

Summary of the strategic consultation on developing Education for Citizenship in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Jurys Inn, Birmingham

November 28-30, 2002

1. Aim & participants

This year's Four Nations conference took the form of a consultation, and aimed to identify, explore and respond to the social, institutional and professional challenges posed by education for citizenship across the UK. The participants included (i) practitioners from schools, colleges and universities; and (ii) professionals from government and specialist organisations concerned with making, shaping and delivering policy on citizenship education.

2. Framework

Jan Newton, Advisor on Citizenship to the DfES

In her opening keynote, Jan Newton¹ addressed the central task of the consultation.

She developed her theme around three questions:

1. What are the critical social concerns facing citizenship in the UK?
2. How might schools respond to these concerns / challenges?
3. What further help do schools need to tackle these concerns?

Critical Concerns

Schools are affected by the wider social concerns that face us all. There is, for example, a pressing need to respond creatively to current concerns such as:

- Issues of diversity - ethnic, religious and cultural
- The challenges of social inequality, exclusion and fragmentation
- Tensions and conflicts around values
- The implications of globalisation
- Disaffection with political and democratic processes

¹ also formerly Chief Executive of the Citizenship Foundation

- The distortions of assessing achievement against what is readily measured

School Responses

In spite of the differences between the four nations, these critical concerns about community, citizenship and society constitute a set of core challenges to schools across the UK.

In responding to these challenges schools are likely to be most effective when they focus on what they can do to make a real difference to their pupils' learning and to the quality of life in and beyond the school. Schools need to be clear about the link between citizenship education and the broader aims and values of the taught and whole curriculum. It helps when this commitment is made public. Some schools are now producing a Citizenship Manifesto¹ in which they spell out the *entitlement* to citizenship education that their students will enjoy.

Citizenship and community awareness involve knowledge and understanding. This will include a basic grasp of human rights, the law, and the justice system. It also includes an awareness of how resources are generated and distributed.

The culture of the school should reflect and affirm the principles and practices of responsible citizenship. The underlying values of the school will influence behaviour and relationships across the life of the school and will underpin the rules and customs by which they are affirmed.

Citizenship in a participative democracy calls for an open, listening classroom and opportunities for genuine participation at every level. Above all, citizenship education is about including everyone in the life and learning of the school and its wider communities. Students need opportunities to discuss controversial issues and to practice advocacy and to engage in reflective action in and beyond the school. This involves creating and developing partnerships with parents, community organisations, NGOs and local and national government.

Teachers are increasingly aware of the challenge of developing new methods of assessment and evaluation that move away from traditional written and oral tests. In England the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is encouraging those teaching citizenship to pioneer fresh approaches to evaluation that will have implications for assessment in other subject areas as well. We need to combat the culture of measuring a 'good school' only by its exam results.

¹ An idea first mooted by Tony Breslin, current Chief Executive of the Citizenship Foundation.

Further Help

Schools cannot address the social and educational concerns of citizenship on their own.

For example:

- The structural causes of poverty and social disadvantage need to be addressed on a wider front.
- There need to be adequate resources available for education in general and citizenship education in particular.
- Across the UK there is clearly a concern among educators about adequate training – initial teacher education and Continuing Professional Development – for those charged with the task of teaching and coordinating citizenship education.

Conclusion

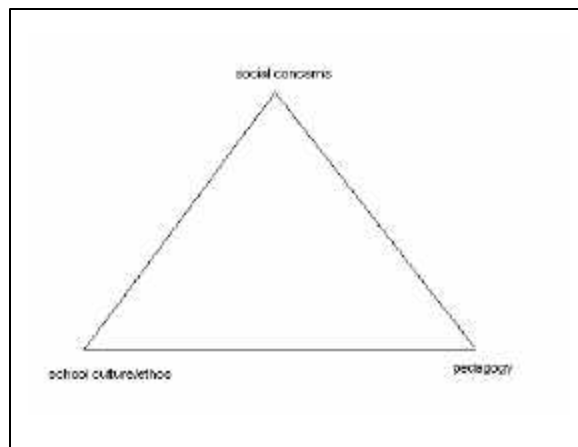
Effective citizenship education – delivered in a variety of ways – can help address some of the social concerns that face us all. We must, however, be realistic and not set schools up to fail through overloading our expectations upon them. We need also to remind ourselves that some of the most effective citizenship education will take place outside the school.

The question is: Can we pool our experience and expertise across the UK to give greater support to schools that are grappling with the challenges and complexities of these tough and important concerns?

3. The Citizenship Triangle

Bart McGettrick, Professor of Education, University of Glasgow

Professor Bart McGettrick set out the framework for the consultation in the form of a triangle of three related issues: (1) social concerns; (2) the school culture / ethos; (3) pedagogy (see also Appendix 1).



These issues were discussed first in Home Nation Groups and then shared in Mixed Nation Groups. Shared concerns between the nations were first identified (Appendix 2) and subsequently considered in more detail. There was general support for the graphic presentation of shared concerns (Appendix 3.)

Each Home Nation group then reviewed its position and established an agenda for further action within and beyond the home nation. These are set out below.

4. Final Reports from the Home Nations

4.1 Capacity Building in Wales:

Anne Whipp, Curriculum and Teacher Assessment Manager, ACCAC

We decided to concentrate first and foremost on tasks that we would look at within Wales because we thought that there was a need for capacity building there. Our tasks, then, are: -

i. Linking formal with informal education

First, we need to cross the divide between formal and informal education. We have benefited very much from being able to talk with others, for example, from the youth agency. Our focus must be on the experiences offered to *the learner* from whatever source they come. Our first task, then, is to bring people together across the formal and informal divide and to talk about what we are doing and how we can be mutually supportive.

ii. Set up a conference planning team

Our second task is to set up a planning team for a conference in Wales in 2003. The aim of the conference would be to raise awareness within Wales for the work that is currently being done and to build capacity to develop future work in this area. In Wales PSE will be statutory from 2003, and this will offer an incentive and a framework for our work.

iii. Work with the Welsh Assembly

Our third task is to work with the Welsh Assembly Government, and to relate this to the decision to make PSE statutory in Wales. We shall explore ways in which the work will link with the prospective statutory requirements for PSE in schools across the country. Among a range of competing initiatives we need to identify reasons why this work is a priority, along with the motivation and resources to support it.

iv. Work with others nations of the UK

- (1) **Scotland:** We shall explore with Scottish representatives the possibility of inviting Scottish delegates to our conference to share their work with us (including the group that visited Maine, USA, in October) and to reflect with us on our own Welsh agenda.
- (2) The **Citizenship Manifesto** is an idea from England that we shall explore further.
- (3) We are looking at the range of citizenship initiatives in Northern Ireland to help us identify and develop relevant activities in Wales.

4.2 Scotland: National Priorities Framework

Denis Stewart, Asst Chief Executive, Education Development, LTS

The Scottish delegation has found this consultation a really good experience. We talked about three things:-

i. The new National Priorities framework in Scotland

This is central to the Scottish educational scene. From it flows our school improvement framework and our national priorities, one of which – Priority 4 - is entitled *Values and Citizenship*. Other relevant priorities are *Achievement and Attainment* and *Skills for Life*. *Inclusion and Equality* are also key issues and, crucially, the priority described as the *Framework for Learning*, which concerns support for professional development and learning.

ii. The National Debate on the Future of Education

This has been going on since March this year. The Scottish Executive initiated this debate – the first in living memory – as an exercise in democratic participation. Large numbers of people are actively involved in discussing issues and providing the Executive with their thoughts on the longer-term future of school education in Scotland and the purposes of education in Scotland.

iii. The National Statement on *Education for Citizenship*

This statement is now in the form of a green paper / document.² We are encouraging schools, teachers and head-teachers and many others involved in educating young people to develop their practice and to do this through a process of discussion, reflection and action. To this end we are encouraging discussion, developing networks and addressing a range of issues that we hope will be helpful to teachers and schools.

² Participants may contact Denis Stewart for a copy c/o Learning & Teaching Scotland, Gardyne Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1NY

iv. Tasks.

Our tasks now are to:

- (1) further engage people throughout Scotland in talking and thinking about vision, values and practical issues related to citizenship, including the links between ethos and citizenship, and ethos and attainment.
- (2) develop ways of supporting and assisting in the professional development of those concerned with citizenship education including: teachers, managers and other school staff and community partners around a shared understanding of what citizenship actually is throughout Scotland.
- (3) revisit the link between values and education generally. One example is the Ethos Network in Scotland.
- (4) share with other nations in developing some indicators of what effective citizenship is UK-wide, with a view to creating a charter-mark or something similar which relates to citizenship.

4.3 Northern Ireland: Nine-point Programme

Carmel Gallagher, Development Manager 4-14, CCEA

i. Northern Ireland: Home Agenda

We set ourselves nine tasks in Northern Ireland and will:

- (1) organise some *senior management training* – in order to affect the ethos of the whole school - through our regional training unit.
- (2) energise our *initial teacher training*
- (3) develop the field of *evaluation*. Alan Smith of the University of Ulster will take that forward with others
- (4) initiate more cross-sectoral work through convening a cross-sectorial group.
- (5) write a shared ‘Common Commitment’ (similar to ‘manifesto’) as a public statement in Northern Ireland.
- (6) foster the link between citizenship and religious education (managed through a separate department)
- (7) strengthen our links with the Human Rights Commission.
- (8) further develop e-learning linked with citizenship education
- (9) develop, promote and make more coherent the many opportunities for accreditation through different awards schemes

ii. Shared agenda

- 1) **Research and Evaluation:** We propose a UK network on research and evaluation whereby we should all learn from each other
- 2) **Initial teacher training:** We would like to put out feelers for help on that, and also for help on models for inset training.
- 3) **Next year's Four Nations' consultation:** We would (with appropriate help) be pleased to host this in Northern Ireland. We'd like to base it on practical examples of citizenship in action, and particularly on approaches to assessment that have been or are being pioneered.

4.4 England: Building on a Statutory Subject

*John Potter, Education Consultant*⁴

Home Agenda

i. Linking standards with values

We agreed that the framework for this consultation - the triangle of issues, ethos and pedagogy – has a crucial part to play in citizenship education and education reform. One of the greatest challenges in English education, not just in citizenship education, is the split between the two competing perspectives of *standards* and *values*. The *standards perspective* focuses on assessment through measuring things that are easily measured, particularly through exams and attainment targets. The *values perspective*, on the other hand, is concerned with motivation, relationships and personal and civic purpose. There is increasing evidence from recent research that these two guiding principles are complementary rather than opposed to one another. Citizenship education stands at the meeting point between the two agendas and as such has a central role in educational reform.

ii. A Campaign

We intend to promote citizenship – now a statutory requirement in secondary schools - as the means and occasion to encourage a campaign for education that consciously combines standards with personal and civic values. The insights that we have gained from the 'citizenship triangle' offer clear and attainable goals for such an initiative. We have provisionally identified the outline of such a strategy, the key issues and the target audiences. We seek forward advice and support from colleagues across the UK on this initiative.

⁴ In the absence of Jan Campbell, Principal Officer PSHE, QCA, who was unwell, the Saturday morning session of the English Group was chaired by John Potter, together with Ruth Deakin Crick.

iii. Shared Agenda

- 1) **Campaign:** We plan to share with colleagues across the UK our vision of citizenship education as a platform for educational reform.
- 2) **Exchange of ideas and people:** We would welcome the systematic exchange of *ideas* (website, email etc) and *people* who are actively involved in aspects of citizenship education. This includes evaluation, research and innovative practice and process.
- 3) **Shared resources / publications:** There is a need for greater coherence and accessibility to ideas, training and resources for citizenship education. Shared resources and commonly agreed frameworks for assessment and evaluation could contribute to such clarity and coherence. For example models of effective community partnerships for citizenship education are emerging in Stoke, York, and Barking. This points to an obvious opportunity to share good practice across the UK.

5. Gordon Cook Foundation: Two Initiatives

5.1 Website – BeCaL www.becal.net

Ruth Deakin Crick, Research Fellow, Citizenship and Lifelong Learning, University of Bristol

The Gordon Cook Foundation has supported Bristol University in developing the BeCaL Website. The site already exists; it is an information gateway for belief, culture and learning. It links values and learning with citizenship and education. It offers a portal through which people can come to find a whole range of resources and links to other databases. There are four sections:

- 1) **An academic bibliography** with - at the moment - about 10,000 references in it relating to the field of values and learning, broadly conceived.
- 2) **Databases** linked to other websites on related themes.
- 3) **A toolkit for teachers:** There is a whole range of practical, hands-on tools that teachers can use in class to address values across the curriculum in different ways. We are seeking further such resources.
- 4) **A virtual learning centre:** The site is designed to for school leaders and governors who want to engage with integrating values and learning. It involves six steps: looking at vision, then values, then policies and ethos, then teaching and learning, then assessment and reporting. There's quite a lot in it already that can be developed and added to and it is attempting also to integrate this concept of values with learning, including interactive learning tasks for people to do online.

Further links:

There are other web projects that will interface with BeCaL, including:

- (1) A major partnership, funded by the Teacher Training Agency, working with the higher education institutions in England that are training the citizenship teachers.
- (2) The Values Education Council

5.2 impetus Awards Scheme

Sim Khera, Project Manager, impetus, Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust

The **impetus** Awards (formerly *Citizenship Values Awards*) scheme has been running in eight pilot areas throughout the UK since January 2002, and is administered through a partnership between the Institute for Global Ethics UK Trust and the Citizenship Foundation, supported by the Comino and Gordon Cook Foundations, the Department for Education and Skills, Home Office, and Lord Chancellor's Department.

We have now completed a very successful pilot², and up to 100 schools and 45 youth organisations have shared and celebrated their good practice in values-based approaches to education for citizenship, in the context of the Human Rights Act.

The aim of the scheme is to encourage young people to explore what our shared values are, and should be, and to help them develop the confidence and courage to put those values into practice in their communities.

We want to support, promote and encourage: -

- Increased awareness of shared rights and responsibilities
- Exploration of the underlying values of citizenship education and the Human Rights Act, in practical, innovative and creative ways
- Whole institution involvement
- Engagement with the local community.

This is a free awards scheme for schools and youth organisations, and is designed to be easy to enter and to build on existing work and projects. After its phased regional launch in 2003, it will run as a rolling programme in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, coordinated within each of these home nations according to local needs.

6. Future Plans

Our aim is to:

- 5.1 bring together the key players from the Four Nations to map out our agenda for the coming year.
- 5.2 publish a *Prospectus* of the recommendations and findings of the three Four Nations conferences and to identify the agenda that arose from the Birmingham consultation.
- 5.3 develop a website and, possibly, further hard copy to support the continuing work.

The Birmingham conference was the final in its present form in the annual series of Four Nations conferences sponsored by the Gordon Cook Foundation. Much appreciation was expressed for the Foundation's support of the three events convened since 2000. The consensus arrived at in Birmingham indicates that the series has been found to be extremely valuable, and Northern Ireland have offered to host, with appropriate help, a conference in 2003. The Gordon Cook Foundation will therefore be discussing with representative bodies in each of the Home Nations, a transition strategy from its 100% sponsorship of the conferences to a sharing of the funding costs with others, with a view to future events becoming self-sustaining.

Bill Gatherer (Gordon Cook Foundation)

Sheila Bloom (IGE UK Trust)

Bart McGettrick (Gordon Cook Foundation)

John Potter (Education Consultant)

² evaluated by the School of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University

Appendix 1

Social Issues	Ethos / culture	Pedagogy
Beyond the Human Rights Act?	Does ethos matter?	Children have memories
Beyond national identity?	Beyond policies of inclusion?	Every child is special
Beyond devolution?	Beyond government	Every child is a citizen
Beyond personal responsibility?	Beyond personal interests?	Children of hope ...

Appendix 2

Social concerns	School Ethos	Pedagogy
1 <i>Diversity & inclusion</i>	Citizenship as a challenge to ethos	Culture of critical reflective practice
2 Lack of engagement	<i>Leadership</i>	Substantial training
3 Participation	Shared responsibility in & beyond school	<i>Professional focus on learning</i>
4 <i>Disaffection</i>	Trust	Teacher education –confidence
5 Anomie & alienation v. Responsible involvement	Participative & inclusive / with shared values	<i>Trusting and learner- centred professionals</i>
6 Fragmentation	<i>A community learning (for change)</i>	Enriching educators
7. <i>Fragmented values</i>	Consultative & participative	Senior Management Training
8 Division & inequality	<i>Human₁₂ rights / responsibilities</i>	

Appendix 3

