, selected via an interview panel comprised of the Student Council Co-ordinator and senior members of the student council. In order to be selected for an interview, students are required to complete an expression of interest form to the chair and vice chair of the council, detailing their reasons for wanting to join the council and outlining the qualities they feel they could bring to the council. The selection process involves a meeting with a group of applicants to discuss ideas mentioned in the expression of interest form.

The whole council meets on a weekly basis and has the following main functions:

i) To act as ambassadors of Blackpool Sixth at a variety of internal and external events such

as college open evenings.

ii) To act as a representative body for the whole student population, ensuring issues arising are communicated to the leadership team at college.

iii) To actively engage in fundraising and raising awareness through events and social media campaigns.

iv) To provide feedback to students on their activities completed that term.

iv) To participate in a work shadowing exercise of a Leadership Team member, and in a limited number of cross-college management meetings. Their role here is to contribute student opinion to issues arising in such meetings or during the work shadowing exercise.

4.2.3 Pastoral Mentor Representatives

Every student in college is assigned to a Pastoral Mentor group. Each Pastoral Mentor's cohort has the opportunity to elect a representative for each year group (QLU) to pass their views to key staff at college. The pastoral mentor representatives meet half-termly. Feedback from these meetings is disseminated to appropriate college managers, including SLT, for consideration and, where appropriate, action taken.

Issues emerging and resulting actions/responses are fed back to Pastoral Mentor Representatives at the following meeting and feedback is given to the whole student body during Pastoral Mentor sessions.

4.2.4 Student ambassadors

Our student ambassadors provide feedback on the events that they support, such as open events.

4.2.5 Recruitment processes

When interviewing potential new teaching staff and curriculum facing support staff, students take part in 'micro-teach' sessions, and are asked to give feedback on the quality of the teaching session, as a means to assess each candidate.

4.2.6 Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Students are routinely involved in the quality assurance of teaching, learning and assessment at Blackpool Sixth (TLA@B6). As part of the annual cycle of review weeks, learning walks and lesson visits, observers listen to the views of students about the quality of the teaching and learning in their lessons through either discussions with individuals or a small group of students.

Additionally, during departmental reviews of teaching, learning and assessment conducted by the college, students are also involved regarding the planning and delivery of lessons, regularity and meaningfulness of assessment, teacher responsiveness to individual need and support with progression to their next steps.

4.2.7 Compliments, concerns and complaints

The compliments policy and the concerns and complaints policy, managed by the Deputy Principal, are a written channel of feedback to the Leadership Team and to the Directors.

Complaints may be informal or formal (written) in nature and the process for responding to complaints is detailed in the policy. Students are made aware of this at induction.

4.2.8 Student groups

Student groups, such as the LGBT+ group or Eco group, are set up and led by the students are another channel of communication. A member of staff facilitates each group and liaises with a member of the Leadership Team to ensure views are shared and acted on.

4.2.9 Strategic Equality Committee

This cross-college group is composed of the Principal, Deputy Principal, representatives from the Leadership Team, college middle leaders, staff and student representatives from the Student Council. This group meets termly to provide strategic oversight of all matters of an equality and diversity nature. Issues are cascaded via each representative.

4.2.10 The college magazine

The college magazine is led by a group of students supported by a member of staff. The magazine is a mouthpiece for student views and news.

4.2.11 Alumni

There is regular and active engagement with former students who are encouraged to comment on their experiences at Blackpool Sixth and maintain their connection with the sixth form. A prime purpose of the alumni engagement is to provide a means for former students to reflect on their study pathways and career development and to share their insights with current students and staff. Former students often visit the sixth form to speak to current students and staff about their careers. There is a display of particularly notable alumni in the foyer and further alumni profiles are produced for display elsewhere in the college and for use in publications.

4.3 Student satisfaction surveys

Student surveys are formally reported on to SLT and the Directors, as well as being fed back to all curriculum and cross-college areas and students.

4.3.1 Marketing survey (new students - completed in October)
A survey researching student views on the impact and reach of the college's pre-enrolment marketing. A formal report is generated for SLT by the Head of Admissions, Liaison and Marketing. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.2 Induction survey (new students - completed in November)
This annual induction survey asks first-year students and their parents/carers specific questions about student satisfaction with the enrolment and induction processes. A formal report is generated for SLT by the Head of Student Services. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.3 Wellbeing surveys (all students - completed in October, January and May)
These short online surveys are undertaken as a way of collecting information about students'

general wellbeing. The anonymous survey gives a snapshot of wellbeing at that point in time and is used to identify common issues and help to plan the college's prevention work. Report is generated for SLT by the Head of Additional Learning Support. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.4 Teaching and learning survey (all students - completed in Feb/March)

Students complete a short survey to assist the college in identifying good practices and any areas for improvement relating to teaching, learning and assessment. Report is generated for SLT by the Head of Teaching and Learning. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.5 Safeguarding survey (all students - completed in March/April)

Students complete a short survey to assist the college in identifying good practices and any areas for improvement so we can maintain a safe and secure environment that meets your needs. A report is generated for SLT by the Assistant Principal - Student Support. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.6 Pastoral support survey (all students - completed in May)

Students complete a short survey to assist the college in identifying good practices and any areas for improvement relating to pastoral support. A report is generated for SLT by the Head of Student Services. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.7 Building futures survey (all students - completed in July/August)

Students complete a short survey to assist the college in identifying good practices and any areas for improvement relating to careers information, advice and guidance. A report is generated for SLT by the Head of Learning Resources and Careers. Results of the surveys and any additional actions are communicated to staff and students subsequently.

4.3.8 - SEND Survey (students supported by the ALS team - completed in June/July)

At the end of every year students who have been supported by the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team are asked to complete a survey so we can identify strengths and areas of improvement within the service that ALS offer. A report is generated for SLT by the Head of Additional Learning Support.

4.3.9 Ofsted learner view survey

This is emailed out to colleges in the autumn term; there are 9 questions. These questions are incorporated into our own student surveys and focus groups. For this reason, the students only complete this survey when the college is notified of an Ofsted visit.

5. Sharing progress, improvements and changes

Each department communicates what the department has done about student feedback. Pastoral Mentors also share cross-college feedback during pastoral mentor sessions. An end of year report is presented to SLT and the Directors.

6. Creating a culture of student involvement

Vital to the success of a meaningful student voice policy are the skills of staff and the readiness of staff to engage in the process. The college's vision for student involvement includes the developing of a culture where staff listen actively to the views of students and students listen actively to the views of staff. In this way, meaningful dialogue can take place.

The college offers employment opportunities to students in departments such as the estates team. This gives us yet another perspective on student views on how the college functions as an employer.

The college contacts students who have left to endeavour to improve its service wherever possible.

In addition, the SLT regularly invite students to talk with them directly in groups, or as individuals, giving a strong lead in creating an open culture.

7. Review of the student voice policy

The Assistant Principal (Student Support) will review the student voice policy every three years. The Student Council will input into the review.

8. Records and monitoring

A report is presented to SLT and the Directors at the end of the academic year.

9. Other related policies

- Teaching, learning and assessment policy
- Pastoral support policy
- Concerns and complaints policy
- Equality policy

Appendix 1: Calendar of student satisfaction surveys

Month	Survey	Target group	Person responsible
October	Marketing survey	New students	Head of Admissions, Liaison and Marketing
	Wellbeing survey	All students	Head of Additional Learning Support
November	Induction survey	New students and parents/carers	Head of Student Services
January	Wellbeing survey	All students	Head of Additional Learning Support
February/March	Teaching and learning survey	All students	Head of Teaching and Learning
March/April	Safeguarding survey	All students	Assistant Principal (Student Support)
April/May	Student Services survey (including bursary/transport support)	All students	Head of Student Services
May	Pastoral support survey	All students	Head of Student Services
	Wellbeing survey	All students	Head of Additional Learning Support
June/July	SEND Survey	Students supported by the ALS team	Head of Additional Learning Support
July	Building Futures survey	Lower sixth	Head of Learning Resources and Careers
August	Building Futures survey	Upper sixth and Route3	Head of Learning Resources and Careers