



# Meet Your Elected Representative

## Activity Overview

This guidance provides tips on how to set up a meeting between young people and their elected representative.

## Preparation

Careful preparation will help give structure to your meeting and focus the pupils. Some planning should help the pupils to use the limited time effectively and mean everyone gets the best out of the experience.

Start by identifying who you want to meet. Decide whether it will be your MP, MLAs or Local Councillors. Do some research to find out about your elected representatives. Find out whether they represent a political party and research their policies. Do they have any personal interests?

Before you meet with the elected representative, lead a discussion with the class. Ask the pupils to highlight the three top issues that concern them. For example:

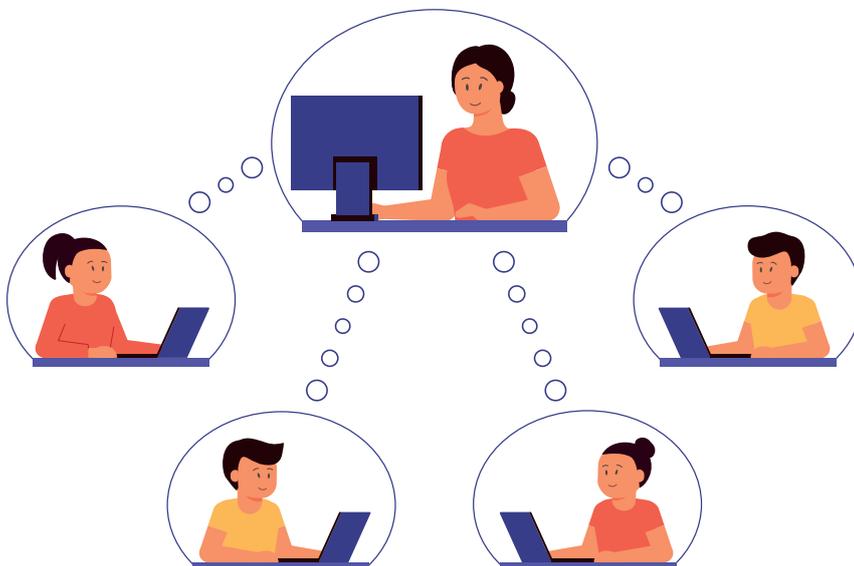
- Are there common issues?
- Are there any urgent issues?

Use this information to generate questions to ask during the meeting. For the meeting to be productive, it may be useful to limit discussions to four or five common points.

It is also important that the pupils understand the basic responsibilities of:

- the UK Parliament
- the Northern Ireland Assembly
- the Local or City Council

This means that their expectations can be met and ensures that the questions are relevant and focus on what the elected representative can actually do something about.





## Meet Your Elected Representative

### During the meeting

Make sure everyone knows how much time is available. Let the elected representative know approximately how many questions they will be asked so that time can be divided appropriately.

Relax! It might help break the ice if you ask the elected representative to tell you about their background before moving to discuss pertinent issues.

Take some photographs if you want to publicise them on social media, but remember to ask permission first.

Appoint someone to take notes. You can use these to hold your elected representative to account by following up on the meeting weeks or months later.

### After the meeting

Send a thank you letter or email, outlining the points raised. Have a wrap-up discussion with your class, clarifying any points that remain unclear. Try to remain in contact with your elected representative.

