Children’s rights (St Eunan’s Primary) - transcript

**Anne Docherty:** Just to set our work in some sort of context: St Eunan's Primary is situated in Clydebank, which is an area of deprivation, and, if we look at the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, we see that 60% of our children actually live at the bottom, the lowest two deciles. And I do mention this purely to set our work in context. We never use it as an excuse. It's there.

**Pupil [speaking through megaphone]:** The importance of education is clear. It opens up many opportunities and helps us all to develop the skills we need to be successful in life. Yet, despite the goals of Article 28, there are still 58,000,000 primary-aged children not in school.

**Amal Azzudin:** My name's Amal Azzudin. I was involved with the kids from St Eunan's because Claire Dunphy, the teacher, invited me and Rosa, one of the Glasgow girls, to go and speak to them about our campaign, when we started a campaign at school, when we were 15, to get our friend back, because she was dawn-raided and detained and she was about to be deported. So, we've been campaigning for 10 years and Claire obviously knew about our story, and she wanted us to go and speak to the young kids at St Eunan's and talk to them about how to go about a campaign.

**Pupil:** It started as a whole-school topic on the rights of the child. So, we looked at Article 28 - every child's right to an education - and we looked further into that and we realised that not every child was receiving an education, and that angered us and it made us want to really make a difference.

**Another pupil [through megaphone]:** Did you know there are an estimated 186,000,000 child labourers worldwide? Did you know there are an estimated 250,000 child soldiers in the world? Clearly, something has to be done.

**Claire Dunphy [primary teacher at St Eunan’s]**: The first people that we involved as partners in the campaign and the idea were the Glasgow girls, two of the Glasgow girls, Amal and Rosa. And we asked them to come in, really, to inspire the children, so that they could see there was a positive example, in the local community, of young people making a difference.

**Woman:** We're Sam and Robin Kennedy's parents and we're here to support rights for children all over the world to an education. They've been doing this topic in school over the last few months and it's made a real difference in their learning. It's opened up opportunities for them - they've learned how to speak in front of people, out in big crowds, which I wouldn't have thought they could do, and I'm delighted at, and also made them more interested in what's happening in the news and the newspapers and things.

**Lisa Broom [Primary teacher at St Eunan’s]:** So, when we've been looking at texts in class, for example, you know, when they were finding out about the barriers to children's education, we were actually able to use quite high-level newspaper articles, reports, you know about child soldiers or poverty, gender inequalities, and the children, because they had that genuine interest in the topic, it really allowed them to explore it at a deeper level, you know for us as teachers to really foster high-level discussions in class.

**Pupil:** The teachers do believe in you and they [unclear] inside the classroom. They're taking you out to all different places and [unclear ] through going to different places. And, like, they've also helped us to develop our confidence, because, without them, we wouldn't be going to different places and reading out our speeches so powerfully.

**Amal Azzudin:** I think they're doing an amazing job and I think the school should take the credit, and especially the teachers for allowing them to do that, because not every school does that, you know, and not every teacher actually listens to what the young people want and, you know, what they're passionate about, and guides them even, and gives them the platform and the opportunity to do something about it, rather than just kind of brushing it off and saying, well you know, that's not for young kids, or politics is not for young kids kind of thing. But it is - it's for everybody.

**Pupil [through megaphone]:** From a society that asks them to work and walk miles and miles a day, just for water and food for their families, we will not stop until these children, like us, receive their basic human right to education.

**Lisa Broom:** The children also had strong links with local politicians and were fortunate enough to be invited to the Scottish Parliament, and on that day they were able to deliver their bundle of signatures, the thousands of signatures that they had managed to collect. And, because of that they were supported by the politicians that they presented to, in particular John Finnie, who actually wrote a lovely blog and put it on his website, about the children, about their passion and commitment, and about how, you know, the whole political literacy that the campaign has allowed the children to explore and to develop was just fantastic and fabulous.

**Pupil:** Using kids as soldiers constitutes one of the most disgraceful breaches of those rights. The situation is even worse for girls - there are still 31,000,000 girls of primary school age out of school. Seventeen million of these girls are never expected to even enter school. How would you feel if your sister or daughter was in this situation?

**Another pupil:** Ah because, until I came into Primary 7, I never really tried my best at my writing and that. I was more laid-back. But then, when we started to campaign, it made me, like, want to try a bit better because there's some children that don't get the chance. So, I started trying harder and writing more in my writing. And, like, in reading I started to ask if I could try the harder texts rather than the easier one, and figured out, later on, that I was really good at analysing and evaluating texts with just a little support. And I've moved up a whole level in my writing now.

**Lisa Broom**: So, for me, learning for sustainability is really about learning for a better world, and no, there are so many different ways in which to achieve that with the children in your class. First of all, it really is about providing them with the opportunity and the experience to practise the values that you, you know yourself , as a teacher, want to instil in the children, but actually giving them the opportunity to practise, whether it be, you know, the values of social justice, the determination to... for equality around the world, and to do that you really need to develop children's knowledge of the world around them, you know, especially as, for us, children... we handle Primary 7, young adults - they really need to have a good understanding of the world around them, you know, explore the barriers, whether it be to children's education, or inequalities with food, or you know, anything, whatever it might be. but to actually have that deep understanding, themselves, of the world around them. Then, they can really use their values and their skills and determination to make a difference, you know, and to have that confidence that really they can do something and make a difference and, you know, make the world a better place.

**Group of children:** Education for every child, everywhere!