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Citizenship, personalisation and Every Child Matters – an argument for synthesis.

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Abstract

This short paper looks at the current position of Citizenship teaching in terms of its statutory position and the different ways in which it can be delivered within this model. It then uses observational examples from three secondary schools to consider the different ways in which the subject is perceived. Finally, it considers how citizenship teaching might be affected by personalisation and Every Child Matters legislation.

Introduction

Citizenship became a compulsory subject in the secondary curriculum in 2002, following the recommendations of the Crick Report (Crick 1998). It is part of the PSHE curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 and becomes a National Curriculum (NC) subject in its own right at Key Stages 3 and 4. There are non-statutory guidelines for Key Stages 1 and 2 (www.nc.uk.net) and recommended Programmes of Study for Key Stages 3 and 4.

Crick fought for the content of the Citizenship orders to be minimal, and to allow schools to build their own frameworks for teaching it. The Citizenship NC document is the shortest of all the NC subject documents, and the requirements for Citizenship at KS3 or KS4 fit onto a single page. The three central strands of Citizenship education are:

- ☑ *Social and moral responsibility. Pupils learn, from the beginning, self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour, both in and beyond the class-room, towards those in authority and each other.*
- ☑ *Community involvement. Pupils learn how to become helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their neighbourhood and communities, including learning through community involvement and service.*
- ☑ *Political literacy. Pupils learn about the institutions, issues, problems and practices of our democracy and how citizens can make themselves effective in public life, locally, regionally and nationally, through skills as well as knowledge. (www.nc.net)*

Delivery

For each of these strands, a school could decide on its own method of delivery. In general, these are either as a discrete subject, through cross-curricular audit plus enhancement or by whole-school (or year group) events or activities – a citizenship ‘week’, for example. The reality was that, while some schools were very good at teaching citizenship, many were less than adequate. Of the three strands, the easiest to teach – involving institutions, processes and procedures – is political literacy. Community involvement is more difficult as it involves taking children and young people out of school confines and into the community (or organising visitors and speakers to come in). Of greatest difficulty is the teaching of social and moral responsibility.

By 2005, Ofsted’s initial inspections of Citizenship led them to conclude:

Increasingly, schools are taking National Curriculum citizenship seriously and establishing comprehensive programmes. As yet, however, pupils’ achievement and the quality of teaching compare unfavourably with established subjects and there is little that is graded very good. In one in four schools, provision is unsatisfactory. (HMI 2005)

In certain subject areas, teachers may find that they have a natural affinity to Citizenship. It is often taught by historians, or as part of the RE department’s brief. Much of the NC content is native to Business and Economics Education. In whatever subject you teach, however, you will be expected to promote citizenship and its associated skills. Increasingly, schools are seeing it as an important subject in its own right and allocating resources appropriately. In the new NC, it is expanded to include a fourth strand as a result of the Ajebo Report. This is ‘Identity and Diversity: Living Together in the UK’ and is part of the drive to promote community cohesion.

Citizenship and PHSE

Citizenship is introduced at both primary and secondary level as a part of PHSE, Personal Social and Health Education. At some point in a teaching career, a teacher is likely to be asked to teach some part of the PSHE curriculum. This is usually because, although there is an expert PSHE teacher or team of teachers who organise the PSHE curriculum, resources are stretched for its delivery. Teachers therefore need to be familiar with the National Curriculum (NC) guidance on this subject relevant to their chosen age range. Personal, Social and Health Education is, in the existing National Curriculum (www.nc.uk.net), an entitlement governed by non-statutory guidance. In the new National Curriculum (www.qca.org.uk) it will become Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education. (PSHEE). It is taught, in a variety of different ways, alongside the subjects of the National Curriculum. It has, in common with the subjects of the NC, programmes of study for each of the key stages.

Schools can therefore choose how they provide PSHE based on the national curriculum framework and guidance. Although combination of different forms of provision is recommended, all of these now have the underpinning philosophy of 'Every Child Matters' (ECM). (QCA 2000)

Measuring progress

Each key stage is marked by expectations that pupils will gain from specific understanding, experiences and interactions with others. There are no Attainment Targets but End of Key Stage statements have been set so that teachers can measure progress. Briefly, these are as follows:

End of Key Stage 1. Children can identify some feelings and be able to manage them in themselves and others. They can make simple choices about some parts of their life and know, for example, how to keep clean, eat well and the importance of exercise and rest. They can tell right from wrong, especially in cases that could be specific to them such as bullying.

End of Key Stage 2. Children have developed a sense of their own worth and that of others. They can begin to look to the future and the development of appropriate skills to manage change or for jobs. Healthy lifestyle understanding includes that related to emotional issues. Pupils have some understanding of drugs and the harm that they can do. They understand how actions have consequences and can recognise and challenge negative behaviour.

End of Key Stage 3. Young people have developed the capacity to evaluate their own achievements. They can plan targets for the future and manage money competently. They know how to stay physically and mentally healthy and have the capacity to counter negative pressure. They recognise difference and diversity and develop the skill to challenge prejudice.

End of Key Stage 4. Young people are self-aware, can set goals for the future and can respond positively to both praise and criticism. They are competent to manage their personal finances. In terms of health, they can judge the relative merits of different lifestyle choices, can assess risks and benefits and know where to go for professional advice on such issues. They understand and can discuss relationships. They are aware of diversity and challenge offensive behaviour in this context.

In secondary education (11-19) the new NC promotes a personal development (PD) curriculum. This lays down the subject matter that schools must teach, such as drug, sex and relationship education.

Cross-curriculum dimensions

Citizenship is often termed a cross curricular or cross curriculum dimension. Again, all of these are now underpinned by ECM legislation. These non-statutory dimensions are embedded in teaching wherever possible. Teachers should not be attempting to teach them in isolation, as often they are inextricably bound up with each other. To understand the global dimension and sustainable development, for example, requires a clear understanding of identity and cultural diversity. Schools have found several ways to include these dimensions, in much the same way as Citizenship was introduced in different ways. Some examples are teaching dimensions as themes so that the themes are brought out in subjects, 'off timetable' teaching, i.e. putting the curriculum to one side for a day or week to focus on groups of dimensions, and using external speakers, community representatives or visits. Some schools have decided to integrate key areas of the curriculum so that both subject and dimension are given equal opportunities. In one example, a local school is planning to integrate up to 50 per cent of the curriculum in a cross- curricular way. Integrated Humanities currently (2007) covers history, geography, literacy and thinking skills and is to have RE, PSHE, personal finance education, citizenship, drama and ICT added to it. You can see that any of these strategies presupposes teachers working across departments, integrating knowledge and sharing planning. The dimensions (QCA 2007) are as follows:

- ☑ Identity and cultural diversity. This promotes understanding of the diverse society of both the UK and the world. It includes ideas regarding tolerance, the origins of diversity and ethnicity and how and why, historically, different cultures, values and beliefs have developed. It encourages young people to think about who they are, where they have come from, and their contextual place in the society in which they live.
- ☑ Healthy lifestyles. This includes eating healthily, taking exercise and enjoying play Pupils need to meet and be comfortable with a range of professionals who can offer advice and be educated to make informed and sensible choices regarding their lifestyles.
- ☑ Community participation. This is already built into the Citizenship curriculum, but is reiterated here as understanding the community in which they live and developing a positive role within it, acting as responsible citizens.
- ☑ Enterprise education. This encourages children and young people to 'be enterprising', i.e. to take risks, tackle problems and to innovate.
- ☑ Global dimension and sustainable development. Young people should be aware of global issues and their own responsibilities within this context. They should know what is meant by sustainability and aim to develop sustainable and environ- mentally friendly lifestyles as responsible and aware citizens.
- ☑ Technology and the media. Young people should be able to treat the media in a critical way. They should have the skills to take the advantages of new technology, but the awareness not to fall into any of the dangers.
- ☑ Creativity and critical thinking. Pupils should learn to use their imagination to develop ideas and to seek creative solutions to problems and issues. They should have the capacity to learn from others and to hold and support an opinion on their own or others' work or viewpoints.

Delivery models.

There are three descriptions of delivery models contained within Appendix 1. These are good exemplars of the main methods of delivering citizenship at KS3 and KS4. In school 1, teachers are given 'carte blanche' to choose the areas of the curriculum which they feel they are best equipped to deliver. This may mean a repetition of some subject areas or concepts, but this may be seen, if it is a repetition from a different focus or direction, as reinforcement rather than overkill. Some elements of what this school teaches as 'citizenship' are not actually part of the curriculum, and Ofsted has expressed concern about this blurring of PHSE issues (such as health education) with the specific issues of the Citizenship curriculum (Ofsted, 2003).

School 2 takes a different approach – that of a citizenship 'audit'. This has also been heavily criticised (Gearon, 2003) as being inadequate. Departments are allowed to 'claim' elements of citizenship which have been taught within their subject area, and PHSE is then left to complete the process by devising a curriculum to cover the rest. The fault lines in this approach are obvious and inherent. School 2 does, however, take up the essence of what Crick intended, in that it allows for and encourages discussion – including of 'difficult' issues such as morality.

School 3 covers the content elements of the citizenship curriculum by having a clear scheme of work and allocating specific topics to specific subject areas. This has the advantage of covering the whole curriculum but, as no monitoring or assessment is built in, the type and depth of coverage can be uneven. Cairns (2003) sees assessment as the vehicle for ensuring that depth has been maintained whereas other commentators (Perkins, 1993; MacGilchrist et al, 2005; Hutchin, 2006) are more concerned about monitoring input than checking output.

Every Child Matters

The philosophy of Every Child Matters is a natural manifestation of the idea with the child set at the centre of service provision. The concept of personalisation recognises that each learner is different, and that the 'hydra curriculum' (Lewis 2007), where as each subject is cut another one or more takes its place, is no longer sustainable. The 2007 QCA curriculum review has thus put less emphasis on subject and the new National Curriculum places more responsibility on the learner. Learners are more central and are expected to develop their own skill sets within descriptors that include teamwork, creativity and reflection on their own learning. According to the Director of Curriculum at QCA, Mick Waters, this means that:

Curriculum subjects need to emphasise the possible routes through schooling and the application of specific learning in the world ... [This means] ... rejuvenating content within the curriculum to use subject disciplines to develop skills and personal qualities in context, and demonstrate links between the traditional and emerging subjects. (Waters 2007)

The idea of personalised learning in an educational context is not a new one as Ken Boston, Chief Executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), explains:

The learning theory on which personalized learning is based goes back 30 years: that for each individual in each domain of learning there is a zone of proximal development – or achievable challenge – in which learning can occur. Teaching is effective only when it is sufficiently precise and focused to build directly on what the individual pupil knows, and takes him or her to the next level of attainment. If the learning task is beyond the zone of achievable challenge, no learning will occur and the child will be frustrated and disaffected. If the learning task is too easy and does not extend the child, again no learning will occur, and the child will be bored. (Boston 2006)

It is, however, a concept that has been readily adopted by politicians in recent years. David Miliband, the Minister for School Standards in 2004, said the government's aim was to make personalised learning a key feature of the education system. He claimed that:

... decisive progress in educational standards occurs where every child matters; careful attention is paid to their individual learning styles, motivations, and needs; there is rigorous use of pupil target setting linked to high-quality assessment; lessons are well placed and enjoyable; and pupils are supported by partnership with others well beyond the classroom. (Miliband 2004)

The concept has also been promoted by the then Schools Minister Jacqui Smith and Prime Minister Tony Blair and has found its way into several government proposals such as the White Papers Higher standards, better schools for all (DfES 2005) and Further Education: raising skills, improving life chances (DfES 2006). In 2006, on the launch of the Education and Inspections Bill, Education Minister Ruth Kelly said:

Our best schools have been personalizing learning with great success for many years. It is the key to raising standards and the Education and Inspections Bill has at its core a commitment to ensure every school is delivering for every child.

Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI), has produced a report (Gilbert 2006) that outlines the skills required for and benefits to be gained from personalised learning. The skills are:

- ☑ analysing and using data, with a specific focus on assessment for learning;
- ☑ understanding how children learn and develop;
- ☑ working with other adults (including parents and other children's service professionals);
- ☑ engaging pupils as active participants in learning.

She adds that personalised learning is learner centred, knowledge centred and assessment centred and:

Put simply, personalizing learning and teaching means taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each child's and young person's learning, in order that all are able to progress, achieve and participate. (Gilbert 2006: 6)

It is an idea that has resonance in all public services where the 'person' is at the centre of service provision, particularly with multi-agency services.

To truly deliver personalised learning, you need both a flexible curriculum and the ability to access a wide range of teaching and learning strategies, including groupwork, mentoring, involving parents and community and, indeed, involving children and young people directly in their own learning. These are all provided by and through the Citizenship curriculum. The case can therefore be made that, whilst personalisation may not make it into the classroom, ECM surely will, and Citizenship and ECM can together deliver the personalised curriculum.

The future

The RSA (Royal Society of Arts) Examinations Board has been a long-time champion and promoter of the skills required of citizenship and the outcomes required of ECM. One of its innovations is the Opening Minds curriculum which has been developed as a way of making the curriculum more flexible and more responsive to the needs of individual learners. According to the RSA:

The National Curriculum is information-driven and struggles to cope with the competing demands of subjects and the rapidly increasing volume of information. Meanwhile, it is neglecting the broad range of skills for life including skills for learning, the ability to manage people and situations well, and good citizenship.

Opening Minds argues that these life-skills need to be taught directly and specifically. It starts from a competence framework that aims to meet the individual's needs in the personal, social and employment worlds. (RSA 2007).

Opening Minds describes five competence categories. Each category contains a number of individual strands, expressed in terms of student progress and outcomes. They include:

- ☑ Competences for Learning – taking account of their own learning style and managing learning creative, being able to handle and use ICT.
- ☑ Competences for Citizenship – developing an understanding of ethics and values and their own place and role in society along with an understanding and respect for cultural diversity. Included in this competency are also personal financial management and the social implications of technology.
- ☑ Competences for Relating to People – understanding how to relate to other people in varying contexts, how to operate in teams, how to develop other people, how to communicate effectively and how to manage relationships, stress and conflict.
- ☑ Competences for Managing Situations – such as managing their own time, managing change, managing risk and uncertainty and being entrepreneurial and initiative-taking.
- ☑ Competences for Managing Information – developing techniques for accessing, evaluating, differentiating, analysing and synthesising information and developing reflection and critical judgement. (RSA 2007).

This innovation has been the subject of a three-year pilot study, which has already shown some significant improvements:

*... the schools involved have experienced some quite stunning improvements in both student and teacher motivation and solid gains in student performance. The benefits seen included:
less low-level disruption in the classroom
students are more mature and more motivated, ready to learn
students and teachers enjoy the Opening Minds lessons. (RSA 2007)*

Each of these can bring a different element to the delivery of Citizenship and the extra boost it has received from the ECM agenda.

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National curriculum documents are available for the current NC at: www.nc.uk.net, and for the new NC at: curriculum.qca.org.uk and www.qca.org.uk/curriculum. Follow links to cross- curriculum dimensions, citizenship, PSHE etc.

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Appendix 1

Case Study 1

This report contains details of how Citizenship is currently taught in School 1. It also includes details of my involvement with the subject and I have included copies of the Citizenship lesson plans and Scheme of Work that I have produced and taught to a group of year 7 pupils. I taught a series of 5 lessons for a top set year 7 group. I was given carte blanche on which subjects to choose and therefore I decided to introduce a new idea by allowing the pupils to vote for which areas they wanted to cover. The pupils decided to look at animal rights and an introduction to personal finance. I also followed the National Curriculum and my teaching was aimed at developing pupils ability to argue and debate and see various points of view. They were also encouraged to use thinking and communication skills through use of my lesson plans.

Citizenship is taught throughout School 1 and is built upon the knowledge which they will have learnt in Key Stage 2 whilst at primary school. Evidence of Key Stage 2 Citizenship has been collected through primary school observations. Whilst on these primary visits I found evidence in both schools that Citizenship does indeed take place. Having had some prior experience of Citizenship in primary School 1 has decided to implement set Citizenship timetabling for all pupils. The year 7 pupils, for example, are involved in 2 set timetabled lessons per week and a range of open topics are explored. Examples of such are: wealth, poverty, pollution, teenage health issues, money matters etc. There are two dedicated full time teachers in the school whose main responsibility is the teaching of Citizenship and Health Education.

In the primary school observed, they choose to teach Citizenship across the curriculum and a record is sent round each term in order to collect department contributions to the National Curriculum. The department looks at the Curriculum requirements and then each area ticks the boxes to say what they have covered off. Many subjects are thus able to add widely to the overall contribution of Citizenship within the school. They do implement a series of PSHE lessons and this is done throughout the school with each year group receiving one hour per week.

Case Study 2

Citizenship in School 2 aims to 'equip young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in public life'. Citizenship made students understand their roles, responsibilities, duties and freedoms as a citizen. Skills and knowledge such as these are not found in other subjects such as Business Studies but yet are essential to the development of positive, mature students for the future. There are school schemes of work for citizenship that follow the National Curriculum. All the activities are interactive for students and made them question the beliefs and understanding of situations and topics not normally touched on.

To introduce a topic team teaching is used for the first lesson so two teachers work with the students to gather their understanding and build confidence with a new topic. These are often 'difficult' topics such as morality. These are often topics which many of the students in the class are unsure of at first but after further discussions and example case studies can achieve a rapid improvement and much more student participation in the subject. Case studies help the students to see the difference between what is morally

right and wrong and it is interesting to see the variety of viewpoints within one class. Students later on lead their own debate where all of the class are encouraged to participate.

As part of the citizenship curriculum the class also studies the environment. When looking at this topic students are made to think about the consequences of their actions and how ethical dilemmas relate to them such as recycling and child labour, again here case studies such as Nike were used. As a group they consider their actions and make suggestions that contribute to sustainable environmental practices.

Case Study 3

School 3 operates a 2 week timetable, where the pupils had a one hour lesson of citizenship every 2 weeks, with all the elements covered within a clear scheme of work. Although this ensured that there was planned coverage of all the elements, it did not ensure any sort of quality of approach, as there was no built in assessment or monitoring regime. Teachers were thus able to cover their own 'hobby horses' in greater detail, and avoid some of the more prickly issues.

However, pupils were encouraged to discuss and debate issues at great length, and this often led to in-depth explorations of topics.

Some of the elements of citizenship are also applied in cross curricular dimensions when planning activities for lessons.