

Press Release

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Worcestershire schoolchildren taken to Houses of Parliament as part of communication competition

4 children across Worcestershire were taken to the Houses of Parliament as part of a Worcestershire Question Time competition organised by Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust's Children's Speech and Language Therapy.

The competition was open to all schools in Worcestershire where children were asked to think of an original, appropriate and well-formed question to ask their local MP.

Emma Jordan, Service Manager, said:

"The competition aims to encourage school-aged children to develop their spoken communication skills. The ability to ask questions is a key ingredient for good communication skills, which in turns dramatically improves a child's life chances.

"The prize of seeing an actual debate in the House Of Commons was very appropriate as it is evidence of how important communication is in areas such as politics, and also how asking appropriate questions help us to understand information and shape the way our country is governed."

The overall winners were Weronika, from King Charles I School in Kidderminster, Jack from Tenacres First School in Redditch, William, from Crophorne with Charlton CE First School in Pershore and Finn, from Callow End Primary in Worcester. The winning questions include:

- "How do the Government collect information for the Census from the homeless and travelling communities?"
- "What would you eat for your last meal? Starter, main course and desert?"
- "Why do we live on earth and not on other planets?"
- "If you go to the seaside and put sea water into a bucket it is clear. But why is blue when you look at the ocean?"

As part of their prize, the winners joined Monica Smith and Rosalind Pow, from the Children's Speech and Language Therapy team, in London, where they met the MP for Kidderminster Mark Garnier. They visited the Houses of Parliament and got a chance to watch a debate from the public galleries.



Monica Smith, Mark Garnier MP and Rosalind Pow with Finn, Jack, William and Weronica

Mark Garnier MP said:

“It was such a pleasure to have the speech winners come and visit the Houses of Parliament with their parents. One of the greatest pleasures I have as an MP is hosting visitors who come to London to see the Houses of Parliament. The four winners were all such a delight and I am so pleased to have helped in a small way to help show what an achievement they have all made through their hard work.”

Monica Smith, Speech and Language Therapist, said:

“Mark Garnier MP was an excellent host and engaged us with lots of really interesting facts about both Houses. All the children were thrilled and a couple told me that they might consider politics as a future career.”

Speech and Language Therapists are the lead professionals working with children and young adults with speech, language and communication difficulties. They work in partnership with parents, schools, and other professionals to reduce the impact of these difficulties and help children achieve their full potential. Last year, 2,400 Worcestershire children were referred to the service, with over 6,000 children known to the SLT Service at any moment in time.

Notes to Editors:

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