



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

January 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about teaching animal welfare in schools.

It is important for children to learn about animal welfare. It is encouraging that schools have the freedom to teach topics such as animal welfare and responsible pet ownership as part of subjects such as Personal, Social, Health and Economic education and Citizenship. Maintained schools, academies and free schools are already required to teach primary pupils about the basic needs of animals for survival including appropriate habitat, food, water and air as part of the science curriculum. Schools should also teach pupils how to take care of animals taken from their local environment and the need to return them safely after study.

Beyond the classroom we should be proud that the UK has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world. The Prime Minister believes animal welfare is a priority and is keen to set ambitious goals. I welcome the Government's commitment to introducing legislation which will further improve animal welfare, for example by increasing maximum sentences for animal cruelty from six months to five years' imprisonment. I am pleased to report that a new law passed last year will ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY