



Citizenship: Survey report: Preparation for the introduction of citizenship in secondary schools 2001-2002

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Introduction

1. When the revised National Curriculum was introduced in 2000, it was announced that 'citizenship' would become a statutory subject in secondary schools from September 2002. During the autumn term of 2001 and spring term of 2002, a sample of 20 OFSTED section 10 inspections was enhanced to enquire how effectively schools had used that time to plan for and manage the introduction of citizenship, and what curriculum models they had decided to employ.

2. These inspections revealed considerable variation in schools' responses to the new requirements. Over half of the schools had made good use of the lead-in time, building on what they were already doing and trying out new approaches. One third of the schools had taken the essential first steps in terms of management and curriculum planning, although there remained a considerable amount to do if a broad and coherent programme were to be offered in September 2002. In some of these schools, more might have been done but for an unfounded assumption on the part of the school that they were already providing much of the statutory programme of study. In a small number of the schools, one in ten, progress towards implementation of citizenship had been given a low priority for development and was unsatisfactory.

Strategic planning for citizenship

3. In all of the schools in the sample, some thought had been given to the broad implications of statutory citizenship; it was acknowledged by senior managers that citizenship complements the aims and values of the school and, in most cases, that it will enhance those aims and values. A few of the schools had reviewed their aims in the light of their planning for citizenship. However, the schools were at very different stages in their planning to take these ideas forward, and varied greatly in their perception of what might be involved. In some of the schools, citizenship in the National Curriculum sense was already significant in the curriculum, whereas in others only the first tentative steps had been taken. In a few schools there appeared to be some degree of complacency, believing that all of the ingredients were in place ('covered'), but without having given due thought to the depth or quality of coverage. In some of these schools there was an assumption that citizenship is simply a part of personal, social and health education (PSHE): the statutory status of the subject had not been recognised, nor had the implications of a National Curriculum programme of study been thought through.

4. The schools that were furthest ahead had developed sensible strategies and time-scales for the introduction of citizenship. Some had decided to pilot citizenship programmes, and so had gained substantial experience. A minority, around one in four of the sample, had deferred action until late in the day, making little use of the two years' notice to get the necessary components in place.

Delegation of responsibility for citizenship

5. In most of the schools a member of staff with sufficient seniority had been appointed to lead on citizenship. Usually this was either a member of the senior

management team, or the teacher appointed had the support of designated member of the senior management team. In several of the schools the lead role on citizenship had been given to the head of PSHE; in other cases to heads of department, usually history or religious education (RE). In a small number of schools the responsibility had been split for Key Stages 3 and 4. In a few cases, these teachers were supported by working parties; in almost all cases they had a clear responsibility to liaise with heads of department and faculty, so that the role had a strong co-ordinating emphasis.

6. In the majority of schools the delegation of responsibility for citizenship seemed appropriate. However, in a few schools the teacher or teachers in charge already held multiple responsibilities, which raised questions concerning their capacity to bring about a major curriculum innovation. In one school responsibility was given to all heads of department and PSHE; a teacher appointed to lead on the audit had insufficient seniority, and this led to difficulties in negotiating with middle managers, some of whom were resistant, causing significant problems of repetition and gaps. This suggests a failure at management level to give the necessary authority to the audit, with suitable deadlines. In one school, the responsibility for citizenship had yet to be decided.

Training and resources

7. Most of the teachers with responsibility for citizenship had received some training, provided either by the LEA or a commercial trainer. A small number of individual teachers had additionally sought other links to available expertise, for example by becoming a member of the Association for Citizenship Teaching.

8. In a few cases, the training had been replicated in school for the benefit of other staff likely to be involved. In over half of schools in the sample, however, the training had been restricted to a single teacher or small team, and had not yet reached other staff, including those most likely to be involved in the teaching. In a minority of schools, no staff had been trained.

9. The majority of schools had identified a budget to support the implementation of citizenship. Some of these budgets had been established on the basis of needs identification through an audit of existing provision. Most schools were looking carefully at the range of existing and emerging materials, treating these with caution and carefully evaluating what was being offered: one school said that it had been inundated with information and advertisements. A small minority of schools had taken no steps to identify or obtain resources.

Curriculum audit

10. All of the schools had recognised the need for an audit of existing provision as a starting-point for curriculum planning. The quality of these audits varied from meticulous to superficial. In a small number of schools, audits were at an early stage of development at the time of the inspection and, in such cases, schools were unlikely to be in a position to begin with a substantial programme from September 2002.

11. The best audits had a qualitative dimension and recognised the inter-dependence of the three strands of citizenship. In one case, the audit included work undertaken involving the community. Such audits were well used to identify strengths and weaknesses and determine appropriate action.

12. In several of the schools in the sample, including those where the approach to citizenship was 'minimalist', the audit seems to have confirmed the school's belief that much of the programme of study is 'covered' already. In a small number of these schools such audits had been used to find out what is done, but without going the necessary stage further to identify the gaps. Sometimes such a lack of action was associated with a negative attitude towards citizenship, particularly with regard to the perceived overcrowding of the curriculum.

13. Inadequacies in the audit were frequently associated with a failure to think through the implications of the programme of study, for example not drawing on advice from the teachers' guide and scheme of work prepared jointly by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and Department for Education and Skills. In particular, some schools insufficiently considered the principle that, wherever it is found in the curriculum, work in National Curriculum citizenship should be explicit, with objectives clear to teacher and pupil; in their audits, much that is only implicit has been given undue status. For example, work in history on corrupt elections in the early nineteenth century, or on suffragettes and the campaign for women's votes, was of contextual relevance, but was not central to the citizenship programme. Had it been linked to work on democracy or voting today, it would have made a stronger and more explicit contribution to citizenship.

14. There were also problems of definition in other aspects of a school's work. In some schools, work experience and careers education and guidance were seen as providing important parts of the citizenship programme. However, the schools had not considered that this can be the case only if the tasks that pupils undertake are carefully constructed so that, in the course of the activity, they investigate and report back on an aspect of the experience relevant to the citizenship programme of study.

15. The weaker audits failed to recognise the inter-relationship of the citizenship strands. For example, departments in one school were audited for examples of participation and responsible action in lessons, with the outcome that current provision was seen as sufficient. In another, it was suggested from the audit that skills of enquiry and communication were already 'covered' across a range of subjects. This missed the key point that enquiry and communication, or participation or responsible action, should be exercised in the context of knowledge and understanding of citizenship.

16. There is a marked difference between these tentative approaches and those more ambitious and thoroughgoing audits that contain a qualitative element, particularly one that recognises the key difference between work that is implicit and thus supportive of citizenship, and work that is explicit, which is the core of citizenship teaching and learning. In only a minority of the schools in the sample had the audit been translated into a statement of how the school would provide a full programme.

Citizenship in the curriculum

17. A few schools were well beyond the audit stage and had already drafted schemes of work both for citizenship and for other subjects with strong citizenship references. For example:

Citizenship has been consulted upon widely and schemes of work are now in place in a balanced combination of discrete provision within personal and social education at Key Stage 3 and within religious education in Year 10, and through subjects across the curriculum at both key stages. The provision is well designed to contribute to the school's aims of pursuing excellence, focusing on the worth of individuals and establishing productive links with commerce and industry, locally, nationally and internationally, for example sponsoring of children in the Third World, and establishing a link with a school in the Ukraine. Subject schemes of work highlight elements of citizenship. The involvement of a large number of teachers ensures a whole-school approach.

The schemes of work set out well how the three strands are to be addressed. There is clear inter-linking of the strands in the planning so that pupils experience direct teaching and learning, combined with personal research, analysis and interpretation, developed and enhanced by group work, discussions and debates, exchanging and sharing views and ideas, extended writing on topics, case studies and practical tasks, for example designing leaflets/posters, planning campaigns, presenting cases for action to the School Council. Pupils are directly and responsibly involved in charity fund-raising, mock-elections, drawing up classroom rules, are consulted on the school's code of conduct, and are involved in environmental activities.

18. A key question schools face is whether to provide citizenship as a timetabled subject. Fewer than one quarter of the schools in the sample indicated an intention to do this: in one, the reason for this was closely associated with a critical evaluation of PSHE within the school; in another, it was part of a major curriculum review that also sought more time for core subjects; and in a third it built upon an existing course.

Citizenship is to become a new foundation subject within the National Curriculum at Key Stages 3 and 4. The previous inspection in 1996 said that: 'The school is committed to the development of pupils as confident, responsible and caring young (people) who can therefore fully participate in and contribute to the society in which they live.' Since 1996, the school has developed a very good policy for citizenship education across the curriculum, of which elements are delivered in discrete 'civics' lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4. This is supported by very good planning which has identified work across the curriculum which contributes to the elements of citizenship in helping pupils to become informed citizens, in developing skills of enquiry and communication and in developing skills of participation and responsible action.

19. In one of these schools, a commercial programme had been adopted for Year 7, but a more ambitious programme was being developed for Years 8 and 9 based on real issues.

20. In the majority of schools the intention was to plan citizenship within PSHE, with some contributions from National Curriculum subjects and religious education, and from off-timetable days, with these often being seen as the main additional provision to address the strand of citizenship relating to participation and responsible action. In taking an approach that bears heavily on PSHE, it is important for schools to balance the weight of other elements of PSHE with those required for an effective citizenship programme, recognising that these combined requirements have substantial time

implications if all the intended knowledge, understanding and skills are to be covered.

21. Few schools had as yet given thought to the flexibility of the citizenship programme of study. In a small number of cases, schools planned to build on existing strengths, such as, for example, performing arts college status. Another planned to build on its existing experience of collapsing the curriculum for particular events, such as a human rights day, a holocaust day, and an industry day.

22. Although there remained some concerns about the impact of citizenship on other subjects of the curriculum, several of the schools in this sample were positive about its introduction. One reason for this was the stimulus that the introduction of citizenship had given to all departments to review their provision. Whether or not it was intended that they should make an explicit contribution to citizenship, this caused departments to look at fundamentals such as how pupils learn, their attitudes, and the opportunities given to them to contribute to lessons.

23. In a few cases, schools viewed the introduction of citizenship with greater apprehension, for example anticipating difficulty in embedding the new curriculum. In the schools with a minimalist approach, it was seen as likely to cause only minor adjustments.

24. With regard to the specific strands of citizenship, some of the schools had identified areas of current weakness that required specific attention. For most of the schools, more thought needed to be given to the third strand – participation and responsible action – than to the other two, in at least some parts of which they believed themselves to be building from positions of greater strength. The problem with the third strand is often the issue of how to provide an entitlement for all pupils. In one of the schools, this was seen as being already in place:

- Year 7 *'Taking Action – raising monies for charity'*
- Year 8 *'The local environment'*
- Year 9 *'Pressure groups and campaigning'*.

25. In Key Stage 4, where option systems meant that not all pupils would take subjects that were expected to make a significant contribution to citizenship, for example, history or geography, a strategy was needed to ensure that all pupils, not only those choosing particular subjects, had access to the statutory curriculum entitlement.

26. In another school where there had been a tradition of volunteering in school- and community-based activities, the school was considering how to formalise procedures so that each pupil negotiates, decides and participates in at least one such experience, and has time to reflect on the experience.

27. In a small number of schools, extra-curricular activities were seen as important for delivery of this aspect of citizenship. In one school, for example, the main thrust was through a 'student volunteer council' that ran alongside the school council. Pupils had charge of all voluntary activities, and through these means it was hoped to establish sufficient options for there to be an entitlement. Yet such activities were often not part of an entitlement: some schools saw extra-curricular activities such as

the Duke of Edinburgh award, the experience of being a prefect, membership of the school council, or young enterprise as constituting a sufficient approach to this element of citizenship, even though alternative experiences were not available to all pupils.

28. A minority of the schools has given some thought to assessment issues. In one school the intention was to carry over from PSHE current practice of using effort grades and certificates; teachers were wary about a 'tick box' approach and the danger of pupils being seen to have 'failed' in citizenship.

Teaching and learning in citizenship

29. In a few of the schools where citizenship activities were already well developed, inspectors made broad judgements about pupils' achievements, including strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths include a high profile in charity work, in which all pupils are involved. Additionally, many volunteer for activities at the weekend, such as 'Litter Busters'. Pupils generally respond well to opportunities to participate. In dealing with topical issues, such as the war in Afghanistan, they have formed opinions based on use of the media. They also use the Internet to obtain information on issues such as human rights. However, in this all-white school, pupils lack awareness of the diversity of British society, and have not tackled issues such as prejudice.

30. In one school, for example, lessons were observed in all year groups 7–12. Content ranged from rights and responsibilities (in Year 7), to Amnesty International and the question of torture (in Year 9), to political parties and voting (in Year 11). All 10 lessons seen in this school were well taught and in 4 the teaching was very good.

Lessons were well prepared with clear objectives derived from the citizenship programme of study. Resources were well chosen, including prepared resource sheets and references to web sites. Teachers were effective in gaining the pupils' interest. In one Year 7 lesson on rules, the teacher started the lesson with a new rule, that if pupils wanted to speak they should indicate this by winking. From this starting-point, the lesson developed well with an excellent rapport between teacher and pupils. In general, the lessons were characterised by good discussion, both whole-class and in smaller groups. Teachers were usually very effective in the use of questioning to prompt pupils to develop and justify their ideas, and in involving all pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge was also very good, and in lessons which confronted controversial issues or issues that required sensitivity of treatment, teachers showed sound judgement. Pupils were generally attentive and enthusiastic in their participation as, for example, in a Year 9 class which dealt well with an enquiry into the moral issues surrounding torture, considering contrasting scenarios with differing priorities.

Issues

31. Schools should consider:

- whether overall responsibility for citizenship is invested in a member of staff with sufficient authority to take forward this significant change, and whether school policy on implementation is developed coherently by all parties involved
- how to take advantage of advice and training to help schools exemplify the essential characteristics and substance of citizenship education; this would support a more considered discussion in schools as to the implications of the introduction of citizenship for the curriculum and individual subjects
- where the PSHE programme will be the main provider of citizenship, whether that programme has the capacity to take up the additional content and teaching and learning styles that might be introduced
- where curricular arrangements for citizenship are complex, how to ensure that pupils have an overview of the subject and that there is the opportunity for incremental progression
- how to encourage fuller community involvement in their planning
- whether the range and quality of resources is sufficient to support a high quality citizenship programme
- how to approach the assessment of citizenship; questions of attainment and achievement, and their measurement, remain issues to be addressed at all levels.