

Active Citizenship and Young People: Opportunities, Experiences and Challenges In and Beyond School Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study: Fourth Annual Report

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National Foundation for Educational Research

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education and Skills.

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Executive summary

Introduction

The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), aims to identify, measure and evaluate the extent to which effective practice in citizenship education develops in schools¹. The study began in 2001 and will conclude in 2009². The report sets out the findings from the second longitudinal survey and visits to ten case-study schools.

Key findings

Approaches to citizenship education in schools: an update

The analysis provides an important update with regard to the status and practice of citizenship education in schools. The findings from this update are listed in brief below:

- Analysis suggests that the main change in approach to citizenship education in schools has been an increased focus on curriculum aspects of citizenship education provision. The proportion of schools described as progressing and implicit, in the typology of schools developed in 2003, remained largely unchanged in 2005. However, the proportion of schools described as minimalist decreased, while the proportion described as focused increased.
- Schools continued to use a variety of citizenship delivery models. However, there was a notable increase in the use of dedicated timeslots and in the use of assembly time.
- Teachers were more likely in 2005, than in 2003, to believe that citizenship education was best approached as a specific subject and through extra-curricular activities.
- School leaders and teachers were more familiar with a range of key documents related to citizenship education in 2005 than in 2003.

¹ For further information about the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study and details of previous annual reports visit www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/citizenship

² The second longitudinal survey involved a nationally representative sample of 91 schools, and reports the responses of 81 school leaders, 301 teachers and 13,643 students in Year 9 (age 14 to 15). The case-study school visits involved in-depth interviews with Key Stage 3 and 4 students, teachers and senior managers. The data was collected in the academic year 2004-2005.

- Teacher confidence in teaching citizenship-related topics saw a moderate increase in 2005, although overall confidence levels remained relatively low.
- Students were more aware of citizenship in 2005 than in 2003. The main ways in which they reported learning about citizenship was: through personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious education, as a discrete subject and tutor groups.
- Descriptions of citizenship education that encompassed ‘active’ components, such as voting and politics, were relatively uncommon amongst students, although a sizeable proportion identified the importance of belonging to the community.
- Although traditional teaching and learning methods continued to dominate in citizenship and other subjects, a range of more active methods were also used. There was also an increase in the use of computers, the internet and external agencies, and a decrease in the use of textbooks.
- There was a substantial increase in the proportion of schools with an assessment policy for citizenship education in 2005, and the use of formal assessment methods was considerably more widespread than in 2003.
- Teachers received more training in citizenship in 2005 than in 2003. Despite this there was a high demand for further training in relation to subject matter, assessment and reporting and teaching methods.[11]
- The main challenges to citizenship education were felt, by school leaders and teachers, to include time pressure, assessment, the status of citizenship and teachers’ subject expertise with student engagement and participation seen as lesser challenges.

Background

The report has a specific focus on active citizenship and young people. This is in direct response to a growing recognition of the link between citizenship education in schools and wider policy initiatives which attempt to increase the participation and engagement of children and young people in society. The report uses the latest data from the Study in three ways: firstly, to update the progress of the development of citizenship education, as an active practice, in schools generally from 2003 to 2005; secondly, to probe the nature and extent of the opportunities and experiences that students have had in relation to citizenship as an active practice in their schools, and in wider communities (i.e. in contexts beyond school) and the challenges involved in providing such opportunities and experiences; and, thirdly, to explore the readiness of citizenship education practice in schools to contribute to wider policy initiatives, notably the make a positive contribution outcome in the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme and civil renewal action plan. The report’s discussion and conclusions focus on the key challenges to the promotion of active citizenship in and beyond school.

Potential for citizenship education as an active practice to take place in and beyond school

The findings from the study highlight the considerable potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, (a) to take place, especially in schools, with links to wider communities, and (b) to contribute to the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme action plan. They suggest that a number of the key underlying factors, which foster and sustain active citizenship, were already evident to, and supported by, students in their daily lives in and beyond school.

These factors include:

- **Sense of community and belonging** – students valued the concept of community and welcome the sense of belonging that being part of a community can bring. They want to be part of strong, safe communities that are based on networks and friendships that foster trust, concern for individual well-being, a sense of self-worth and that encourage individual and collective social responsibility.
- **Attachment to the school community** – the majority of students viewed school as the main social and participative community in their lives. This was because of the amount of time they spend there and the friendships they make and networks they join. They saw school as providing a social and participative experience as much as an educational one.
- **Attachment to wider communities** – though wider communities, particularly the local community, were not the major community in which young people participated, they still valued being part of this wider community. They cared about what happened in the wider community and valued being part of family and neighbourhood networks, where these were present.
- **Having a voice** – young people believed that they should have a voice on matters that affect them, especially in school. Most students said that whilst it might not always be appropriate for them to have the final say, they valued being involved in decision making and wanted to be consulted about issues that affect them. They were keen to show that they can use their voice, both individually and collectively, in a responsible manner.
- **Making a contribution** – most young people were keen to make an active and responsible contribution to the communities to which they belong, particularly the school community. Many students, particularly older ones, felt that they should take responsibility for themselves, their schools and their peers. They demonstrated considerable sophistication in their views of the need for a balance between the granting of rights and exercise of responsibilities. However, they also revealed a clearer awareness of their rights than of their responsibilities.
- **Linking opportunities and experiences** – young people made links between their opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in different contexts. They were able to compare and contrast their experiences between, as well as within, schools, and between school and

their local community. They were sensitive to change in their opportunities and experiences of active citizenship, in these different contexts.

These factors are reinforced through educational policy and legal statute, notably:

- **Statutory citizenship education in schools** – schools have a legal duty to ensure that all students receive their statutory entitlement to citizenship education. The aims and processes of the new subject, as detailed in the curriculum Order, afford considerable potential for the development of citizenship as an active practice. Most students have the capacity to and show an interest in taking part and making a contribution through citizenship education, as an active practice, in their schools.
- **New statutory frameworks for the inspection of schools and of children’s services** – these new frameworks encourage schools and those in charge of children’s services at a local level to ensure that children and young people have a voice, feel safe, secure and valued and are involved in making a positive contribution, in partnership with others. They also actively involve children and young people in the actual review and inspection process in schools and local communities. The frameworks support the change for children programme action plan.

Recognition and realisation of potential for active citizenship in practice

Despite the existence of supportive student attitudes and legislative frameworks the evidence from the survey data and case-study schools suggests that the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, to take place is only partially being realised at present. This, in turn, limits the potential of citizenship education to contribute to the new *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme.

The evidence in the report confirms that although students currently have opportunities and experiences of active citizenship, in general, these:

- were largely confined to the **school context**;
- comprised largely **‘horizontal’** rather than **‘vertical’** participation and engagement³. They concerned opportunities to **take part** rather than opportunities to effect **real change** by engaging with the decision-making process;
- did not often **connect** opportunities and experiences in the curriculum with those in the whole school;

³ Jochum *et al.*, 2005 draw a distinction between ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ participation. ‘Horizontal’ participation relates to participation in community activities, charities, sports clubs, associations and is less formal. ‘Vertical’ participation, meanwhile, relates to participation in political affairs, including participation in political processes and governance related to the decision-making processes in institutions and in society.

- often only involved **certain groups** of students rather than all students, despite an invitation for all students to participate;
- did not regularly link to **wider contexts** and communities beyond school.

The case-study school experiences also highlighted the variation in the contribution of citizenship, as a national curriculum subject, to students's opportunities and experiences of active citizenship. While there was evidence of considerable efforts underway in some schools to make the contribution real and meaningful for students, this was not the case in all schools.

Recommendations concerning active citizenship for audiences involved in citizenship education

The findings suggest a number of recommendations that the main audiences currently involved in citizenship education at a range of levels should consider in order to take active citizenship forward. Some of the recommendations for policy makers at national and local level, practitioners in schools and representatives of the wider community are listed below. There is a particular focus on four key measures that help to lay secure foundations for active citizenship in schools:

Recommendations for policy makers at national and local level

- Increase awareness and understanding about citizenship as an active practice and of the **key contribution** that schools can make in laying the foundations for such practice.
- Publicise and make **more explicit** the links between the promotion of active citizenship in schools and the wider participation and civil renewal agendas, notably *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme action plan, and emphasise the particular contribution of the citizenship curriculum to participation.
- Work to provide a more **coordinated** approach to the development of citizenship as an active practice, particularly at a **local level**, that links schools with key community partners and organisations, and affords more **'joined up'** opportunities and experiences for young people.
- Ensure that young people have opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in the community that offer experiences of both 'horizontal' and 'vertical' participation and enable **real engagement** with decision-making processes.
- Provide requisite **training and resources**, particularly in schools for school leaders, citizenship coordinators and teachers, as well as for students. This training should focus on improving the understanding of citizenship as an active practice, and increase the confidence of its delivery through more active learning and teaching approaches.
- Work in **multi-agency partnerships**, involving schools, to tackle the challenge of encouraging increased engagement and participation from those **students** who are underachieving, disaffected or socially excluded.

Recommendations for school leaders, coordinators and teachers

The cumulative practice from the case-study schools identifies four measures that were important in enhancing the active citizenship opportunities and experiences for students in those schools. These four measures suggest that in order to improve the chances of laying secure foundations for citizenship as an active practice within the curriculum, with links to the whole school and wider community beyond, schools should consider ensuring that they:

1. Build and maintain a strong sense of belonging to the school community (with links to belonging to the local community).

There are a number of measures that schools can take to develop a sense of belonging for students within the school community including:

- Giving students a voice.
- Creating a climate for mutual respect between teachers and students.
- Ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all students.
- Dividing the school community up into smaller communities.
- Improving the quality of the school buildings and facilities that students use.

2. Develop an ongoing, active focus in the delivery of citizenship education

This includes:

- ‘Bringing to life’ citizenship-related lessons for students.
- Providing an equal focus on rights and responsibilities.
- Encouraging students to be critically active and reflective.
- Ensuring citizenship-related lessons and topics are sufficiently differentiated.
- Considering the skills and knowledge development needs of students and teachers.

3. Assist students to participate in decision-making processes in school and beyond, on a regular basis

Schools need to do more to help students to:

- Understand why having a voice is important.
- Use their voice effectively.
- Understand the mechanisms and processes of influencing policy and change.

- Believe that their voice will be heard, taken seriously and acted upon.
- 4. Provide sufficient training and development in relation to active citizenship for teachers and students.**

At present, many citizenship coordinators and teachers regard active citizenship as something distinct from the citizenship curriculum, and are struggling with a sense of what it means and how it should be approached. Training is needed to help develop a view of active citizenship as an integral feature of learning and teaching in citizenship education. Training of teachers should take place in parallel with that of students.

Recommendations for representatives of the wider community

- Recognise that the provision of opportunities and experiences of active citizenship is **not solely** the responsibility of schools. Schools can make a major contribution but they cannot develop citizenship as an active practice effectively without the support of those in the wider community.
- **Take responsibility** for their actions and the impact that these have on young people. Students in the case-study schools were influenced by the attitudes and behaviour of those in their families, neighbourhoods and those they saw in the media. Work hard to promote a strong sense of belonging, particularly to the local neighbourhood or community, and actively involve young people in that process.
- Recognise that for many students the **school** is their main social and participative community and learn from best practice in how schools foster a sense of belonging to the school community. Those in the wider community can benefit from working with and in schools and sharing and promoting good practice.
- **Encourage** students to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills that they develop through active citizenship in schools by providing them with further opportunities for active involvement and participation in communities beyond school, that show them that their contribution is important and valued.

Moving forward

The findings from the fourth annual report underline the potency of the Study in helping to identify, measure and evaluate the extent to which effective practice in citizenship education is developing in schools. Though these are interim findings they help to shed more light on the progress of citizenship education in schools and, in particular, on how well practitioners are defining and approaching citizenship as an active practice. They suggest recommendations for key audiences involved in citizenship education. They also prepare the ground for further analysis of active citizenship in future surveys and school case-study visits through the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study.

1. Introduction, context and report focus

1.1 Citizenship in schools

The advent of citizenship as part of the statutory curriculum in schools in England is a recent phenomenon. It has its roots in the report of the government appointed Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools, which was set up in 1997 and chaired by Professor (now Sir) Bernard Crick (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), 1998; Kerr, 1999a and b). The Citizenship Advisory Group defined *'effective education for citizenship'* as comprising three separate but interrelated strands. These are to be developed progressively through a young person's education and training experiences, from pre-school to adulthood (DfEE, 1998, pp. 11–13) namely:

- **social and moral responsibility:** *'...children learning from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other'*. This strand acts as an essential pre-condition for the other two strands;
- **community involvement:** *'...learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community'*. This, of course, like the other two strands, is by no means limited to children's time in school;
- **political literacy:** *'...pupils learning about, and how to make themselves effective in, public life through knowledge, skills and values'*. Here the term 'public life' is used in its broadest sense to encompass realistic knowledge of, and preparation for, conflict resolution and decision making, whether involving issues at local, national, European or global level.

The Citizenship Advisory Group's report was well received in a public consultation and, following the revision of the National Curriculum in 2000, citizenship education was incorporated for the first time in the school curriculum between the ages 5 and 16 (QCA, 1999). Citizenship is currently part of a **non-statutory framework** for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship at Key Stages 1 and 2 (pupils age 5 to 11) and a new **statutory foundation subject** at Key Stages 3 and 4 (students age 11 to 16). Schools have therefore been legally required to deliver citizenship education for all 11 to 16 year olds from September 2002.

The new citizenship Order at Key Stages 3 and 4 has programmes of study for citizenship and an attainment target based on three interrelated elements:

- knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens;
- developing skills of enquiry and communication;
- developing skills of participation and responsible action.

The citizenship Order advises that:

*Teaching should ensure that **knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens** are acquired and applied when **developing skills of enquiry and communication, and participation and responsible action.** (QCA, 1999, pp. 14–15).*

The intended impact of citizenship in schools is encapsulated in a quotation in the citizenship Order from Professor (Sir) Bernard Crick who states:

Citizenship is more than a statutory subject. If taught well and tailored to local needs, its skills and values will enhance democratic life for us all, both rights and responsibilities, beginning in school, and radiating out. (ibid, p.12)

1.2 Aims of the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has funded NFER to carry out the *Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study* in order to strengthen the existing evidence base for citizenship education and to obtain a clearer picture of the progress of the introduction of citizenship education in schools post 2002.

The *Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study* (hereafter, the Study), which began in 2001, is tracking a cohort of young people from age 11 to 18, who entered secondary school in September 2002 and are the first students to have a statutory entitlement to citizenship education (Appendix 3 provides further details about the Study).

The Study has one overarching and two subsidiary aims. The overarching aim is to:

- Assess the short-term and long-term effects of citizenship education on the knowledge, skills and attitudes and behaviour of students.

The two subsidiary aims are to:

- Explore how different processes – in terms of school, teacher and student effects – can impact upon differential outcomes.

- Set out, based on evidence collected by the Study and other sources, what changes could be made to the delivery of citizenship education in order to improve the potential for effectiveness.

The research design of the Study is based on four interrelated components:

- A longitudinal survey of a cohort of Year 7⁴ students tracking the whole Year 7 group through Years 9 and 11 and 13 (or equivalent when they are aged 18), their schools and their teachers;
- Four cross-sectional surveys of Year 8, 10 and 12 students, their schools and their teachers;
- Longitudinal school case studies;
- A literature review.

This is the Study's fourth annual report. It draws upon a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data from two components of the Study. The quantitative data is drawn from the **second sweep of the longitudinal survey** (i.e. when the cohort of students was in Year 9) involving 13,643 students, 301 teachers and 81 school leaders in 91 schools. It provides an update of citizenship education developments in schools. The qualitative data comes from in-depth interviews with Key Stage 3 and 4 students, teachers and senior managers in **ten longitudinal case-study schools**. It enables a more in-depth investigation of the reasons and factors that lie behind such developments. Reference is also made, for the purposes of comparison, to quantitative data from the first sweep of the longitudinal survey, carried out in 2003 when the longitudinal cohort of students was in Year 7 (Kerr *et al.*, 2003). More detailed information about the survey methodology, sample information, and characteristics of the case-study schools, is provided in Appendix 1.

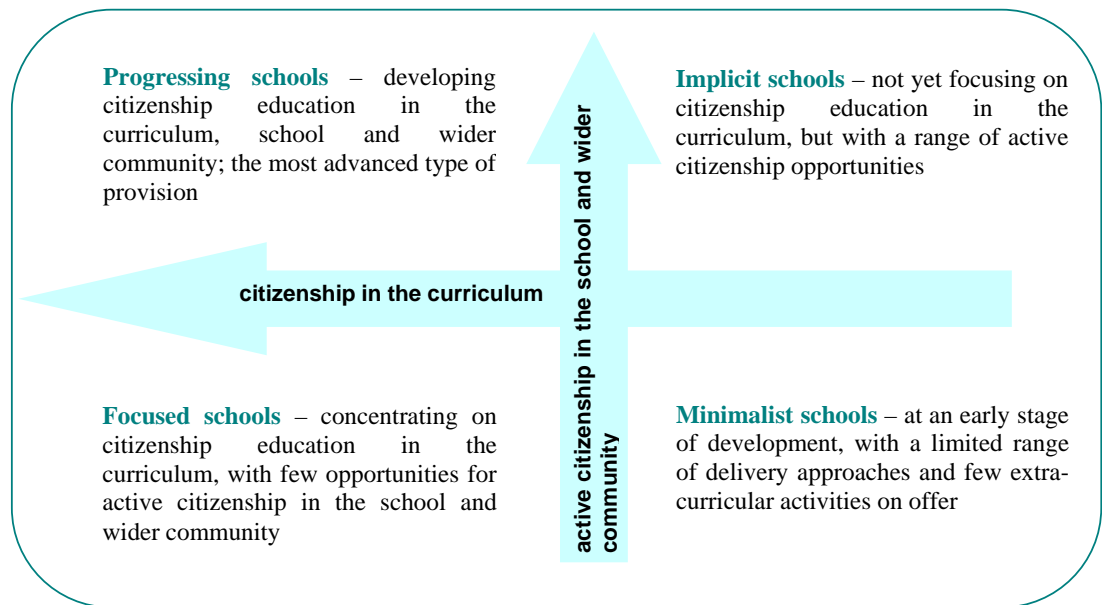
1.3 How is citizenship progressing in schools?

The research and evidence base for citizenship education in schools, colleges and communities was weak prior to 2002 but is being strengthened all the time. Many of the previous gaps in knowledge and understanding are rapidly being filled (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005; Whiteley, 2005; Craig *et al.*, 2004; Kerr and Cleaver, 2004; Kerr *et al.*, 2004). The Study has played a central role in this, alongside the inspection activities of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (2003; 2005b; 2005c; Bell, 2005a) and the monitoring undertaken by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) (2003; 2004; 2005).

⁴ In terms of age of students and year groups the following classification applies in schools in England. Year 7 students age 11-12, Year 8 age 12-13, Year 9 age 13-14, Year 10 age 14-15, Year 11 age 15-16, Year 12 age 16-17, Year 13 age 17-18.

The consensus from this evidence base includes:

- **Implementation gap** – a recognition that there remains a gap between the vision of policy makers, as laid out by the Citizenship Advisory Group and in various curriculum frameworks for citizenship education, and the ability of those in schools to understand, act upon and own that vision in practice. It will take time to close this gap;
- **Definition** – a redefinition of citizenship education away from the three strands in the Citizenship Advisory Group report to a growing conceptualisation of citizenship in schools as comprising three interrelated aspects – the three citizenship ‘Cs’: **citizenship learning in the curriculum; opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in the school culture;** and **opportunities and experiences of active citizenship through links with the wider community.** Practitioners find that the three ‘Cs’ of citizenship fit well with the reality of daily practice in schools;
- **Approaches** – acceptance that though provision is uneven, patchy and evolving, types of school and college approach to citizenship education appear to be emerging. Figure 1.1 below outlines the typology of approaches that was set out from the data in the Study’s second annual report (Kerr *et al.* 2004);
- **Factors** – the identification and agreement about key school and college level and learning-context level factors that work together to support, promote and champion best practice in citizenship education. For example, at school and college level these include the power of a supportive culture and ethos, and the need for senior management support and real resources. Meanwhile, at learning-context level it is helpful to identify a ‘citizenship champion’ to promote and lead the area and to encourage active approaches which involves students in their own learning (Kerr *et al.*, 2004; Craig *et al.*, 2004);
- **Challenges** – recognition of a number of key challenges that need to be tackled in order for citizenship education provision to become more visible, coherent and effective. These include addressing the challenges of definition, location, teaching and learning approaches, staff training and development, assessment and self-evaluation (Kerr *et al.*, 2004; Cleaver *et al.*, 2005).

Figure 1.1 Four approaches to citizenship education in schools

It is important to understand this consensus for it informs the context within which the data in this report was collected in schools and that within which the findings will be received.

1.4 Focus of the report

The focus of the fourth annual report is on *Active Citizenship and Young People*. The report explores the nature and extent of the opportunities and experiences that young people have had in relation to citizenship as an active practice in their schools, both within the curriculum/classroom and the school organisation/culture, and in wider communities (i.e. in contexts beyond school) and the challenges involved in providing such opportunities and experiences.

This focus has been chosen deliberately. It responds to a growing recognition of the link between citizenship education in schools and wider policy initiatives which attempt to increase the participation and engagement of children and young people in society. It is what David Bell, the former Chief Inspector of Schools⁵, has described as ‘*the link between “participation” in citizenship and the “making a contribution” element of the Every Child Matters’ programme* (Bell, 2005b). Bell emphasises the significant value that effective citizenship in schools can bring to the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme through a sharpened focus on participation.

⁵ David Bell has recently been appointed as the Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

As he noted:

In citizenship we take participation a step further through the initiation, planning and reflection on school and 'community action'. The definition of participation is somewhat sharper, but there are also close parallels. What I can say is that a school providing good citizenship education is also doing well in terms of the Every Child Matters agenda of making a contribution. (Bell, 2005b p.2)

The report uses the latest quantitative and qualitative data from the Study: firstly, to update the progress of the development of citizenship education in schools generally; secondly, to probe the extent to which citizenship education is providing opportunities and experiences of participation for young people; and, thirdly, to explore the readiness of citizenship education practice in schools to contribute to wider policy initiatives⁶, particularly the **'make a positive contribution'** outcome in the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and civil renewal action plan.

The **'make a positive contribution'** outcome is defined in the *Change for Children* programme as ensuring that all children and young people are given opportunities to:

- engage in decision-making and support the community and environment;
- engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school;
- develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate;
- develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges;
- develop enterprising behaviour.

Meanwhile, a Civil Renewal Unit has been established within the Home Office. Civil renewal is at the heart of the government's vision of life in 21st century communities and is defined as comprising three essential ingredients (Blunkett, 2003a and b):

- **active citizenship** – people who take responsibility for tackling the problems they can see in their own communities;
- **strengthened communities** – communities who can form and sustain their own organisations, bringing people together to deal with their common concerns;
- **partnerships in meeting public needs** – public bodies who involve local people in improving the planning and delivery of public services.

⁶ These initiatives include: the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme, the *Youth Matters* green paper, the *Working Together* guidance and the *Together We Can* action plan.

A civil renewal action plan, under the slogan *Together We Can* has been put in place to encourage and empower people to: become actively engaged in the well-being of their communities; be able to define the problems they face in those communities; and to tackle those problems together with help from the government and public bodies.

Given its focus the report attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

- What is the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, (a) to take place and (b) to contribute to the *Change for Children* programme and civil renewal action plan?
- How far is this potential currently recognised and realised in practice?
- What actions need to be taken in order for this potential to become better recognised and realised in practice in the present and future
 - by policy-makers at national and local level?
 - by representatives in the wider community?
 - by leaders, coordinators and teachers in schools?
 - by young people?

1.5 Relevance of the report focus

The focus of this year's report on *active citizenship and young people* is timely for four reasons. It fits with:

- broadening of citizenship education policy beyond schools and increasing emphasis on the promotion of active citizenship;
- perceived link between citizenship education and the wider participation and civil renewal agendas;
- challenges in the effective delivery of citizenship as an active practice;
- impact of change on childhood, community and society in 21st century.

Each of these reasons is explored briefly, in turn, below:

1.5.1 Broadening of citizenship education policy beyond schools and increasing emphasis on the promotion of active citizenship

Policy concerning citizenship education has moved on apace since the statutory introduction of citizenship in schools in September 2002. It has broadened beyond schools to encompass other education and training phases and the wider community. This broadening has been accompanied by an

increasing emphasis on **active citizenship**, on **citizenship as an active practice**, and its contribution to wider participation and civil renewal agendas, as witnessed by developments concerning citizenship in relation to:

- 16-19 education and training;
- communities; and
- civil renewal.

For example, the report from a second Advisory Group on Citizenship for 16-19 year olds in post-compulsory education and training (Further Education Funding Council, 2000) contained a more specific focus on active citizenship:

Young adults will only be able to realise their potential as active and effective members of society at large, and of all kinds of public and voluntary bodies, if those responsible for their education, training, employment and other forms of development provide the necessary models and learning environments for active and participative citizenship.

An in-depth exploration of the reality of the active engagement and participation of young people in their schools and local communities is therefore timely.

1.5.2 Perceived link between citizenship education and the wider participation and civil renewal agendas

There has been a shift in emphasis in recent government policy to a more participatory form of citizenship. This has seen conscious attempts to (re)engage people as citizens with democratic processes through the active practice of citizenship in their daily lives. It is manifested in a number of key policy developments, notably:

- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* (HM Government, 2004) programme which seeks to achieve five outcomes in ensuring that all children and young people ***be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution*** and ***achieve economic well-being***, through more integrated children's services, and support for change, particularly at a local level. The programme of change is based on a multi-agency partnership between government and statutory, voluntary, private and community sectors;
- *Youth Matters* Green Paper (GB, Parliament. HOC, 2005) which aims to encourage more young people to volunteer and become engaged with their communities, improve their life chances and reduce antisocial behaviour;
- *Working Together* (DfES, 2004) which provides guidelines for schools on the ways in which children and young people can be involved in and consulted on many school issues;

- *New Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services* (HM Government, 2005) and revised *OFSTED Framework for the Inspection of Schools* (OFSTED, 2005d) which seek to review the quality of provision of services for children and young people at a local level, including in schools. Both frameworks follow closely the principles of the *Every Child Matters: Children for Change* programme and seek to actively involve children and young people in the review and inspection process, and encourage local services and schools to regularly consult with students as part of a self-evaluation and target-setting process;
- *Together We Can* (HM Government, 2005) which sets out the government's plan of action to empower citizens to work with public bodies to set and achieve common goals. The action plan looks to join up initiatives across 12 government departments, including DfES. The action plan is structured around four overarching areas, one of which is entitled *Citizens and Democracy* and has two actions – *Together we can ensure children and young people have their say* and *Together we can strengthen our democracy*.

What unites these initiatives is an emphasis on actively involving people, particularly children and young people, in issues that matter to them in their everyday lives. Involvement is based around an active, democratic process centred on:

- identifying and solving problems together;
- action planning through collaborative partnerships;
- taking action;
- learning and applying lessons;
- sharing learning and lessons with others.

Citizens, including children and young people, are to be consulted, listened to and encouraged to become part of the solution, through active partnerships with others.

Though the introduction of statutory citizenship education in schools predates these initiatives, links have been made between the aims and processes of existing citizenship education in schools and the outcomes and processes of these broader initiatives, particularly the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme.

Analysis of data which considers the progress of citizenship education in schools and the extent to which current citizenship education practice which can contribute to the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and civil renewal action plan is therefore highly relevant to the conduct of policy and practice, at a number of levels.

1.5.3 Challenges in the effective delivery of citizenship as an active process

The Study has highlighted in previous publications the fact that schools often have difficulty with implementing the more ‘active’ elements of the citizenship curriculum (Kerr and Cleaver, 2004). The third annual report found that the range of active citizenship opportunities available to young people in schools remained inconsistent across the country, and that the actual take-up of such opportunities by young people, where they existed, was low (Cleaver *et al.*, 2005). The difficulty with implementing the more ‘active’ elements of citizenship is not confined to schools. The initial *Joint Area Reviews* of services for children and young people in local authorities, carried out under the *New Framework for the Inspection of Children’s Services*, highlight that though children and young people were encouraged to participate at local level there were limited opportunities for them to engage with democratic processes and influence decision-making at council level (OFSTED, 2005e).

The identification of this gap at local authority level between encouragement to participate and opportunity for participation to have an impact is a significant finding when set alongside evidence of the challenges facing schools in delivering active citizenship. The findings support the distinction in the literature on active citizenship and civil renewal between ‘*horizontal participation*’ and ‘*vertical participation*’ (Jochum *et al.*, 2005). Horizontal participation relates to participation in community activities, charities, sports clubs, associations and is less formal. Vertical participation, meanwhile, relates to participation in political affairs, including participation in political processes and governance related to the decision-making processes in institutions and society.

Analysis of data which can explore the range and reality of active participation opportunities that exist for young people in their schools and local communities, and the reasons why students engage with or disengage from such opportunities, is therefore crucial if a greater understanding of effective models of citizenship education – in all its manifestations – is to be achieved. It also has the potential to contribute to the literature on active citizenship and civil renewal.

1.5.4 Impact of change on childhood, community and society in the 21st century

In the late 20th and early 21st century childhood has become increasingly institutionalised. Children and young people’s unsupervised activities outside of home and school have become ever more problematised; becoming regarded as risky to both children and to society at large (Buonfino and Mulgan, 2006). Meanwhile, notions of community and belonging have been transformed by rapid social, economic and technological change. Young

people are as likely to be part of networks sustained by new information and communications technologies (ICTs) as members of local communities (Coleman, 2005). This context is important because individual, family and community factors may well affect young people's attitudes and actions concerning participation and the underpinning values. A greater understanding of young people's lives, and the groups, activities and experiences, both in school and beyond, that they find significant and meaningful is central to any analysis of young people's lives, attitudes and actions in 21st century Britain.

These broader changes in community and society also have an impact on children and young people's experiences of and attitudes to education and schooling. Often isolated outside of school hours in homes that can be distant from school, and with few spaces of their own to go to, school has become an increasingly important social institution for young people. A greater understanding of school as a social, participative and active space is also therefore central to any analysis of young people's lives in 21st century Britain.

A combined understanding of young people's lives, both in school and beyond, may prove significant in identifying factors and practices that promote better planning and delivery of multi-agency, partnership work towards the meaningful participation of children and young people in society. This partnership approach, particularly at a local level, is central to ensuring successful and sustained outcomes for the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and *Together We Can* action plan.

1.6 Structure of the report

The report is structured in response to the overarching questions which arise out of the focus on *active citizenship and young people* and which, as a result, drive the analysis of the data. Following this opening chapter, which introduces and sets the context for the report:

- **Chapter 2** focuses on current **approaches to citizenship education** in schools and sets the wider context within which active citizenship is taking place. It considers changes in approach to citizenship education in schools through a comparison of data from the first longitudinal survey in 2003 and the second in 2005: How are schools approaching citizenship education? What delivery models and teaching and learning approaches are they using? What are the key challenges for school leaders and teachers? What is the impact of citizenship education?
- **Chapter 3** addresses **knowledge and understanding of rights and responsibilities**: What rights and responsibilities do students feel they have in school? Are students provided with the requisite information and experiences which help them to understand the school, local and national services and democratic structures that affect their everyday lives? How

well does citizenship education contribute to students' knowledge and understanding of decision-making processes in school and beyond?

- **Chapter 4** explores **active participation and skills of participation**: What opportunities do students have to take an active part in lessons and to participate more widely in school? How far do students have a voice in the wider community? Are the opportunities provided enabling students to gain the necessary skills to take part in making decisions that affect their lives – at both school and community level?
- **Chapter 5** examines **community and belonging**: What factors influence students' feelings of belonging to school? How far do they have a sense of belonging to the wider community? How does a sense of community and belonging affect how students view opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in practice?
- **Chapter 6** is entitled **moving active citizenship forward** and reviews the central questions posed in the introduction concerning young people's opportunities and experiences of active citizenship and their contribution to wider participation and civil renewal agendas. What are the key challenges to the promotion of citizenship as an active practice in schools? How far are schools equipped to overcome these challenges and move forward? How can active citizenship be made meaningful and real for all young people, beginning in school and spreading out, in the 21st century?

The supporting appendices include: references; information about the methodology and sampling procedures for the second longitudinal survey and school case-study visits; and further background about the Study.

2. Approaches to citizenship education in schools: an update

Key findings

- The proportion of schools described as *progressing* and *implicit*, in the typology of schools developed in 2003, remained largely unchanged in 2005. However, the proportion of schools described as *minimalist* decreased, while the proportion described as *focused* increased. This suggests that the main change in approach has been an increased focus on curriculum aspects of citizenship education provision.
- Schools continued to use a variety of citizenship delivery models. However, there was a notable increase in the use of dedicated timeslots and in the use of assembly time. Teachers were more likely in 2005, than in 2003, to believe that citizenship education was best approached as a specific subject and through extra-curricular activities.
- School leaders and teachers were more familiar with a range of key documents related to citizenship education in 2005 than in 2003. It was notable that school leaders' awareness of these documents was higher than that of teachers.
- Teacher confidence in teaching citizenship-related topics saw a moderate increase in 2005, although overall confidence levels remained relatively low.
- Students were more aware of citizenship in 2005 than in 2003, with the proportion saying that they have learned about citizenship 'a lot' increasing from 16 to 24 per cent. The main ways in which they reported learning about citizenship were: through PSHE, religious education, as a discrete subject and tutor groups.
- Descriptions of citizenship education that encompassed 'active' components, such as voting and politics, were relatively uncommon amongst students, although a sizeable proportion identified the importance of belonging to the community.
- Although traditional teaching and learning methods continued to dominate, a range of more active methods were also used. There was also an increase in the use of computers, the internet and external agencies, and a decrease in the use of textbooks.
- There was a substantial increase in the proportion of schools with an assessment policy for citizenship education in 2005, and the use of formal assessment methods was considerably more widespread than in 2003.
- Teachers received more training in 2005 than in 2003. Despite this there was a high demand for further training in relation to subject matter, assessment and reporting and teaching methods.
- School leaders and teachers were substantially more likely in 2005, than in 2003, to believe that citizenship education had some impact on a range of issues including voting behaviour, student participation and consultation.
- The main challenges to citizenship education were felt, by school leaders and teachers, to include time pressure, assessment, the status of citizenship and teachers' subject expertise with student engagement and participation seen as lesser challenges.

This chapter provides an update on the current state of citizenship education in schools using data from the longitudinal survey⁷. It focuses on the question: *how are schools approaching citizenship education in 2005?* Where appropriate, it compares data from the first longitudinal survey in 2003 with the second survey in 2005, in order to comment on changes in approach over time. The main purpose of the chapter is to establish the wider context within which young people's opportunities and experiences of **active citizenship** – of citizenship as an active practice – is taking place in schools.

The chapter considers citizenship education in schools in terms of:

- overall approach;
- curriculum location;
- school leader and teacher confidence;
- topics that are taught;
- student definitions of citizenship;
- teaching and learning approaches and use of resources;
- assessment strategies;
- staff training opportunities, and;
- impact and major challenges.

Data from the longitudinal survey concerning active citizenship education in schools is incorporated into Chapter 4. This data considers:

- links between the curriculum, school culture and wider community;
- opportunities for students to be involved in citizenship as an active practice within the classroom and school culture;
- opportunities for students to be involved in citizenship as an active practice in the wider community.

2.1 Overall approach to citizenship education

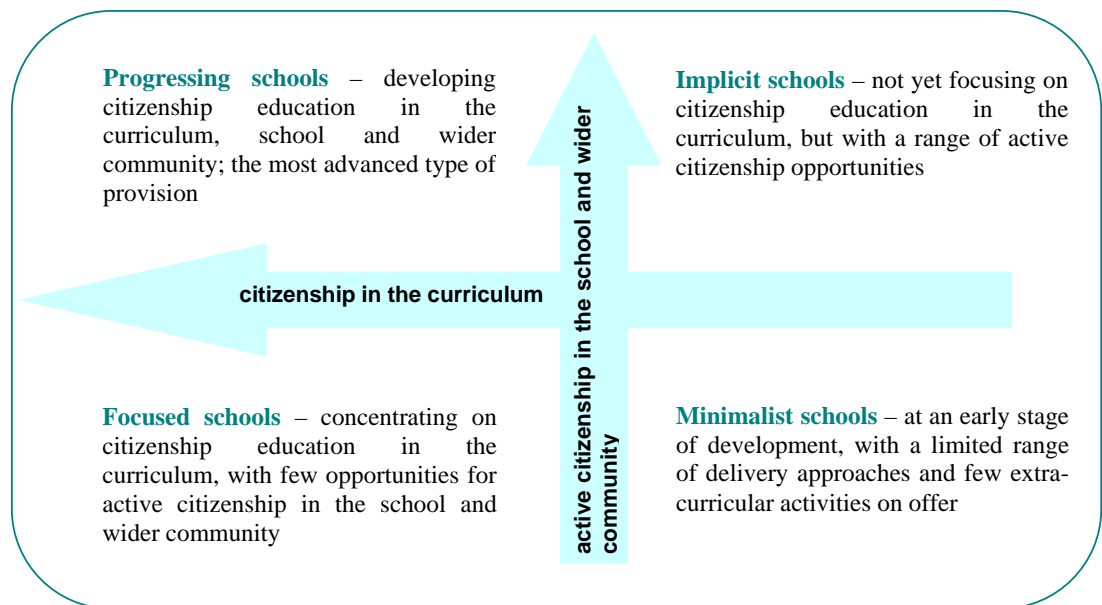
The Study's second annual report (Kerr *et al.*, 2004) contained a typology which summarised the overall approach of schools in 2003 to the delivery of citizenship. Schools were broadly classified in terms of two dimensions: their implementation of citizenship education in the curriculum and their provision of opportunities for active citizenship in the school and wider community.

⁷ The longitudinal survey is based on a nationally representative sample of schools and therefore the findings are representative of how schools are approaching citizenship education across the country.

An analysis of their delivery approach was undertaken using these dimensions. The resulting typology identified four types of school approach to citizenship education in 2003 (see Figure 2.1 below):

- progressing;
- focused;
- implicit;
- minimalist.

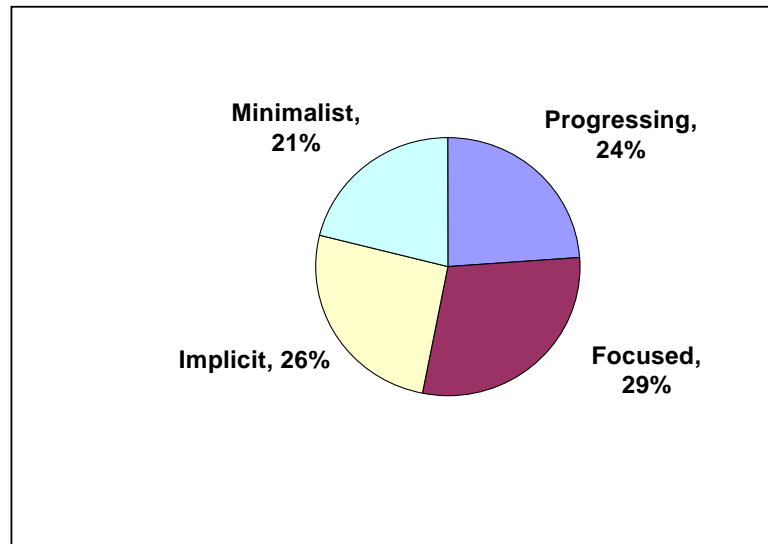
Figure 2.1 Four approaches to citizenship education in schools



In 2003, when the longitudinal survey schools were classified for the first time, about one-quarter of the schools surveyed fell into each of the four categories.

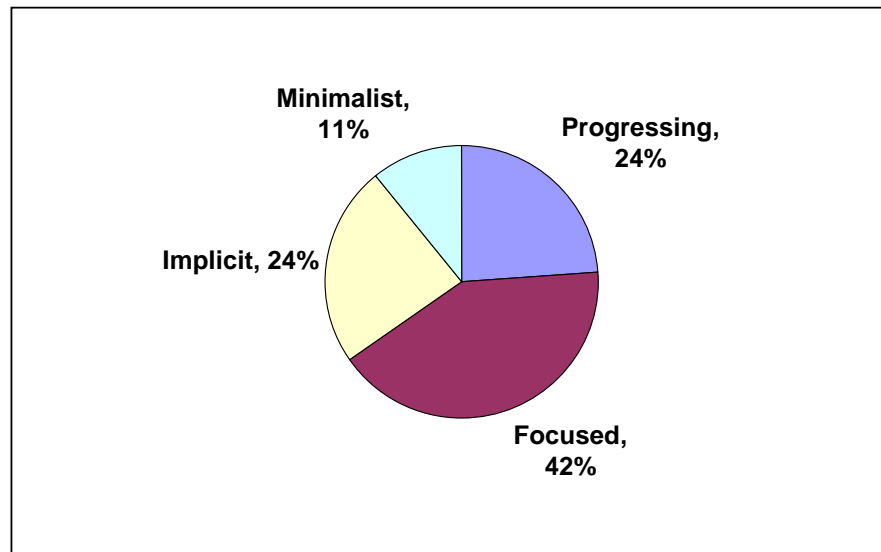
The delivery approach of the longitudinal survey schools was re-analysed in 2005, using the same classification, in order to map the extent of changes in delivery approach between 2003 and 2005. The results are shown in Figures 2.2 and 2.3 below:

Figure 2.2 Typology of schools in 2003



Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005

Figure 2.3 Typology of schools in 2005



Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005

The figures highlight that between 2003 and 2005, the proportion of schools described as *progressing* and *implicit*⁸ remained largely the same at around one-quarter of all schools. The main change in 2005 was a decrease in the proportion of schools offering **minimalist** citizenship provision (21 per cent in 2003 down to 11 per cent in 2005), and a corresponding rise in the proportion classified as offering **focused** citizenship provision (29 per cent in 2003 rising to 42 per cent in 2005).

⁸ For a description of the terms *progressing* and *implicit* see Figure 2.1.

In addition, there was considerable movement of schools between approach types,⁹ indicating the loose connections between schools' current approach to citizenship education and their approach in 2003. The only type of change that was not observed was *progressing* schools becoming *minimalist* over the two years. However, movement of schools between all other categories was observed.

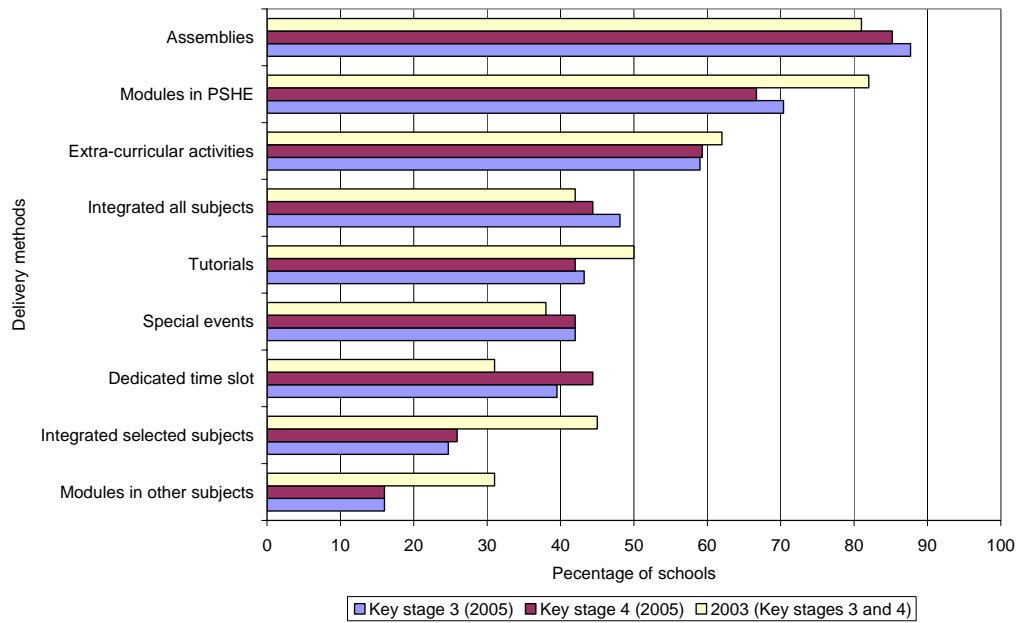
The observed changes suggest that approaches to citizenship education have not yet stabilised within schools and are continuing to evolve and develop. While they are positive, in that the proportion of schools offering **minimalist** citizenship provision has halved, they do not show an increase in the number of **progressing** schools, as might have been expected. Rather they suggest the main change in approach to citizenship education in schools has seen a concentration on the curriculum aspects of citizenship education at the expense of more active elements in the school and community. This is evidenced in the rise of **focused** schools. This change can be explained by a number of factors, including the reported difficulties schools experience with developing links between the citizenship curriculum, school community and wider community (Kerr *et al.*, 2003), and an increase in the use of the GCSE short course. It is perhaps to be expected given the strong drive in schools on effective curriculum delivery in all subjects, and the classification of citizenship as a new national curriculum subject. Interestingly, the change coincides with OFSTED's tightening of the inspection of citizenship as a statutory national curriculum subject in schools.

2.2 Citizenship in the curriculum

Schools were also asked about the main ways in which they delivered citizenship education and the results are shown in Figure 2.4 below. It is clear that schools were using a wide variety of ways to deliver citizenship education. The main methods included through assemblies, modules in PSHE and through extra-curricular activities. While the range of approaches in schools has remained stable between 2003 and 2005 there was some change in the prevalence of certain delivery approaches. The most notable changes were an increase in the use of a dedicated timeslot for citizenship, particularly in Key Stage 4, and an increase in the use of assembly time. The increased use of dedicated timeslots at Key Stage 4 can be explained, in part, by the greater take-up in schools of the new GCSE citizenship studies short course.

⁹ In 2003, school leader questionnaires were received from 84 of the 112 schools which took part in the longitudinal survey. In 2005, 81 of the original 112 schools took part in the second longitudinal survey and, on this occasion, school leader questionnaires were received from all these 81 schools. The present findings are based on 65 schools for which school leader questionnaires were received in 2003 and 2005.

Figure 2.4 Methods used by schools to deliver citizenship education, 2003 and 2005



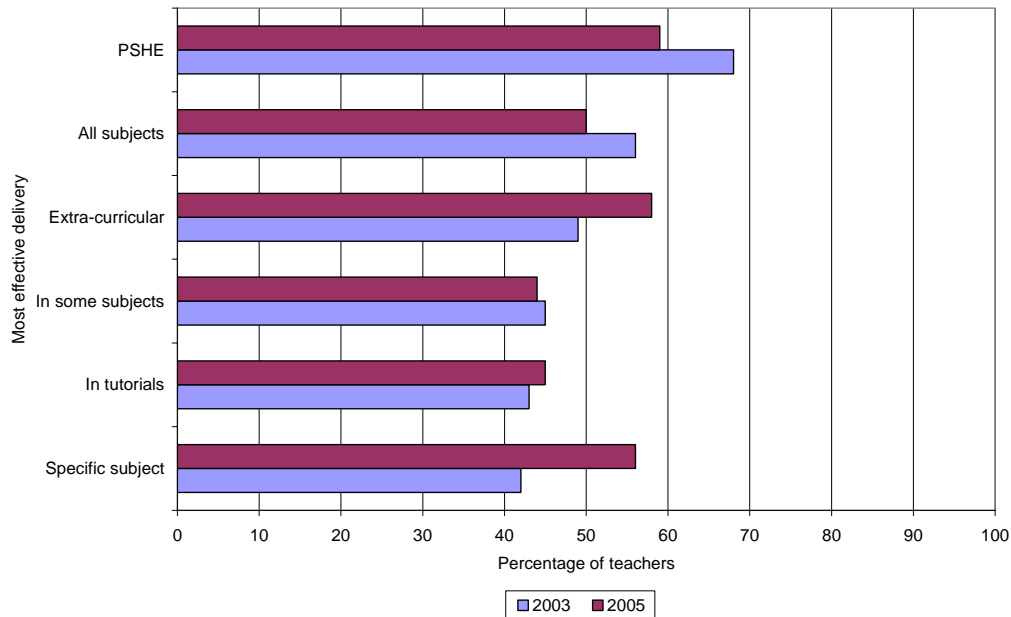
N = 81 schools in 2005, 84 schools in 2003

Please note: in 2005 schools were asked to give information on Key Stage 3 and 4 delivery methods, whereas in 2003 schools were not asked to make this distinction

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005, 2003

A comparison of teachers’ views of the most effective ways of delivering citizenship education, between 2003 and 2005, highlights teacher support for changes in approach to citizenship in schools. Figure 2.5 below shows that while teachers advocated the use of a range of approaches, there was increased support for the delivery of citizenship as a specific subject and through extra-curricular activities. There was a slight decrease in support for the delivery of citizenship through PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education) and through all curriculum subjects.

Figure 2.5 Teachers' views of the most effective ways of delivering citizenship education, 2003 and 2005



N = 301 teachers in 2005, 387 teachers in 2003

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005, 2003

2.3 School leader and teacher confidence about citizenship

Comparison between the longitudinal survey data from 2003 and that from 2005 reveals signs of growing familiarity and acceptance of citizenship in schools and increased school leader and teacher confidence about its aims and curriculum content. It should be remembered that citizenship was only introduced into schools in September 2002 and was therefore very new when schools were surveyed in 2003. It is to be expected that, as schools work with the new curriculum, so their familiarity with it leads to growing levels of confidence about what it includes and how it should be delivered.

2.3.1 Familiarity with key citizenship documents

Comparison between the data from 2003 and 2005 shows that **school leaders'** familiarity with key documents for citizenship has increased over the two years. The proportion of school leaders who felt very familiar with the following documents, was as follows:

- National Curriculum Order for Citizenship Education (35 per cent of school leaders in 2003, 41 per cent of school leaders in 2005);
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Key Stage 3 schemes of work for citizenship (26 per cent in 2003, 35 per cent in 2005);

- QCA Key Stage 4 schemes of work for citizenship (21 per cent in 2003, 31 per cent in 2005);
- Crick Report (10 per cent in 2003, 15 per cent in 2005);
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES) citizenship website (13 per cent in 2003, 19 per cent in 2005);
- OFSTED inspection guidance for citizenship (21 per cent in 2003, 35 per cent in 2005);
- QCA assessment guidance for citizenship (10 per cent in 2003, 30 per cent in 2005).

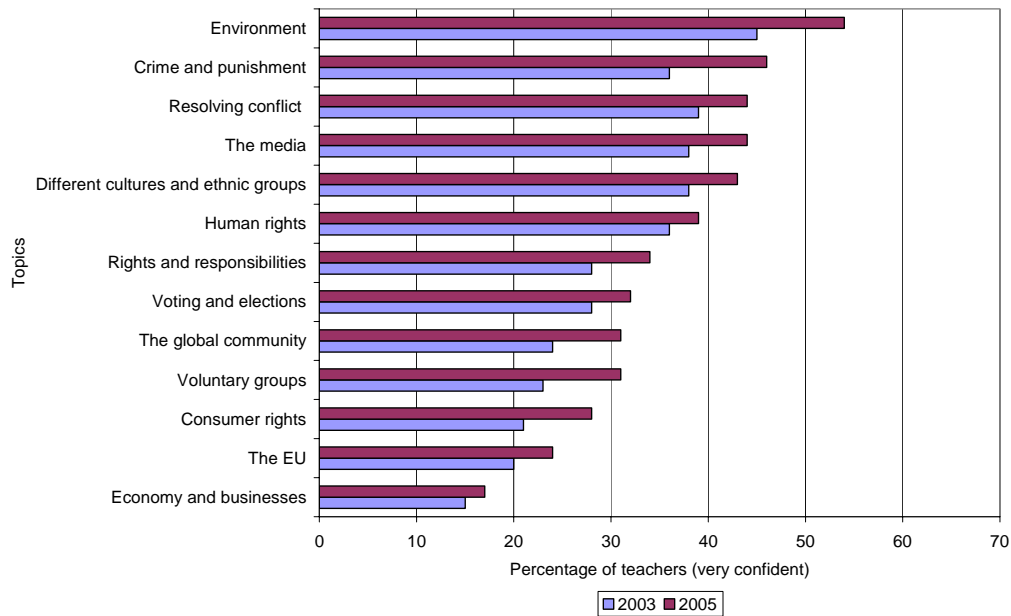
Teachers who responded to the survey in 2005 were also more familiar with key documents than teachers in 2003. However, typically smaller proportions of teachers described themselves as very familiar with the key documents compared to school leaders (for example, 41 per cent of school leaders said that they were very familiar with the national curriculum Order for citizenship compared to 22 per cent of teachers in 2005). This may be because citizenship is taught in schools by a range of teachers, including many non-specialists, who may work with schemes of work based on the citizenship Order, but drawn up by the citizenship coordinator.

It is encouraging, however, that, a somewhat higher proportion of teachers in 2005 reported that they understood the aims and purposes of citizenship education (76 per cent in 2003 compared to 83 per cent in 2005).

2.3.2 Teacher confidence in citizenship-related topics

Figure 2.6 below compares levels of teacher confidence about teaching citizenship-related topics in 2003 and 2005. It highlights a moderate increase in teacher confidence across all the topics from 2003 to 2005 as a result of two more years' experience of teaching these topics in their schools. However, it also shows that teachers remain more confident about teaching some citizenship-related topics than others. Topics in which teachers show the highest levels of confidence include the environment, crime and punishment, the media and resolving conflict. They reveal lowest levels of confidence in teaching the topics of economy and businesses, the EU (European Union) and consumer rights. It is not clear how this confidence relates to actual teaching approaches with students. Whilst it is true that confidence levels have increased over the past two years, it should also be noted that the increase is relative. Closer examination of the figures reveals that overall teacher confidence levels remain relatively low. Only in relation to one citizenship-related topic (the environment) did over half the teachers who responded to the survey report feeling 'very confident' about teaching it.

Figure 2.6 Teachers' confidence in teaching different citizenship-related topics in 2003 and 2005



Please note: in order to make the graph clear the axis showing the percentage of teachers who were very confident, runs from 0 to 70 per cent, not 100 per cent

N = 301 teachers in 2005, 387 teachers in 2003

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005, 2003

2.4 Learning about citizenship

Young people were more aware of citizenship in 2005 than they were in 2003. Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) of students said that they learned about citizenship a lot and over two fifths of students said that they learned about citizenship a little. Only five per cent said that they were not taught about citizenship at all. Comparison with the data from 2003 reveals that the proportion of students who said that they learned about citizenship a lot had increased over the two years (16 per cent of Year 7 students in 2003 said that they learned about citizenship a lot).

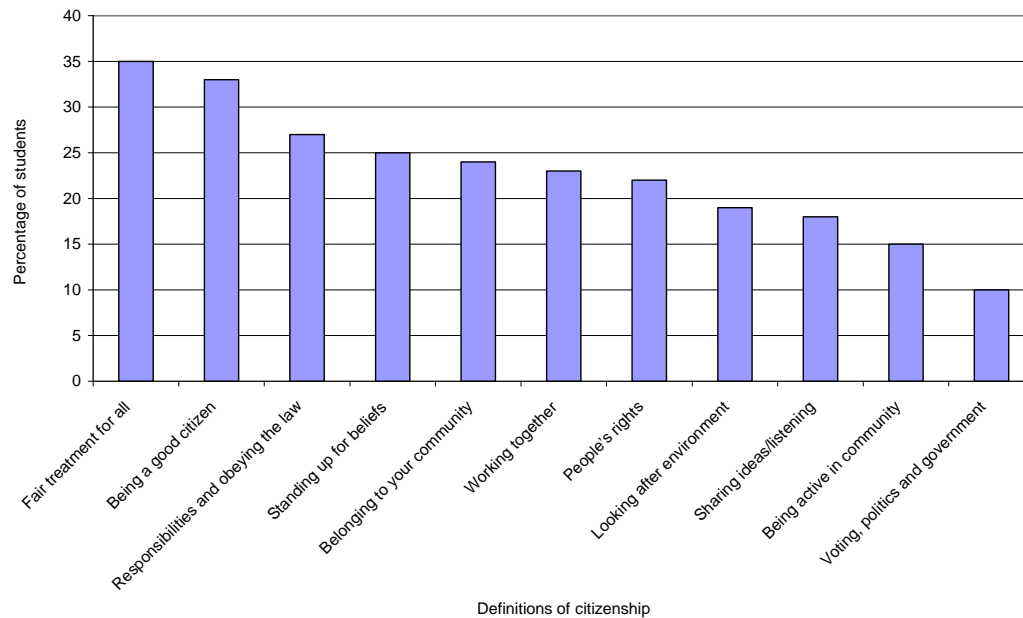
The lessons in which Year 9 students reported learning about citizenship in 2005 were:

- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) (57 per cent);
- Religious Education or Studies (35 per cent);
- Citizenship lessons (30 per cent);
- Tutor groups (29 per cent);
- History (18 per cent);
- English (16 per cent);

- Other lessons (16 per cent);
- Life skills (15 per cent);
- Geography (13 per cent);
- Politics (10 per cent);
- Business studies/Economics (nine per cent);
- Science (eight per cent);
- General studies (eight per cent);
- Sociology (seven per cent).

In 2005, students responding to the survey were asked to indicate their views on what citizenship means to them. Figure 2.7 below shows that students tended to view some of the more active components, such as being active in the community, and voting and politics, as quite low on their list of definitions. However, a higher proportion (24 per cent) identified **belonging** to the community as an important element. This view is explored further, and substantiated, in Chapter 5 and the implications for the development of active citizenship opportunities are discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 2.7 Students' definitions of citizenship, 2005



Please note: in order to make the graph clear the axis showing the percentage of students who supported each definition runs from 0 to 40 per cent, not 100 per cent

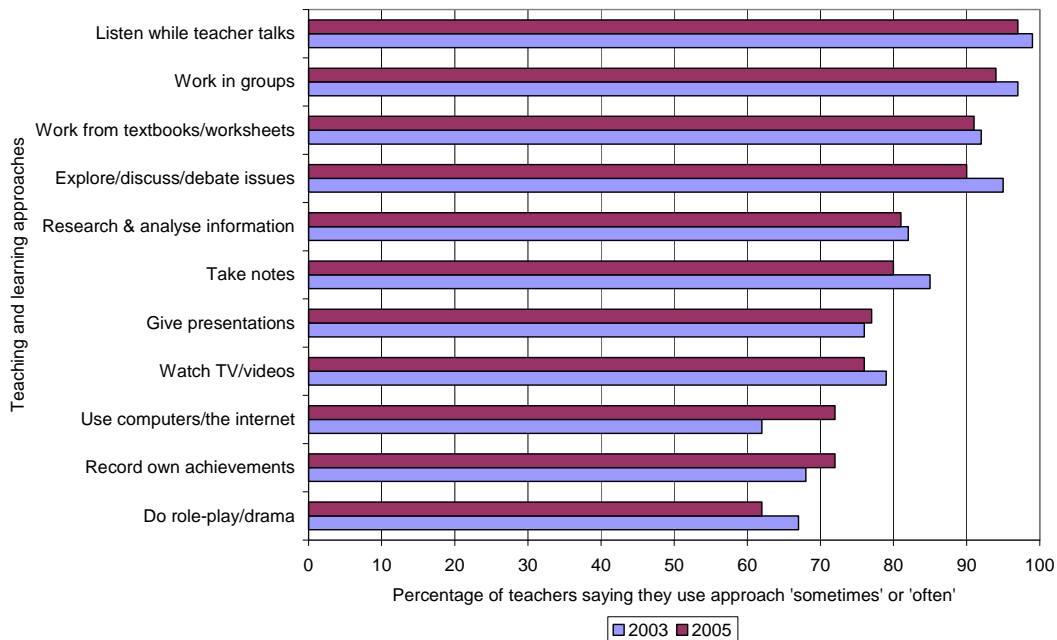
N = 13,643 students

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005

2.5 Teaching and learning approaches and resources

As is shown in Figure 2.8, the most frequently used teaching and learning methods, reported by teachers in 2005, were relatively traditional methods such as talking whilst the class listened and working from textbooks. However, a range of active methods, such as working in groups and exploring, discussing and debating issues, were also used frequently. This reflects the data collected from the students who reported that, whilst traditional methods were still dominant, there were some opportunities for participation in the classroom (see Section 4.1.1).

Figure 2.8 Most commonly used teaching and learning approaches



N = 387 teachers in 2003; 301 teachers in 2005

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005, 2003

Comparison with data from 2003 shows that the most salient change in teaching and learning methods was the increase in the use of computers and the internet. This change is also reflected in the resources that teachers reported using in 2003 and 2005: the proportion of teachers that reported using ICT increased over this time from 67 per cent in 2003 to 74 per cent in 2005. In addition, teachers appeared to have become less reliant on textbooks with 71 per cent reporting that they used textbooks sometimes or often in 2003, whilst in 2005 this figure has fallen to 63 per cent. (See Table 2.1 below). Overall, however, teachers drew upon the same kinds of resources in 2005 as they did in 2003, particularly their own ideas, the media and original resources.

Table 2.1 Resources used often/sometimes in planning citizenship education

Resources	2003 % teachers	2005 % teachers
Own ideas	89	88
Media	85	85
Original sources	72	73
ICT	67	74
Textbooks	71	63
Commercial materials	63	66
Official curricular guidelines	53	48
National standards for citizenship	46	45
N =	387	301

Percentage of teachers saying they use resources 'sometimes' or 'often'

More than one response could be given so percentages do not sum to 100

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005, 2003

In addition, in 2005, more teachers reported using external people in the teaching of citizenship-related topics (63 per cent, up from 47 per cent in 2003).

In 2005, almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of teachers indicated that they had access to computers and the internet for citizenship education lessons and activities. This is similar to 2003 (when 71 per cent reported having such access). However, in 2005, a greater proportion of the teachers who had access to the internet used it for the following citizenship education activities:

- Researching topical issues and events (73 per cent in 2003 and 88 per cent in 2005);
- Planning lessons and activities (72 per cent in 2003 and 81 per cent in 2005);
- Lessons with students (58 per cent in 2003 and 76 per cent in 2005).

2.6 Assessment

Between 2003 and 2005, the assessment of citizenship appears to have increased in importance for schools. The percentage of schools having an assessment policy for citizenship education increased substantially over the two years (from 24 to 53 per cent for Key Stage 3, and from 25 to 49 per cent for Key Stage 4). This may be linked to an increase in familiarity with the QCA assessment guidance in schools. In 2005, three times more school leaders than in 2003 (30 versus 10 per cent) reported being very familiar with

the guidance, and more teachers (45 per cent) reported being at least quite familiar with the same guidance (an increase from 31 per cent in 2003).

Changes in the methods of assessment and recognition of achievement used were also apparent from the school leaders' survey, with formal assessment becoming more widespread in 2005 than in 2003. As more schools became *focused citizenship schools* (see Section 2.1), so in 2005 more schools than in 2003 were using the GCSE short course (17 per cent in 2003 compared to 33 per cent in 2005) or non-GCSE qualifications (20 per cent in 2003 compared to 42 per cent in 2005) at Key Stage 4. However, over the same period, there was a decrease in the use of awards or certificates at Key Stage 3 (from 46 per cent in 2003 to 37 per cent in 2005).

As far as methods of assessment are concerned, at both key stages, there was an increase in the proportion of schools using written tasks (from 19 to 32 per cent at Key Stage 3, and 21 to 28 per cent at Key Stage 4) and peer assessment (from 13 to 25 per cent at Key Stage 3, and 13 to 19 per cent at Key Stage 4). At Key Stage 4, this was accompanied by a decrease in self-assessment (from 45 to 37 per cent) and the use of portfolios (from 39 to 25 per cent).

2.7 Staff training opportunities

Comparison of the 2003 and 2005 reveals an increase in the take-up of training about citizenship by teachers (up from 37 per cent of teachers in 2003 to 46 per cent in 2005). However, this increase needs to be set within the overall context that over half the teachers surveyed in 2005 (54 per cent) reported that they had received no training. This suggests that there is still a considerable way to go before all those who currently teach citizenship have received any training in the new subject. Most of those teachers who had had training reported that they had found the training either very or quite useful (60 per cent of these who had received internal training and 57 per cent of those who had received external training).

There was limited change between 2003 and 2005 in those who provided the training in citizenship for teachers. The main training provider remained local authorities (59 per cent of teachers surveyed in 2005 reported receiving such training up from 51 per cent in 2003), followed by commercial organisations (33 per cent in 2005 compared to 34 per cent in 2003) and citizenship organisations (28 per cent in 2005 down from 37 per cent in 2003). Interestingly, there was little recognition of the new Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT) among teachers. There was a slight increase in those reporting membership (up from four per cent in 2003 to nine per cent in 2005) but over two-thirds of teachers (68 per cent) replied that they did not know if they were members. It may be that some schools have taken out institutional membership and that the teachers in these schools are unaware of

this. However, the findings highlight the considerable work still to be done to raise awareness among teachers about the professional support networks that are available to them.

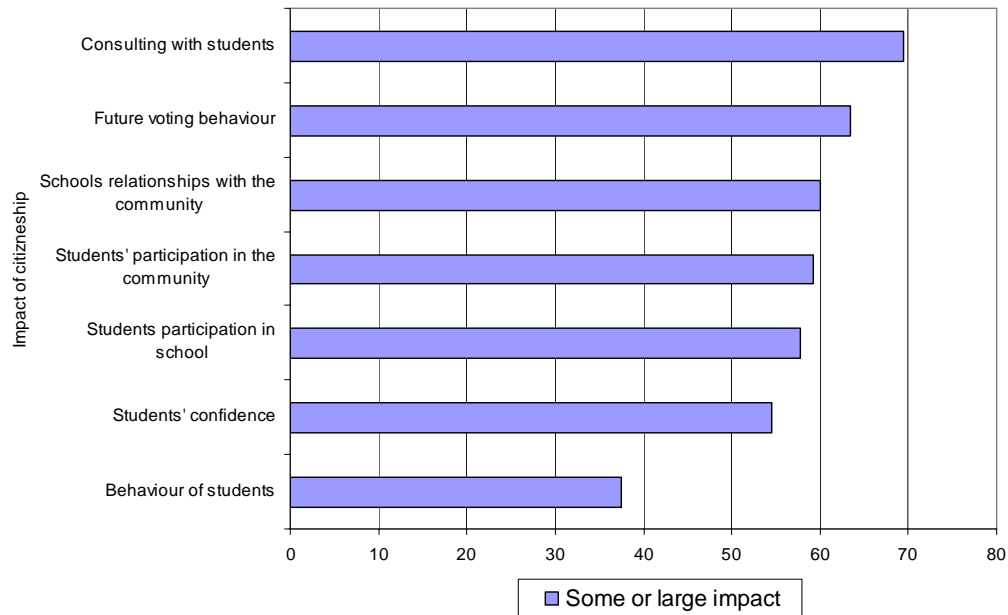
There was also a high demand for further training on citizenship from teachers (70 per cent reported needing additional training in 2005 compared to 74 per cent in 2003). The nature of the training requested remained relatively constant between 2003 and 2005. The main areas where training was requested were subject matter (52 per cent of teachers in 2005 compared to 53 per cent in 2003), assessment and reporting (56 per cent in 2005 down from 63 per cent in 2003) and teaching methods (33 per cent in 2005 and 44 per cent in 2003). This underlines the continued request from teachers for further training in the new subject of citizenship in order to build their knowledge, understanding and expertise in delivering it in their schools.

2.8 Impact and challenges of citizenship education

The 2005 data reveals that a proportion of school leaders (a third or more) believe that the introduction of citizenship education into the school curriculum will have at least some impact on a series of student and school-related outcomes. (See Figure 2.9 below.) Compared to 2003, there was a tendency for fewer school leaders to indicate, in 2005, that citizenship would have no impact on students' participation in school¹⁰. However, school leaders perceived the main impact of citizenship to be on students' actions and activities beyond the school, through future voting and participation in the community.

¹⁰ A direct comparison between the 2003 and the 2005 data is not possible due to the updating of the questionnaire's measurement scales in the interim period.

Figure 2.9 Schools leader views on the impact of citizenship



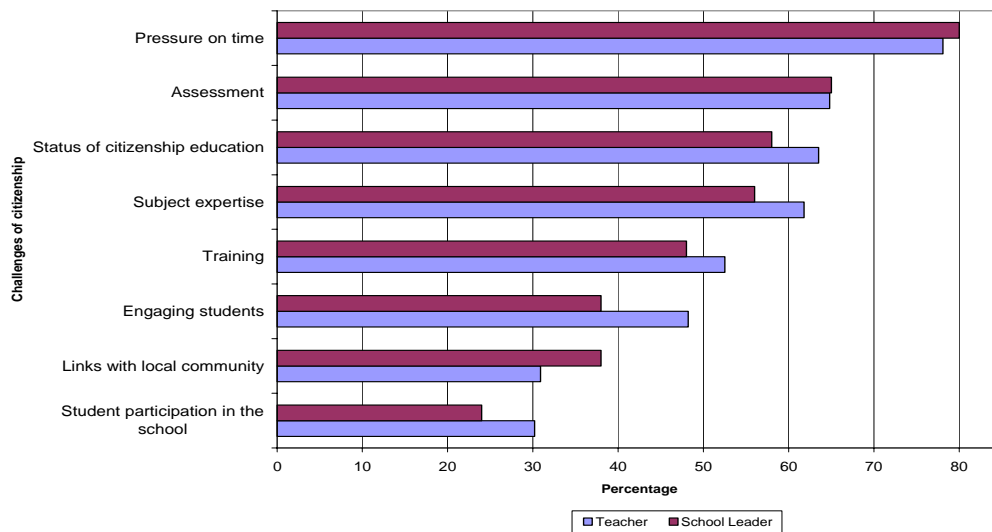
Please note: in order to make the graph clear the axis showing the percentage of school leader views on the impact of citizenship runs from 0 to 80 per cent, not 100 per cent

N = 81 schools

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005

Figure 2.10 below shows teachers' and school leaders' views on the main challenges for citizenship education in 2005.

Figure 2.10 Main challenges for citizenship education



Please note: in order to make the graph clear the axis showing the main challenges for citizenship education runs from 0 to 85 per cent, not 100 per cent

N = 301 teachers; 81 school leaders

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005

Teachers and school leaders who responded to the survey indicated that they felt that the main challenges for the delivery of citizenship education related to delivery of citizenship through the curriculum, such as pressure on time, assessment, the status of citizenship and teachers' subject expertise. Issues relating to engaging students, links with the local community and participation in school were seen as less pressing challenges.

This chapter has explored how schools were approaching citizenship education in 2005. It has highlighted, among other things, changes in delivery models, the increased confidence of teachers and school leaders with key documents relating to citizenship and the increase in assessment policies for citizenship. Overall, the chapter sets the context within which young people's opportunities and experiences of active citizenship is taking place in schools. The following three chapters explore in more detail particular opportunities that young people have to be active in and beyond schools. Chapter 3 examines young people's understanding of and opportunities to be involved in decision-making within school.

3. Knowledge and understanding

Key findings

- Students appeared to be well equipped to participate actively in school life and to make a positive contribution. They recognised that they have responsibilities in school and, whilst they were keen to highlight their right to have a voice regarding school matters, they also recognised the rights to a voice of other groups. Moreover, they demonstrated considerable sophistication when explaining who should have a say about school life and why.
- Students often linked becoming adult members of society to the acquisition of rights and, to a lesser extent, to the capacity to take up responsibilities. They understood that many civic and political rights are age related and were aware of a series of issues which should be considered when deciding at what point a right, such as voting, should be awarded to young people.
- Students believed that citizenship education has contributed to their awareness and understanding of issues such as current affairs, politics and their rights. However, some teachers highlighted differences in student attitudes, in that not all students benefit from, or are receptive to, citizenship education to the same extent.
- Furthermore, not all students had the same level of understanding of participation mechanisms and the decision-making process within the school and beyond that how these affect their everyday lives. These are areas where there is scope for citizenship education to contribute more, both through teaching and learning in the curriculum and through the provision of active citizenship opportunities within school.

This chapter examines whether young people in case-study schools have sufficient knowledge and understanding to enable them to participate actively and effectively in the life of the school and beyond. It also looks at the contribution of citizenship education to their acquisition of knowledge and understanding. In order to do this, the chapter looks at:

- students' understanding of rights, responsibilities and decision making in school;
- students' understanding of rights, responsibilities and decision making beyond school;
- the contribution of citizenship education towards students' levels of knowledge and understanding.

3.1 Understanding of rights, responsibilities and decision making in school

This first section considers students' understanding and awareness of the rights, responsibilities and decision-making opportunities they have within school.

3.1.1 Rights and responsibilities in school

Across the ten case-study schools, the students interviewed felt that they had certain key responsibilities in their schools, which included:

- learning/keeping up with school work;
- keeping the school tidy/free from litter;
- social stewardship towards other students (for example, passing on information to younger students and, in particular, making Year 7 students feel comfortable in their new school surroundings).

Only one group of Key Stage 3 students did not perceive themselves to have any responsibilities at all. In contrast to the views expressed by other students they felt that: *'They should give us more'*; *'We owe the school nothing. They wouldn't have a job if it wasn't for us'*.


Although students generally believed that they had certain responsibilities in school they also felt that they had a **right to have their voice heard** on matters that affected them, such as:

- school uniform and grooming rules;
- the school physical environment and facilities;
- the name of the school and school merging processes;
- school rules;
- catering (e.g. choice of food);
- subject options available;
- how lessons should be conducted;
- what they should be taught;
- decisions that affected them more generally.

Students resented decisions on these matters being taken without them being consulted or given an explanation of the rationale underlying decisions made. Whilst one student expressed the view that students were not mature enough to make decisions about school life, because they would, for example, choose to have holidays from school every day and therefore would not learn much, the

majority of students interviewed were confident about their right to a voice. They also generally acknowledged the rights of voice of others, such as teachers. In only two schools were there some students who thought that students alone should have a final say regarding their school life.

Mostly, students identified teachers, as well as students, as those best placed to have the right to have a say about students' school life. However, sometimes the headteacher was thought to be the one who should have the final say, albeit after consultation with students and, for some, with teachers. Some students thought that parents and/or the government should have an input into decisions. However, others considered that parents and the government, as well as school governors, were out of touch with the daily realities of school life and so should not have much of a say in what happened there. The following illustration demonstrates the continuum of opinions expressed by students about their rights to voice in school.

Students have the most right to a say:	Students have a right to have their voice heard:	Students should <u>not</u> have a say:
<i>'We should put an idea forward and then we should decide if we want it or not'</i> (Key Stage 3 student)	<i>'I don't think we should have the final say, but we should definitely be consulted about it'.</i> (Key Stage 4 student)	<i>'Teachers [should make the decisions about students' school life] because students aren't mature enough'.</i> (Key Stage 4 student)
		

Students showed considerable sophistication when presenting their views about their rights of voice and how much of an input others should have. Their views on this matter tended to be underpinned by the following considerations:

- considerations about the level of information, expertise, maturity or experience of each individual or group of people;
- the stakes which individuals have in school life;
- the contribution which different groups make to school life;
- concerns about fairness.

These considerations are captured in more detail in the following illustrations:

Rationale	Examples
Information, expertise and experience of different groups	<i>‘The issues in one school aren’t going to be the same as in another school ... the government gets a general say and that is agreeable, but if one headmaster is given what they have to do for that school and it doesn’t work, then they shouldn’t have to stick to it.. (Key Stage 4 student)</i>
Stakes in school life	<i>‘[Parents also have right to be heard] because parents want you to be safe at school and have a good time.’ (Key Stage 3 student)</i>
Contribution of different groups to school life	<i>‘[Government should have a say.] Well, they provide the money, don’t they?’ (Key Stage 4 student)</i>
Ensuring fairness	<i>‘I think the way that it works now is a good thing ... if the government set our curriculum then each child is learning the same sort of thing based around the same topics. If [this was not the case,] ...one school could choose... really easy topics and one school could choose... really hard topics and it wouldn’t be fair.’ (Key Stage 3 student)</i>

As part of this thinking, students acknowledged a series of factors that may put others in a better position to participate in decisions about their school life. For instance, some students recognised that teachers and government have expertise and experience that can be helpful in deciding what best to include in lessons. In contrast, when discussing whether they, themselves, should have some say about how lessons are run and what they should be taught, some students highlighted the limitations of students’ potential input, on the grounds that they had minimal knowledge of what there is that could be learned.

This degree of thoughtfulness about the rights of voice of a range of individuals suggests that students are generally well equipped to participate in debates and decision-making processes within schools.

3.1.2 Factors influencing perceptions of rights and responsibilities in school

Students’ views about rights and responsibilities in school appeared to depend mainly on the individual characteristics of the students, although there was some indication that views also varied between schools, because of the influence of schools’ ethos and/or intake.

Age and maturity appeared to be key influences on how students thought about rights and responsibilities. In two schools, Key Stage 3 students acknowledged considerably fewer responsibilities than their Key Stage 4 peers: one group of Key Stage 3 students did not identify any responsibilities at all and the other did not think that they had responsibilities in relation to other students, although they did feel that students had responsibilities towards teachers and parents. Also, the young people mentioned in Section 3.1.1. above, who thought that students should have the decisive say regarding school decisions, were Key Stage 3 students. This suggests that perceiving others as having equal rights to voice may be something which develops with age and maturity.

Other factors that appeared to be associated with perceptions of responsibilities included:

- **values**, such as valuing education – Two Key Stage 4 students stated: *‘We should treat [teachers] with respect. They are trying to give us an education’* and *‘You should treat everyone else with respect because they are trying to get an education’*;
- **parental expectations** – One Key Stage 4 student commented: *‘If I got worse marks than my mum expected... she would be disappointed in me and I would hate it’*;
- preoccupations with **fairness and equity** – Another Key Stage 4 student explained: *‘If I got a bad grade from a good teacher, then I’d feel responsible as they’d not look like as good a teacher as they actually are’*;
- perceptions that certain **behaviours pay back** – A Key Stage 4 student noted: *‘How can [teachers] respect you if you don’t show them any respect?’*;
- the fact that **roles held** entail responsibilities (e.g. being a form representative and therefore having to represent others). This point was emphasised by a number of students.

Whilst across schools students consistently perceived themselves as having both rights and responsibilities, some of their considerations about responsibilities appeared to be influenced by **the ethos of the school** and/or the **type of community** from which schools drew their student intake. In one high achieving school, students explicitly talked about their academic responsibilities in terms of keeping grades high and, in another school with strong academic results, students discussed the importance of maintaining the school’s good reputation through their hard work. On the other hand, the group of Key Stage 3 students, mentioned in Section 3.1.1 above, who did not believe that they had any responsibilities attended a school where, as reported by their Key Stage 4 peers, some students disrespected teachers, reportedly swearing at them, for example. It is possible that the students who perceived themselves not to have responsibilities and those who reportedly disrespected

teachers belonged to a subgroup of students in the school that come from backgrounds where young people were disaffected *vis-à-vis* education and authority.

3.2 Understanding of rights, responsibilities and decision making beyond school

Students were very aware that the acquisition of many civic and political rights is related to age, for instance, smoking and getting married at 16, and being able to vote and buy alcohol at 18. Many highlighted, what they perceived to be, inconsistencies in the awarding of rights, since different rights are awarded at different ages. The acquisition of rights appeared to mark an important change in their social status from the students' perspective. Indeed, many cited the acquisition of certain rights at a given age as a reason for identifying that stage of life as the time when you become an adult. Rights which were mentioned as markers of adulthood were varied and included the right to get married, the right to smoke, the right to have children and the right to vote.

Although many students associated the process of growing up and becoming an adult with the acquisition of **rights**, some also linked adulthood with a capacity for taking up **responsibilities**. For instance, they mentioned the importance of being mature, being able to make one's own decisions and taking financial responsibility for themselves as markers of adulthood. One Key Stage 3 student illustrated the association of both rights and responsibilities with adulthood, as well as the questioning of the fact that different rights are awarded at different ages as follows: *'I think you should be [an adult] when you are 16, because you are responsible, you can smoke – so why can't you drink?'* However, it was noticeable that young people identifying the key markers of adulthood as marriage, smoking, having children and voting, for example, tended to identify these markers as rights, rather than responsibilities. For example, they identified the right to smoke or drink rather than the importance of doing so with consideration for others and the right to have children, rather than the responsibility of parenthood.

Opinions were split across groups of students regarding the voting age. While some students believed it should be lowered others argued that it should not. In part, this lack of consensus was due to different views about when young people are mature enough to make voting decisions. There was often no correspondence between the age at which students thought that they should have the right to vote and when they thought they would become adults. This may have been due to beliefs such as those expressed in one group that people can mature in different areas at different rates, which could mean that whilst someone could be mature enough to vote, they might not be mature enough in other areas to be considered an adult.

3.3 The contribution of citizenship education to knowledge and understanding

The final section considers the extent to which the levels of knowledge and understanding outlined in this chapter may have been influenced by students' citizenship education programmes in school.

3.3.1 The contribution of citizenship education to knowledge and understanding of decision-making processes?

Students felt that citizenship education was useful in helping them to form their opinions and in providing greater knowledge and understanding, in particular in relation to political processes, politics and voting. The particular gains provided through citizenship education which students identified were:

- **forming** or changing their **opinions** on the issues covered;
- feeling more confident about **voicing** their **own opinions** about political and topical issues due to being more knowledgeable about them;
- becoming more aware of issues relative to their **rights and the law**;
- **learning about issues of interest to them**, such as drugs, AIDS and HIV, the media and racism.

It would appear that the knowledge and understanding which students demonstrated when discussing their rights and responsibilities in the school community and beyond, as well as their confidence in voicing such opinions, can in part be attributed to the influence of the explicit teaching of citizenship education that they had received in their schools.

In four case-study schools, the Key Stage 4 students who took part in the discussions were particularly keen to highlight the impact that their citizenship education lessons had had on their political literacy. This is illustrated through the following discussion with one group of Key Stage 4 students.

Student A:	<i>Voicing our opinions about politics [is something citizenship has helped me with].</i>
Others:	<i>Yeah!</i>
Student A:	<i>This year, I've taken a lot more interest in politics because I know a bit more about it, so I was voicing my opinion a bit more.</i>
Student B:	<i>I certainly felt this year that I understand a lot more about the individual parties, about what they're actually standing for... You don't discuss it in things like geography. Citizenship is the only way for people of our age group to start to understand politics, especially.'</i>

In two of these schools, citizenship education was delivered through the citizenship GCSE short course. Meanwhile, in the other two schools senior management support for citizenship education was high, with one being a citizenship specialist humanities school and the other a school where senior management placed great emphasis on experiential citizenship learning and where student voice was highly developed and valued in the school. This indicates that education for citizenship may be particularly successful in engaging students either where they are taught political literacy as part of a citizenship short course in a context where good academic results are valued, or where the school ethos which senior management encourage is consistent with the aims of citizenship education.

However, some students felt that they had not gained much from citizenship education that was useful in their wider lives in school or outside. This was either because they felt that they had covered the topics before, and would have been able to pick up what was covered in citizenship in other subjects or in normal life, or because they felt that citizenship did little to change the way they thought. On the other hand, some of the students who were not very positive about how much they had learned in citizenship put it down to the delivery of the subject rather than its potential: not having covered the topics in sufficient depth, and some teachers not having given them enough direction, for instance, when researching information.

3.3.2 Can citizenship education contribute to the knowledge and understanding of all students to the same extent?

Whilst two citizenship coordinators thought that citizenship education did not engage or benefit particular groups of students more than others, over half the coordinators and teachers interviewed reported that not all groups of students benefited from or engaged with citizenship education to the same extent or in the same way. They reported that students differed in their receptivity, readiness and ability to gain from the citizenship education on offer at the school. The issues raised by these staff related to students’:

- level of ability;
- attitudes and interests.

In two schools where citizenship was taught through the citizenship GCSE short course, it was felt that students in **lower ability** sets were: more difficult to teach; were less able to cope with the discussion of citizenship issues when these did not specifically affect them; and, engaged to a lesser extent with citizenship education, than other students. These schools were academic, and a great emphasis was placed on GCSE targets and results. However, in a third school where citizenship was also taught as a GCSE short course, the GCSE did not appear to be a problem for lower achieving students and it was actually

felt that the less able, who did not have a broad general knowledge of the issues covered, could particularly benefit from citizenship education. Indeed, lower ability students were said to prefer the more active aspects of the citizenship programme.

Students' attitudes and interests were also mentioned as factors that influenced the receptivity of students to citizenship education. In some schools it was felt that citizenship lessons offered students who were interested in current affairs, or other topics, an opportunity to find out more about those areas. However, it was not felt only to appeal to the engaged. In one school, citizenship education was said to provide 'chavy'¹¹ students with information which they wanted to acquire but could not be seen to actively seek themselves because of the risk of losing their 'street credibility' with their peers. In another school it was also pointed out that different topic areas interested different students, for example, a lesson on stress management had particularly engaged a group of conscientious girls.

Analysis of this data suggests that, given the wide range of students within even a single school, if schools are to develop students' knowledge and understanding through citizenship education then they need to provide a range of approaches and points of access to citizenship that match the variety of students' ability levels and interests. This may require advance discussion and consultation with students.

3.3.3 Areas where the contribution of citizenship education to knowledge and understanding can be enhanced

Although students demonstrate a considerable sophistication of views in relation to their own, and others' rights and responsibilities, and acknowledge the contribution of citizenship education to gains in their knowledge and understanding, there remains scope for improvement in two respects in relation to such knowledge and understanding:

- students' understanding of decision making *beyond* school
- students' understanding of decision making *within* the school.

When talking about rights and who should make decisions about their school life, some students demonstrated an awareness of how power is held at different levels, for example, by senior managers and teachers in schools, and by government, beyond school. Indeed, some mentioned in their discussions

¹¹ 'Chav' is a derogatory slang term in popular usage throughout the UK. It refers to a subculture stereotype of a person who is uneducated, uncultured and prone to antisocial or immoral behaviour. The label is typically, though not exclusively, applied to teenagers and young adults of white working-class or lower-middle class origin. see Wikipedia [online]. Available: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chav>

about rights and responsibilities, that government influenced what happened in schools, in particular via the National Curriculum, which, in turn, determined the approach of teachers. However, the majority of students did not mention such issues, and appear to be unaware of **decision making beyond school** and how this impinges on their school lives.

Knowledge of **decision making processes within the school** itself was also an area where there is scope for development. For example, all the case-study schools had school councils in place. Although groups of students interviewed had some knowledge of how the school councils worked in their schools, there were groups of students in some schools who were totally unaware of how their school council was supposed to work and of what activities student council representatives were undertaking on behalf of the student body. This lack of knowledge and understanding is related, in part, to the restriction of student voice in decision making in schools. In two schools, for example, school council activity diminished as the academic year progressed thereby impairing the opportunities for actively learning about decision-making processes within the school community. This is an issue which is covered in more depth in the next chapter, which concerns the opportunities for active citizenship provided by schools.

This chapter has highlighted that students are well equipped to participate actively in schools and to become involved in the decision-making process. Students believe that citizenship education has contributed to their readiness to participate by raising their awareness and understanding of rights and responsibilities. However, not all students have the same levels of understanding of what is meant by participation. The next chapter builds on these findings by exploring the extent of the actual opportunities that young people have to participate in school and in the wider community.

4. Active participation and skills of participation

Key findings

- Within the classroom, traditional teaching and learning methods were predominant, although there were many opportunities for students to take a more active role in their lessons through group work, research and analysis and participation in role-play. Generally, however students did not feel that they were able to contribute to the planning of teaching and learning in their school.
- In school, there was a range of opportunities for students to participate in, for example, sports, fund-raising for charity and school councils. In addition, students generally had a positive attitude towards participation in school-based activities.
- The majority of students had some opportunities to participate in decision-making processes in school. Nearly all schools provided school councils and the majority of students knew that there was a school council in their school. Students in case-study schools made their voices heard through school councils and also opinion surveys and student focus groups.
- However, students felt that student voice was permitted on some topics, but not on others. In addition, fewer than half of students had actually participated in school council elections. The main reasons why school councils may not be functioning well were:
 - lack of information;
 - lack of status;
 - giving voice to only a minority of students.
- Outside of school, students participated in a range of activities such as sports, youth clubs, hobbies, raising money for charities and good causes. In a minority of schools students also had opportunities to participate in decision-making processes in the wider community.
- Although the contribution of citizenship education to active participation in and beyond school was not yet extensive, the main ways that citizenship education had contributed to the development of active citizenship opportunities were through:
 - provision of opportunities for active participation and input into teaching and learning in citizenship lessons;
 - 'citizenship-friendly' school ethos facilitating active citizenship;
 - extra-curricular citizenship activities.
- There were a range of factors which impact on opportunities for active citizenship these include:
 - school culture, in relation to student consultation and volunteering;
 - confidence and enthusiasm of teachers and students;
 - attitudes and priorities of senior management and the citizenship coordinator;
 - approach to citizenship education delivery;
 - school size and ethos, particularly concerning academic achievement.

This chapter examines the extent to which students are able to actively participate in activities in school and in the wider community. It looks at the opportunities they have for participation and the extent to which citizenship education, and other factors, affect these opportunities. It concentrates on active participation in its widest sense of opportunities that students have to take part in school and wider community life – ‘horizontal participation’. It also considers how much students contribute, specifically, to decision- and policy-making processes in school and beyond – ‘vertical participation’.

The chapter deals in particular with:

- students’ opportunities for participation in the classroom;
- students’ opportunities for participation in the school community and challenges to student voice;
- students’ opportunities for participation in the wider community;
- the role of citizenship education and other factors in fostering or hindering the provision of opportunities for active participation in schools.

4.1 Opportunities at classroom level

4.1.1 Taking an active part in lessons

Within classrooms, the Year 9 students who responded to the survey reported that more traditional teaching and learning methods were most frequently used. The majority of students said that in lessons, included those involving citizenship, they worked from textbooks and worksheets (89 per cent) and listened whilst the teacher talked (87 per cent) sometimes or often. More active ways of learning were also quite common, with over half of students saying that in their lessons they sometimes or often:

- Worked in groups (69 per cent);
- Researched and analysed information from different sources (56 per cent);
- Participated in role-play and drama (56 per cent);
- Explored, discussed and debated issues with other students (54 per cent);
- Gave presentations (53 per cent).

In addition, the majority of students felt that there were some opportunities to participate in their classrooms. More than half of students thought that the following occurred in their lessons at least sometimes:

- Teachers respected students’ opinions and encouraged them to express their opinions in class (73 per cent);

- Students felt free to express their opinions even when they were different from the rest of the class (70 per cent);
- Students felt free to disagree with teachers during discussions about topical issues (69 per cent);
- Students brought up issues from the news for discussion (59 per cent).

Consistent with survey findings, in most case-study schools students reported having some opportunities for active participation in class, such as opportunities for voicing their opinions and taking part in discussions.

4.1.2 Having a voice on teaching and learning

Opportunities for students to have an input into decisions about teaching and learning appeared to be more restricted than opportunities for active participation in lessons. Over three-quarters (78 per cent) of the students surveyed said that there was little or no involvement of students in planning teaching and learning in their school. In addition, in only two case-study schools did students report that they had an input into teaching and learning. In one of these schools there was a specific ‘Teaching and Learning Forum’¹² and, in the other, students felt confident about approaching teachers regarding such issues and reported having successfully challenged a teacher’s teaching style by asking the teacher to do less textbook work and more group-based activities in class.

In general, however, students were keen to have opportunities to input into teaching and learning and in some schools they articulated a variety of advantages arising from students being involved in such decision-making processes. These included teachers learning about how to teach more effectively, with benefits for the students (who learn more) and/or the teachers (who become more competent teachers). These positive views were echoed by one teacher who had experience of receiving feedback from students as part of the above-mentioned Teaching and Learning Forum. This teacher thought the feedback process was beneficial for staff: *‘If you give the students a choice in the decisions, then they feel more engaged in what they are doing’*.

One group of students mentioned that allowing students an input into teaching and learning decisions was a strategy which worked particularly well with teenagers, who perceive their status to be enhanced by virtue of their participation:

‘I think it’s important that teachers do [try different teaching methods in response to student feedback], because it makes us feel important

¹² In the Teaching and Learning Forum, a select group of students give feedback to members of staff about the teaching and learning in the school, with different subject departments being the focus of the feedback at different points in time.

and feel a lot more involved, like they are not just reading out of a text book ... like we are on an equal par and they are not just telling us what to do, because that doesn't work so well with teenagers.'

4.2 Participation in the school community

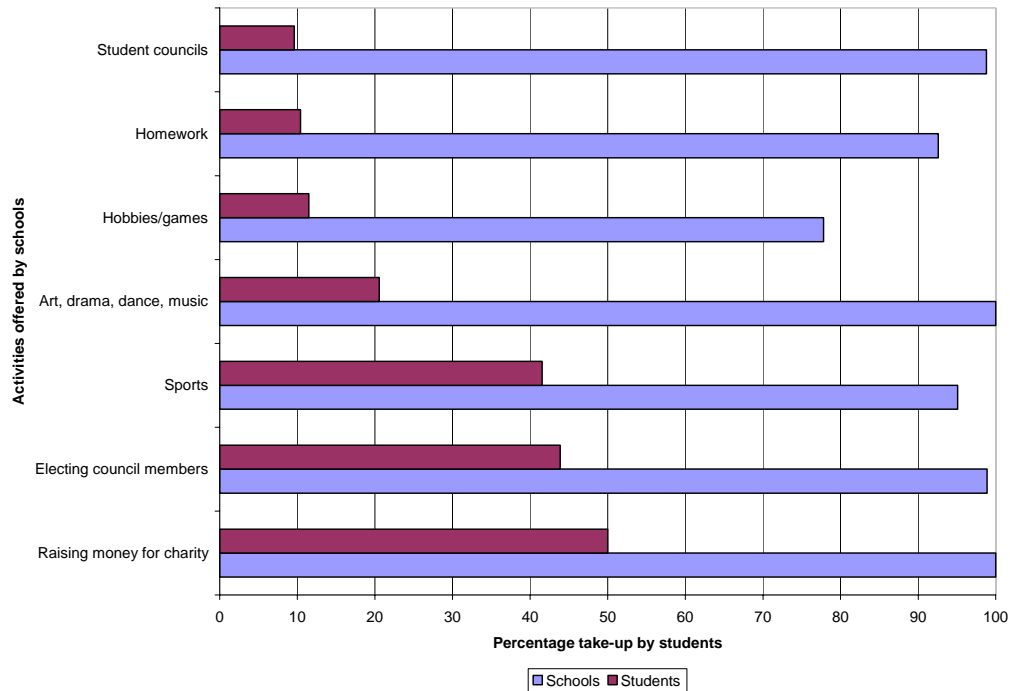
4.2.1 Taking an active part in school life

In survey and case-studies schools, there was a wide range of extra-curricular activities available in which students could participate. As Figure 4.1 shows for schools participating in the survey, the most commonly available activities in which students could participate were raising money for good causes or charities; sports clubs or groups; arts, dance or drama groups, hobbies and games groups, homework-related clubs and activities and school councils.

However, the proportion of students involved in these activities was relatively small in some cases. For instance, nearly all school leaders (99 per cent) said that there were school or student councils available in their institutions (Figure 4.1), and students were also generally aware of these opportunities, with 84 per cent saying that there was a school council in their school and only eight per cent believing that there were no prospects to be involved in the running of their school through a council. However, Figure 4.1 also shows that there was a large gap between the availability and take-up of school council activity. The implications of this are discussed further in Section 4.2.2 below.

All case-study schools offered extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as sports and subject-related clubs. In schools with house systems, many of the extra-curricular activities were organised in the context of (inter-)house activities and competitions, with some events being organised by student house members. In some schools, there were opportunities for students to take up prefect or mentoring-type roles. It is possible that some schools may be using activities of this type to develop citizenship-related knowledge, understanding and skills.

Figure 4.1 Opportunities for participation in activities in school – offered and taken up, 2005



N = 13,643 students, 81 Schools

Source: *Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, Longitudinal Survey 2005*

Students from the survey generally had a positive attitude towards participation in activities in school: two-thirds of students surveyed (66 per cent) said that they enjoyed taking part in clubs and groups in school and over half (53 per cent) thought that doing optional activities was a good way to meet interesting people.

The students interviewed in case-study schools also recognised many reasons why taking part in extra-curricular activities in school was a good idea. These included gains associated with learning, getting to know other people/making friends, having fun, having something to do and taking advantage of such opportunities to learn or experience different things, were often mentioned by students. Other reasons for getting involved, mentioned in a small number of schools, were academic (such as getting better at a subject) and having a break from lessons.

The survey of Year 9 students, however, revealed that a small proportion of respondents (12 per cent) thought that taking part in activities in school was a waste of time. Moreover, students generally did not feel obliged to participate: the majority (59 per cent) did not think that students have a duty to take part in clubs and activities at school. These factors may partly help explain the discrepancy between the widespread offer of extra-curricular activities across

schools and the relatively low take-up of such activities by students observed in Figure 4.1.

4.2.2 Having a say in school policy making

The majority of Year 9 students surveyed felt that they had some input into the decision-making processes in their schools. Over half (62 per cent) said that students were consulted about the development of school rules and policies and over one-fifth (21 per cent) thought that they had quite a lot, or a lot, of say in how the school was run.

However, as reported in Figure 4.1 above, under half of the students surveyed (44 per cent) said that they had actually taken part in a school council election and only 10 per cent had actually been involved in a school council. Whilst it is understandable that only a small proportion of students can actually sit on councils, the relatively small number of respondents that have voted in school council elections, given levels of availability and awareness, suggests that there is still considerable work for schools to do in improving the opportunities for all students to participate in democratic processes in school.

Case-study data corroborates these findings, since the students interviewed tended also to feel that they had at least some voice in school. However, they did not necessarily have a voice across all aspects of school life. In one school, for instance, action by students had resulted in an extension of the morning break, but changes to the uniform were perceived to be a ‘no-go’ area.

All case-study schools had a school council and students tended to identify this structure as a way in which they could have their voice heard in the school. In addition to the school council, many teachers and students in case-study schools reported that opinion surveys were used to obtain students’ views about issues that affected them. Other ways in which students could have their voices heard in case-study schools included approaching the headteacher with any concerns. In addition, the above-mentioned ‘Teaching and Learning Forum’¹³, which was in place in one school, was perceived by students to be a helpful way for students to have their voice heard.

In terms of issues for consultation, in most case-study schools, staff reported that students were consulted about staff appointments (e.g. involvement in recruitment interviews) as well as teaching and learning issues. In a few schools, staff also mentioned that students had an input into:

- decisions relating to the school environment and facilities;
- catering in the school;

¹³ See footnote 9.

- travel plans and safety;
- school uniform and school rules.

Other areas in which students were reported to have a voice were the school day, homework and fund-raising activities.

Students, however, did not view staff recruitment as an area in which they should have their voice heard. In fact, one group of Key Stage 4 students thought that students should not have a voice in matters regarding staff recruitment because the headteacher is more likely to know which candidates would be most suitable. However, it should be noted that these students attended a school where Year 12 and 13 students were involved in staff appointments and as such the Key Stage 4 students who were interviewed would not have taken part in the decisions made. This may explain why they did not perceive students as having the ability to make a contribution in this area.

In addition, not all students in case-study schools thought they should have more of a voice. One group appeared satisfied with the state of affairs in their school. They thought that students did have a right to contribute to decisions in the school and, in their school, students were informed via leaflets and/or consulted via surveys or interviews. In another school, one group did not feel that they should have more say than they had in what happened in school and highlighted that the school itself was not free to do as it wished and had to work within the realms of the National Curriculum. The following are examples of comments made by students who were satisfied and dissatisfied with student voice in their school:

Students who were satisfied – example	Students who are dissatisfied – example
<i>'They usually ask everybody and then ask the teachers and then Mr. X [headteacher] will decide what happens'</i> – Key Stage 3 student	<i>'At the start of the year they make a big fuss about [the school council] and then by the end nobody really cares'</i> – Key Stage 4 student

4.2.3 Challenges to student voice

As discussed earlier (Section 4.2.1), there was a considerable gap between opportunities for school council activity and take-up of those opportunities. Evidence from the case-study schools suggests some of the main reasons why school councils were not functioning well included:

- **lack of information about school council.** Students in some case-study schools felt uninformed about what happened in school council meetings,

school council achievements, or even who their school council representative was. In some instances, representatives themselves were unsure as to what was going on in the school or as to what follow-up action was taken based on school council discussions. One student representative said *'we're never quite sure what happens, if ideas get passed on... the sixth formers take notes and then they kind of disappear'*.

- **lack of status of school council.** In most case-study schools, school council meetings were not as frequent as planned or desirable. In some schools, the school council representatives were not respected by other students and there was a lack of interest in being a school council representative or attending meetings. In one school, where student voice was particularly weak, one student described the situation thus:

As you go up through the school, the participation in the school council decreases. In Year 11, no-one turns up. In Year 10, two or three people turn up but they are abused and teased for turning up... The school is good in getting you through and getting you good exam results. I don't feel that it is supportive when it comes to the school council.

This lack of power was seen to be a reason why students failed to take the school council seriously.

- **giving voice to only a minority of students.** In some schools, the school council did not represent the views of all students, but only those involved as representatives. In addition, the coordinator in one case-study school commented that she thought that only a small group of students in her school had a voice, as they were the ones who most frequently volunteered and were selected by the teachers to give their views. This coordinator felt that the school may need to implement a system for tracking which students have been involved in active participation so that those who do not have the opportunity for expressing their opinions can be identified and encouraged to do so.
- **underdevelopment of students' skills of participation.** School council representatives tended to be elected, but in many of the case-study schools students perceived elections to be negatively affected by students voting for the most popular students or their friends. In one school, one student even suggested that input from staff in the selection of student representatives may be an appropriate way of tackling this issue, whereas two other schools did have a system in place whereby some of the student representatives were selected by staff in order to address such issues. Concerns with voting being a 'popularity contest' may indicate that many students lack the decision-making skills necessary for the effective running of democratic processes in school. A further area in which student participation skills may be lacking is that of communication and negotiation skills. Indeed, in two schools at least, school council meetings did not necessarily run smoothly, with students reportedly yelling at one another or fighting over the issues under discussion.

The case-study schools present a continuum concerning the opportunities for and development of student voice. While in none of the ten case-study schools was the functioning of the school council considered perfect, in the majority it was working to varying degrees of effectiveness. However, in two of the schools the function of the school council was particularly poor.

The following examples present two contrasting approaches to student voice.

A poorly-developed student voice

Decision making in the school tends to be top-down in nature, the power of the school council is considerably limited and it has low status, as revealed in interviews with staff and students. One teacher interviewed suggested that there is a lack of a culture of students taking responsibility in the school. The operation of the school council relies heavily on the input of the sixth formers who run it and varies over time depending on how much they contribute (for example, in 2004/5 there was a dearth of council meetings). Student participation in the student council decreases as you go up the school and student contributions are not always appropriate due to students lacking an understanding of school processes. Though students have been involved in governors' meetings, staff recruitment and school uniform policy, they do not receive feedback about teaching and learning, and generally feel that they do not have much of a voice in the school. While some students reported that school uniform had been changed because of students' views, some felt that they did not have a voice. For instance, one student expressed the view that, despite the fact that student representatives attend governors' meetings, *'usually not a lot happens about it'*.

A well-developed student voice

The school's headteacher is a champion for citizenship education, and puts particular emphasis on the experiential and implicit teaching of citizenship. Over the past two years, the school council has been considerably developed. Every tutor group elects a representative to the council. Older council representatives are involved in interviewing new members of staff. The students were satisfied with the operation of the school council and, as one student noted, *'I think it's effective because it's not just the big issues that get changes, but the smaller issues too'*. The school council is complemented by a student 'Teaching and Learning Forum' where a select group of students, who have received training, give feedback about the teaching and learning. Students were enthusiastic about the 'Forum'. They explained: *'loads of students have been picked to go... and talk about how the lessons are going... and talk about how to improve them', 'there have definitely been changes according to what we've said'*.

4.3 The wider community

4.3.1 Engaging with the wider community

Students in the survey reported participation in a range of activities outside of school, most commonly:

- Sport clubs and teams (40 per cent);
- Youth clubs, scouts or guides (23 per cent);
- Hobbies and games clubs (23 per cent);

- Raising money for a good cause (21 per cent);
- Art, dance, drama (20 per cent);
- Helping in the local community (10 per cent).

Furthermore, students were asked about their involvement in optional activities in the last 12 months. In the year prior to the survey:

- Twenty-eight per cent of students had taken part in a sponsored activity;
- Nearly one-fifth (18 per cent) had helped to organise or run an event;
- Fifteen per cent had given any kind of help to a group or club;
- Eight per cent had been part of a committee for a group or club.

All case-study schools offered their students opportunities to engage with the wider community. The types of opportunities most consistently available across schools are described below. They include:

- Fund-raising and fund-raising events for charities or charitable causes, at local to international level, for example: non-uniform days and fund-raising activities for the victims of the Asian tsunami and Red Nose Day;
- Volunteering in the community, including through the Duke of Edinburgh programme;
- Work experience in the community;
- Visits to institutions, participation in the organisation of events whereby students can meet community groups different from their own, such as the elderly, younger children and individuals in hospices. In one school students were also able to interact in school and through common tuition with young offenders and other members of the community who were doing vocational Entry to Employment (E2E) courses on campus.

Other types of activities whereby students came into contact with the wider community, mentioned in only some case-study schools, included productions/art performances for the community (although sometimes these were mainly attended by parents), school trips (national and international), regional competitions in debate and public speaking, and bringing speakers from the community into the school (e.g. non-governmental organisations, members of parliament, local business people).

Students participating in the survey had a positive attitude towards volunteering and it was not seen as 'uncool':

- Nearly half (46 per cent) disagreed that their friends would laugh at people doing voluntary work. In contrast, only 15 per cent agreed with this statement;

- Only 18 per cent said that most of their friends think doing voluntary work is a waste of time.

Students saw advantages for themselves in doing voluntary work: 41 per cent thought that it may help them get a better job in the future. Only one-fifth (19 per cent) of students thought that they were too busy to take part in voluntary activities inside or outside school.

4.3.2 Having a voice in decision making in the wider community

Whilst all case-study schools provided opportunities for students to engage with the wider community, only a minority appeared to provide opportunities for students to have a voice in decision-making processes beyond the school environment. Such opportunities, however, seemed to be very valuable as they involved students being consulted on community matters, such as having an input into local travel plans. One school was represented by school council members on council and district-level youth forums.

4.4 Factors affecting opportunities for active participation

4.4.1 The contribution of citizenship education

The perceived contribution of citizenship education to the creation of opportunities for active participation within school did not appear to be, overall, very great among the teachers and students interviewed. This may be because the case-study schools, like schools involved in the survey (see typology findings in Chapter 2), appeared to have concentrated on developing the curriculum aspects of citizenship education more than the area of active participation. In many case-study schools, staff felt that the active citizenship aspects of citizenship education were in need of further development. Only two of the case-study schools were classified unanimously by all staff interviewees as *progressing* schools where there were opportunities for active citizenship as well as citizenship in the curriculum. In contrast, many schools were considered to be *focused* on citizenship education in the curriculum.

Nevertheless, the case-study schools highlight that the introduction of citizenship education may be beginning to make a recognisable contribution to the development of opportunities for active participation in schools through:

- **citizenship lessons providing opportunities for active participation.** Students in case-study schools reported that there were opportunities for active participation in class in citizenship lessons. According to students, in most schools, citizenship was amongst the subjects where students have the most opportunities for active participation in class, through discussion and voicing of opinions, alongside Religious Education (RE), Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), and art and humanities subjects;

- **citizenship lessons providing opportunities for input into teaching and learning.** In a minority of schools, there were opportunities for an input from students into teaching and learning strategies in citizenship lessons. Revision lessons, however, were also sessions where some students reported being allowed an input into teaching and learning;
- **‘citizenship-friendly’ ethos.** In some schools, the school’s senior management promoted a school ethos that was citizenship-friendly (as was the case in the citizenship specialist school or the school where the headteacher championed the experiential teaching of citizenship education) and as such facilitated active citizenship;
- **extra-curricular citizenship activities.** In some schools, there were extra-curricular activities or democratic processes which had clear and explicit citizenship education objectives. In one school, a mock election had been organised in such a way as to simulate the general election. The mock parties had two parallel parties that were registered for the general election so that students could learn about their different stances, were registered to vote and were sent voting cards. In another school, the election of student representatives to the school council mimics that of MPs (from there being an electoral register to ballot papers being put into sealed boxes). A member of staff said: *‘it is explained that this is exactly how your parents would do it when they go to vote’*.

This type of activity, however, cannot be said to be necessarily the result of the existence of statutory citizenship education and some of these activities may already have been in place prior to September 2002, when it was introduced as a new National Curriculum subject. For instance, in one school, there was a long-standing residential programme for Year 7 students. This programme was perceived to have a citizenship focus and contribute to citizenship education because it developed team-working skills given that students were not able to succeed in many of the set tasks unless they worked as a team.

4.4.2 The contribution of other factors

While citizenship education may be contributing to the provision of opportunities for active participation in schools, other factors also appear to have an impact on the extent to which such opportunities occur in schools. These include:

- citizenship coordinators’ views and priorities;
- the culture of student consultation in a school;
- the culture of volunteering and charity work;
- enthusiasm and competency of citizenship teachers;
- school size;
- student confidence;

- the model of citizenship education delivery;
- emphasis on academic achievement.

These factors will now be considered in turn.

Citizenship coordinators' views and priorities. In some case-study schools, where the focus on citizenship education in the curriculum was perceived to be more developed than the focus on active citizenship, the coordinators had either not made the latter aspect a priority or did not see it as part of their role. One of these coordinators mentioned that opportunities for participation in the local community were not integrated into citizenship education and that: *'In terms of forging links with the local community with a view to doing more, that is certainly something on my personal agenda but it has joined the list of priorities and currently resides around number eight'*. Another coordinator thought that: *'Links with the community... that isn't directly part of my brief. My brief is really just the curriculum side of things'*. The same coordinator expressed uncertainty as to what constitutes active citizenship:

I never know whether you would see this [involvement by students in local charitable activities] as citizenship or not. Things like the band playing at the mayor's party... We have the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which I suppose is a more active sort of citizenship phenomenon... it's an area we probably need to develop as a school. It's not that it doesn't exist... I don't think it's necessarily explicit in the way that perhaps it needs to be.

Culture of student consultation. Two schools appeared to have an ethos that was particularly conducive to encouraging student input into teaching and learning. Both schools appeared to be strong in the implicit aspects of citizenship education and were classified by staff as being a *progressing* school or on the way to becoming one. In contrast, some schools appeared to have a culture or ethos that discouraged student participation. In two of these schools, Key Stage 3 students felt that some teachers think that they are answering back if they voice their opinions or disagree with the teachers. One Key Stage 4 student felt that teachers: *'Don't seem to recognise that we are 16-year-old people. They still see us as younger and don't really take our opinions as much as I think they should'*.

One school, with a reportedly particularly ineffective school council, was perceived by one member of staff to have a very top-down approach, with council affairs controlled by the headteacher and teaching staff, while in another school, where students felt that they should be seen but not heard, students reported an instance where, despite a feedback process being initiated, the outcome was negative:

Classic example... We didn't do well in our... mock exam. We got asked to write an evaluation saying how we thought we could be taught

differently. We put what we thought in an adult manner. We weren't giving them any stick or anything. And all we got back was 'this is absolute crap, if you think I am going to listen to any of this then you can forget about it'.

In addition, in some schools it appeared that there was not a culture of participation amongst students. In some cases students felt that sometimes students did not respect other students' opinions or had strong opinions and it could seem like they are personalising issues. One group explained that at times it happened that:

If you say something... people just laugh at you. They're like 'oh shut up, what are you talking about?!. Yesterday I asked a question in citizenship, then a person goes to me 'you're the cleverest kid in the class... but sometimes you ask such stupid questions'.

Culture of volunteering and charity work. One school was particularly active in terms of fund-raising for charity and this was a long-standing feature of life in the school in which both students and teachers took part. In another school, which was a faith school with a strong ethos, students were encouraged to become involved in fund-raising and charitable organisations, and they planned and carried out a fund-raising event as part of personal and religious education (which encompasses citizenship education). This school also had strong links with the wider community, but these tended to be with organisations that also have a faith-based ethos.

Enthusiasm and competency of citizenship teachers. In some schools, the citizenship teachers' approach to lessons impacted upon the extent to which there were opportunities for active participation. In one school, students reported that the core team of citizenship teachers gave more opportunities for discussion than other teachers, possibly due to the fact, mentioned by the coordinator, that there were a large number of staff involved in teaching citizenship education, but only a small core team who were dedicated and enthusiastic. In another school, students felt that there was the need for debates to be controlled, but that not all teachers were equally skilled at running discussions in lessons: *'It depends a lot on the teacher's skill. How much they can control the class... because sooner or later everyone just ends up yelling at each other. You need some sort of like control over it.'*

In addition, whereas some teachers were positive about the capacity of students to contribute constructively to discussions about school life, others did not believe that students had the maturity to convey their opinions appropriately or the knowledge required to take part in certain decision-making processes.

School size. The size of the school was mentioned as a factor working both for and against the provision of active participation opportunities in over half the

case-study schools. Generally, the smaller the school, in terms of student numbers, then the easier it was to offer participation opportunities to all students. In one school the question arose as to how the school could provide opportunities for all students to engage with the wider community given its large size.

Student confidence. One citizenship coordinator reported that work-experience students were often reluctant to leave the local area, because they were used to being taken everywhere by their parents by car. The coordinator felt that the students lacked the confidence to get out into the community, and that this needed working on. Furthermore, in other schools, older students appeared more confident in making their voice heard in school. For instance, in one school, Key Stage 4 students thought that they were more able to disagree with the teachers as they went up the school and, whereas Key Stage 4 students were confident about approaching the headteacher as a way of having their voice heard, Key Stage 3 students were not as confident.

The model of citizenship education delivery selected by schools. This appeared to influence on the extent to which there was scope for the active participation of students in citizenship lessons. One coordinator mentioned that, although in both PSHE and citizenship education there was particular potential for discussion, there was more note taking in citizenship education than in PSHE due to the fact that the former was an examined subject (using the GCSE short course) and there was the need to prepare for the exam.

Emphasis on academic achievement. In one school, the citizenship coordinator felt that the school placed such an emphasis on maximising GCSE results, including those on citizenship, that this was at the cost of allowing students to explore issues and develop their attitudes and opinions. In addition, Key Stage 4 students in some schools commented that they found it difficult to find time to take part in opportunities for active participation in school as they were so busy working for their GCSEs.

A number of other issues also emerged from the case-study schools which impacted upon the extent to which students were able to participate in active citizenship opportunities. These included:

- students reported being encouraged to participate due to the encouragement of teachers and the enthusiasm of other students;
- the timetable of extra-curricular activities was well advertised and the achievements of those participating was celebrated, which was positively looked upon by students;
- some students reported not being able to take part in after-school activities, as they had no way of getting home afterwards, whereas in another school a free bus service was provided to take students home after such activities;

- teachers in some schools felt that it was difficult for students to establish relationships with the wider community as their schools had a very disparate intake and students often lived some distance from school;
- in other schools, staff highlighted that the bureaucracy associated with taking students into the community was a hindrance to providing opportunities for students to engage with the wider community: *'Getting through the red tape and getting around the bureaucracy is almost impossible'*;
- in one school, teachers reported that there was simply not enough time to train teachers and students in the skills needed to make the school council run effectively;
- in a final school, which had a house system, one member of staff highlighted that the attitude of the house manager impacted on how well houses were run and that therefore not all houses were equally successful.

In spite of a number of reported constraints, some schools were making substantial inroads in developing a culture of active participation within their school. The following case-study provides one such example:

An active school community

This school was deemed by staff to be **developing into a progressing school** and was strong on the implicit aspects of active citizenship in the school and wider community. Students appeared very confident about approaching teachers regarding **teaching and learning** issues and even reported having **successfully challenged** a teacher's teaching style. The school has a **house system** as part of which there are **yearly elections** of house leads (from amongst Year 12 students) and house assemblies and debates. **Sports competitions** and other activities also run through the house system. In addition, the school is strong on **fund-raising for charity**, with teachers as well as students being involved in such activities. As one student noted: *'charity is a big part of this school'*. The school also has a link with a school in Africa and organises student **visits to other continents**.

Students thought that there were good reasons to take part in the extra-curricular activities on offer because they enable participants to get to know other people and because they learn/experience different things. In addition, they mentioned that teachers actively encourage students to participate. However, this being a **high-achieving school**, participation was highest in Key Stage 3 due to the **time constraints** associated with academic work in Key Stage 4.

This chapter has shown that the majority of students had some opportunities to participate in decision-making processes in school. This was often through the school council, though such councils were not functioning well in all schools. The chapter has also highlighted a range of factors that impact on student opportunities for active citizenship in schools. The next chapter considers young people's opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in relation to their sense of belonging to their school and wider communities.

5. Community and belonging

Key findings

- Survey data showed that over half of students (59 per cent) felt 'quite a lot' or 'completely part' of their school community. Case-study data revealed that several key issues appeared to affect the extent to which young people felt a sense of belonging to their school communities including:
 - having a say in decisions that are made in school;
 - relationships in the school amongst students and between teachers and students;
 - levels of student engagement;
 - belonging to a smaller community within the school community;
 - school facilities.
- Although the majority of young people in case-study schools felt a greater sense of belonging to their school than to the wider community, the community outside of school was still important to young people. Over half (57 per cent) of students responding to the survey felt 'quite a lot' or 'completely part' of their neighbourhood.
- Several key factors were highlighted by young people in the case-study schools as impacting upon their sense of belonging to their wider communities. These included:
 - knowing and trusting people and having friends in the local community;
 - the size of the local community;
 - availability of activities;
 - feeling safe.
- The majority of young people felt that it was important to be part of a community for two main reasons: having a sense of community provides opportunities for the development of social responsibility; and knowing people creates a sense of worth, trust and security.
- Many of the young people interviewed valued the concept and practice of participating in a community. Whilst the school community was particularly important to interviewees, many also showed a willingness to take responsible action in their local neighbourhoods. They valued living in communities which were safe and mutually trusting. This enthusiasm and sense of social obligation provides a sound basis on which schools might develop active citizenship opportunities within and out of school.

This chapter examines the wider context in which active citizenship takes place looking at students' sense of belonging to their school and wider communities.

As discussed in the preceding two chapters, although young people in the case-study schools display considerable capability to participate actively in school life and make a positive contribution, some have a limited

understanding of decision-making processes within and beyond school. However, there are further factors that impact upon young people's propensity for participation, both within and outside school. To gain a greater understanding of young people's lives and the groups and activities they find significant and meaningful, these factors need to be investigated further. The factors that facilitate and challenge students feelings of location within, and dislocation from, their school and wider communities, provide the wider context within which the knowledge, skills and opportunities for participation, including through citizenship education, that young people gain through school, are situated. This chapter examines that wider context, by considering:

- the circumstances in which a sense of belonging develops or is challenged, within school and the wider community;
- young people's views of community and how these impact upon their opportunities for, and propensity to engage with, active citizenship in and beyond school.

5.1 Factors contributing to a sense of belonging in the school community

Young people in the case-study schools overwhelmingly felt a greater sense of belonging to their school than they did to their wider communities. School was the most important community for young people as it provided them with a safe place to make friends with people of their own age. In addition, young people highlighted the fact that they spent more time in school than anywhere else. Data from the survey reveals that, for the majority of students, the school community was very important. Over half (59 per cent) of Year 9 students, who responded to the survey, said that they felt 'quite a lot' or 'completely' part of their school.

Analysis of the case-study data reveals that several key issues affect the extent to which young people feel a sense of belonging to their school communities. These include:

- having a say in decisions made in school;
- relationships in school amongst students and between teachers and students;
- levels of student engagement;
- belonging to a smaller community within the school community;
- school facilities.

Each of these issues is examined in turn in what follows.

5.1.1 Having a say in decisions that are made in school

Encouraging students to contribute to decision making was seen as an important factor in encouraging a sense of belonging amongst teachers and senior managers in case-study schools. One headteacher stated that in her school *'students can be made to feel part of the school through incorporating them in the decisions wherever we can'*. She went on to explain that, involving students in decision making allowed the development of a sense of trust and respect between teachers and students. Meanwhile, a member of staff in another school felt that students in her school were incorporated in decisions through the active student council and this helped them to feel involved in the school community. However, teachers and senior managers also recognised the limitations of student involvement in decision making. One headteacher acknowledged that students' input only had a limited impact on the decisions taken in school, and the coordinator of the school council in the school commented that *'children are often misguided or don't understand the overall situation, especially the younger ones'*.

The view that having a voice in school helps to create a sense of belonging was not widely expressed by students. Some students were able to discuss the extent to which they had a voice in school by contrasting their school experience to other situations in their lives. Examples included one student who reported a sense of relative powerlessness in her local neighbourhood compared to school, where she felt she had some say, and another who was able to compare his current school experience to that of a previous school he had attended commenting: *'They are quite good here. At my last school they were ruled by everything adult'*. That there were few other similar comments may reflect the fact that young people did not consider having a voice in school an important factor in creating a sense of belonging. However, it should also be recognised that the concept of **'voice'** is a difficult one for students to articulate clearly. The case-study data suggests that students who had not experienced another type of participative or non-participative community, had difficulty gauging the extent to which the opportunities they had in school encouraged them to feel a sense of belonging.

In some case-study schools, teachers were keenly aware of the negative impact that not involving students in decision making had on student morale. A citizenship coordinator in one school commented that students in her school had not been consulted about changes that had been made to the discipline policy and as a result the young people felt the policy was unfair and that no-one in the school listened to their views.

5.1.2 Relationships in school amongst students and between teachers and students

For many students in the case-study schools it was their relationship with others, both students and teachers, that determined their sense of belonging to school. When asked to describe their school, students often reported that their school was ‘friendly’. Students explained that they felt part of school because they spent a lot of time there and, as such, had established strong **friendship networks** and a sense of community. One Key Stage 3 student said: ‘*I spend more time here than home, this is more my home*’. Meanwhile, a Key Stage 4 student stated that ‘*I’ve had some of the best laughs of my life in school*’, whilst another Key Stage 4 student explained how her sense of belonging to her school community had developed over time:

I think I am more bonded like to the school, because we came over at 11 or 12 and from being 11 or 12 we’ve grown up quite a bit, like we’ve grown through the school and it is going to be hard to leave, because you know everybody and you’ve seen them every day for five, six, seven years.

The friendship and support networks that young people in the case-study schools have developed inside and outside school are discussed further in Section 5.2.1.

Relationships with teachers were also seen as very important by students in the case-study schools. Students in one school said that they appreciated the fact that teachers treated them as equals. A case-study school, where students particularly highlighted the good relationships they had with teachers, is described below.

Student–teacher relationships

A small school in a rural area had particularly positive relationships between students and teachers. Students felt that the teachers were very supportive of them and encouraged them to get involved in activities. One student commented: ‘*Teachers know everyone and everyone knows each other and they [teachers] are constantly encouraging you to get involved in things, it is constantly getting better.*’ Another student felt that the students had good relationships with the teachers and commented that ‘*you feel like you have a nice bond with the different teachers that teach you*’. Other students noted that ‘*the teachers are approachable*’ and ‘*the teachers can be really supportive*’. There was also, as one student commented, ‘*a lot of respect*’ amongst teachers and students. Another student explained why this was the case: ‘*They treat you like adults, you get treated properly... because we are teenagers, if you speak to us properly, we will feel like adults*’.

These student views were echoed by a teacher in one of the case-study schools, who commented that he thought it was his, and other teachers’, responsibility to foster a sense of community and belonging amongst students:

‘For me and I am sure for others, it is a number one priority to make sure that every child knows that they matter and that they are part of it [the school]’.

In addition to identifying a positive relationship between students and teachers, some students said that a factor creating a sense of belonging to their schools was that their teachers were **effective educators**. One student commented that: *‘The school provides a good education, the teachers are good and teach you a lot of things’*. Another student said that in her school the teachers *‘actually teach you things’* and went on to explain how she valued the way the teachers encouraged students to get involved in the lessons, rather than just telling them what to do. Other students, when asked to describe their school, emphasised that a positive aspect for them was that they were good, academic schools.

Conversely, a negative relationship between students and teachers was seen to inhibit the development of sense of belonging to the school community amongst students. A teacher in one school felt that the lack of trust between students and teachers undermined efforts that had been made to involve students in decision making in the school. She described the student–teacher relationship in her school as *‘very them and us’*, and explained that although students were involved in voting for the head girl and head boy in the school, the students did not trust the school to take their views seriously and felt that the teachers would *‘just pick who they want anyway’*. Evidence from survey data shows that there were moderate levels of trust in teachers by Year 9 students: over one-third (35 per cent) trusted their teachers quite a lot or completely; however, 15 per cent did not trust them at all. This suggests that, certainly for a minority of schools, relationships and trust between teachers and students, may be an issue of concern.

5.1.3 Levels of student engagement

In some case-study schools, teachers felt that there were groups of marginalised students who, for various reasons, failed to feel a sense of belonging to the school community. Such young people included:

- ***The socially excluded*** – a teacher in one school acknowledged that there would always be some students who failed to feel part of the school community. One teacher described these students as those *‘who are alienated from the school environment ... and often alienated from school in general’*.
- ***The disengaged*** – in one case-study school, a teacher felt that a lack of engagement with the school community was widespread: *‘A lot of youngsters here are just doing the schooling bit because they have to’*. He felt that this was because identifying with the school was seen as *‘uncool’* and as such only a minority of students tried to be part of the school

community. A teacher in another case-study school described such young people as those who were *'quite selfish in their world view'*.

- **Low achievers** – one citizenship coordinator in a school felt that the students who were less academically able, and who were as such *'at the bottom of the class'*, felt marginalised from the school community.

Whilst a failure to feel sense of belonging to the school community may be attributed, in some cases, to the attitudes and values of certain groups of young people, such as the consciously disengaged, in other cases, it would seem that **schools themselves** need to carry some responsibility for the feelings of alienation experienced by low achieving, socially excluded or otherwise disadvantaged young people.

5.1.4 Belonging to a smaller community within the school community

Teachers and senior managers, particularly in larger case-study schools, believed that students in their schools felt a sense of belonging because they were part of smaller communities within the school, such as a form group, which they were often taught in for many subjects, or a house. In schools where there were house systems, teachers emphasised the important role that these systems played in creating a sense of belonging, as they provided students with smaller communities in which they could more easily participate and feel part of. A Key Stage 4 student in one school commented that getting involved in house activities encouraged a sense of belonging that crossed other school divisions, of age and year group: *'there is a sense of a united front, especially in house entertainment, independent of how old you are'*.

Schools where interviewees highlighted that the house system had improved students' sense of belonging were those where there were inter-house competitions for other activities as well as sports, such as raising money for charity, arts and drama. Students in one school commented that the relationship between the different houses was one of *'extreme rivalry'* and a teacher in this school also commented that there was a lot of competition between the houses, indicating that the sense of belonging was more to **house** than to the **school as a whole**.¹⁴ This point is illustrated in the example below.

The role of house systems in creating a sense of belonging

A particularly large school had successfully used a house system to create a sense of belonging in the school and encourage participation in the school community. A teacher from the school explained that it was difficult for students to feel a sense of belonging to the school as a whole, as it was so big *'five hundred students in each year group means a sense of community amongst year groups is impossible'*.

¹⁴ It is worth noting that none of those interviewed observed that there were negative aspects to a competitive atmosphere between houses.

In addition, a senior manager commented that the house system in her school had *'basically broken down a very large school into six smaller communities that the students can identify with'*. The houses, as well as running sports competitions, ran non-sports activities such as Christmas decoration competitions and pantomimes. A senior manager in the school emphasised that students had a say in the activities they undertook within their houses and that this was important in fostering a sense of belonging. The citizenship coordinator also felt that students had a sense of belonging to their houses. However, she was unsure of the extent to which students felt a sense of belonging to the school as a whole.

However, efforts to encourage a sense of belonging to smaller units within the case-study schools were not always successful. In one school the headteacher did not support the development of a house system, so although there were plans to introduce such a system, progress was very slow. In another school a teacher had tried to encourage a sense of belonging amongst year groups through year group focused activities. This was thwarted because other teachers in the school were too busy to organise activities, and as a result they did not take place.

5.1.5 School facilities

The quality of the school building and the facilities that were available to students were seen as important factors in encouraging a sense of community. Students in one school said that they liked the fact that the school had good sports and computer facilities as it meant that there were a range of things for them to do. The impact on community spirit in a school, which had recently had a lot of work on the school building completed, is described below.

School building and facilities

This school had recently had a lot of building work done including new IT, sports and canteen facilities. The headteacher believed that the new buildings and facilities had *'boosted the school's self-esteem'*. He felt that the students in the school *'look to the material things to judge the school and see it in a positive light now as they've had all this work done'*. Students were also positive about the new buildings and facilities. They were proud of the facilities that the school had, and many had chosen to attend this school over others partly because of the good facilities. One student described his viewpoint: *'I saw other schools before I came. When I came here I really liked the teachers and the facilities, I was really impressed by them. I've definitely made the right choice.'*

Students also enjoyed using the new facilities, and particularly cited being able to use laptop computers and interactive whiteboards as highlights of lessons they had had recently. They described the new ICT classrooms as *'much better than a stuffy old classroom'*. In addition, students felt that the new facilities improved their quality of life at school: *'With the new canteen it gives you somewhere to relax, like if you are somewhere where it doesn't look nice, you can't relax, but if you are somewhere which is really nice then you can sort of relax better'*.

Students in another school felt negatively about the school because of the condition of the building. When asked to describe what their school was like, some Key Stage 4 students described it as *'a dump'* and *'boring and dirty'*. Key Stage 3 students expressed similar sentiments but were less harsh in their descriptions of it as *'not a perfect school'*, *'a bit scrubby, with graffiti'* and *'a bit run down'*.

There was also a range of additional issues that teachers and students thought helped foster a sense of belonging and community within the case-study schools. These included:

- **Relative safety and stability of school life** – one teacher commented that many students had disjointed lives outside of school, and that for these students the stability of school made them feel safe and part of something continuous. Students in some schools commented that they did not feel safe in their local communities, and that their schools provided a safe haven where they could meet up with friends.
- **Sharing of fundamental values** – teachers from the two faith case-study schools commented that the religious aspect of their schools helped to foster a sense of belonging. One teacher felt this was due to regular collective acts of worship that took place in the school. Another teacher felt that students and teachers shared the same fundamental values in the school and that this helped encourage a sense of belonging, which was reinforced through the religious practices in the school, even though not all students and teachers shared the same religious beliefs.
- **External factors** – one school was located in the centre of the local community, and many of the students' grandparents and parents had attended the school. As such this school had a strong sense of community and belonging linked to the wider community. A school in another area had a very large number of feeder primary schools, and this produced a disparate student body. Senior managers and teachers felt that because of this they had to work harder than other schools to engender a sense of community within the school.

The next section considers the circumstances that enable, or hinder students' sense of belonging to the **wider community**.

5.2 In what circumstances does a sense of belonging to the wider community develop?

As discussed in the previous section, the majority of young people in case-study schools felt a greater sense of belonging to their schools than to their wider communities. Evidence from the survey data, however, suggests that the wider community is still important to young people. A total of 57 per cent of Year 9 students surveyed felt 'quite a lot' or 'completely' part of their neighbourhood. Young people in the case-study schools identified key factors

important in helping them to develop a sense of belonging to their wider communities. These included:

- knowing and trusting people and having friends in the local community;
- the size of the local community;
- availability of activities;
- feeling safe.

These different factors are examined, in turn, below.

5.2.1 Knowing and trusting people and having friends in the local community

A key factor identified by many young people from the case-study schools, in encouraging their sense of belonging to their wider communities, was **knowing people** in their neighbourhoods. Evidence from the surveys reveals that whilst the majority of Year 9 students do know people in their local communities, these are generally their parents' friends rather than family. Over half (60 per cent) of young people said that their parents had lots of friends in the local community, whilst 64 per cent said that they did not live near most of their relatives. For some of the younger participants from the case-study schools, having people of their own age to play with, locally, was important. For example, one Key Stage 3 student noted that although some parts of her community were *'rough'*, in *'some streets and cul-de-sacs there are children around you can play with'*.

For older participants, having their friends nearby was also important. As one Key Stage 4 student commented: *'All my friends live nearby and there are younger people down the road'*. Other students commented that their parents also had a wide social circle in their neighbourhoods, which contributed to a sense of belonging. One Key Stage 3 student felt that they could not imagine living anywhere else because *'everyone knows each other, it is full of young people and my parents and I know most people who live nearby'*, whilst another commented: *'My Mum knows practically everyone in the area, as we walk along she says "hello, hello" to everyone'*.

Trust between members of the local community, particularly between parents and other adults, was also seen as important. Over two-fifths (41 per cent) of Year 9 students from the survey reported that where they lived, their neighbours looked out for each other. One Key Stage 3 student, from the case-study schools described such a situation in his area: *'if you go on your holidays, you can rely on your neighbours to look after your pets. I have at least four people around us that we can ask'*. Other students generally thought that there was a sense of trust amongst their neighbours, with one student commenting: *'People leave their doors open where I live'*, whilst another said

that *'people who live there [in her local community] trust each other'*. Other students commented that they themselves were trusted by other people in their local communities. One respondent said: *'I think people where I live trust me to help them out in their garden'*.

The example below provides an illustration of one case-study school where students expressed a strong sense of belonging to the local community:

A sense of community

In a school situated in a small village, surrounded by other villages, students at the school reported a particularly strong sense of local community. Many people in the local community had lived there for many years and knew one another and there was a sense of trust amongst neighbours. A Key Stage 3 student stated that *'My Mum knows most people: she has lived in the village all her life and she is nearly 40'*. Another Key Stage 3 student commented that *'most people respect each other'*, while another said that *'if we go on holiday we will leave our key with the next door neighbour in case anything happens'*. A Key Stage 4 student explained his feeling of attachment to his local community: *'I'm right bonded to my village, I'd prefer to live there rather than anywhere else because like I've been brought up there'*. In addition, many students said that they had friends locally. As most students lived locally, their friendship networks in school and out of school were closely interlinked. One student said *'everyone that you hang about with in school hangs about in the village too, or we all get the bus down to the other village'*.

Although the majority of young people interviewed in the case-study schools agreed that living in a close-knit community was an advantage, there were those that saw it less positively. One student described how her local community could sometimes feel claustrophobic:

Everyone goes to the same places and everyone knows each other. Everyone is into each other's business. Sometimes you just need somewhere you can get away from everyone and the rivalry.

Neither was it the case that all students came from close-knit communities. Almost half (47 per cent) of students in the survey reported that they trusted their neighbours only a little or not at all. In addition, some young people in the case-study schools felt isolated from their local neighbourhoods. Feeling much younger than the rest of the local population was an isolating factor for some interviewees, and one student described the sentiments of many others when she said that where she lived was *'full of old people'*. Students in some areas felt that people in their communities did not really talk to each other. One Key Stage 4 student described how, in his neighbourhood, *'nobody ever leaves the house apart from in a car to go somewhere else'*. Another Key Stage 4 student described how the sense of isolation in his community had increased:

We don't know many people in our road ... and I just think that is because everything has changed, it used to be that everyone was

friends and everyone knew everyone else, but now I think that people are more wary of each other and people are more private as well.

Some young people who did not have friends locally also felt a sense of isolation from their neighbourhoods. One student explained that *'none of my friends live in my village, it seems quite cliquey'*. Some young people said that they felt different from the people who lived in their local communities: one student said this was because *'I don't fit in. Don't know people'*, whilst another said that this was because his neighbours were *'all Chavs'*¹⁵. Another student expressed the view of many in this situation, when she said: *'I'd rather be closer to my friends'*. Some students also felt that people of their age were not trusted by members of their local community. One commented that *'everyone is old in my street. Me and my brother are the only young people so everyone is like "oh, watch out for them"'*. This perceived sense of distrust of young people in local communities was a major issue for students interviewed in the case-study schools. It is explored further below.

¹⁵ See footnote 8 for a definition of the term 'Chav'.

Young people in the community – students' views

Many young people in the case-study schools felt that they were **not trusted** in their local communities, as illustrated by the following quotations:

'Adults mistrust kids.'

'I don't think they trust teenagers of our age.'

'Anything that goes wrong is blamed on young people.'

'It is a sweeping generalisation of teenagers as a whole, everyone thinks we are going to be stealing stuff.'

In fact, many students had experienced being **treated suspiciously** by adults:

'Sometimes people will cross the road as you are walking down the street.'

'I hate that when you go in a shop and they really keep their eye on you and you feel quite intimidated because you are being treated like a criminal.'

'Sometimes if you go to the park to play in the swings and adults are there with little kids, they will leave and you know it is because you've turned up.'

'When we are out on the streets playing football people assume you are up to no good. Sometimes they call the police.'

Some young people felt that they were treated suspiciously because of their **choice of clothes**:

'Sometimes I get watched just because of the clothes I wear, not just because of my age.'

'This whole thing about if you wear a hoodie you are going to nick things. I wear hoodies all the time and I don't nick things.'

Young people felt that sometimes they were unfairly treated in public spaces because they **met up in groups**:

'There is a stereotype round here that kids who hang about outside shops are Chavs and they'll mug you for all your money ... the reason they hang around is that there is nowhere else to go.'

'We don't want to feel as though we are intimidating other people, but we still want to be with our friends.'

For students in two case-study schools their movements in public spaces were further restricted by the **law**. Young people in one area had experienced being moved on by police under Section 30 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (GB. Statutes, 2003). Whilst young people in another school said that there were curfews in operation in some of their neighbourhoods.

In spite of these frustrations, young people did understand why they were sometimes treated with suspicion, however: *'it's fair enough as things do get nicked'*. Some students also said that they knew people who had stolen things. In addition one interviewee commented *'Sometimes I don't trust people my own age because some people my age make trouble'*. Survey evidence shows, however, that this was the view of a minority: over half of Year 9 students (59 per cent) trusted people of their own age quite a lot or a great deal. In addition, many case-study students protested that it was only a minority of young people who behaved badly, and that it was unfair for all young people to be tarnished with the same reputation:

'We all get named like yobbos, asbos ... but I think it is just certain individuals who think they are cool doing it.'

'Chavs, I am anti them because they are the ones that cause trouble and that, and then everyone else gets into trouble for it.'

'Wherever you go there are always a few who cause problems and give the rest of us a bad name.'

5.2.2 The size of the local community

Living in a **small community** was seen to encourage a sense of belonging and community by young people interviewed in case-study schools. One student explained: *'If you live in a small community, like a cul-de-sac, you talk to people more and you trust people more'*. Another student commented that how friendly a local community was, depended on the size: *'it depends how big the community is ... I live in a little village, I wouldn't say everyone lives in each others' pockets but we do, so it is pretty friendly'*. Students mostly thought that there were benefits to living in a small community as neighbours were supportive of each other and young people felt they knew what was going on. One student commented that in a close-knit community *'people look out for each other, like if they see someone in trouble they can stop and help'*. Another student said: *'It is good because if there are things going on you can find out about them'*.

Some students did comment however, that the main disadvantage of living in a small community was that their parents were *'always stopping off to talk'*, and, as outlined in Section 5.2.1 above, that it could be difficult to find personal space or privacy. Additionally, as outlined in Section 5.2.3 below, young people living in small communities often complained of the lack of facilities, activities and events in which they could participate. Furthermore, in two case-study schools where students were able to access nearby large towns and cities by public transport, some young people felt that there were more facilities and activities for people of their age to participate in.

5.2.3 Availability of activities

Indeed, being able to participate in activities in the local community was an important factor for some young people in the case-study schools, as it enabled them to meet other people in the locality. One student commented that *'I dance most weeks, so I know a lot of people through that, but there are some people in the village who I don't know'*. Another student explained that, having recently moved to a new area, his family would soon get to know other people through community activities: *'Even though I don't know anyone there, there is a school and picnics and a beach and barbeques, so I will soon get to know people there'*. However, only a minority of young people interviewed in the case-study schools felt that they had the opportunity to participate in their local communities. Most young people felt that there was a lack of facilities and opportunities for people of their age group in their local neighbourhoods. Furthermore, half of the students (50 per cent) who responded to the survey did not think that there were lots of activities in their neighbourhood in which they could actively participate. The experiences of the case-study students are examined in more detail in the box below.

Community facilities – young people’s perspectives

Many of the young people interviewed in the case-study schools felt that there were **limited facilities** in their local areas. They explained that in their communities:

{There are} *just five shops and a newsagents*
{There is} *a Post Office and that is about it.*
{There are} *just houses and one football pitch.*
‘There used to be a park but they built houses on it.’
‘There is nothing to do.’
‘It is a nice place, just boring. Nothing goes on.’

They also explained limitations which were put on their use of **public spaces**:

‘If we are sitting on the top field at night you get moved on. The police ask you to move on. Used to go to the youth club, but it is shut for refurbishment, so there is nowhere to go.’
‘There are loads of fields and if you try to play football on those, someone comes up and shouts at you.’

This dearth of local facilities for young people, and their exclusion from public spaces, was not only frustrating for young people but **inhibited their sense of belonging** to their local communities:

‘[I] know people in local communities but there is nothing to do – no way [I] can take part in the local community and feel part of it.’
‘I don’t feel like old enough to really feel part of our community. I don’t know why. It’s just there aren’t many opportunities.’

Young people’s alienation from their local community in some areas resulted in **antisocial and illegal behaviour**:

‘Because of boredom a lot of people go out and vandalise and drink.’

5.2.4 Feeling safe

Feeling safe in their local communities was an important issue for young people interviewed in the case-study schools. Whilst many students said that they felt safe where they lived, there were a proportion that did not. Some young people described their neighbourhoods as ‘rough’. *‘Because there are brothels, people break the windows and you can get robbed’* and *‘because of muggings, drug dealers and murders’*. Some young people felt under threat in their local communities, either from verbal or physical abuse. One student said that in his local community *‘some people are not very nice and they pick on you’* whilst another said that *‘I won’t go out of the house on my own’*. Some young people were scared of other groups of young people in their communities.

Also one Key Stage 4 student said:

In my village there are two types of young people, the people who wear all black and are scary and the people who wear Burberry and try to beat you up.

Another Key Stage 4 student said that where he lived: *'If you walk past Alldays at 9 o'clock then you are really scared. The Chavs¹⁶ are threatening to put a hammer to you'*. One young person interviewed described an experience of physical assault in her local community and said that she had had things thrown at her windows because she was *'a Goth'*¹⁷. In such situations, it would seem all the more important that schools do all they can to engender a sense of belonging and community within the school.

The final section of this chapter examines the extent to which young people value being part of a community and why this is important to them.

5.3 Why is community important to young people?

The majority of young people felt that it was important to be part of a community, for two main reasons:

- a sense of community provides opportunities for the development of social responsibility;
- knowing people creates a sense of worth, trust and security.

For many of the young people in the case-study schools, a sense of community was important because they felt a **social responsibility** to contribute to the well-being of their neighbourhoods. Young people in the case-study schools were often frustrated that there were groups of young people in their local communities who did not make an effort to do this. Several interviewees commented that young people *'should [look after the local community] but, they don't'*. One Key Stage 3 student said about her town: *'We've just had regeneration ... [people should] stop dropping litter and spitting, and dropping fags on the floor'*. A student in another area commented: *'In some places where you go in the town there is a lot of graffiti and places where people aren't respectful'*. One young person accepted the inevitability of this kind of

¹⁶ See the footnote 8 for a definition of the term 'Chav'

¹⁷ Goth is a modern subculture that first became popular during the early 1980s within the gothic rock scene, a sub-genre of post punk. It is associated with gothic tastes in music and clothing. Styles of dress range from gothic horror, punk, Victorian, fetish, cybergoth, androgyny, and/or lots of black. Since the mid-1990s, styles of music that can be heard in goth venues range from gothic rock, industrial, punk, metal, techno, 1980s' dance music, and several others. See Wikipedia [online]. Available: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goth>

behaviour, however: *'There is one group who do a lot of vandalism ... you will always have people who don't [look after the local community]'*.

Knowing and trusting people in their local communities clearly also created a sense of **worth, trust and security** for young people in the case-study schools. One student commented: *'You know people and people help each other'*, and another said: *'If you are in a community, everyone knows each other and trusts each other and you feel more safe'*. Other students commented: *'It would be weird not having a community...because you'd just feel all alone'* and: *'If you didn't have a community you'd be pretty bored so being part of a community is important.'*

Many of the young people interviewed clearly valued both the concept and practice of participating in a community, whether inside or outside of school. Belonging to a community was generally regarded as an important aspect of life, with the school community being regarded as particularly influential. These young people had spent much of their lives in school and, consequently, had built up valuable friendship and support networks there. Many also showed a willingness to take responsible action in their local neighbourhoods to make them better and safer places to live. They valued living in communities where they trusted others, believed they were trusted in return, and felt safe and secure. This enthusiasm and sense of social obligation, provides a sound basis upon which schools might develop opportunities for active citizenship, both within the school community and through links with the wider community.

This chapter has reported some of the things that young people interviewed in the case-study schools valued about their local communities: such as, living in a close-knit community and knowing friends and neighbours nearby, feeling safe and having opportunities to participate in the community. It has also highlighted the sense of alienation that some young people feel from their local communities due to a lack of facilities and opportunities for people of their age and the restrictions placed on their movements in public spaces by legal and social regulations. The next and final chapter of this report builds upon young people's views about community and belonging. It considers the challenges to the development of active citizenship in and beyond schools. It discusses possible ways of taking citizenship education forward in order to strengthen the opportunities and experiences of active citizenship that are available for all young people and, in so doing, make a telling contribution to wider policy initiatives such as *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme..

6. Moving active citizenship forward

Having analysed the range of factors and processes which underpin students' engagement with, or disengagement from, active citizenship opportunities and experiences, this final chapter revisits and attempts to provide answers to the questions outlined in the introduction, namely:

- What is the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, (a) to take place and (b) to contribute to the *Change for Children* programme and civil renewal action plan?
- How far is this potential currently recognised and realised in practice?
- What actions need to be taken in order for this potential to become better recognised and realised in practice in the present and future:
 - by policy-makers at national and local level?
 - by representatives in the wider community?
 - by leaders, coordinators and teachers in schools?
 - by young people?

Through the process of answering these questions the chapter:

- draws some conclusions about the current state of citizenship education, as an active practice, in schools and the readiness of citizenship practice to contribute to the *Every Child Matters* programme and civil renewal agendas;
- summarises some of the key challenges to the promotion of active citizenship (i.e. of citizenship as an active practice):
 - in schools, in both the curriculum and whole school culture;
 - in communities, through links with schools;
 - for policy-makers at national and local level; and
 - for young people.
- in response to these challenges, sets out some possible ways forward, particularly in relation to the school context, in order to ensure the development of **meaningful** participation opportunities and experiences for all young people.

6.1 What is the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice (a) to take place and (b) to contribute to the *Change for Children* programme action plan?

The findings from this report highlight the considerable potential for citizenship education as an active practice, (a) to take place, especially in schools, with links to wider communities, and (b) to contribute to the *Change for Children* programme action plan. Indeed, the evidence from the case-study schools suggests that a number of the key underlying factors, which foster and sustain active citizenship, were already evident to, and supported by, young people in their daily lives in and beyond school. These factors include:

- **Sense of community and belonging** – young people valued the concept of community and welcome the sense of belonging that being part of a community can bring. They want to be part of strong, safe communities that are based on networks and friendships that foster trust, concern for individual well-being, a sense of self-worth and that encourage individual and collective social responsibility.
- **Attachment to the school community** – the majority of young people viewed school as the main social and participative community in their lives. This is because of the amount of time they spend there and the friendships they make and networks they join. They saw school as providing a social and participative experience as much as an educational one. They came to school to make friendships and participate in social networks as well as to learn.
- **Attachment to wider communities** – though wider communities, particularly the local community, were not the major community in which young people participate (as noted above that is the school) young people still valued being part of this wider community. They care about what happens in the wider community and value being part of family and neighbourhood networks, where these are present.
- **Having a voice** – young people believe that they should have a voice on matters that affect them, especially in school. Most were measured in this view, feeling that others, in particular headteachers and teachers, and to a lesser extent, parents, governors and the government, also have a right to a voice. Most young people said that whilst it might not always be appropriate for them to have the final say, they value being involved in decision making and want to be consulted about issues that affect them. They were keen to show that they can use their voice, both individually and collectively, in a responsible manner.
- **Making a contribution** – most young people were keen to make an active and responsible contribution to the communities to which they belong, particularly the school community. Many students, particularly older ones, felt that they should take responsibility for themselves, their schools and their peers. They demonstrated considerable sophistication in their views of the need for a balance between the granting of rights and exercise of

responsibilities. However, they also revealed a clearer awareness of their rights than of their responsibilities.

- **Linking opportunities and experiences** – young people make links between their opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in different contexts. They were able to compare and contrast their experiences between as well as within schools, and between school and their local community. They were sensitive to change in their opportunities and experiences of active citizenship, in these different contexts.

These factors are reinforced through educational policy and legal statute, notably:

- **Statutory citizenship education in schools** – schools have a legal duty to ensure that all young people receive their statutory entitlement to citizenship education. The aims and processes of the new subject, as detailed in the curriculum Order, afford considerable potential for the development of citizenship as an active practice. Most students have the capacity to and show an interest in taking part and making a contribution through citizenship education, as an active practice, in their schools.
- **New statutory frameworks for the inspection of schools and of children’s services** – these new frameworks encourage schools and those in charge of children’s services at a local level to ensure that children and young people have a voice, feel safe, secure and valued and are involved in making a positive contribution, in partnership with others. They also actively involve children and young people in the actual review and inspection process in schools and local communities. The frameworks support the change for children programme action plan.

It is one thing for citizenship education, as an active practice, to have the potential (a) to take place and (b) to contribute to the change for children programme action plan, but quite another for that potential to be recognised and realised in practice.

6.2 How far is the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, (a) to take place and (b) to contribute to the *Change for Children* programme action plan recognised and realised in practice?

Despite the existence of supportive student attitudes and legislative frameworks the evidence from the survey data and case-study schools suggests that the potential for citizenship education, as an active practice, to take place was only partially being realised at present. The evidence confirms that although young people currently had opportunities and experiences of active citizenship, in general, these:

- were largely confined to the school context;
- comprised largely ‘horizontal’ rather than ‘vertical’ participation and engagement.¹⁸ They concerned opportunities to take part rather than opportunities to affect real change by engaging with the decision-making process;
- did not often connect opportunities and experiences in the curriculum with those in the whole school;
- often only involved certain groups of students rather than all students, despite an invitation for all students to participate;
- did not link to wider contexts and communities beyond school.

The case-study school experiences also highlight the variation in the contribution of citizenship, as a national curriculum subject, to young people’s opportunities and experiences of active citizenship. While there was evidence of considerable efforts underway in some schools to make the contribution real and meaningful for students, this was not the case in all schools. These efforts must be seen against the backdrop of the focus in schools on ensuring that the delivery of citizenship education, as a subject in the curriculum, is under control. There were signs in the survey data and case-study schools of increased familiarity with, and confidence in, delivering the citizenship curriculum in 2005 compared with two years previously. This focus was influenced, in part, by the standards agenda drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning and students’ academic achievement. However, this delivery focus has meant that in some schools the citizenship curriculum has become divorced from the notion of citizenship as an active practice with links to the school culture and wider communities beyond school.

The impact of this curriculum focus was evident in the key challenges for citizenship education, as identified by school leaders and teachers in the 2005 survey data (See Section 2.8, Figure 2.10). Interestingly, the leading challenges were precisely those arising from curriculum delivery, namely pressure on time, assessment, status of the subject and teachers’ subject expertise. Tellingly, engaging students, links with the local community and student participation in the school, the elements of citizenship as an active process in and beyond school, were identified as lesser challenges.

The current situation concerning the development of active citizenship opportunities and experiences for young people in schools is perhaps not surprising for a number of reasons arising both in this and other reports from

¹⁸ There is a distinction in the literature on active citizenship and civil renewal between ‘*horizontal participation*’ and ‘*vertical participation*’ (Jochum *et al.*, 2005). Horizontal participation relates to participation in community activities, charities, sports clubs, associations and is less formal. Vertical participation, meanwhile, relates to participation in political affairs, including participation in political processes and governance related to the decision-making processes in institutions and society.

the study (Kerr *et al.*, 2003 and 2004; Kerr and Cleaver, 2004; Cleaver *et al.*, 2005).

- **Timeframe** – citizenship education only became statutory in schools in 2002 and therefore policy and practice are still emergent and not fully formed. There is still the opportunity for the development of active citizenship opportunities and experiences in school.
- **Competing agendas and priorities** – citizenship education is competing for space, status and resources in schools alongside other agendas and priorities, particularly those concerning the raising of standards and student achievement through improved examination results.
- **Active citizenship not made explicit** – citizenship education was introduced as a national curriculum subject into the school curriculum, with little explicit reference, in the supporting documentation and resources, to the need to develop citizenship as an active practice in the curriculum with links to whole school and the wider community beyond.
- **Challenge and complexity of the active citizenship change process** – the democratic change process at the root of active citizenship is challenging and complex, both to understand and effect. At its core it addresses the nature of the power relationship between young people and adults in society. It is particularly challenging to schools given the size of student populations and variety of students in a school.
- **Leadership and coordination** – the proposed, multi-agency, partnership approach to active citizenship, both in schools and communities, is challenging. It benefits from clear leadership and coordination. Such leadership and coordination can be difficult to manage effectively within schools.
- **Limited time to train staff and build confidence** – despite increased training opportunities there remains a lack of teachers in schools with sufficient subject expertise and confidence to lead and contribute to teaching and learning in citizenship education. It will take time for teachers and students to feel confident about their involvement with citizenship as an active practice.
- **Limited time and resources** – time and resources are valuable and limited commodities in schools. There is considerable pressure on finding curriculum time and resources to deliver citizenship adequately in the curriculum. The democratic change process at the heart of active citizenship is time and resource intensive and requires constant maintenance.

These reasons give rise to a number of challenges, particularly for schools, if current citizenship education practice is to evolve in ways that provide opportunities and experiences of active citizenship for all young people in the future. These challenges are explored in the next section.

6.3 What are the key challenges and ways forward for active citizenship in the present and future?

Many of the ways forward for active citizenship were highlighted in the preceding chapters of this report. These chapters raised a number of key challenges for those audiences central to the promotion of active citizenship, notably:

- school leaders;
- citizenship coordinators;
- teachers;
- representatives of the wider community;
- policy-makers at national and local level; and
- young people.

The key challenges for each of these audiences are explored, in turn, in what follows.

There is a particular focus on the key challenges facing those in schools. Developing practice in the case-study schools is used cumulatively to suggest four practical measures that schools can take in order to enhance students' active citizenship opportunities and experiences in schools. These measures were present in the case-study schools that were most successful in providing students with active citizenship opportunities. This focus is highly relevant given that school is viewed by students as their main social and participative community, and offers the location with the greatest potential to provide young people with opportunities and experiences of citizenship as an active practice. This section of the report provides suggestions for thought for school leaders, citizenship coordinators, teachers and young people, as well as policy makers.

6.3.2 Key challenges and ways forward for all audiences

There are a number of key challenges and ways forward, concerning the development of active citizenship, that apply to all the audiences involved in the process in schools and beyond. They include the challenge and need to:

- work in partnership to boost the capacity for the development of active citizenship in a range of contexts and to increase the capabilities of individuals and organisations to take such development forward with confidence;

- recognise and build on the underlying, supportive attitudes of young people and legislative and policy initiatives that promote citizenship as an active practice;
- embrace the process of change that is at the heart of active citizenship and demands a transformation in the power relationship between young people and adults at all levels of society, and encourage its adoption and promotion;
- acknowledge and raise awareness of the short and long-term benefits of providing meaningful opportunities and experiences of active citizenship for young people, for schools, communities and society at large;
- ensure that all students, and not just a majority, have access to and take up opportunities and experiences of active citizenship;
- ensure that active citizenship opportunities provide experiences not just of ‘horizontal’ but also of ‘vertical’ participation, experiences of both taking part and attempting to effect change;
- provide sufficient training and development, particularly for teachers and school leaders, in order to boost the capacity, capabilities and confidence of individuals and organisations to develop and take forward citizenship as an active practice;
- recognise and promote the central role of schools, and the particular contribution of citizenship as a curriculum subject, in laying the foundations for active citizenship for children and young people.

These are the core challenges, arising from the survey data and case-study schools, in taking active citizenship forward. How they are approached and played out in practice, in terms of priority and emphases, will vary considerably depending on audience and context.

6.3.3 Key challenges and ways forward for those in schools (school leaders, citizenship coordinators and teachers)

The cumulative practice from the case-study schools identifies four measures that were important in enhancing the active citizenship opportunities and experiences for young people in those schools. These four measures suggest that, in order to lay secure foundations for citizenship as an active practice within the curriculum, with links to the whole school and wider community beyond, schools should consider the importance of ensuring that they:

- a. build and maintain a strong sense of belonging to the school community (with links to belonging to the local community);
- b. develop an ongoing, active focus in the delivery of citizenship education;
- c. assist students to participate in decision-making processes in school and beyond, on a regular basis;

- d. provide sufficient training and development in relation to active citizenship for teachers and students.

a) Build and maintain a strong sense of belonging to the school community (with links to belonging to the local community)

The case-study data identified a number of measures that schools were taking to develop a sense of belonging for young people within the school community and, ultimately, the wider community. Building a strong sense of community established a positive climate for the development of active citizenship opportunities and practice. These measures included:

- **giving young people a voice** through formal school mechanisms, such as school councils and house systems, and through involving young people in decisions about their learning and their school environment. The key to this would seem to be to educate school leaders and teachers alongside young people in the skills of active participation, so that young people can **genuinely** be empowered to have meaningful involvement in the life of their schools;
- **creating a climate for mutual respect between teachers and young people** – Teachers need to set an example as good role models through their professional conduct (students value teachers who they see as ‘good educators’) and by treating young people with interest and respect. However, such treatment also needs to exist between young people and teachers. Where there is a lack of mutual trust, formal structures (e.g. school councils) that, in principle, give students a voice, can fail. Some schools speak of the importance of shared values amongst all teachers and young people;
- **ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all young people** – Schools need to ensure that systems/strategies are in place that guarantee equality of opportunity for all students (including the less academically able, those who underachieve and the socially excluded). Mechanisms for creating a sense of belonging to the school community (such as school councils/houses) will only provide genuine opportunities for active citizenship if they serve all students, not just the committed or enthusiastic;
- **dividing the school community up into smaller communities** – Larger schools can do much to create a greater sense of belonging for students by dividing the school population into smaller communities through houses or form groups. The case-study data indicates that, whilst this tends to create a greater sense of allegiance to the small community than to the school as a whole, this does not matter terribly, as it also provides a structure within which young people can build confidence, opportunities and skills for participation, which benefit the school as a whole;
- **working on the physical appearance of the school** – The case-study data indicates that young people valued having a clean, modern school environment and good facilities and technologies. It would seem that schools which work hard to improve their appearance (in tandem with

their ethos) create an environment in which young people feel safe, secure and stimulated.

The case-study data also suggests that schools need to be aware of the impact on young people of their sense of belonging to the local community. This can be both an advantage and disadvantage to the building of a sense of belonging to the school community. The data identifies a number of factors that appear to create a sense of belonging to local community among students. The young people themselves valued the concept of community and displayed a strong sense of the need for individual and collective social responsibility within their neighbourhoods, as well as valuing the sense of security that can come from living in a safe and friendly community.

Some schools were advantaged where a student population was served by a relatively cohesive local community (e.g. a small, close-knit community), and students were relatively content with their sense of community. These students tended to be those who:

- have lots of friends in their neighbourhoods;
- have parents who have a wide social network;
- feel trusted by older people in their communities.

Conversely, other schools served students who come from disparate communities, and communities where students felt unsafe or not trusted by older people. These schools faced greater challenges in creating a sense of belonging for young people within the school community and providing a climate within which opportunities and skills for active citizenship can be developed. However, it could be argued, that there is all the more need for such schools to create a sense of belonging within the school community, and to develop the skills of active participation amongst their students, in order to counteract students' sense of lack of belonging to the wider local community beyond school.

b) Develop an ongoing, active focus in the delivery of citizenship education

Some young people (particularly those attending high achieving schools, or schools where citizenship education has a particularly high profile) felt that citizenship education had proved useful in helping them to form opinions and gain knowledge and understanding (particularly of political structures and processes). However, students in other schools noted that citizenship education was not always particularly stimulating or useful because they felt that: it was teaching them nothing new or different; did little to change the way that they thought about things, or was poorly taught and facilitated. Teachers in some of these schools pointed out that it has also proven difficult to engage low achieving students in citizenship education.

These findings suggest a need for citizenship education delivery in schools to develop a more active focus, in order that young people can develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to participate in their schools and the wider community to greatest effect. In particular, case-study evidence suggests that:

- citizenship-related lessons may need **'bringing to life'**, so that young people can engage with the subject content. A key to this would seem to be to negotiate areas of interest with students (topics related to public issues such as drugs, AIDS and HIV, racism and the media are popular, for example);
- elements of the programme that relate to rights and responsibilities should seek to ensure an **equal focus on both aspects**. This would enable young people to recognise the range of responsibilities they need to develop, in relation to themselves, others, their schools and the wider community, in order to be truly active citizens;
- young people should be encouraged (with appropriate support) to be **critically active and reflective** in lessons so that they are not just learning details, but are beginning to engage with the issues covered, and becoming more active in their approach to learning;
- just like any other subject, citizenship-related lessons need to be sufficiently **differentiated** so that citizenship education is accessible not only to higher achieving students or the most motivated but to the full range of student abilities. This is a particular issue in schools where the citizenship curriculum is addressed mainly through the GCSE short course in citizenship at Key Stage 4;
- schools need to consider the **skills and knowledge development needs** of both teachers and students, in order that citizenship programmes can be well organised, thought through and delivered in ways that ensure the suggestions above can become a reality.

c) Assist students to participate in decision-making processes in schools, and beyond, on a regular basis

Schools need to be mindful of students' desire to be consulted and involved in decision making. They should ensure that there are appropriate democratic structures within schools to enable young people to be actively involved in the life of the school and in their learning.

Within the school community, case-study students appeared to have more opportunities for active learning and participation within the **classroom** than for input into **whole-school decision making**. Many students stated that they were keen to have a voice, although others thought that either it was not their place to be consulted on matters relating to the school, or that it would be pointless to be given a say, because their views would not be taken seriously. Although most schools offered a wide range of activities in which students

could get involved, there was generally a large gap between the **availability** of opportunity and the **take-up** of that opportunity by students. This was particularly pronounced in relation to student involvement with school councils, and is an issue of some concern, given that school councils are meant to represent the whole student population, and provide valuable opportunities for students to learn about democratic decision making and participation.

Although there were some examples of opportunities for students to have a voice in the school community in the case-study schools (for example, through opinion surveys), these opportunities were ad hoc. Survey and case-study data suggests that schools need to address the issue of low student participation in school decision-making processes by helping young people to:

- **understand why having a voice is important.** There would seem to be a clear role for the citizenship education curriculum in helping students to understand what can be achieved through individual and collective involvement in democratic decision-making structures. For some schools, this may represent something of a culture shift as not all schools think that it is the students' place to have a say on matters affecting the school. The point is that students need a clear rationale for why taking part matters;
- **use their voice effectively.** Some staff and students report that students can lose control in debating situations and start 'yelling at each other', or that some students can intimidate others. This suggests a range of training and development issues for both the staff facilitating these sessions and the students taking part in them. Young people need to be helped to get their points across in a constructive, considerate, yet non-confrontational, manner;
- **understand the mechanisms and processes of influencing policy and change.** It is clear that a number of students (even school council representatives) do not fully understand the ways in which school councils work. Schools need to develop a clear statement on the rationale, purpose, and functioning of councils, so that students understand, for example, the processes for feeding their views to members and staff and receiving feedback. Students may also need educating in the reasons for, and appropriate means of taking part in, elections, so that these do not become 'popularity contests'. Again, there is a potential role for the citizenship curriculum in this respect;
- **believe that their voice will be heard.** Some school councils are reported to have very low status, to represent the views of only a 'keen minority', or to be discouraged by teachers and school leaders. Some students report that, whilst they are given opportunities to express their views in principle, in practice they are either chastised by some teachers for doing so, or that teachers do not think they are sufficiently mature to have a voice. If school councils (and similar structures) are to be effective, students need to believe that there is a clear mechanism for their views to be taken into account, and that their views will be taken seriously.

A growth in students' participation in school councils (or similar mechanisms) is only likely to occur where schools take measures to address at least some of the above issues.

As with the situation within the school community, there were currently more opportunities for students to take part in **volunteering activities** in the wider community than to have a voice in **decision-making processes** outside of school. This suggests that opportunities for 'horizontal' outweigh those for 'vertical' participation both in and beyond school.¹⁹ This underlines the fact that schools and wider communities have some way to go if opportunities for active citizenship are to be fully realised.

d) Provide sufficient training and development in relation to active citizenship for teachers and students

If the development of active citizenship is to be achieved in schools, it is clear from the research that teachers need to have sufficient training in order to become **skilled in facilitating such learning and teaching**. They also need to be given the appropriate time and resources in which to consider links between the citizenship curriculum, school democratic structures, and issues within the wider community. That training should begin with developing a basic understanding of what active citizenship means and how it can be facilitated in the curriculum and through whole school and community links. At present, many citizenship coordinators and teachers regard active citizenship as something **distinct** from the citizenship curriculum, and are struggling with a sense of what it means and how it should be approached. A key point emerging from the data, which might assist the promotion of active citizenship in schools, is that training should help to develop a view of active citizenship as an integral feature of citizenship education which can be addressed through:

- critical engagement with local, national and international issues within the curriculum, rather than the learning of facts about such issues;
- opportunities for reflection and review of issues covered, such as the opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences of being involved in work experience or community experience, and on what they have learned through such opportunities;
- discussion of the processes of democratic decision making within the school, the local community, or globally, drawing upon the example of the school council, how it operates, and how it could be used to best effect.

The experience of the case-study schools suggests it would also make sense to ensure that the training of teachers is carried out in parallel with the training of students, so that they also have the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills to make the most of the opportunities and experiences of citizenship as an active practice that are offered to them in school. Students need to be

¹⁹ See footnote 15.

encouraged to become critically active and reflective and to develop confidence in the growth and use of student voice, both individually and collectively, in the classroom, school and beyond.

6.3.4 Key challenges and ways forward for representatives of the wider community

The key challenges for those in the wider community include the need to:

- recognise that the provision of opportunities and experiences of active citizenship is not solely the responsibility of schools. Schools can make a major contribution but they cannot develop citizenship as an active practice effectively without the support of those in the wider community. Citizenship as an active practice can only work where there is a real and lasting partnership between schools and representatives and organisations from local, national and wider communities. This partnership must be based on mutual trust and respect. Those in the wider community need to consider how they can facilitate such partnerships;
- take responsibility for their actions and the impact that they have on young people. Students in the case-study schools were influenced by the attitudes and behaviour of those in their families, neighbourhoods and those they saw in the media. It is important that those beyond school work provide good role models for young people in terms of their attitudes and behaviours, particularly in relation to rights and responsibilities;
- work hard to promote a strong sense of belonging, particularly to the local neighbourhood or community, and actively involve young people in that process. Young people want to feel valued, trusted and safe in the community;
- recognise that for many young people the school is their main social and participative community and learn from best practice in how schools foster a sense of belonging to the school community. Those in the wider community can benefit from working with and in schools and sharing and promoting good practice;
- encourage young people to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills that they develop through active citizenship in schools by providing them with further opportunities for active involvement and participation in communities beyond school.

6.3.5 Key challenges and ways forward for policy makers at national and local level

The key challenges and ways forward for policy makers at national and local level concern the need to:

- do more to emphasise the importance of providing real and meaningful opportunities and experiences of active citizenship for young people and to

promote the benefits for young people, schools and communities of such opportunities and experiences;

- increase awareness and understanding about citizenship as an active practice and of the key contribution that schools can make in laying the foundations for such practice. This can also provide incentives for schools to prioritise taking forward such practice alongside competing agendas;
- publicise and make more explicit the links between the promotion of active citizenship in schools, particularly through the citizenship curriculum, and the wider participation and civil renewal agendas, notably *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme action plan, and emphasise the particular contribution of the citizenship curriculum to participation;
- recognise the challenges and complexity of the change process that lies behind active citizenship. This involves taking a more long-term approach to the development of successful delivery and being more supportive and understanding of the efforts of individuals and organisations, particularly schools, to initiate this change process;
- work to provide a more coordinated approach to the development of citizenship as an active practice, particularly at a local level, that links schools with key community partners and organisations, and affords more ‘joined up’ opportunities and experiences for young people;
- ensure that young people have opportunities and experiences of active citizenship in the community that offer experiences of both ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ participation and enable real engagement with decision-making processes;
- support schools to develop their practice in ways that further reduce *minimalist* approaches and encourage schools categorised as *focused* and *implicit* to become *progressing* in their practice;
- provide requisite training and resources, particularly in schools for school leaders, citizenship coordinators and teachers, as well as for young people. This training should focus on improving the understanding of citizenship as an active practice, and increase the confidence of its delivery through more active learning and teaching approaches both in the curriculum and across the school. It should: consider the promotion of the four-step approach to active citizenship outlined in this chapter and have the sharing of emerging good practice at its core; cover the span of continuous professional development from initial teacher training through to the training of school leaders; and explore the potential for joint training initiatives involving school and link community partners;
- work in multi-agency partnerships, involving schools, to tackle the challenge of encouraging increased engagement and participation from those students who are underachieving, disaffected or socially excluded.

6.3.6 Key challenges and ways forward for young people

Though, as the evidence from the survey and school case-study visits highlights, opportunities and experiences of active citizenship are often provided for young people by others, there are a number of key challenges and ways forward for young people. They include the need to:

- take up more of the opportunities and experiences of active citizenship that are provided, particularly in schools. This includes those concerning training and development. Encourage other young people to take up the opportunities by pointing out their responsibilities and the benefits of participation in ways that they will understand. Work individually and collaboratively to build a strong sense of belonging, particularly to the school community;
- build the confidence to make the most of student voice and be considerate and constructive in how it is used, both in collaboration with other young people and in partnership with adults. Recognise that inappropriate use of voice, such as yelling at and intimidating others, reduces its effectiveness and takes away from the belief that students can be trusted to use voice effectively;
- give greater consideration not only to rights of participation and engagement but also to associated responsibilities to participate and engage in the different communities to which they belong;
- have the confidence to raise concerns, where appropriate, about the type and level of active citizenship opportunities and experiences provided in different contexts, so as to ensure engagement with issues that matter to young people and opportunities to influence the decision-making process.

6.4 Moving forward – a final comment

It is clear from the evidence in this report that there is considerable potential to develop citizenship as an active practice, especially in schools. It is also evident that the introduction of citizenship education in schools can make a particular contribution in deepening and enriching such active practice, to the benefit of wider participation and civil renewal agendas. However, in terms of current approaches to citizenship education, this potential is only being partially realised in practice at present, and only in some case-study schools and not all. The report highlights a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order for more schools to recognise the potential to develop citizenship as an active practice.

The current situation is understandable given that citizenship education was not introduced as a statutory curriculum subject until 2002, and that, therefore, citizenship practice in schools is still bedding in. The vision of the policy makers involved with the Citizenship Advisory Group was that it would take a generation of young people to have experienced statutory citizenship provision

before any judgement could be made about the merits of introducing citizenship into schools in 2002 (Crick, 2000). The evolution of citizenship in schools is evidenced in this report in the greater focus of survey and case-study schools on developing citizenship as a recognisable curriculum subject. This development carries with it considerable potential but also certain dangers in terms of young people's opportunities for active citizenship in school and beyond. On the one hand, it offers the potential to lay a strong curriculum base for citizenship education and for students to develop the fundamental knowledge, skills and understanding that underpin citizenship as an active practice in and beyond school. On the other hand, there is a danger that the curriculum base for citizenship that is developed will limit its impact as envisaged by Professor (Sir) Bernard Crick, namely that:

Citizenship is more than a statutory subject. If taught well and tailored to local needs, its skills and values will enhance democratic life for us all, both rights and responsibilities, beginning in school, and radiating out. (ibid, p.12)

The curriculum base could be that of 'solely' rather than 'more than' a statutory subject where the teaching is patchy, not tailored to local needs and interests of local communities and with insufficient links between the curriculum and school culture and wider communities so that there is no radiating out.

It is unclear from the evidence in this report whether the present increased focus on citizenship as a curriculum subject in the survey and case-study schools is merely a stage in the process of citizenship bedding down in schools that will be followed by increased links between the citizenship curriculum and whole school and wider community approaches in the coming years, or whether it is a more permanent and limiting development. It raises the overall question as to how far, and in what direction, the citizenship curriculum in schools will continue to develop in the coming years, and the extent to which such development will succeed in fostering increased opportunities and experiences of active citizenship for students. It is clear that some case-study schools are in a much better position to take active citizenship forward, through the citizenship curriculum, than others. However, it is not clear what will happen in the coming years.

How citizenship education develops in the survey and case-study schools in the coming years will have a bearing on how well citizenship education in schools is able to make a contribution to wider policy initiatives such as the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and civil renewal action plan. In order to fulfil the potential to make a distinctive contribution, as identified in the introduction to this report, citizenship education will have to first succeed in providing young people with real and meaningful opportunities and experiences of participation in the classroom and school, as

well as opportunities to reflect on that participation. Only if this occurs will citizenship education in schools be in a position to *'begin in school and radiate out'* to wider policy initiatives in the way that was envisaged by policy makers when statutory citizenship was introduced in 2002.

There are indications, in the current practice of case-study schools, that the ability of schools to provide such opportunities and experiences may depend on the level of support and encouragement they are given to help them to: better understand what active citizenship means in practice; recognise the contribution of citizenship education to such practice; and to develop a clear vision of how to move forward. There are encouraging signs, in some of the case-study schools of the emergence of such a vision, across the school, and of its impact on students' active citizenship opportunities and experiences. The following two quotations capture the spirit of this vision in schools. As a citizenship coordinator in one school noted:

I would hope my students to be bloody-minded, and questioning after they have done citizenship education.

Meanwhile, a headteacher in another school explained how citizenship education provided the glue that linked the curriculum, school ethos and community and wider community beyond the school. As he noted:

We actually always have set ourselves a prime aim of forming responsible citizens of the future...citizenship education...by whatever name we call it, has always had to be there. Our school is multi-faith, multi-racial, multi-ethnic. It does, therefore, very much need to create a homogeneous community and homogeneous society in our school but also to enable our learners to go out and be members of that wider community and fulfil their roles there.

With much still to play for in terms of the promotion and development of active citizenship for young people, the nature and extent of the contribution of statutory citizenship education to that development, and the impact of the policy backdrop of the *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* programme and *Together We Can* initiative, it will be interesting to follow up on the issues raised in this report through the Study's components in the coming years. It will be particularly interesting to revisit the case-study schools to see what has transpired and to gauge how far the potential for active citizenship has been realised in practice.

Appendix 1. Methodology and sample information

Survey design

The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study comprises two linked biennial surveys, a cross-sectional survey and a longitudinal survey, which tracks a cohort of students from Year 7 until they are aged 18. (See Appendix 3 for more details.) This report discusses findings from the second round of the longitudinal survey which was carried out in spring 2005. Also, where appropriate, comparisons are made with data from the first longitudinal survey of Year 7 students, which took place in autumn 2002.

Second Longitudinal Survey administration

A total of 91 schools who had taken part in the first round of the longitudinal survey in 2002 when students surveyed were in Year 7 agreed to participate in second round of the survey in 2005 when the students were in Year 9. In January 2005 schools were sent questionnaires for:

- the whole of their Year 9 year group;
- five Key Stage 3 citizenship teachers;
- one school leader.

Schools were asked to complete the questionnaires within two weeks of receiving them. Schools who had not returned questionnaires after this date were sent reminder letters and faxes, and were contacted by telephone to ask them to complete and return the questionnaires. In addition, those schools who had not returned school leader questionnaires were sent additional copies of the questionnaire with letter reminders. In July 2005, all schools that had completed student questionnaires were sent feedback consisting of their students' aggregated responses compared to the aggregated responses of students in all other schools.

Response rates

Questionnaires were completed by:

- School leaders: 81;
- Teachers: 301;
- Year 9 students 13,643.

The numbers of schools returning each type of questionnaire were as shown:

	Number returning questionnaires	% of those agreeing to participate in survey
Returned any type of questionnaire (number and per cent of schools)	85	93
Returned Year 9 questionnaires (number and per cent of pupils)	13, 643	73
Returned teacher questionnaires (number and per cent of teachers)	301	66
Returned school leader questionnaire (number and per cent of schools)	81	89
Returned all three types of questionnaire (number and per cent of schools)	80	88

Characteristics of students

The characteristics of students were as follows:

Gender	Students %	Books in the home	Students %	Ethnic background	Students %
Male	48	None	2	Asian/British Asian	7
Female	48	Very few (1-10)	12	Black/Black British	2
Non-response	4	One shelf (11-50)	22	Chinese	1
		1 bookcase (51-100)	22	Mixed ethnic origin	2
		2 bookcases (101-200)	17	White British	78
		3+ bookcases (201+)	20	White European	2
		Non-response	5	Other ethnic group	1
				Prefer not to say	2
				Non-response	4

N = 13,643 students. Due to rounding percentages may not add to 100

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Survey, Longitudinal Survey 2005

Sample

Table A1 compares the characteristics of the 85 schools who responded to the survey with the national profile of maintained schools, and shows that the sample is closely representative of the national school population.

The sample covers a spread of geographical regions, types of school and levels of achievement at GCSE. There are only minor variations from the national pattern within the sample with:

- slightly more schools in the south and slightly fewer in the north;
- slightly fewer comprehensive schools up to the age of 18, and slightly more 'other' schools (not grammar or comprehensive);
- slightly more schools with one to three per cent of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN);
- slightly more schools in the second lowest band of the percentage of students eligible for free school meals (FSM);
- slightly fewer student in the lowest band for achievement at GCSE.

NB EAL stands for 'English as an Additional Language'.

**Table A1. CEE Longitudinal Survey 2005
Representation of the Sample (schools)**

		Schools			
		Schools returning any information		Schools in population	
		Number	%	Number	%
Region	North	21	25	910	29
	Midlands	27	32	1,018	33
	South	37	44	1,173	38
Total		85	100	3,101	100
Secondary school type	Comprehensive to 16	36	42	1,238	40
	Comprehensive to 18	36	42	1,531	49
	Grammar	2	2	161	5
	Other Secondary schools	11	13	171	6
Total		85	100	3,101	100
% of EAL pupils (2003)	None	16	19	667	22
	1 - 5%	43	51	1,511	49
	6 - 49%	22	26	768	25
	50% +	4	5	153	5
	No Information Available			2	0
Total		85	100	3,101	100
% of SEN pupils (2002)	None			96	3
	1 - 3%	50	59	1,512	49
	4 - 29%	13	15	563	18
	No Information Available	22	26	930	30
Total		85	100	3,101	100
% eligible FSM 2003 (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	3	4	202	7
	2nd lowest 20%	26	31	741	24
	Middle 20%	21	25	829	27
	2nd highest 20%	22	26	771	25
	Highest 20%	13	15	555	18
	No Information Available			3	0
Total		85	100	3,101	100
Achievement Band (Total GCSE point-score 2002)	Lowest band	14	16	661	21
	2nd lowest band	22	26	664	21
	Middle band	18	21	634	20
	2nd highest band	18	21	596	19
	Highest band	11	13	494	16
	No Information Available	2	2	52	2
Total		85	100	3,101	100

Since percentages are rounded to the nearest integer, they may not always sum to 100. Schools in population column refers only to those schools of matching types to those in sample (e.g. not primary schools).

Source: Citizenship Education Longitudinal Survey, Longitudinal Survey 2005

Case-study schools

Nine case-study schools were selected from the first cross-sectional sample schools in 2003. In-depth case-studies first took place in these schools during the spring and summer terms of 2003. These schools were visited again in the spring and summer terms of 2005, and the data collected from these second visits is referred to in this report. An additional school with Specialist Humanities status with citizenship as one of its lead subjects was added to the sample and was visited for the first time in summer 2005.

The case-study schools were not selected to be representative of schools nationally, but rather illustrative of the range of different approaches to and experiences of citizenship education. The characteristics of the ten case-study schools are described below.

- Two schools were in the north, three in the midlands and five in the south of the country.
- Nine were comprehensive schools and one was selective.
- Seven schools had students from 11 to 18 years old and three from 13 to 18.²⁰
- Three schools were large with over 1,500 students, six schools had between 1,000 and 1,500 students and one school had fewer than 1,000 students.
- Nine schools were mixed and one was a single sex (girls) school.
- Two schools were faith schools.
- Only one school did not have Specialist Status. Of the nine schools with Specialist Status, there were two Language colleges, two Technology Colleges, two Sports Colleges, one Engineering College, one Mathematics and Computing College and one Humanities College (with citizenship as one of its lead subjects).
- Nine schools had between one and three per cent of students eligible for free school meals, however, one school had 21 per cent.
- Eight schools had between zero and three per cent of students with English as an Additional Language, though one school had 12 per cent and another 33 per cent.
- Three schools, including the selective school, had achievement in terms of 5+ A* to C grades at GCSE very much higher than the national average, four were at or slightly above average and three were considerably below this average.

The case-study schools had a range of approaches to citizenship education and many used more than one delivery method at Key Stages 3 and 4.

²⁰ In the 13 to 18 schools, citizenship coordinators from feeder schools were also interviewed.

Delivery at Key Stage 3:

- Six schools were delivering citizenship education through discrete lessons, sometimes as part of a carousel with other subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and careers, education and guidance.
- Four schools were delivering citizenship through other subjects. Some schools used all other subjects to deliver citizenship education, whilst others only used a few specific lessons such as history, geography and religious education.
- Two schools were delivering citizenship as part of PSHE.
- Two schools were delivering citizenship through collapsed timetable days and events.

Delivery at Key Stage 4:

- Seven schools used discrete lessons.
- Two schools delivered citizenship education through other subjects.
- Two schools delivered citizenship through PSHE.
- One school was using collapsed timetable days and events.

In terms of assessment, the schools also had a range of approaches.

Assessment at Key Stage 3:

- In three schools teachers assessed students' achievement in citizenship. In some schools this was an assessment of students' progress over the course of a term or year and in other schools this was an assessment of a particular piece of work such as a presentation.
- Two schools used self-assessment at the end of a particular piece of work or a module.
- One school used Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards.
- Two schools did not assess students specifically for citizenship at Key Stage 3.

Assessment at Key Stage 4:

- Five schools used the GCSE Citizenship Studies short course to assess students.
- Two schools used teacher assessment.
- One school used self-assessment.
- One school used ASDAN Awards.
- Two schools did not assess students for citizenship at Key Stage 4.

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Appendix 3. The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study

Background

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has commissioned NFER to undertake a longitudinal study extending over a total of eight years, in order to track a cohort of young people who first entered secondary school in 2002, and are therefore the first students to have a continuous entitlement to citizenship education.

Following the report of the Citizenship Advisory Group (QCA, 1998), citizenship became a new statutory National Curriculum subject at Key Stages 3 and 4 in September 2002, for all 11 to 16 year olds in schools in England. The Advisory Group's definition of 'effective education for citizenship' was centred on three separate but interrelated strands: **social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy**.

The accompanying Citizenship Order (QCA, 1999) set out the anticipated learning outcomes in relation to three elements: **knowledge and understanding and skills of enquiry and communication and participation and responsible action**. However, methods of delivery are not prescribed, and although schools are advised to devote at least five per cent of teaching time to citizenship, they are free to choose how to achieve this goal.

Purpose and aims

The overarching aim of the longitudinal study is to assess the short-term and long-term effects of citizenship education on students aged 11-16.

In addition, the two subsidiary aims are to:

- ◆ Explore how different processes – in terms of school, teacher and pupil effects – can impact upon differential outcomes.
- ◆ Set out, based on evidence collected from the Study and other sources, what changes could be made to the delivery of citizenship education in order to improve its potential for effectiveness.

Methodology and design

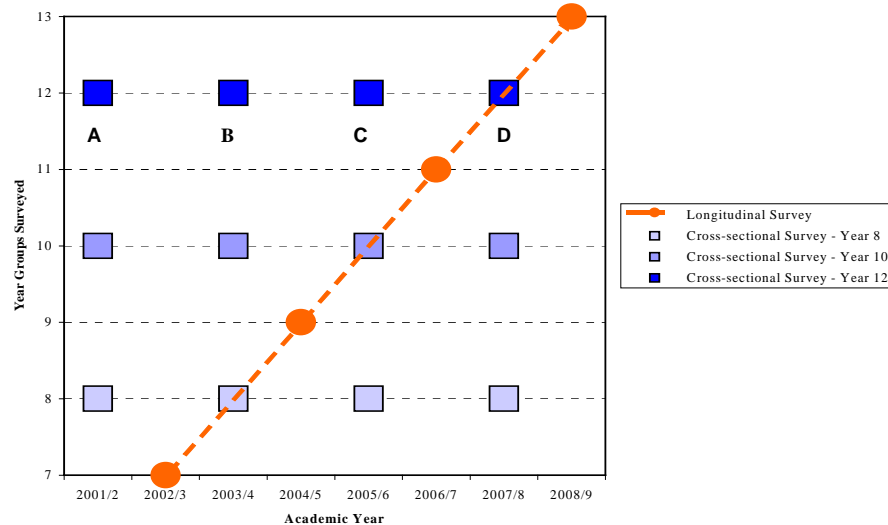
The overall survey design involves linked surveys of school senior managers, teachers and students. There are two series of surveys:

- **A longitudinal survey**, based on a complete cohort from a sample of 75 schools. Young people were surveyed in November 2002 following entry to Year 7 and again when they were in Year 9. They will be contacted

again in Year 11 and at age 18 (the final questionnaire will be sent to home addresses). Results from the Year 9 survey are discussed in this report.

- **A biennial cross-sectional survey**, with questionnaires completed by approximately 2,500 students in each of Years 8, 10 and 12. Each time the survey is run, a new sample of 300 schools and colleges is drawn, and one tutor group (about 25 students) from each will take part in the survey.

The following schematic diagram illustrates the timing of both surveys



In all schools participating in the surveys, one senior manager and five teachers are also asked to complete questionnaires.

In addition to the surveys, the project incorporates a literature review and 20 longitudinal case studies. The case-study schools are selected, ten from the schools participating in the first cross-sectional survey, and the other ten from the schools involved in the longitudinal survey. School visits include in-depth interviews with key personnel, lesson observation and student discussion groups. Results from the second round of case-study visits to the ten schools who participated in the cross-sectional survey are described in this report.

Research team

The research team is made up of staff at the NFER:

David Kerr, Project Director

Julie Nelson, Project Leader (maternity cover for Elizabeth Cleaver)

Elizabeth Cleaver, Project Leader (on maternity leave)

Eleanor Ireland, Senior Research Officer

Joana Lopes, Research Officer

Susan Stoddart, Project Secretary

Thomas Benton, Project Statistician.

In addition, Professor Pat Seyd (University of Sheffield) and Professor Paul Whiteley (University of Essex) are consultants to the study and work in partnership with NFER.

Reports

So far, the Study has published four annual reports (including this one).

The first report **Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study: First Cross-sectional Survey** (Kerr *et al*, 2003) focuses on the findings from the first survey undertaken as part of the study, carried out in the year before citizenship education became compulsory. It provides a baseline of evidence of existing knowledge about and provision of, citizenship education in schools, prior to statutory implementation. In addition, it charts the citizenship-related attitudes and knowledge of students at this time.

The second annual report **Making Citizenship Education Real** (Kerr *et al*, 2004) examines findings from the first longitudinal survey, and first round of case-study visits. It establishes a baseline of the attitudes of students, teachers and school leaders to citizenship education in the first year following the introduction of statutory citizenship education. It also outlines the emerging approaches to citizenship education in schools and begins to identify and explore the factors which influence the decision-making processes in schools concerning citizenship education.

The third annual report **Listening to Young People: Citizenship Education in England** (Cleaver *et al*, 2005) sets out the findings of the second cross-sectional survey. It focuses specifically on students' experiences, understandings and views of citizenship education and wider citizenship issues.

In addition, the Study has published two literature reviews:

The first, **Citizenship Education One Year on: What Does it Mean?** (Kerr and Cleaver, 2004) focuses on 'definitions, models, approaches and challenges to citizenship education in policy and practice' in the first year of national curriculum citizenship in England.

The second literature review, **Citizenship Education: the Political Science Perspective** (Whiteley, 2005) draws on research in political science which examines the relationship between education and citizenship engagement. As well as discussing a series of alternative models, which can be used to explain why people engage in voluntary activities in politics, it uses data from the longitudinal survey to test some of these models.

Two journal articles discussing the results from the Study have also been recently published:

Citizenship education in England – Listening to Young People: new insights from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study, (Kerr, 2005)

Moving citizenship education forward: key considerations for schools and colleges, (Lopes and Kerr, 2005).

All outputs from the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study and more information about the Study can be found at the following link:

www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/citizenship/

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