The views of 281 primary school children aged 9 to 11 are reported.

72% knew they were British Citizens, 8% that they were not British citizens. One in five children (20%) did not know whether or not they were British Citizens.

80% of the children were very proud or quite proud to be British or living in Britain.

Most usual reasons for being proud were freedom, safety, equality and the NHS. Most usual reasons for not being proud were the weather, terrorism, and hearing bad news.

The twelve top rights the children thought child citizens of Britain should have were education, housing, to give their opinions, clean water, food, freedom, a right to vote, family, medical treatment, the right to play, and not to be taken into slavery.

The top nine duties and responsibilities children thought child citizens have were to keep to the law, help others, help clean at home, do chores, not to litter, look after their pets, respect others’ faiths and religions, help and care for friends, and keep themselves safe.

The communities children told us most frequently that they felt they belonged to were their sports clubs or teams, their group of friends, their school, and their non-sports clubs and groups.

71% of the children said that their opinions as a child were a little, or not much, taken notice of.

The three top British values identified by the children were taking responsibility for each other, caring, and democracy.

The three top ways children currently engage in helping other people were helping someone they come across that needs help, donating to charity, and taking part in events for charity. The top ways children would like to be able to help others were helping people with MS, raising money for charity, helping homeless people, and giving food to a food bank.

60% of the 9 to 11 year olds asked intend to vote in elections when they reach voting age.

Ceremonial events made 53% of the children feel more proud of Britain, but did not make 45% more proud.

Of seven key elements of primary school citizenship education, the two that children considered they had learned and understood best were about people’s different religions, cultures and backgrounds, and how to work out what is true and fake in what the media and social media tell us. The two that children considered they had learned and understood least were how Parliament and Councils work, and how to research and find out for themselves what is happening in the country and the wider world.
Introduction

1. This report is a formal submission to the House of Lords Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee, in response to its inquiry on citizenship and civic engagement.

2. The report is from Pupils 2 Parliament, a project to enable school pupils to consider and feed in their views to parliamentary, national government and national body public consultations and inquiries. The project has been approved by the Clerks of both Houses of Parliament to use the term ‘Parliament’ in its title.

3. Pupils 2 Parliament aims to bring the particular viewpoint of children and young people to those conducting inquiries and consultations - plus the uniquely fresh and often challenging analysis that children and young people bring to decisions and policies.

4. The project also gives school pupils the chance to learn about and consider key issues and decisions being made by parliament, national government and public bodies, and genuinely to participate in democracy by feeding their views into real national decisionmaking.

5. Pupils’ views are independently gathered through discussions with groups of pupils led by someone from Pupils 2 Parliament, usually with a member of school staff taking notes of the pupils’ views. We use information from the relevant consultation or inquiry document to explain the issues. We specialise in putting the issues and questions even-handedly, without leading pupils in any way or suggesting any responses. All views come spontaneously from pupils, with no adult prompt on what they might say.

6. The information we gave to pupils about this inquiry came from the documents on the parliament website. The topics we asked the pupils about to find out what they thought they had learned well and understood from citizenship education at school, were selected from the list of objectives given by the Department for Education for Key Stage 2 in primary schools.

7. I am grateful to the staff of the Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee for their wish to receive and consider a report of pupils views from Pupils 2 Parliament on this subject outside the formal public consultation period, so that we could gather children’s views in school term time. We agreed the questions we asked pupils with the Committee’s policy staff, and added some they asked us to put to children, to make sure that we were asking questions that would be useful to the Committee.

8. This report contains all pupil views given, without selection, comment or addition. The views reported are entirely pupils’ own views, and nothing but pupils’ views.

9. Views in the report came from 281 primary school pupils aged 9 to 11, in 9 focus groups across 8 schools. These were Belle Vue Primary School, Stourbridge; St George’s CE Primary School, Clun; Eardisley CE Primary School; Gig Mill Primary School, Stourbridge (two groups), Hob Green Primary School, Stourbridge; Orleton CE Primary School; Staunton-on-Wye Endowed Primary School; and Stokesay Primary School, Craven Arms.
10. This report represents the vital perspectives of child citizens on central issues of citizenship and civic engagement, both as present citizens and as future voters, and I hope that their views will provide the Select Committee with a serious and valuable input to their deliberations.

Knowing whether you are a British citizen

11. We wished to know how many of the pupils were sure they were British citizens, how many were sure they were not British citizens although living in Britain, and, importantly, how many children were not sure of their own citizenship.

12. Out of 270 9-11 year old children answering this question, 80% knew what country they were citizens of, but 20% were not sure of this. 72% said they were British citizens, and 8% that they were not.

13. Some of the reasons for uncertainty about citizenship were being unsure about which UK countries counted as ‘British’ (for example, could one be both Welsh and British at the same time – which of those was one’s country?), having one or both parents from different countries than Britain, and exactly where the boundaries of a country such as England were in the borderland with Scotland.

How proud are children of being British?

14. We asked all the children how proud they were of being British or of living in Britain.

15. Of 256 children who answered this question, a large majority (80%) said they were very or quite proud to be British or living in Britain. 20% were not really proud or definitely not proud. The most common answer was, from almost half the children (49%), was to be quite proud.

16. We invited children to give us examples of why they felt proud or not proud to be British or living in Britain.

17. Some children said they felt proud to be British, but were not really sure why. It was just that it was their country. It was also where they have their families. One felt proud because they had friends in a different part of the country. Some children just felt proud of Britain because they had been born part of it.

18. One reason for being proud of Britain was that we have more freedom and rights here than in many other countries. It is a free country. It is an independent country. You have of course to keep to the laws and rules in Britain, but these have been “set fair” compared to many other countries. A view linked to this was that “Parliament makes good choices”.

19. Some said they were proud that Britain is a country where people are not always judged for being in a minority group. The country is fair and not racist, and the colour of your skin doesn’t matter.
20. Children also said that we have more safe food and clean water compared with other countries, and more housing and hotels than some countries. We also have farms with sheep and cattle. Britain is also quite a wealthy country. These made them feel proud.

21. Other children said they felt proud because they had what they needed in Britain, including important things like shelter. Yet others felt proud of Britain because there have not been any recent wars here. Not having many natural disasters in Britain, such as earthquakes, tsunamis and tornadoes, made some feel proud.

22. Having a good army was also given as a reason for being proud of Britain, so was how the armed forces had protected the country’s people in World War II, and how we are an island country surrounded by sea and with a strong navy. There was a view that Britain sticks up for itself.

23. Some children were also proud because animals are usually well treated in Britain; “we take them seriously and try to look after them”.

24. Another reason for being proud was that Britain has achieved a lot compared with other similar countries, and one child said that having the Olympics and sports competitions had made them feel proud. English has become one of the most known languages in the world. Britain had once owned a lot of the world. Some however said that they felt less proud because they felt the country had not achieved very much.

25. Having big cities in Britain with lots of attractions in them made you feel proud.

26. Other children felt proud to be British because of our NHS and ambulance services, which everyone can use for free. You don’t have to pay to get help from a doctor. However, as with many of the points raised, the health service counted both ways. Another view was that lack of doctors and the long hours junior doctors have to work were reasons for feeling less proud of being British.

27. Having special landmarks was given as another reason for being proud of Britain, as was Britain having “a lot of nice people”. It is a “nice place to live”. Some felt proud of the area where they lived. One child summed it up when they said they were “proud of the area that I live in and the people that live there”. A further reason was that Britain does a lot to raise money, and things like clothing, to help people elsewhere in the world. Britain is also free of most deadly or poisonous creatures. For many reasons, Britain feels a safe country to be in.

28. One common reason for not being proud, or being less than very proud, was the British weather, and how cold and wet it is.

29. Another common reason was the amount of litter left around the country. Some said there is too much pollution. One said there is too much smoking of tobacco.

30. A further reason for not being so proud of Britain was that there are no large wild animals here. Another was the state of the economy; “we’re getting into minus numbers of money”. The fact that not everyone has housing made one less proud of the country. A different view in another group was that we build too many houses in some places but we don’t always focus on the schools
that are needed. In one group we heard that voting to leave the EU was a reason for being less proud of Britain, because prices had started rising.

31. Not having wars in Britain had made some proud, given that some countries had been suffering from wars for many years. But there was also the view that the country might be in the middle of a war soon, and that made you less proud of your country.

32. A few children did not feel proud of Britain because of other people coming into the country from other countries.

33. Another thing that made some proud made others not proud. Having nice people in Britain had been said to make some proud of the country. One child said “we are a small country, but we are still here and help each other”. Another thought that “even though there are lots of drugs around, everybody is happy and cheerful”. But in another group there was a view that people aren’t so nice to other people, which made you less proud to be British. In yet another group a reason for not being proud was that there are “nasty people around”. There were also bad people coming in with deadly weapons. One child said “I didn’t say I am extremely proud because I’ve been living in Britain most of my life, but people haven’t always been kind to me”.

34. Other things that made children not proud of being British or living in Britain were the bad state of the roads, the way different people get treated in different ways, and the problem of people attacking those who don’t believe the same things they do. The fact that this keeps happening made some children feel that the police and others were not doing much to stop it, and that made them less than proud to be in Britain.

35. Terrorist attacks were a big factor for many children. For some, recent terrorist attacks in Britain, in places like London and Manchester, and the fact that Britain wasn’t able to stop these, made them less proud to be British or living in Britain. “I’m not really proud because people in Britain hurt people – there are terrorists and I don’t feel people are doing enough about it”, “I’m proud to be living in Britain, but lots of things have been happening, like people being harmed, and we’re not doing much about it”. But for others, having fewer terrorist attacks than some other countries was a reason for being proud to be British. One view was that we can be proud that Britain has clear gun laws, which not all countries do.

36. Hearing so much bad news all the time about things in Britain made you feel less proud of the country.

37. Some children gave us reasons for being in the middle about pride in Britain. One said they were “proud as I know the language and was born here, but on the other hand I want to go to different countries and speak different languages”. Another said that they were happy to live in Britain, and that was better than living in some countries with poor conditions, but they weren’t proud of living here; “I could be just as happy in France or Germany”. The same point was made in another group; living in Britain is “just as good as living anywhere else”.

What rights do children believe they have as British Child Citizens?
38. We defined ‘rights’ as things all children should get whenever they need it, things all children should be allowed to do, things no child should be made to do, things all children should be allowed to know, and things all children should be saved or protected from.

39. We asked children to put forward rights they thought all children living in Britain should have, whether these were rights they already have, or new rights children wanted to propose. Some schools were UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools (and taking part in Pupils 2 Parliament counted towards that award), others were not. Many children knew about the list of children’s rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Many others had not.

40. These were the top eleven rights put forward by the most children (in order with the most frequent first):

- To go to school and have an education
- To live in a house or shelter
- To say what you think and give your own opinion (including on the rules you have to follow)
- To have clean water
- To have food
- The right to be free
- The right to vote in national votes and elections
- To have and stay with your family
- To have medicines and medical treatment by doctors or in hospital
- The right to play
- Not to be taken into slavery.

41. Here is a number of quotes from children, summing up their views of general children’s rights:

“I have the right to be me”, “the right to be what you want to be”, “the right to company and love”, “the right to enjoy our lives while we have them”, “the right to be free and happy and not worry about bad things and enjoy”, “the right to live life as a normal person”, “the right to go out and not get hurt”, “children should have the right to do what they want to do within reason”.

42. Here is the complete list of other rights, which were each put forward by one or two children. They are in no special order. The list is very long, but we have not left out anything that even only one child put forward. We hope it is a good resource showing the huge range of possible future children’s rights that have been put forward by children themselves:

- to know about the timeline of British history, to go anywhere and not to be worried about attacks, to do what we want with our own money, to go into any country without being stopped, to have a name, if you are fostered or adopted, the right to know that and who your parents are, not always to be bossed around and not always to have to do whatever an adult tells you to do, not to be blamed for something by an adult on the basis of what other children say, not to be given homework, to ride a horse on a bridle path, not to be harassed by motorists when riding a horse as a child, not to have other children or adults going onto your property, to have a brief period of free time if you are stopped from playtime with others, the right to pass examinations, rights about everything, children and animals should have the same rights to medicines they need, to have a home, even if it isn’t with your own parents, to have transport, to rest and relax, to be warm, to have fun, to have and choose clothes, the right to help other people, to have
choices, to have luxuries, to have help when you need it, to have dental treatment, to have electricity, to be healthy, to go on holiday, to go shopping, to have first aid, to be heard and listened to by adults, not to be abused, to be treated well, to keep cows (a right shared with adults and families), to have friends, to have help from the emergency services, to have pocket money, to be able to get money from the bank and to do jobs to earn money, not to have to go to work, to help look after your parents’ animals, to be gay, to have a good environment, to believe in a religion or certain thing, the right to know and say what your rights are, the right to take responsibilities, to have fewer but longer school holidays and terms, the right to choose who to speak to about problems and not to have to speak to just anybody, the right sometimes to do just what you want to do without being controlled by one person or group of people or by adults, the right to some time alone when you want, not to be bossed about by other people than your parents and teachers, not to be pushed against your will or forced to do things, not to be made to fight in a war, not to do any dangerous jobs, to have a guardian, to have your views respected, to have health checks, to sleep, the right to follow your dreams, children have the right to be as respected as other citizens, to be kept safe and protected, to have parents who understand and obey the laws about child cruelty, not to be hit or hurt by parents, guardians or anyone else, not to be shouted at by teachers, to be taught by parents why you need to stay away from strangers - from a very early age (one and a half to two), to experience a day in the life of an adult, to be kept safe while travelling, to choose your own sports and activities, privacy, not to have people smoking near you, not to be treated cruelly, to know what is going on around the world, to wear your own style of clothes, to have the chance to do what you want to do, to be allowed to play football, walk your dog, and play other ball games in local parks and other local places - without notices saying ‘no ball games’, to have lower age and height limits for many fun activities, and children have the right to be noticed a bit more.

43. One child said that children should have the right to have adults accept that part of being a child is to be annoying.

44. One child asked a key question about citizenship: “are the British Values rights?”

45. On the right for children to be noticed a bit more, one child summed this up by saying “children should be noticed a bit more – on the news, it is always about adults”. They wanted the news to cover the world of children more.

What duties and responsibilities do children believe they have as British Child Citizens?

46. After discussing rights, we asked children what duties and responsibilities they thought all children living in Britain should have – what being a British citizen or living in Britain means you should do as a child.

47. These were the top nine duties and responsibilities put forward by the most children (in order with the most frequent first):

• To keep to the law
• To help other people
• To help clean at home (including toilets!)
• To do your chores
• Not to litter – put your litter in bins
• To look after your pets
• To respect other people’s faiths and religions
  □ To help and care for your friends
  □ To keep yourself safe.

48. Quotations summing up some of the responsibilities of children were:

“give when you can”, “always believe in yourself”, “when old enough to go out on your own, be responsible”, “do what you can”, “don’t be nasty to your friends, be nice to them”, “appreciate one another”, “if someone has annoyed you, don’t take it out on others”, “respect others’ lives”, “don’t be influenced to do bad things”, “help ensure people do the right thing”, “be nice to each other, be kind, look after the world, don’t litter”, “treat others how you would like them to treat you”, “our duty is to look after people and not to harm anyone”, “respect everyone even if they don’t respect you”, “make sure you know the laws, so that you don’t break them because you don’t know”, “don’t make fun of people’s backgrounds and where they come from”, “be kind to everyone, no matter who they are”, “don’t make fun of what people look like”, “respect people’s dreams”, “every child has responsibility for their own personality”.

49. Here is the complete list of other duties and responsibilities of children, which were each put forward by one or two children. They are in no special order. As with the list of rights put forward by the children, this list is very long, but we have not left out anything that even only one child put forward. As with the rights list, we hope it is a good resource showing the huge range of duties and responsibilities different children consider they have as child citizens:

Not to make fun of someone of a different colour, to respect others, not to abuse the environment, don’t steal vehicles, respect things that aren’t yours, look after others in your family, help look after younger children and be responsible in caring for them, to be respectful, not be mean, to appreciate people who are different from yourself, to be fair, not to be racist, not to make a big deal out of something small happening, not to accuse people wrongly of stealing, to be kind, to be democratic, respect what farmers have spent time and money to grow, respect people’s languages, only make criticisms that help people to do better, don’t judge people by things like the colour of their eyes, be truthful, go to school, to study, to help and look after one another, look after those around you and animals, do as you are told, listen, do your best in everything, do some school work when you are away on holiday, dress yourself, help when requested, follow rules, don’t bully people, respect each other’s thoughts, views and opinions, respect the right of teachers to teach you, to eat and not waste food that you have bought, pick up litter, keep your teacher busy so that they keep teaching their pupils, to be given and to do your homework, be grateful for the food you have, take notice of what your parents say and ask you to do “within reason” (that is as long as they are not asking you to do something that you know is wrong), obey British Values, accept that teachers have a duty to look after their pupils, to get out of your room and away from your screen and play outdoors, help injured animals you come across, look after the environment, never to kill anyone, never to get into a stranger’s white van, to look after yourself, to look after your own stuff and belongings, not to destroy other people’s property, not to smoke, not to get into fights, be responsible and get a job, represent your country, try not to do anything bad, be responsible for your friends, be responsible for your own privacy, respect your teachers and other people who try to do their best for you, don’t
hack, don’t damage people’s houses set fire to houses or break their windows, report a dangerous bug if you find one, don’t steal from people or shops, respect animals be responsible towards them and feed them if they need it, don’t kidnap and keep a stray animal that has identification on it, tidy your room, be happy, remember your homework, get yourself and your stuff prepared to get to school, be responsible for your own hygiene and health, not to smoke unless you are over the legal age, cross roads safely, take responsibility for your own money and spend it properly, be responsible for your own actions, help your parents.

50. In one group we heard the view that there is a duty on everyone not to make harm and attacks on people get worse by the way we react; “even though people harm us, it doesn’t mean we have to harm them back”.

51. One child said that although children have the right to freedom, they also have a duty not to abuse this right; “don’t overdo the right to freedom because if you use it to break the law, you will lose your freedom by being in jail”.

The communities children belong to

52. We defined ‘communities’ as groups of people you belong to, outside your family or the household you live in. These could be groups of people you spend time with or do things with, or wider groups of people across your local area or across the whole country that you feel you are part of, even if there are too many for you ever to meet them all. Children could tell us about more than one group or community where they felt they belonged. We have reported below all the communities or groups that children told us they felt they belonged to.

53. The type of community children most often felt they belonged to was a sports club or team. 28% felt they strongly belonged in their sports clubs or teams. The most usual of these sports communities was a football club, team or squad, or a football development academy. Others included rugby, hockey, running, fencing, cricket, mountain biking, motocross, paintballing, golf, netball, basketball, athletics, trampoline, swimming, martial arts, karate, boxing, dirt biking, kick boxing, British Gymnastics and dodgeball clubs and teams. There were special elements of being part of a team, for example the fact that team members all “communicate during games”.

54. While many spoke of being part of a team that work together and help each other, many also spoke of feeling part of the wider sporting community of all the people taking part in their sport.

55. Some told us they felt part of these communities, not only because they were groups sharing an interest or activity together, but because they had stronger links with the people they knew in the group. As one child put it, “I feel part of gymnastics because they help me”.

56. The second most common group children said they belonged to was their group of friends. 14% of children told us they felt they strongly belonged in a group of friends. As one put it, “I belong to my friends, who care about me”.

57. The third community children most commonly felt they belonged to was the community of their school. 11% of the children felt their school was a group they strongly belonged to. One said
“school’s like a big family”. Others said they felt they most belonged to their school class or their school year.

58. Again, feeling you belonged to your school community went further than just being with people you felt you belonged with. It could include wider things your school gave you; “I feel like I belong to my school because I wouldn’t be this far in my life”.

59. Four children said they felt they were a part of the future community of children they would join next at school, either the next year above them, or, for two, the high school they would go to in the next school year. Two other children felt they belonged to the community of children younger than themselves, below their own year at school. Two children felt they still belonged to the community of their old school, and one to the community of the local cathedral school.

60. The fourth most common communities children felt they most belonged in were nonsports activity clubs. 10% of children told us they felt they strongly belonged in these. They included clubs for science, art, dance, Spanish, drama, dog training, sewing, gamers’ squads and ballet. Some of these were school or after school clubs, others were local clubs or activities outside school. One pupil told us they felt they still belonged to the community of the old dance group they used to attend.

61. The next most common community children felt they belonged to was a community of those learning and playing a musical instrument. This included those who felt they belonged to a music group or a group of instrument learners, but for some it went much further to include the wider community of all players of their instrument. Instruments the children played included brass instruments, the flute, guitar, drums, clarinet, and keyboard).

62. Again, one child told us they felt they still belonged as a part of the community of the old music school they used to attend.

63. Although this did not come from many children, there are clearly a few who feel that their main community, or one of their main communities, is that of a school, activity group or club that they used to go to in the past.

64. Some told us they felt they really belonged with the community of their teachers at school. They saw teachers with their pupils as a definite sort of community.

65. Eight children told us they felt they really belonged to the faith community of their Church or Mosque.

66. Six children told us they felt they really belonged to the community of England, one to the community of Scotland, one to the community of Ireland, one that they felt they belonged to the community of Britain. Five others told us they felt they belonged to the community of the whole world. One said they felt they belonged to the community of “everyone”. One child said “I feel I’m part of England ‘cos no-one says to get out”.

67. Five children told us they felt they really belonged to a group on YouTube.
Other communities that smaller numbers of children felt they belonged to were: supporters of particular football clubs, atheists, the community of heaven, children in speech, language, maths and reading support groups, the farming community, the community of their parent’s military friends, video gaming groups, Scouts, Guides, Beavers, Brownies and former Brownies. Many of these included belonging to the wider community across the world, as well as the particular local group they were part of.

Other communities were given by just one child each. Here is the full list of communities they told us they belonged to, listed in no special order: the community of Parliament, the community led by the Queen and Prime Minister, the community of all children, the people of Africa, people who play X-Box, the community of horse lovers, the family of their activity instructor, the family of their football coach, ‘the people who care for me’, the people of the county I live in, the people of the valley I live in, the community of my village, the skiing community, people who wear glasses, people who feel they have special needs, England rugby supporters, the eco community, a movie theatre group, and the community of all animal lovers. One child listed a number of international cities and communities they felt a link with.

Even though we had asked about communities outside their own families, some children still told us how important it was to belong to a family. One of these children wrote to us; “I belong to my family because they guide me through hard things each day”.

In some groups, children asked if communities had to be groups of people. Some told us they felt they really felt belonging when they were with animals, such as their dogs, horses, household pets, or animals on farms they lived on. One child from a farm wrote; “I feel like I belong with my sheep, because they make me happy!”

How much notice do children think is taken of their opinions?

The international list of children’s rights (the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) says children have the right to have their say on things that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. So we wanted to find out how much children thought their opinions really are taken notice of, across all aspects of their lives.

Out of the 233 children who answered this question, 16% said their opinions are very much taken notice of, 38% that they are taken notice of a little, 33% that they are not taken notice of much, and 13% that their opinions are not at all taken notice of. The two most usual answers were that children’s opinions were a little, or not much, taken notice of. Overall 71% said their opinions were either a little or not much taken notice of.

One child summed this up for many when they said that in this country “our opinions don’t matter, only adults’ views matter”.

What are British Values?

We asked children to tell us what they saw as “British values” – things that made people British, things that everyone living in Britain should share, think are important and support.
Some of our groups had discussed British Values as part of their citizenship at school, and there was a list of British Values on the wall in one classroom we met in. In this question, we asked children to tell us what they themselves thought were the most important British Values, whether these were ones they had learned about in school, or were ones they had come up with for themselves.

Our groups were less certain about what they saw as British values than they were about the rights, duties and responsibilities of children living in Britain. They put forward fewer values than they had put forward rights, duties and responsibilities.

The top three values put forward by our groups, in order with the one given to us by the most children first, were:

- Mutual respect
- Caring
- Democracy and voting.

These other values (not in any particular order) each came from two or more children:

- Fundraising and charity
- Equality
- Individual liberty and freedom
- Rule of law
- Kindness
- Tolerance
- Joyfulness.

These values (not in any special order) came from one child each: paying your way (paying bills and for your house, taxes, fuel, and rentals), the monarchy, courage, tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, determination, friendship, perseverance, thankfulness, politeness, engagement, love, helping the poor, honesty, teamwork, happiness – and tea and crumpets.

On equality, some things were definitely British values, but still need working on. One boy said everyone should be equal, but there were still big inequalities to deal with, such as the fact that women footballers don’t get paid as much as men players.

On honesty, one child said that the spread of terrorism is based on dishonesty and people not owning up to knowing about things.

On democracy, one child said “everyone has to have democracy in their lives”.

Tea and crumpets were put on the list because they define something basic about being English.

The view was put that a value is something more important than a law or anything else.
How are children involved with and for other people?

86. The Committee were particularly interested to hear what children do with others to help other people, and what more they would like to be able to do with others to help other people. We asked some of our groups to tell us what they did with others for others, outside their own families or households.

87. Although children were able to tell us about many sorts of activities they do, or would like to do, there were not so many activities done specifically to help other people, or done with others.

88. These are the things three or more children told us they did with others to help other people outside their own families or households:

• Helping people you come across who need your help, for example if someone has fallen over or dropped their money or their shopping
• Making donations to charity
• Doing events (for example, sales, book stalls) to raise money for charity.

89. These ways of children already helping others each came from two children:

• Making things to sell for charity
• Helping run the school bank
• Helping a disabled relative
• Swimming gala or sponsored swims raising money

90. Here is the complete list of things children told us they were doing to help other people: helping people who are struggling in some way, helping someone look for something they’ve lost, helping at a Scout group, serving on the School Council, helping friends with video games, run a race to raise money for charity or special causes like water aid, taking food and drink to people on the street (for example giving a homeless person a cake from a stall), helping teach other children to do tricks in a dance group, helping at swimming group, counting house points, tidying up, never littering the environment, helping make tea at a charity event, helping others through the ‘classrooms in the cloud’ scheme, raising money for poor people, asking a lonely child if they’d like to play, checking that a child sitting on their own in the playground is OK, helping neighbours carry their shopping into the house, giving money for the poor, helping friends, being a reading buddy to help children read, giving things to a charity store, sponsored walks, playing football for charity, giving someone directions, charity runs (and Colour Runs), going to visit someone who wants to see you even when you don’t want to, helping at a care home, helping at a food bank, giving some Christmas money to help someone seriously ill, and “respecting friends and classmates”.

91. As well as ways they currently helped people, two children wanted to tell us about ways they helped animals too, both generally helping animals and also doing things to help endangered animals in other countries.

92. We then asked some of our groups to tell us additional things they would like to be able to do with others to help other people. Here are the five things that each came from two or more children:
• Help people with MS
• Raise money for charity
• Help homeless people
• Give food for a food bank
• Generally help people that need your help

93. Other things that each came from just one child were: a sale at school to raise money to help people, helping people with mental health problems, a bake sale for charity, helping a very ill relative more, help my country, helping old people, help to get smoking outlawed, help to stop terrorist attacks, help other people to sky dive, help save lives, help people who have been slaves, visit a poor country to help build classrooms there, go to Africa to help provide food and water, encourage people to do sports instead of watching TV, a Macmillan bike ride, a run to raise money, help people with balancing problems to ride a bike, start a company in the future and give money from it to charity, help police and ambulance people to stay safe, help people who haven’t had an education, help evacuated children, a sponsored rugby match, raise money through a motocross club, pass an unexpired car park ticket on to someone else, help people who don’t have much help, help my country in the Army, give out Christmas presents at the hospital.

94. Again, even though we had asked children to tell us of things they would like to be able to do to help other people, some told us of things they would like to be able to do to help animals. These were to become an animal physiotherapist, to help injured and endangered animals such as rhinos, to act as a guard to endangered animals such as giraffes, and to become a pilot transporting sick or injured animals.

95. On raising money to help other people, one child said they would like to “do something I like for a long period of time to raise money”.

Will children vote in elections when they reach voting age?

96. Voting in elections and referendums when an adult is a key part of citizenship. We asked all 281 children in our groups whether they thought they would, or would not, usually vote in elections when they became 18. Children answered this question by putting tokens into ‘yes’ or ‘no’ money boxes.

97. 60% of the children answered that they thought they would usually vote in elections when they reached voting age. 37% of the children answered that they did not think they would usually vote in elections once they reached voting age. Six children abstained.

98. We hope it will be useful to the Committee to know that the intention to vote in the future stands at 60% of the 9 to 11 year olds asked. (This may perhaps be compared with the regular findings for those aged 18 – 24 in the Hansard Society’s Audit of Political Engagement).

99. We also hope that this information will be helpful in thinking about citizenship education, which the Committee’s staff have said is of particular interest to the Committee.

Do ceremonial events make children feel more proud to be British?
100. One of the questions asked in the Committee’s inquiry was whether ceremonial events make people more proud to be British. We asked all 281 children whether seeing or taking part in local or national ceremonial events made them feel more proud to be British or living in Britain. We explained that this was different to whether or not they enjoyed the events.

101. Just over half the children (53%) felt more proud of being British or living in Britain because of ceremonial events.

102. 45% said that ceremonial events do not make them more proud. Four children abstained on this question.

Children’s involvement in decisions

103. The Committee is interested to know about how far children take part in making decisions outside their own families or the households where they live. We asked the children in some of our groups to give us examples of decisions they do have a say in outside their family or household, and then to tell us of any other sorts of decisions they thought they don’t have a say in but thought they should have a say in.

104. Here is the full list of decisions children did have a say in outside their own families (not in any special order):

- Choosing your friends (this was the most frequent decision children made)
- Having a say on the school council
- Having your say by putting your opinions to your teacher
- Decisions when playing with friends
- Voting for Head Boy and Head Girl at school
- Voting for school House Captains
- Choosing sports Captains
- Choosing which motocross races your team takes part in
- Players’ choice in football
- Choosing clubs to join
- Voting for members of the school council
- Having a say through Pupils 2 Parliament
- Having a say through a school suggestions box
- Choosing what to buy with your own money
- Designing cheerleader outfits for competitions
- Choosing your own shoes.

105. Here is the full list of decisions children did not have a say in, but thought they should have a say in outside their own families (again, not in any special order):

- Children’s Mini-elections when the country votes
- Voting on who should become Prime Minister
- Having a say whenever someone tells you to do something
- Voting about school dinners
- Having a say in deciding how long you should play electronic games or on your phone
What have children learned from their citizenship education at school?

106. The Committee’s staff asked us to find out from children how well they thought they had so far learned about citizenship at school. So we took seven key areas of citizenship education from the government’s list of things to learn in years 5 and 6 in primary school. (This is the Department for Education’s voluntary list of ‘objectives’ in Key Stage 2 Citizenship).

107. We went through those seven parts of citizenship with all of the children in our groups, and asked them to tell us whether they had learned each one well at school and now understood it.

108. Here is the list of the seven parts of citizenship we asked them about, with the ones children understood best at the top. In brackets after each one is the percentage of the 281 children who said they had learned and understood it:

- People’s different religions, cultures and backgrounds (80% of children)
- How to work out what is right and what is wrong in what the media and social media tell us (66% of children)
- How laws are made (55% of children)
- What democracy is (48% of children)
- Current affairs – what is happening in our country and the wider world (43% of children)
- How to research and find out about things that are happening (40% of children)
- How Parliament and local Councils work (39% of children).

109. I am grateful to the Heads and staff of the eight schools for letting me carry out these discussions with their pupils, to the members of staff of each school who took notes of the pupils’ votes and views, and above all to the pupils themselves who gave their fresh thinking, views and ideas for this report.