

Our School Our Voice Report



WILMSLOW HIGH SCHOOL

Welcome to the Wilmslow High School **Our School Our Voice** Report.

Our School Our Voice was a large-scale voice activity across our students, parents/ carers and staff in spring 2023 so that we could find out more about how our community want us to improve the school further.

Your feedback has been incredibly useful in helping us to understand your priorities for us as we prepare for 2023-24. Therefore, I would like to thank everyone who committed the time to giving us ideas and suggestions, Mr Vincent and Mr Morley for working so hard on collating your feedback, and all the staff who are now working hard on how we can respond.

We are a big school and it is therefore all the more important that we ensure a 'small school' feel in which our students are known and valued.

I hope that the report below demonstrates that we have listened and I was delighted to receive the following message in an email last term: *"I know school like to hear feedback from parents."*

We do. Thank you and best wishes.

Ms Powley
Headteacher

What were the key messages and what next steps will we be taking as a result?

Below are the 10 key messages that we picked up from our students, parents and carers and the actions that we are now planning as a result:

1. High quality spaces and experiences
2. Toilets
3. Knowing our students well
4. Strong discipline
5. Safe choices and safe spaces for discussion
6. Effective learning time
7. Rewards
8. Uniform
9. Communication
10. Leadership opportunities

Our aim is that you will see a difference as we move into September 2023, and we will be asking for your views on this at the end of September so that we can assess how effective we have been.

What were the key words that you wanted to describe our school?

- Encouraging, Supportive, Safe – Year 7-13 students and parents
- Respectful, happy – Year 7-11 students and parents
- Friendly, welcoming – Year 7-11 students
- Inclusive, diverse – Sixth Form
- Achieving – Parents

1. High quality spaces and experiences

You said	What next?
<p>Many of you felt that we should improve our social spaces for students and their social time experience at breaks and lunchtime. This included reviewing our food offer so that we are offering more healthy options.</p>	<p>We agree. We will be moving away from year group zones for September to allow our students more choice of space and activity, and more peaceful areas for students who prefer a quieter lunchtime experience. Mr Vincent is leading on this and he will be conducting further student voice activities this half term so that he has plenty of information about students' food and activity preferences.</p> <p>Please do encourage your child to get involved in this as we will be most effective where students are working closely with us.</p> <p>We are keen to review our food offer to ensure that we are providing a range of healthy options and we are working with Chartwells on this.</p> <p>We are also hoping to invest in more seating for our students as part of improving their social time experience.</p>
<p>There was a particularly strong feeling from you that we need to do more to improve our Sixth Form spaces</p>	<p>We agree. We are currently working on ideas to improve our Sixth Form spaces for September. Mr Hall and Mrs Kettlewell are leading on this and are keen to recruit Year 12 students to help them with their planning.</p>
<p>Some of you felt that we should be improving the breadth and scheduling of the Wider Curriculum activities that we offer</p>	<p>We have noticed ourselves that, post-Covid, our students seem to appreciate opportunities to connect with each other.</p> <p>We have therefore invested in this in two ways:</p> <p>We are keen for our 'performing' subjects: PE, Music and Drama, to work more closely together. Mr Pickup is leading on this and he will share more with you about our first 'Performance' Day in the 16th June issue of High Notes.</p> <p>We are also purchasing an app which will assist us in scheduling of Extra activities. More to follow from Mr Pickup in the next few weeks.</p> <p>We set up a number of additional 'personal development' clubs and activities this year and Mr Spence will be conducting further student voice this half term so that he can get an update on the activities that our students are interested in for the year ahead.</p>
<p>A few of you mentioned the environment of the school</p>	<p>We agree and, whilst we are looking forward to the completion of building project in summer 2024, we will be looking to make some updates this summer to refresh the school environment.</p> <p>We are also keen to buy more bins so that we can keep the site as litter-free as possible.</p> <p>Some of you commented on how much you have missed opportunities to visit us on site and so, whilst parking remains a challenge, we will be looking for more opportunities to welcome our parents and carers onto the school site as we have missed you!</p>

2. Toilets

You said	What next?
<p>Toilets were flagged up as an issue by many of you.</p> <p>Some students were worried about not being able to go to the toilet when they needed to and you were concerned that toilets should be clean and free from vaping.</p> <p>Parents/ carers also commented on students eating in toilets.</p>	<p>We agree.</p> <p>Mr Bebbington is leading on this issue. We are keen to get the balance right between students being able to use the toilet when needed and minimising the disruption to learning caused when students use this as an excuse to get out of lessons. Please be reassured that we will base our next steps on knowledge of the individual needs of our students.</p> <p>We will also be ensuring closer supervision and monitoring of our toilets by staff with stronger penalties for inappropriate use of toilets.</p>

3. Knowing our students well

You said	What next?
<p>There was strong support for our House system with students and parents/ carers wanting more contact with their House team and form tutor.</p>	<p>We were delighted to get this feedback and Mr Jones and the House Teams are considering how they can provide this for 2023-24. More will follow between now and September.</p> <p>We have also invested in three Progress Leader roles for 2023-24 to ensure that you have a year group point of contact as well as a house point of contact.</p> <p>Mr Pollock will be the Progress Leader for Years 7-8 Mr McGregor will be the Progress Leader for Year 9 Miss Allwright will be the Progress Leader for Year 10-11</p> <p>The Progress Leaders will work closely with Mr MacHugh, Assistant Headteacher, Raising Attainment, and they will be introducing themselves to you in the 16th June issue of High Notes.</p>
<p>Students and parents wanted more regular updates on progress, including in the Sixth Form</p>	<p>We will be incorporating more regular updates on progress into our calendar planning for 2023-24 which will be shared with you this half term.</p> <p>Whilst we know that there are mixed views from parents/ carers regarding face-to-face versus online Parents Evenings, we did feel from your feedback, that it was appropriate to return to in-person Parents Evenings in 2023-24. More details on how these will work will be shared over this half term.</p> <p>You will also see in the 9th June issue of High Notes additional parental evenings that we are introducing to support our Year 9 and 10 students before we break up for the summer holidays.</p>

4. Strong discipline

You said	What next?
<p>The words 'zero tolerant' appeared frequently in the feedback from students, parents/ carers and staff. You were clear that you want us to be tough on anti-social behaviours and those that interfere with effective learning. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Vaping • Inappropriate use of mobile phones • Inappropriate language or behaviour <p>There was a common theme that mutual respect was valued by all.</p>	<p>We agree. Based on this, we will be introducing some new rules to strengthen discipline in these areas and we will be sharing these over this half term through High Notes. We will also continue to take a strong line to address any behaviours that make other students feel unsafe.</p> <p>Students and parents/ carers were more worried about the potential for poor behaviour in areas away from classrooms. We will therefore be increasing our presence in these areas.</p> <p>Strong relationships will also be a key theme for us (as students will know from Ms Powley's assemblies!)</p>

5. Safe choices and safe spaces for discussion

You said	What next?
<p>Students wanted more information on making safe choices and developing resilience.</p> <p>They are also keen to ensure that Wider Curriculum lessons are 'safe' spaces for discussion.</p>	<p>Mr Spence, who leads on our Wider Curriculum, will ensure that this is reflected in the Wider Curriculum planning for 2023-24. He will also follow up this term with some feedback from students on how effectively we are creating these 'safe' spaces for discussion.</p>

6. Effective learning time

You said	What next?
<p>There was quite a lot of feedback about seating plans – including from Sixth Form students.</p>	<p>This was interesting to read and we will ensure that we are thoughtful about the effective use of seating plans</p>
<p>Feedback was a theme. Students were keen for clear and specific feedback on how they could improve and where they had gone wrong. This fitted with the feedback on plenty of progress checks.</p>	<p>We really appreciated the mature feedback from students on wanting to improve and the positive response to gap analysis assessments. Feedback will be a focus as we plan for next year, led by Miss George, and you will hear more in the September Expectation Evenings.</p> <p>There was some feedback on clearer distinction between exercise books for different subjects so we will be following up on this for September.</p>
<p>Homework was a theme. Students wanted more homework club options, clear explanations of homework and more tasks linked to Knowledge Organisers.</p>	<p>We have been trying to emphasise to our students the necessity of independent practice to effective learning so we really appreciated the mature feedback from students about the importance of homework.</p> <p>Mr MacHugh will be taking a lead on ensuring that our procedures around homework, and homework support, are clear in all subjects as we go into September.</p>
<p>Students were keen for learning about revision techniques to begin in key stage 3 with more responsible students requesting regular testing.</p>	<p>Smart Learning has been a focus for us so we will certainly be taking this feedback on board.</p> <p>Mr Conley will be sharing the Smart Learning programme for each year group in the Expectation Evenings in September, and Smart Learning work will also be provided as part of our summer work package for each year group.</p>

7. Rewards

You said	What next?
You gave us plenty of feedback on rewards – what you like and what doesn't work for you. The common theme was that rewards (when we get them right) are valued and appreciated: and that we mustn't forget those students who quietly get it right every day!	<p>We will continue to focus on how we use rewards effectively and Mr Conley leads on this area.</p> <p>We have felt for a while that we would like to celebrate more of our students so, for this reason, in addition to the Year 9 Alton Towers rewards trip, we will be introducing Year 7 and Year 8 Celebration Evenings this year. You can see the 'save the date' details for these in the 9th June issue of High Notes.</p> <p>We are also determined to tackle the eccentricity of our current reward text messages which can sometimes provide you with 'anonymous' praise messages. More will follow as we get to grips with this one!</p>

8. Uniform

You said	What next?
It probably won't surprise you to read that uniform was flagged up as an issue. Views were mixed with some of you feeling that this was over-enforced and others feeling that it was under-enforced. There was also a concern on the pressures that girls are placed under by their peers to look glamorous.	We agree that it is time to look again at how we implement our uniform and dress codes and we will be discussing this with students over the next half term so that ideally, we can strike the right balance. Some very sensible suggestions were made as to how this can best be done.

9. Communication

You said	What next?
Communication was a theme. You provided plenty of helpful feedback on where our systems can be 'clunky' and rather outdated	We agree. In addition to investing in an updated website, and tackling our 'anonymous' text messages, we will be looking at how to ensure that our comms with our parents are as user-friendly as possible.

10. Leadership opportunities

You said	What next?
You were keen to have more leadership experiences for students including Sixth Form students supporting with lower school	We are considering how we can offer more house leadership roles to students – more to follow on this. We are very much aware of the impact that our Sixth Formers can have as role models to younger students. Therefore, we will be aiming to provide a range of opportunities for our Year 12 students, as well as our Year 13 students as we move into 2022-23.

Thank you again for taking the time to provide your views and we are looking forward to our next voice exercise in September.