

HOC Script – Primary

Lots of things that can affect us all are discussed and decided in UK Parliament.

And while it's the Government's job to run the country, its Parliament's job to check and challenge what the Government does.

Parliament is made up of two Chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Let's take a closer look at what happens in the House of Commons.

The House of Commons Chamber is where important topics are debated, laws are discussed and where Members of Parliament, MPs, question government ministers about the work they are doing

In the UK, we live in a democracy. This means the people have a say in how the country is run. We do this mainly through our right to vote in elections. MPs are voted for by the people in their area at a general election. Each area is called a constituency. There are 650 MPs in the House of Commons, each one representing a different constituency of the United Kingdom.

On the day of an election, people go to 'polling stations'. They choose who they want to vote for, from a list of candidates, by putting a cross next to their name. The candidate with the most votes becomes the MP for that constituency and has the job of representing the interests and concerns of their constituents in the House of Commons.

The party with the most elected MPs forms the Government and their leader becomes the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister chooses a team of MPs and some members of the House of Lords to form a Government.

The MPs from the parties that didn't win become the opposition. They take a leading role in checking and challenging the ideas of the Government through debates and questions in the Chamber.

The Chamber is laid out with the Government on one side and the Opposition parties on the other. The Speaker makes sure debates are polite and fair – because sometimes they get very lively!

One of the main jobs of UK Parliament is to make laws. The Government cannot make new laws or raise new taxes without Parliament's agreement. A law is a rule we all agree to live by. Ideas for new laws are called Bills and they can be suggested by lots of different people, including individual MPs, political parties and campaign groups – but the majority come from the Government.

A Bill must go through lots of different steps before it becomes a law. In the House of Commons MPs will hold debates, where they can discuss what they agree and disagree with in the Bill, and suggest changes to make it better. MPs check Bills very carefully because making and changing laws can affect everyone.

A Bill must be agreed in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords before it can become a law. Sometimes it will move between the two Houses lots of times before a final version is agreed – this is called Ping Pong!

Once the two Houses agree, then it's the Monarch's job to formally agree the Bill. This is called Royal Assent and makes the Bill an Act of Parliament, and only then does it become 'law'.

Whatever your age, there are lots of ways to get involved and get your voice heard. If there's something you feel strongly about in your local area or an issue that affects people across the UK, you can contact your local MP to let them know about it.

What will you do?