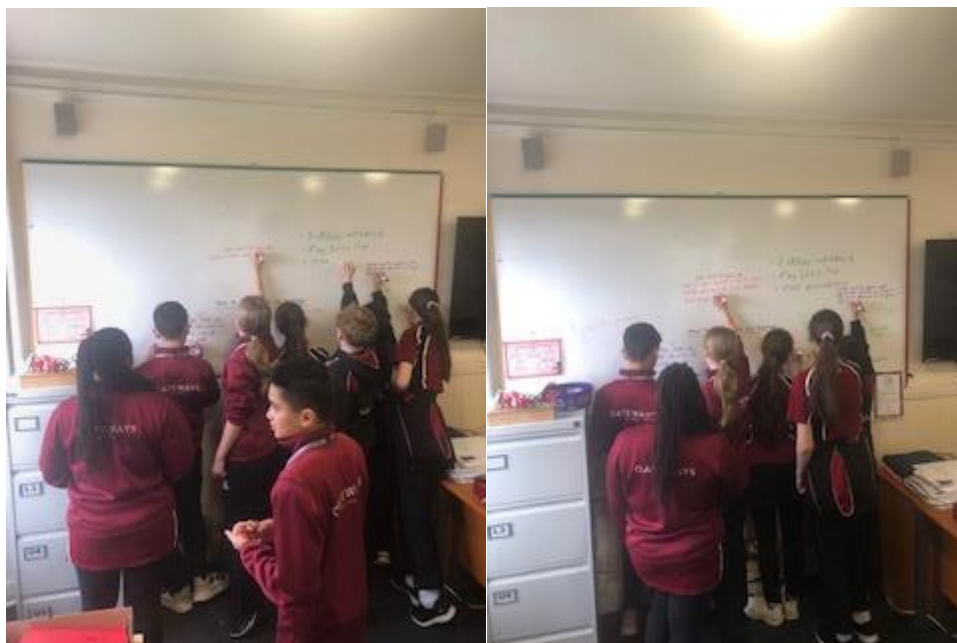


Upper 4 discuss how best to improve our society...



My Upper 4 pupils are currently reading William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*. Published in 1954, the story focuses on a group of English schoolboys marooned on a desert island with "no grown-ups". One of the challenges the boys face is how to devise a system of government on the island. They determine to hear the voice of every boy using the conch as a symbol of democratic equality; they try to organise a schedule of rules about how to live. As many parents may remember, the novel does not end well....

During one lesson I presented a controversial idea about how I would improve society which met with a wide variety of responses but then I asked the class what they would like to do to improve the UK. Some of the suggestions included the need for the UK to grow its own food and become less dependent on imported crops; to pay less tax; to pay more tax; for each person to commit to living carbon neutrally one day each week; to invest more in education and children; to limit the use of social media in the under 18s; to raise taxes on fast foods and vaping, and to legalise marijuana but to tax it very heavily.

One of the criticisms made of schools today is that the young people are spoon fed to pass examinations and have never learned how to think. My Upper 4 would beg to differ, and I would like to congratulate them on their thoughtful and cogent arguments.

Mrs Alison McKeefry