

Last term, two Year 6 pupils - Stephanie Fox and Chantelle Bassey - were selected to represent St Anne's at the annual Cafod Public Speaking Competition. They competed against children from St Martin's School and Sacred Heart in Henley. Both girls gave tremendous speeches and provided much food for thought. Please do read their pieces below. We are very proud to say that Stephanie was judged overall winner with a powerful speech and a very engaging delivery.

#### WINNING SPEECH

##### **Power To Be**

By Stephanie Fox  
Year 6, St Anne's RC Primary School

Just imagine ... a child – innocent, vulnerable, alone as his petrified mother nervously waits outside the door. The first incision is made; the doctor realises he has only seconds left until the appendix bursts. Then ... poof ... no light, no power, possibly no life left behind. Do you want this to happen? Do you want innocent lives to be lost? If not, then support the 'Power To Be' campaign which saves lives.

For far too long, people have been relying on unstable and unreliable energy sources: such as coal that – when burnt – can be the start of lung cancer and paraffin lamps that give off a toxic gas which damages the airways.

Veronica is a girl who lives in Kenya; she uses a paraffin lamp and is lucky not to be one of the 4.3million people who die each year as a result. But her dreams of being a politician flicker and flash before her eyes like the flame from her lamp. She coughs and is often ill on the fumes. In such places, people have to walk miles upon miles to get to a district hospital simply to see a doctor. Surely you don't think this is acceptable, do you? Surely you would agree that renewable energy would benefit the lives of children in Kenya?

At the moment, children all over the world are being robbed of a childhood. They need water but the hours they spend collecting it could have been spent enjoying life or gaining a proper education to live their dreams. But more than just the obvious could improve with renewable energy ... It can help with health – to freeze vaccines that protect from diseases and viruses and can give hospitals the electricity to run overnight so sick children can have the right treatment at any time. In addition, refrigeration keeps meat and other foods from decaying. Also, renewable energy would help mothers by stopping the need to cook over burning stoves that give off toxic fumes. Safer energy would also mean that farmers would not have to slave away watering plants with water they walked miles to get. Instead irrigation pumps would deliver fresh, clean water straight to the fields meaning the crops would grow – beautiful and well-fed. As well as this, farmers would use machines to harvest and to process grain. It is also certain that renewable energy would provide businessmen with the electricity needed to use computers (giving access to the internet and a world of customers). Renewable energy can change the world – one pump, one light, one fridge at a time. Join our campaign today!

So, what is the one thing we ask of you? What is the reason for all this? I'll tell you; this speech is to persuade you to help the children of the world – the future of our planet. Every minute, a child dies because of the issues that we have heard about today: the shortage of water pumps, the lack of electricity in hospitals and homes and futures are limited. But, with renewable energy, the world can be transformed and children can be saved. All you need to do – to change lives – is sign our petition to Melanie Robinson (the UK representative at the World Bank) demanding that they increase the 3% of their money spent on renewable energy; surely it should be at least 10%?

Just imagine ... we're back in the hospital ... but, this time, they have renewable energy. The first incision is made; the doctor realises he has only seconds until the appendix bursts. But this time, the power stays on and the operation is successful. Instead of a spine-chilling death, this child lives!

We can't change what has happened, but together, we can change what will happen. Sign our petition today!

##### **Power To Be**

By Chantelle Bassey  
Year 6, St Anne's RC Primary School

Drop what you're doing! Look at me! Listen carefully to what I have to say! In Kenya, there is a girl named Veronica. Veronica longs to be a politician; this is a very ambitious aspiration. Everyone knows that to become a politician, you must study. But Veronica can't study. Every day, Veronica goes home, switches on the paraffin lamp and starts to cough. She coughs and splutters and coughs again, whilst still trying to study. Sometimes, blood spatters the desk, papers and walls. Sometimes, she can't study at all and her dreams are crushed. Sometimes, the darkness rushes over her and pushes her (unconscious) to the floor. This is Veronica's life. But you can change her life. Now is the time to restore energy to the impoverished places of the world!

For far too long, we have been using fossil fuels: wood, coal and oil. These are unreliable and short-term forms of energy that are harmful to the environment. We shouldn't be using these. The fossil fuels can cause respiratory problems which may eventually lead to a painful death. For far too long, farmers have been stood in the scorching sun, tending to and harvesting crops all day long. They have no rest and must do everything manually since they have no machines to assist them. For far too long, nurses and doctors have been unable to properly treat patients as they can't refrigerate blood or vaccines. As a result, many people die of diseases that could have been easily prevented. Join the 'Power to Be' campaign to end energy poverty's reign today. Let us change the way people live for the benefit of today's world and the future.

Surely you would agree that renewable energy is a better source of power? There are many ways in which sustainable power benefits humans and the environment. Currently, children are having to walk miles every day just to collect water – which isn't even clean. This means that children can't go to school because they spend most of their time collecting this dirty water. But – with renewable energy – children could go to the pump (which would be close to them) and collect water easily, saving hours of walking which they could, in turn, spend on studying and going to school. In addition, often, children have no light in their schools which means that they have to strain their eyes and work in the

dark. Straining could even damage sight permanently making it impossible for them to study. With renewable energy, however, children can have light so that they don't have to squint to see their work, reducing the risk of damage. Right now, children are having to study by the light of an oil or kerosene lamp which gives off fumes. These fumes are toxic and can injure the lungs; they can even potentially cause death. But, with renewable energy, children can use solar-powered lamps which do not emit intoxicating fumes and, therefore, fewer children (and adults) die. 4.3 million people die each year for this exact reason. What if you were one of these people? Or your child was?

In addition, fossil fuels also negatively affect adults. Mothers have to cook over the stove with fossil fuels. Inhaling the smoke they discharge makes mothers cough excessively, yet they have to endure this daily. But - with renewable energy – mothers could make food without risking their lives since solar-powered ovens would pose no danger. Out in the fields, farmers must water and harvest their crops, getting up in the morning and working until dusk. However – with renewable energy – farmers wouldn't have to spend hours on end cultivating their crops but would have the help of machines. Meanwhile, businessmen have to make do with no computers or technology which are vital to today in many industries. But – with the power of renewable energy – businessmen could run their businesses more effectively due to the fact that they could use computers and other electronics that work-places in more developed parts of the world use.

So, what exactly do we want of you? We need you to change the world! Everyone of you present could sign our petition calling on Melanie Robinson (the UK representative at the World Bank) to press for greater expenditure on renewable energy to aid the poor. Currently, the World Bank is spending only 3% of its money on sustainable and healthy power. This must change! And, with your signatures, we might be able to change this: raise this number to 7 or even 10%. Just a couple of signatures could change – or even save – lives.

So, before you go home, switch on the electricity-powered TV, turn on the electricity-powered lights and scroll through Facebook on your electricity-powered phone, think about Veronica and the difference you would have made by signing our petition. Veronica could be at home, studying under the light of a solar-powered lamp, breathing easily, not coughing and hope for her future could be igniting within her. Her dreams could slowly be becoming a reality, all because you signed our petition. So ... pick up your pens! Sign our petition! And remember ... you have the power to make a difference! You have the power to be a life-saver! You have the power to change the world!