



Pupils 2 Parliament

**The views of the children of Oak Class, Eardisley CE Primary School
Gathered for Lord Bird and Caroline Lucas MP
for their debates on
The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill**



An email arrived at Eardisley school, as other schools, inviting children to contribute art work, a video or a letter to an MP, to support the coming parliamentary debate on The Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill.

Eardisley school has for the past five years been a part of the Pupils 2 Parliament project, which works with schools to gather pupils' views to submit to parliamentary inquiries and government consultations. Therefore the school and the project have worked together to gather children's views, and put them together in this report for yourselves, as the parliamentary sponsors of the Bill, to use as you think best in the coming parliamentary debates on the Bill.

We have gathered the children's views without suggesting answers or ideas to them. As always, we gathered their views neutrally, not as part of a campaign, and without leading them for or against what is being proposed. We simply explained what is in the Bill as introduced, so what the report says is entirely the children's views, and nothing but children's views.

These views come from 26 children in the top class of pupils, aged 9 to 11, at Eardisley CE Primary School, Herefordshire. Questions were read out to them, without suggesting answers, and each pupil individually wrote their views on a sheet which, without any editing or selection, was collected in for this report.



Twelve Visions of wellbeing from children

We told the children the definition of “wellbeing” in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary; that is, being happy, healthy and comfortable.

We asked the children to write down what would make their life more happy, healthy and comfortable.

Some wrote their own clear visions of wellbeing. Here they are:

“If the air, the sea, the city are more clean, then that could do a big impact on everyone’s wellbeing, and that makes my life brighter. To make all schools have values and do reflection time so they can reflect on themselves and say ‘I’m a good person’. And all in all, make it safer.”

“If the world would be more peaceful. And if animals would be treated better. Also if things costed less money.”

“I would choose healthy, because less people would die and if you are healthy you can be more comfortable because you aren’t stressed out. Spending more time with my family and friends.”

“Behave better and less pollution. Make more electric cars and stop making petrol/diesel ones.”

“A happy environment. More trees, no poaching animals, reducing our carbon footprint, use less electric. Make sure homeless people get food and money.”

“If we all worked together to stop extinction and to fight climate change. If every school has competitions to raise money for a charity.”

“Things to be less money so the poor can afford them, animals being better treated and at zoos and rescue centres, bigger enclosures, and everyone having clean clothes, food and water. No alcohol or smoking or things that will damage the body should be sold.”

“Less cities, more countryside and more gardens, and if you live in a city flat you can put pots of flowers or vegies in window baskets. And to put a ban on cutting down trees without planting new trees.”

Four of the children gave a much more personal vision of what future wellbeing would mean for themselves:

“My life would be happier, healthy and comfortable if everyone is happy, healthy and comfortable!”

“Playing on technology all the time, eat food, go out on adventures. Make sure you have enough food and drink and air.”

“To be rich so I can help the world.”

“To be a vet when I am older”

These twelve visions range from views of wellbeing in a better and more protected world, improving wellbeing through countering the problems of today, issues of the environment, wildlife, plant life, wellbeing of people, and personal visions, including ambitions for a personal future.

We believe they are well worth quoting – and we are happy for the children’s views to be quoted in debate or otherwise in relation to the Bill.



Key wellbeing issues from the children

The children wrote – with no adult suggestions – particular aspects of wellbeing they would each like to see for future generations. We asked them to do this specifically to be sent to you as the parliamentary sponsors of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill.

Doing something for animals and caring for wildlife was the wellbeing issue raised most by the children. This included stopping cruelty to animals, increasing care and ‘looking after’ for animals, and stopping hunting animals for their body parts. It also included providing and protecting habitats and the natural environment.

Children were concerned that plants, and especially trees, should be cared for and protected. Some reflected what appeared in one of the Twelve Visions – that no trees should be cut down without replacement. One child wrote “ban everyday cutting down of trees”.

One pupil wrote that a future with wellbeing meant that we should all “help people and animals get food, water and shelter”.

A second main wellbeing issue was about education and children having a say in the future. Very many wrote of the importance of values education in schools, and wanted to see more of this in future. Children saw values education as a practical way of working “to make the world a better place” and “to help stop wars”. Schools should show children how to be peaceful.

They were concerned that alongside this, children should be enabled to have their say about the future, and about what is and is not right.

Some children wrote that they saw writing their views for this report to you, as the Bill’s two parliamentary sponsors, as definitely having their own say as children about the future.

In relation to children, the pupils saw everyone in the future needing to have easy and free access to good education throughout their years, more good teaching equipment in schools and better school equipment for rainy days. A big issue for children in the future was simply stopping cruelty to children.

A third aspect of wellbeing on the children’s lists was making the environment of the future better for people to live in. This involved less pollution of the air, land, rivers and seas – including producing and wasting less plastic. They wrote that it involves more reusable bags and bottles, having electric rather than polluting diesel and petrol vehicles, less smoke, and more bins. The aim is to have cleaner air, cleaner water to drink, cleaner water and sea, and cleaner cities.

Some children wrote that to achieve all this meant taking care of the environment and our planet.

The fourth main aspect of wellbeing the children wanted for the future was for people to be healthier. This included people stopping smoking and drinking too much alcohol, and stopping people selling bad drugs. It also included having better and healthier food, and everyone having enough food to eat. There should in future be enough houses for everyone.

Being healthier included more opportunities for sport, more people walking rather than driving, and going outside more instead of watching TV. As well as people keeping themselves healthier, it would involve making health care better too.

The fifth main aspect of wellbeing was to do with helping homeless people. They did of course know of Lord Bird's work for homeless people, and said that wellbeing of all in the future meant that homeless people should be able to have work, get enough food, a fair share of money, and homes to live in. Homeless children should be able to get a good education at school.

Some children raised other aspects of wellbeing for future generations. One was spending more time with each other in families and with friends, including "spending more time with older family". Another was to do with having faith (one child wrote that they wanted people "to respect Jesus"). Yet another hoped for helping each other more through charities; "teach people to share and raise funds for charity".

A final aspect of wellbeing for future generations was to work for peace. One child wrote this as their wish for wellbeing (their capitals); "WAR to END".



The Children's Priority Order for different aspects of wellbeing

We gave the children a list of 11 aspects of wellbeing that we took from the parliamentary and Big Issue websites about the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill. We asked each child to give a score to each one to say how important they thought it is in helping people to have good wellbeing. They rated them all as important, but their scores gave us a children's wellbeing priority order.

Here, then, is the children's priority order of those aspects of wellbeing, in order with the most important first:

- Keeping the environment healthy
- People being healthy
- People being safe
- Doing things that help other people in other parts of the world
- Fighting climate change
- Each person having a fair chance, without discrimination against anyone
- Not using up too many of the world's resources
- Nice places to live
- People having good jobs and earning enough money
- Everyone being able to keep to their own traditions
- Lots of good sports, hobbies, arts and music to take part in.

What children would like to see added to the Bill

One pupil wrote that the aim of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill should be that “everyone should be kind, nice, happy – every day”.

Two others wrote their own set of things the the Bill should say to improve life for the people of the future:

“stop cutting down trees, get more values education, in schools show how to be peaceful, stop cruelty to animals, make sure that people get more food, let homeless people go to work and school. Stop cruelty to children. Stop pollution. Stop smoking”

“stop being cruel to animals and help them instead. Provide every human with clean clothes, clean water and food. And children should have a say in what they think is right”.

Here is the list of children’s specific proposals for addition to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill (not in any particular order):

- A measure to improve the care of all animals
- A ban on hunting animals for parts of their bodies
- A measure to improve the protection of wildlife habitats, for both animals and plants
- The requirement to plant a new tree for each tree cut down
- Stronger protection for children against cruelty
- Improvement in health care
- More say for children in the future
- More school councils
- Schools to have more values education
- More help for homeless people
- Make sure all can afford enough food
- Make sure all have clean water
- Make sure there is good housing for all, including homeless people
- Reduce sales of alcohol and cigarettes, and more measures to stop smoking
- Better measures against pollution of the air, water, land and seas, including reducing littering and plastic waste and increasing re-usable bags and bottles
- Sea and coast wildlife protection areas, where oil tankers, planes, cars and boats are banned
- More choice of vegetarian and vegan foods
- More opportunities for sports.

Two final Votes

We had given the children a list of ten key parts of the Bill as it is now. Finally, after they had thought about the Bill and wellbeing of future generations, we asked them each to vote on two questions.

Firstly, we asked them to vote FOR or AGAINST the Bill being passed into law. They voted strongly FOR the Bill being passed, by 20 votes for, with none against (and 6 unsure).

Secondly, we asked them to vote FOR or AGAINST the Government having to do a survey every year if the Bill becomes law, to find out what school pupils and college students think about how things are going for everyone's wellbeing and for the people of the future.

The children voted strongly FOR this too, by 21 votes for and none against (with 5 unsure).



These children's views were gathered and reported by

Bridget Knight
Headteacher
Eardisley CE Primary School

Dr Roger Morgan OBE
Pupils 2 Parliament

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