

# News story: Chris Skidmore meets with students to encourage democratic participation in the West Midlands

Minister for the Constitution Chris Skidmore met with students from Q3 Academy Great Barr today to discuss ways of increasing voter registration in the lead up to the election for the first mayor of the West Midlands.

In addition to raising awareness about registering to vote, the visit explored the particular experiences of students living in the West Midlands and the challenges they may encounter.

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, said:

Today's visit will help this government better understand the experiences of young people, so that we can deliver a democracy that truly works for everyone. The students at Great Barr showed real enthusiasm for ensuring that their voices are heard, and debated a number of ideas about how to promote the importance of democratic participation among their peers.

This is particularly meaningful in the lead up to the election for the first mayor of the West Midlands. Regardless of who you are, every voice matters and we encourage you to register to vote in what will be a significant moment for your area.

Mr Mark Arnall, Head of School at Q3 Academy Great Barr, said:

We are delighted to welcome Mr Chris Skidmore MP to Q3 Academy Great Barr today to promote greater voter registration, especially in the preparation of the election of the first Mayor of West Midlands.

The more we engage in the democratic process the better we can strengthen British Values and democracy. At Q3 Academy young people's voices are heard and they need to be fully represented at the political level too.

The minister is visiting the West Midlands as part of his Every Voice Matters Tour. The tour will see him visit every part of the country to understand how to tackle barriers to voter registration.

As part of his trip to the West Midlands, the minister also visited Aston University, where he presented the royal warrant for the Regius Professorship for research in Pharmacy.