



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Self-Evaluation Tool for Pupil Voice in Schools in Wales



www.pupilvoicewales.org.uk

Introduction

The **aim** of this self-evaluation tool is to support senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils in Wales in developing effective, holistic and inclusive pupil voice, linked to the School Effectiveness Framework and the National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales.

What is Pupil Voice?

Pupil voice (or pupil participation) is about developing a culture in schools where **ALL** children and young people have a voice and the opportunity to play an active role in decisions that affect their learning and well-being, as set out in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Although having an active school council is an essential part of this approach, it is only one aspect.

Pupil voice should happen **in a variety of ways and at different levels** of school life. Some of these are:

- As part of teaching and learning;
- By involving pupils in school self-evaluation and assessment;
- Using the National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales;
- Consultation mechanisms such as questionnaires, surveys, circle-time, focus groups, and suggestion boxes;
- Participatory and representative groups such as the school council, eco-committee, healthy schools and peer mentors;
- Learner involvement with the governing body, and in staff appointments;
- Learner involvement in planning, reviewing and implementing policies and procedures, including the school development plan;
- Learner involvement in budgeting and how money is allocated/spent;
- Having structures in place so that all pupils can be involved in decision-making, including those with additional learning needs.

Consulting pupils on decisions that affect them may be part of the participation process, but it is not synonymous with it. Where pupils are consulted regarding policies and services, it is important that this is done in line with the National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales so that:

- Information is presented to children and young people in ways that are clear and accessible;
- Children and young people are clear why they are being asked to give their views, and how these views will be taken into account to influence change;
- Children and young people have a choice as to whether they wish to be involved;
- Everyone gets a chance to have their say;
- Children and young people know what they can get out of taking part - in terms of increased skills and confidence, accreditation or qualifications, certificates, vouchers, etc.; and
- Pupils get to know what has happened as a result of them being involved. If change hasn't been possible, they should know why not.

Why develop pupil voice?

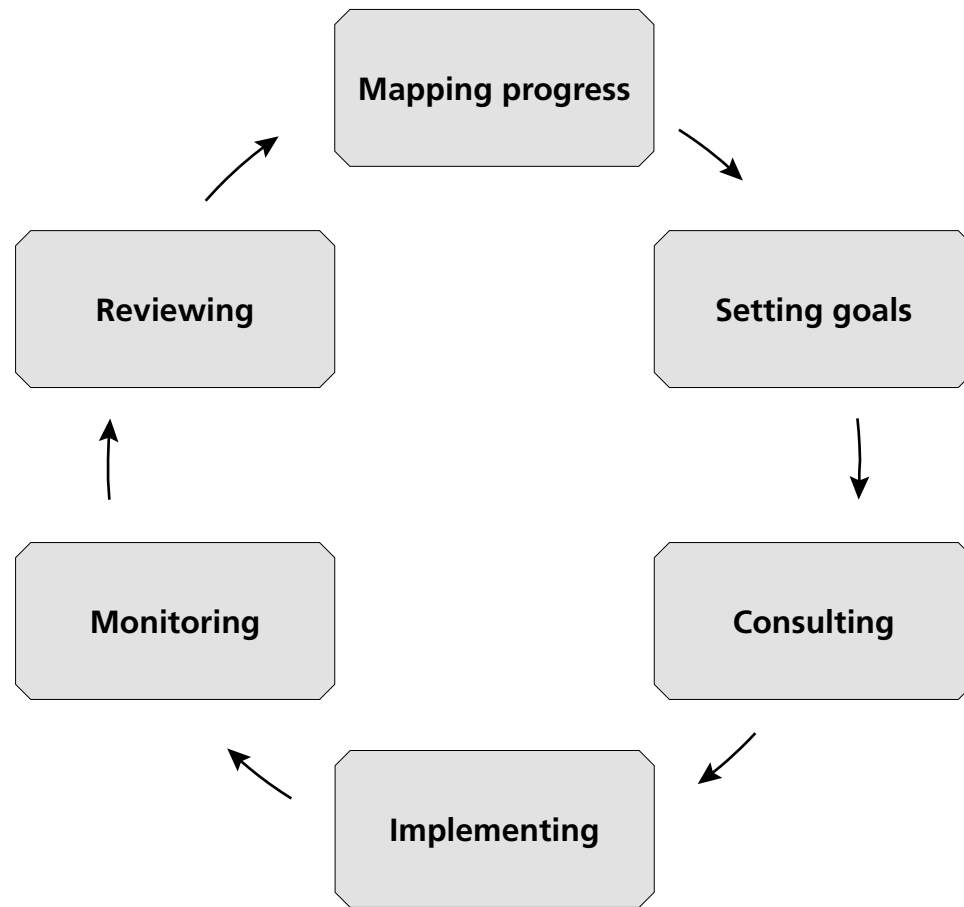
Pupils are the key stakeholders in education. The quality of learning and the learning environment experienced by them in schools is of vital importance to their well-being, development and educational attainment. It is therefore crucial that pupil voice is heard in the shaping and developing of the services they receive in school. Developing pupil voice also enables children and young people to become active and articulate citizens now - working alongside adults to improve their community.

Pupil voice is at the heart of the School Effectiveness Framework and an important factor in Estyn's 2010 Common Inspection Framework (Sections 1.2.2 and 1.2.3).

Research commissioned by the Welsh Government suggests that developing children and young people's participation in decision-making has benefits for individual pupils and for schools. Children and young people who participate in decision-making develop better self-esteem and motivation, gain important personal, social and organisational skills, and learn about democratic processes and working in a team. At a whole-school level, pupil involvement in decision-making leads to better relationships, more relevant and effective policies, and better learning. Pupils and adults work together as partners to ensure that their school provides the best possible learning environment for all. Children and young people are involved in their own learning, and feel that they have a role to play in their learning community¹.

¹ 'School Councils in Wales: Best Practice Guide' - August 2009, downloadable at: <http://www.pupilvoicewales.org.uk/grown-ups/about-us/benefits-of-participation/>

Work on pupil participation is a cyclical process, and should involve the following steps:



Developing more effective pupil participation can lead to:

- Improved pupil engagement, well-being, behaviour and learning;
- Better pupil - staff and pupil-pupil relationships;
- Better whole-school policies and procedures, based on the real needs of pupils;
- More inclusive communities, where all pupils are encouraged and supported to participate, not just those who are most confident and articulate;
- Increased opportunities for pupils to develop personal and social skills, and to have those skills recognised and accredited should they so wish.

The importance of evidence:

Both young people and professionals who have been involved in developing participation report benefits in terms of improved self-esteem, well-being, relationships and skills, as outlined above. It is difficult, however, to make direct links between improved participation and better outcomes. To assess the effectiveness of approaches it is important to gather evidence of activity and to document improved outcomes for children and young people, staff and the school community. Using this self-evaluation tool will help staff and pupils to evaluate where their school is in developing different aspects of pupil voice, to gather evidence of activity, and to link this to improved outcomes for pupils and the school as a whole.

How to use this tool:

The tool is designed to be used as part of a school's annual self-evaluation process, but can also be used in preparation for an Estyn inspection.

There are **two parts** to this self-evaluation tool:

- A grid which can be used by both staff and pupils to show progress on pupil participation, and to gather evidence of activity and outcomes, linked to the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) and the National Participation Standards;
- A management tool, for use by the Senior Management Team to ensure that the structures, roles and procedures are in place to develop pupil voice in a holistic, effective and inclusive manner.

Where both staff and pupils are involved in mapping progress and gathering evidence of activity and outcomes, it is important that young people and adults work separately in the initial stages, so that adult perspectives can be balanced against evidence and outcomes as experienced by pupils themselves on the ground. Often the services and improvements which are planned and implemented by adults can be experienced quite differently by the stakeholders themselves, and their insights are invaluable in developing and improving provision.

Evidence can be gathered in a variety of ways, for instance:

- Questionnaires (e.g. an annual pupil participation questionnaire)
- Focus groups
- Through school council representatives (or representatives from other pupil groups) talking to their classes / forms
- Suggestion boxes

- By involving pupils in evaluating and improving learning
- Through links between pupils and the governing body.

Progress in developing pupil voice is measured on a scale of 1 - 4, in line with the **School Effectiveness Profile**. In broad terms levels should be attributed according to the following descriptors:

- 1 - Nothing happening as yet
- 2 - Little happening: Inconsistent / dependent on individual staff
- 3 - Significant / Consistent across the school
- 4 - Planned for, monitored and embedded

A filled-in sample grid is provided but **this is as an example only**, and shows how one school went about using the levels to assess and build on progress. The value of using this tool will come from schools developing, reviewing and revising their own descriptors to assess where they are on the journey of developing pupil voice. The value is in the journey itself, not on having 'arrived'. The sample grid provided should never be used as an off-the-peg 'solution'.

We hope that you enjoy using this tool. We are interested to know how you have used it to map and improve progress, and to evaluate outcomes for pupils, staff and the school. You can send feedback and suggestions for improvements to this tool by e-mailing: childrenandyoungpeoplesrights@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Developing Pupil Participation in your School

A Self-Evaluation Tool for Staff and Pupils

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>LEADERSHIP</p> <p>Pupils take on responsible roles - e.g. on the school council, eco-committee, healthy schools, anti-bullying group</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>LEADERSHIP</p> <p>Pupils tell their Headteacher and Governors about their ideas for making changes in their school</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>WORKING WITH OTHERS</p> <p>Pupils work with staff to solve problems such as bullying, healthy food and the school environment</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>WORKING WITH OTHERS</p> <p>Pupils talk to staff about what they would like to learn and how they think they learn best</p>				
	<p>Evidence - activity and events</p>				
	<p>Proposed impact</p>				
	<p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>WORKING WITH OTHERS</p> <p>Pupils have a say on what they think should be included in the Home-school agreement</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>WORKING WITH OTHERS</p> <p>Pupils take part in out of school clubs and groups to make a difference</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>GROUPS TO SHARE GOOD PRACTICE</p> <p>Pupils carry out surveys and questionnaires so that staff understand what their views and experiences are</p>				
	<p>Evidence - activity and events</p>				
	<p>Proposed impact</p>				
	<p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>GROUPS TO SHARE GOOD PRACTICE</p> <p>Pupils share information about what's going well in their school through assemblies, web-sites and newsletters</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>GROUPS TO SHARE GOOD PRACTICE</p> <p>Pupils have links to their local young people's council</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>GROUPS TO SHARE GOOD PRACTICE</p> <p>Pupils make links to other schools to share information about what's going well</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER</p> <p>Pupils work with staff to help pupils who have problems learning</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER</p> <p>Pupils get involved as playground pals or peer supporters</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER</p> <p>Pupils run lunch-time clubs such as an eco-club or an international club</p> <hr/> <p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <hr/> <p>Proposed impact</p> <hr/> <p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER</p> <p>Pupils get involved in out of school clubs and activities</p> <hr/> <p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <hr/> <p>Proposed impact</p> <hr/> <p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>IMPROVING AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Pupils find out other pupils' ideas about how the school can be improved, and then vote on them</p>				
<p>Evidence - activity and events</p>					
<p>Proposed impact</p>					
<p>Actual impact</p>					

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>IMPROVING AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Pupils talk to the Headteacher and Governors about their ideas and how they can be taken forward</p>				
<p>Evidence - activity and events</p>					
<p>Proposed impact</p>					
<p>Actual impact</p>					

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>IMPROVING AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Pupils tell their fellow pupils how things are going and what they have achieved</p>				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING</p> <p>Pupils help to collect pupils' views about what they are learning and how they like to learn</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING Pupils train to help other pupils learn</p> <hr/> <p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <hr/> <p>Proposed impact</p> <hr/> <p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING</p> <p>Pupils help to appoint staff in the school</p>				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation

(for Senior Management)

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Develop a whole-school approach, including providing and publicising a range of opportunities for all pupils to be involved in decision-making from classroom to whole-school levels.				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Ensure that a senior member of staff and a designated governor have responsibility for developing and implementing pupil participation.				
	Evidence - activity and events				
	Proposed impact				
	Actual impact				

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Ensure that training is in place so that all staff, governors and pupils have the information and skills they need to develop and implement pupil participation.				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Support pupils in evaluating their own learning, and in helping their peers to learn and develop within the classroom and beyond.				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Invite pupils to work with teachers in curriculum teams to review schemes of work and develop plans to improve teaching and learning.				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Consult with pupils on a regular basis (e.g. through questionnaires, surveys and focus groups) on the quality of their school experience and how it could be improved, and ensure that pupils receive feedback				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	Involve pupils appropriately in governance and in selection procedures for new members of staff.				
Evidence - activity and events					
Proposed impact					
Actual impact					

Checklist to Monitor Pupil Participation (for the Senior Management Team) (contd.)

National Participation Standards	Actions	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>Ensure that well-publicised procedures and structures are in place so that all pupils have opportunities to have their voice heard, including those who are most marginalised.</p> <hr/> <p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <hr/> <p>Proposed impact</p> <hr/> <p>Actual impact</p>				

Sample Self-Evaluation

(Completed Grids)

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>LEADERSHIP Pupils take on responsible roles - e.g. on the school council, eco-committee, healthy schools, anti-bullying group</p>	<p><i>We have no opportunity to take on responsible roles in our school.</i></p>	<p><i>We have little opportunity to take on responsible roles in our school.</i></p>	<p><i>We have plenty of opportunity to take on responsible roles in our school.</i></p>	<p><i>We are asked to take on responsible roles in our school.</i></p>
	<p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <p>Pontarddulais <i>School Council, Eco Schools, Peer Mentors, Buddies, Anti-bullying, Miss T, Charity, Mr. X.</i></p> <p>Sandfields <i>School Council, Prefects, healthy school, anti-bullying, Eco Club, Mr. G.</i></p>				
	<p>Proposed impact</p>				
	<p>Actual impact</p>				

Developing Pupil Participation in your School - A Self-Evaluation Tool

National Participation Standards	Key Elements of the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF)	Levels of Pupil Participation			
		1 Nothing happening at all	2 Little/dependent on individual staff	3 Significant/consistent across the school	4 Planned for, monitored and embedded
	<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING</p> <p>Help to collect pupils' views about what they are learning and how they like to learn</p>	<p><i>As pupils we do not have the opportunity to express our views about what we learn and how we like to learn,</i></p>	<p><i>As pupils we have little opportunity to express our views about what we learn and how we like to learn,</i></p>	<p><i>As pupils we have spoken about the ways we want to learn and it has resulted with minor effect.</i></p>	<p><i>As pupils we have spoken about the way we want to learn and there has been much action taken against this matter.</i></p>
<p>Evidence - activity and events</p> <p><i>Pupils, teachers, surveys, questionnaires, inspections, school/year councils, exercise books (pupil product), reports, diaries (planners)</i></p>					
<p>Proposed impact</p>					
<p>Actual impact</p>					