

Primary Schools Parliament

■ Summary



The primary schools parliament gives children aged 6-11 the opportunity to communicate their ideas to decision makers.

On 29th June 2009, children from 45 local schools attended the primary parliament. Each school brought one proposal that had been discussed and agreed in advance by their school council. Every proposal was presented and debated in workshops. The children voted for the two ideas they felt would make life better for children. **The two ideas with the most votes were:**

- support for young carers
- better wheelchair access to Bath Leisure Centre small pool

■ The problems and how we tackled them

Feedback from the 2009 parliament was that we should ensure children are more involved in the planning.

Initially it was difficult to find schools who could commit to the time needed for this. However, children from four schools took part in 4 days of planning in early 2010. They were able to attend by being accompanied by parents and parent governors, as it was not always possible to release teachers. Threeways school allowed their accessible venue to be used for the 3 day planning event, and Bath Spa University was used for the logistical planning day.

■ Outcomes and impact

A DVD has been created to show the action that has been taken to address the two proposals from the 2009 parliament (disabled access at Bath swimming pool and more support for young carers at school). The DVD was made by two schools (Threeways and East Harptree) who took part in 2009. The DVD was made available to all B&NES primary schools.

Children have been much more involved in the planning of the 2010 parliament. The planning group devised the content of the day (on the theme of 'choices'), in consultation with their own schools. They have created all the preparation work that they want schools to do prior to the event, the schedule for the day, the invite list - and made sure all the information that went out to schools was written in a way that would be clear to children.

■ Who was involved?

The primary parliament is organised by the B&NES Children's Services, the Children's Society and the School of Education at Bath Spa University.

The 2009 Parliament was attended by 90 children, along with councillors, including the Chair of the Council, the Cabinet member for Children's Services, and the Strategic Director of Children's Services.

■ Next steps



The next primary schools parliament is to be held at Bath Spa University on June 29th 2010. All primary schools in the area have been invited to attend, and SPOT – the Schools Parliament Organisation Team are going to facilitate the day with support from adults. Adults representing all services for children have been invited to attend and listen to what children have to say.

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