

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Raising the profile of pupil voice across the school

How Esher Church School raised the profile of pupil voice across the school

Context of our anti-bullying work

Anti-bullying has always played a huge role in our School ethos and Values and we have always used Anti-bullying week as a way to not only show a visible commitment to bullying but to also make the whole school aware of what bullying actually is, why we don't tolerate it and how we deal with any bullying incidents. It is also a great way to bring bullying to the foreground of the staff and to look at our curriculum and classroom practice to ensure that our Prevention is of upmost importance as well as the way that we deal with and support all parties should any bullying take place.

As members of a school community we are aware of our responsibility to ensure that all parties feel safe, respected and supported. The study explained in *The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-bullying in schools* (2011), the Government document on *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (2017) and numerous studies and information provided by the Anti-bullying Alliance/ United Against Bullying, all highlight the need for a pro-active, peer supporting and restorative approach.

Due to Covid and staff changes, we have felt that PUPIL VOICE has been neglected and we strongly believe in the value of involving the whole school community to instigate change and to make the school the most engaging and inspiring that it can be. Children are very insightful and we feel that the only way that we can prepare our children to become confident, resilient and engaging members of the community is to include them in all that we do.

What we hoped to achieve

- For Pupil Voice to help "Develop Peer Acceptance".
- For all the children at ECS to have the opportunity to play a role in some part of school life. For children to feel valued and to foster a sense of value and belonging.
- To have an anti-bullying logo and motto displayed around the school that has been designed by all the children in a bid to foster ownership, understanding and respect
- For every member of the school community to sign an anti-bullying charter generated by the School Parliament

The action we took

- Pupil Voice has been made a target for the PSHC/Anti-bullying/School Parliament lead for 2021/2022 academic years. During a recent filming for the new website, this member of staff was filmed doing an interview about Pupil Voice. This will be used not only on the website but also for training for new staff and new families joining the school
- To raise the profile of the School Parliament. They now meet every 2 weeks and are a very insightful and articulate group of children who take their responsibilities very seriously. They are a valuable go-between between the children and adults at school and have had some incredible ideas which have made a difference to individuals and the school as a whole eg from curtains in the shower room, organising a Jubilee picnic for the whole school community, to creating an anti-bullying logo for the whole school. They have had a huge input into playtimes with a questionnaire, looking at anti-bullying hot spots in the playground, looking at the AB Policy, creating an anti-bullying logo and motto, meeting with another SP lead to discuss ideas, leading assemblies on Anti-bullying and "What I wish my teacher knew" boxes. They have met with the Full Governing Body and have shared their ideas and developments with the Governors and are visiting the Houses of Parliament in July. They have their own display board in the entrance hall which is updated regularly. The School Parliament have started writing reports which are included in the weekly Newsletter and will have a section in the new Website once it has been updated. The School Parliament even took part in the process to find a new Heateacher and interviewed all the candidates. School Parliament members are voted in by their classes
- To re-instate the Playground Friends. This has not happened for a few years. Year 5 children were asked to apply to be a PF. They completed application forms, a morning of training and now meet every Thursday lunchtime to develop their playground games knowledge and discuss incidents and how best to deal with them. They introduced themselves to the school community by writing and leading their own assembly and follow a playtime/lunchtime rota. They wear yellow tabards so that they are visible. They started designing Playground Stops but following on from the Pupil Questionnaire and Playground questionnaire they have decided to design and paint playground benches (they felt benches would be more social and appealing than stops) which they are in the process of and which will be ready by mid July. They too met with the Governors to discuss their ideas and developments. They have their own display board in the entrance hall.
- We have always had Music and Sports Ambassadors and Prefects but we have introduced House Captains this year. They are to be the role models for our Behaviour Policies and ambassadors for our Values. They go round the school every week to collect the house points and stories and examples of how the values have been demonstrated. They then lead a celebration assembly on a Friday. The information is then communicated with parents via the Newsletter
- We now also have Sports Leaders who are helping the Sports Curriculum leads plan fixtures and they have been an integral part of the planning for a sports week in July
- All Ambassadors and Prefects have their pictures displayed in the entrance hall (with parents permission)
- Child Led Worship Assemblies are to be developed. As a Church School we have a member of the Church Parish lead a weekly assembly. Every assembly involves children to help lead. We also have a group of children who have volunteered (called the

Tentenners taken from the Bible John 10:10, one from each class) to meet with a Child Worker from a local Church who will write and lead an assembly with them every month. The children are volunteering in their droves and the children watching are most supportive.

- The year 6 children and School Parliament review the Anti-bullying Policy as part of the annual review.
- We are going for a Healthy schools and Eco Award and have instated Eco Ambassadors, one per class who meet every week. They have been round all the classrooms, have gone through bins etc to find ways for us to be more responsible
- There is a weekly Newsletter to communicate this information to our families and the wider community
- We are in the process of developing our Website and there is going to be a new Pupil Voice information section with photos and information, to be updated regularly. There is also going to be a more interactive Anti0bullying section too.

Impact and outcomes of the work

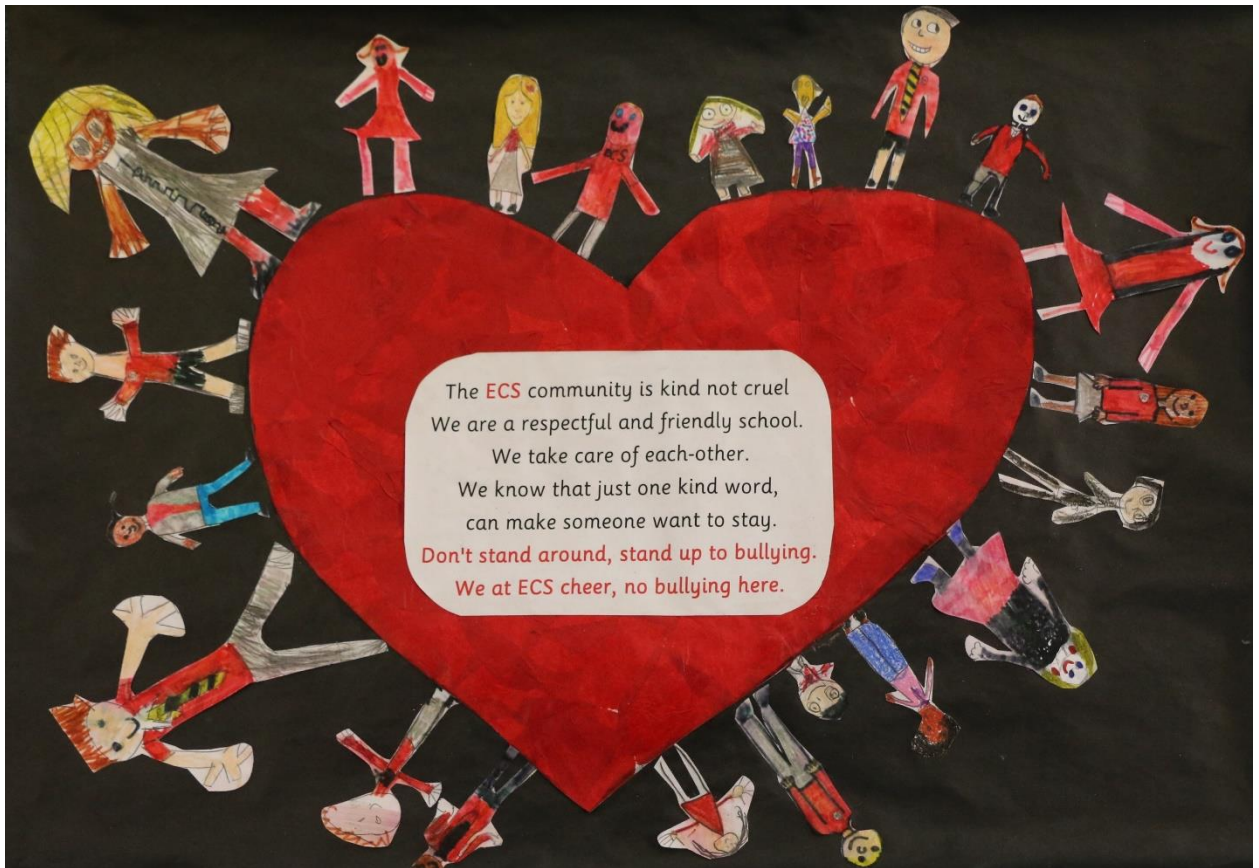
- In a recent SP meeting the children were asked about their thoughts of the last year.

"You get to be part of a Democracy and you get to contribute to school changes" (year 6 girl)

" I like asking questions and helping and I like sharing things with the class" (year 1 boy)

These comments and continual interaction with all the children has shown how seriously they take their responsibilities and much the whole community enjoys their engagement and contributions. We were also pleased to see that the percentage of "I feel like I belong" in the UAB Questionnaire rose in just 3 months.

- With this in mind, we are introducing as from September 3 new Pupil Voice groups:
 1. Associate Governors: There will be 2 children voted onto this body by their classes and they will join all 3 Full Governing Body meetings. They will also have the opportunity to meet with the Chair of Governors without any other Governor members before each meeting.
 2. Year 5 children will be able to apply to be an Ambassador for new children and families. They will be buddied up with any new children and will be given opportunities to meet with the SLT to discuss changes and initiatives
 3. We will encourage children to apply to be Digital Leaders. They will receive training and will support the children and staff in lessons. They will also be encouraged to lead an IT club.
- Their anti-bullying logo is displayed around the school in every classroom and communal area. The children are so proud of this and leaves no doubt in people's minds of their commitment and passion.



- Signed anti-bullying charters are also in every classroom, the school office
- Our vision is to enable all the children who want to be able to play an active role in the daily life of ECS either by taking on a specific role or by engaging in other ways.
- We will continue to ensure that Pupil Voice is the gateway to a happy and ever evolving school with the children at the heart.

What we have learned

- It has taken a lot of time and energy to support and co-ordinate the children. The meetings can't all happen at lunchtime/ after school and we have had to timetable staff to ensure that the meetings do take place and are not cancelled or moved due to staff shortages. This has required commitment and passion from all the staff and from the children who do sometimes have to miss lessons and give up playtime to attend the meetings.