Student story 6

... Before today, I thought poverty was just another English word from the dictionary. I didn’t know anything about it. Until we did a bit of brainstorming on what we knew of poverty.

And then I realised, hang on a second, I know a lot about poverty here. ‘Cos my dad came from England, and everyone thinks, ‘Oh England’s got London, heaps of people there’. But if you go to the western side of England, there’s not many people there. It’s more country and land, and that’s where my dad grew up. And you see people living on the street.

When the Big Day In came, the people from India, the person that talked about India, she had a great knowledge of, a great brain that said how they’re living there. And I realised, hang on a second, we need to change what they’re doing here. If they’re not going to have a good life...if they find a plastic bottle, don’t just chuck it away. If you were in India, they’d keep it and you might get a dollar out of it, and that could buy a bit of, a bowl of rice or some water. Maybe some milk.

And when I saw these pictures, I realised they were sleeping on bricks, with maybe just a cloth over it, so it would keep them a little clean. And they had to work when they were about three years old, and they didn’t have a good education. Now where’s children’s rights in here? Children deserve to have a home, deserve to go home to a nice warm home, and they deserve to have a bed to sleep in at least. Well that’s what I thought. But these people don’t. They have to sleep on just bricks. So our school... are trying to help fix this problem with all the ...schools [in our district] by putting fundraisers and like [the town in India], maybe giving, buying a well and giving it to them.

I thought it was interesting that the Government aren’t helping the problem. If you give money to the Government, they don’t really give it to [the people who need it].They give half. They think ‘Oh they’re a bit greedy, we’ll just take that, and we’ll give them a bit of it’. That’s what they’re doing.

I reckon we should sponsor a child, like I do, and I sponsor this child who now, we give money to him every month. This child now has a bed to sleep on, a blanket, a pillow, and now has a home to live in.
He’s almost got enough money to move to a different country that has better protection from getting killed. And I think that if we’re going to fix poverty, we’ve got to do it all together. Everyone…one person can make a difference, but everyone can make a big difference.

And our class …has been doing this thing, faces of poverty, art with [the Art teacher] …We’re bringing in cardboard boxes and we’re putting people in poverty on the front and back and sides on them. And we’re making a collage and putting it in and trying to raise some money so parents can come and see what we’re trying to be learning here.

We’ve also done Power Point presentations, and we’re making a thing for Garageband, and we’re putting our music... and ... our voice in. And that’s why we need to fix poverty, ’cos ...children have rights.

So thank you.