

ST AIDAN'S CHURCH IN WALES V.A. SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs. S. James

*Our school is a welcoming, warm hearted place and a bubble of trust where we can feel safe to talk to God and follow the Christian values. We are encouraged to become independent and confident in ourselves as well as in society. We are challenged to reach our highest potential and climb the ladder of life because we **'Believe and Achieve'**.*

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
Chair, Petitions Committee National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

1st June 2020

Dear Chair

Thank you for your email of 18th May 2020 asking for our views on the attached letter from Hannah Blythyn AM. The pupils are very proud that their petition will be considered, despite being very disappointed that they were not able to present it on the steps of the Senedd due to the lockdown.

I have explained the contents of the letter from Ms Blythyn and the findings from Wrap Cymru to the children through our digital learning platforms and have had responses from them which I have included in the points made below. The pupils welcomed the comments made by Ms Blythyn and can see she is clearly very supportive of the petition. They feel that their ideas and thoughts have been taken into consideration.

1. The pupils are extremely positive about Wales becoming the first country to send zero waste to landfill. They clearly understand how damaging it is to the environment and feel that this move would make Wales a *'great place'* and also *'it is amazing because anything to try and reduce global warming is an excellent idea'*.
2. They feel that a Deposit Return Scheme would be an excellent incentive to encourage people to recycle their waste and this is something that would have impact on the wider community, not just schools. In general, pupils are often more ecologically aware than adults as it is something that is discussed and taught on a regular basis.
3. They are very supportive of the applying a restriction on Single Use Plastics as hopefully in the future this will lead to *'no product [being] produced in a container'*

that can't be recycled'. This would certainly have an impact on schools. Many pupils bring water and food in plastic containers that are single use and through research they have found out that the extent to which all plastics can be recycled is limited. The pupils have previously made comments after inspecting rubbish in the school and after lunchtime and realise that although recycling facilities are available, they are not used consistently. They are also aware that only about a third of plastic pots are ever recycled and just over half of all plastic bottles.

4. The findings from Wrap Cymru were very interesting. Before lockdown, as a class we had investigated the potential of having a Pergyl unit in school to dispense milk. This was greeted by the pupils as an excellent idea. Discussion was had around the need for hygiene and the washing up of cups, but it was agreed that the extra time that was needed for this would be worth it. The pupils looked at the costs of purchasing a unit and were quite shocked. They appreciated that it was a one off cost, but also realised that as a small school, we run a very tight budget. The price of a unit equated to double the cost of classroom consumables for this last academic year. The pupils felt that in the interests of equality and fairness for all schools that the one off cost for purchasing a Pergyl unit should be met by the Welsh Government. Previously there had been a great debate in class on the introduction of glass bottles as this was something being trialled in other schools in the county. Looking at the findings from Wrap Cymru it was clear that transportation is the main cost when comparing all 3 systems in school. Given that Wales has a history of innovation in many industries, would making glass bottles be an area to develop with entrepreneurs, thus reducing transportation costs across the country?

Class 4 are fully appreciative of the support they have had for their petition as well as advice from Amber Lewis from the Assembly Commission Staff. They feel proud that their petition has reached its current stage and feel very excited that their views and ideas could be instrumental in changing policy in Wales.

I will certainly make the link to Senedd TV available to the children on 9th June so that they can see the final outcome of their petition.

Yours sincerely,



Wendy MacGarvie

Class Teacher and on behalf of all the pupils in class 4, St Aidan's Church in Wales VA School