

# Primary Voice Meeting

## Icebreaker – “3 Words & a Theme Song”

Schools were invited to share three words that describe their group, plus a theme tune. Children used their own brilliant language:

- **Curious**, because “we’re both quite curious” and “quite intelligent.”
- **Kind, helpful and respectful** (Dedridge Primary).
- **Inclusive, respectful, interested** (Merkinch Primary).
- **Powerful** (St Mark’s).
- **Chatty, active and funny** (“because we do quite a lot of things for Cost of the School Day”).
- **Confident, thinking and ready** (Miss Moses’s class).

Theme songs included:

- **Bluey theme song**
- **The Simpsons theme tune**
- **You Are a Star**
- **Reach for the Stars** (S Club 7)
- **Make Your Mark**

Kirsty joined in the fun, joking she’d probably choose *a lullaby* because she likes sleep.

## What Does Cost of the School Day Mean?

Kirsty asked if anyone felt brave enough to explain COSD in their own words.

Children said:

- *“It’s about helping others have things they need to learn.”*
- *“Some people give bags and jackets out for some kids.”*
- *“Things might be expensive for people not in a great situation.”*
- *“It’s trying to reduce money or reduce the cost in schools.”*
- *“So everyone can get the same experiences.”*

One pupil beautifully summed it up:

**“Make sure everyone has everything they need to learn.”**

## What Schools Are Doing Already

Children proudly shared the activities happening where they live:

### Making Essentials Easy

- **Clothing racks** and pop-up uniform shops: "People can come and get jackets, uniform... if they can't get stuff online or in shops."
- **Healthy snack stations**: for pupils who "can't have breakfast or can't have snacks."
- **Breakfast Clubs** with *toast and cereal*.
- **Free water bottles** for every pupil when they start.

### Food & Warmth

- **Lunch salad bars**, free toast, and snack cupboards.
- **Food banks** where pupils help check boxes and restock items.
- **After-school clubs** that are all free.

### Clothing & Swap Shops

- **Halloween and Christmas swap shops**
- **Community clothing racks**
- **Jacket drives**
- **Book exchanges** for World Book Day
- Pupils explained how these help families who "maybe don't live near a shop" or "find it difficult to get things online."

## Talking About the Scottish Election

Kirsty asked what big event was happening in Scotland in May 2026.

Children confidently replied: "**The election!**"

She explained that adults vote for MSPs who make decisions about things like schools, hospitals, and money. Pupils guessed the voting age:

- "16?"
- "18?"
- "Maybe 21?"

Kirsty confirmed: **16-year-olds can vote in Scottish elections.**

Even though most pupils aren't 16 yet, she reminded them that their voices still matter.

## The School Shouldn't Cost Manifesto

Kirsty introduced the 5 calls created from thousands of children's views:

1. **End child poverty.**
2. **Make sure schools have enough money and staff.**
3. **Make sure everyone has the basics to learn** (food, uniform, devices).
4. **Make school trips and opportunities possible for all.**
5. **Listen to children and young people.**

A pupil named **Jade** had even visited the **First Minister** to explain why these things matter. She spoke honestly about growing up in poverty and said she tried to make her words "*persuasive.*"

## Activities Children Can Join

Pupils can:

- Write letters/emails to politicians
- Make posters and artwork (competition included!)
- Create social media messages
- Ask politicians to visit their school
- Teach other schools about the manifesto using assembly slides

Schools loved these ideas—many were already planning poster competitions and assemblies.

## Closing

Kirsty and Alison thanked all schools and encouraged them to send photos of their COSD work.