Defining active citizenship in English secondary schools

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ABSTRACT

The key stage three and four programmes of study for citizenship in English secondary schools include the requirement that schools make provision for participation (active citizenship) for all pupils. Following the publication of the programme of study a number of organisations have offered advice on how schools should fulfil this requirement. The key influences on this are the Department for Education and Skills through the Crick Report, The Office for Standards in Education and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Each offers differing views on the definition of participation and therefore conflicting advice to teachers wishing to put it into practice in schools.

A summary of these sources makes it clear that schools require further guidance in this area in first how to fulfil their legal requirements and second how to fulfil the spirit of the programme of study. Key distinctions between Crick, Ofsted and QCA include the questions of whether or not active citizenship must relate to the knowledge and understanding elements of the curriculum, whether or not participation should take place in the classroom and whether the notion of ‘doing good’ is compatible with the notion of ‘political good’.

As schools are primarily concerned, not with legal requirements but with offering the best education to their pupils, I conclude that the most appropriate course of action is to plan a classroom curriculum which fulfils Ofsted’s requirements and complement this through a participative school culture. This must include a political curriculum alongside extra-curricular opportunities which offer all pupils the opportunity to take part in activities which involve both ‘doing good’ and ‘political good’ as in reality neither can exist without the other.

‘The aim of the new subject is to create active and responsible citizens.’ (Crick 2000:120)

PART 1 – MODELS OF PARTICIPATION

In recommending the introduction of citizenship into the English curriculum the 1998 ‘Crick Report’ (QCA 1998) aimed to bring about, ‘a change in the political culture of this country.’ (ibid :7) Citizenship education, it said, should empower young people to

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1 The advisory group on citizenship was asked by the secretary of state for education to consider the need for and approach to the teaching of citizenship in English schools. The group was chaired by Sir Bernard Crick and recommended the adoption of citizenship as a national curriculum subject. The final report of this group became known as the Crick Report.
‘participate in society effectively as active, informed, critical and responsible citizens.’
This means a curriculum about, ‘not just knowledge of citizenship and civic society; it also implies developing values, skills and understanding.’ As a result they declared:

‘Active citizenship’ is our aim throughout’ (QCA 1998: 25)

The national curriculum programme of study for key stages 3 and 4 (ages 11-14 and 14-15) required pupils be taught to, ‘negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in both school and community-based activities and reflect on the process of participating.’ (QCA 2001a) As a result the English education inspectorate, the Office for standards in education (Ofsted) declared that (Ofsted 2005): ‘…citizenship is not like other subjects and does not lend itself to teachers simply talking to pupils.’

Thus the citizenship curriculum has also given schools an opportunity to take a fresh approach to engaging pupils with the concepts of democracy and citizenship and enable them to develop as active citizens.

But whilst active citizenship has been welcomed by many, it also poses the question of what it means in practice and how schools should fulfil their statutory duties. This discussion will focus on the questions of how active citizenship is defined and how schools can ensure a meaningful entitlement for all pupils.

As Ofsted stated in 2005, ‘The implementation of citizenship as a National Curriculum subject has been beset by problems of definition.’ (Ofsted 2005: 5) Active citizenship is as much a victim of this as any other element of the citizenship curriculum. Activities classed as active citizenship have ranged from classroom debates to refereeing a football match to allowing pupils to join anti-war demonstrations. A comparison of these examples reveals a broad variation in the understanding of what constitutes active citizenship. Schools are doing many things but can they all be described as active citizenship?

To better understand this situation we will first consider the models of participation used to justify active citizenship. This will be followed by a consideration of the evolution of citizenship as a subject. Third we will compare the descriptions of the approaches recommended by the Crick Report, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA, responsible for regulating the English school curriculum) and Ofsted. Finally we will discuss some ways forward for practitioners.

Desiring not to ‘overload the bending backs of so many teachers’, (Crick 2000:119) Crick states that the commission on citizenship did not initially intend to request the inclusion of active citizenship in the programme of study. However, he went on, ‘Without the experiential, participative side of citizenship learning, some schools could turn the brave new subject into ‘safe and dead, dead safe, old rote-learning civics.’ (ibid:119).

A number of educational theories offer a basis to the notion of participation. The work of both A.S. Neill (Neill 1970), and Paolo Freire (Freire 1972) describe approaches which undermine the traditional teacher pupil relationship through a democratic principle. Freire’s description of the ‘banking process’ in education, where a teacher deposits
knowledge into pupils, reflects Crick’s assertion that citizens will not be formed by knowledge alone. In ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ (Freire 1972) Freire defines the weaknesses of the banking approach (ibid:60):

‘The more pupils work at storing the deposit entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world.’

Freire believed that learners would not develop as citizens if they were not able to engage with what he saw as the oppressive reality undermining their humanity. In his view, to simply speak about concepts like democracy is no more than verbalism whilst to act without reflection is simply activism, action for action’s sake. Again this chimes with the spirit of the programme of study requiring pupils to ‘negotiate, decide, take part and reflect’.

Hart (1992:5) offers the reassurance that participation of pupils in learning must be in conjunction with adults in order to avoid a ‘Lord of the Flies’ scenario. He states:

‘Children’s participation does not mean supplanting adults. Adults do, however need to learn to listen, support, and guide.’

Hart defines participation as ‘…the process of sharing decisions which affect one’s life and the life of the community in which one lives’ (ibid: 5). He goes on to say that, ‘It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured. Participation is the fundamental right of citizenship’ (ibid: 5). Considering the ambition of the Crick Report to create a new political culture through citizenship education this endorses the inclusion of participation as a core principal of the curriculum.

Hart’s ladder of participation (figure 1) demonstrates how children (anyone aged up to 18, to use the UN definition) can be engaged in participative activities at eight possible levels ranging from ‘manipulation’ to ‘child-initiated shared decisions with adults’. This offers a framework for what should be regarded as meaningful and therefore be counted as part of the entitlement.

Hart argues that participation begins at the fourth rung of the ladder where children are given tasks to do but are informed about why they are being asked to do them and crucially given the option to take part. Activities here include the informed use of children as guides, and projects designed by adults but run by children, such as a consultation process run by a TV company, and adult initiated activities where adults and children cooperate in decision-making. What these activities have in common is that while they do take into account the agency of the children involved adults remain the leaders of the projects. The final two rungs of the ladder differ from this in that they are respectively, child initiated and child-initiated and led. These both require children to come up with, plan and lead an activity, although often with the input and support of adults, crucially, where pupils request it.

To a greater or lesser extent all of these levels of engagement are visible in English schools. Clearly though it is at least the fourth rung which schools need to be achieving if they are to call their activities participation. The less common activities are those at the top of the
ladder, initiated by children. Clearly schools cannot plan for children to have ideas and therefore it is debatable how schools should go about creating a supportive environment in which pupils are able to undertake activities of their own design.

**PART 2 CITIZENSHIP IN ENGLISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Whilst many schools have long enabled active participation for pupils it is only with the introduction of the citizenship curriculum in 2002 that it has become a requirement. Citizenship is designed to play a role in counteracting a perceived political apathy in England. This, in turn, connects with other initiatives across Whitehall bringing issues including voting and public participation in decision-making to the fore.

The Crick Report recommended adopting the approach of education for citizenship. This is as opposed to education about or through citizenship which promoted, respectively, an entirely knowledge based, ‘civics’ approach or an active approach enabling pupils to learn by imitating the activities of citizens. Education for citizenship differs in that it acknowledges pupils as citizens today. As the result of a programme of citizenship education they are able to grow in stature through the knowledge, skills and understanding they gain.

The curriculum was organised around the three strands of:

1. Moral responsibility
2. Community involvement and
3. Political literacy

This reflects the whole school nature of citizenship in part influenced by the active participation strand of the curriculum.
Figure 1: Hart’s Ladder of Participation (adapted from Hart 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of participation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Role of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Participant initiated, shared decisions with adults</td>
<td>Participants’ idea carried out in collaboration with adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Participants are directed</td>
<td>Participants’ idea, adults available to help if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Staff initiated, shared decisions with participants</td>
<td>Adult idea. Activity shared with participants throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Consulted but informed</td>
<td>Adult idea. Participants consulted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assigned but informed</td>
<td>Adult idea, participants volunteer to take part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tokenism</td>
<td>Adults ask opinions of participants on adult terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
<td>Participants take part without understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manipulation</td>
<td>Participants do what adults suggest without understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schools have adopted the curriculum in a variety of ways mapped in the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) sponsored longitudinal studies compiled by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

**Figure 2**

![Four approaches to citizenship education](image)

- **Progressing schools** – developing citizenship education in the curriculum, school and wider community: the most advanced type of provision.
- **Implicit schools** – not yet focusing on citizenship education in the curriculum, but with a range of active citizenship opportunities.
- **Focused schools** – concentrating on citizenship education in the curriculum, with few opportunities for active citizenship in the school and wider community.
- **Minimalist schools** – at an early stage of development, with a limited range of delivery approaches and few extracurricular activities on offer.

Figure 2 illustrates the four broad approaches categorised by NFER in their studies (Cleaver *et al.* 2004).

These studies demonstrate a gradual movement from the teaching of citizenship predominantly through assemblies and as a part of existing subjects such as Personal, Social and Heath Education (PSHE) to the increasing use of specific timeslots dedicated to teaching citizenship. Progressing and Implicit schools also take account of active citizenship encouraging pupils to engage with the school community and the community beyond the school.

In many schools citizenship has begun to develop a profile based on ‘the three Cs of citizenship’ comprising:
1. Curriculum
2. School Culture and
3. The wider Community (Pattison 2005)
This approach takes citizenship beyond the classroom into the wider school community and the community beyond. Such approaches would be familiar to those schools described in the report as progressing. NFER note a movement from minimalist to progressing schools. Active citizenship therefore has taken hold. However a number of issues remain concerning the fulfilment of the aims of the programme of study.

**PART 3 DEFINING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

‘…it seems possible to say what active citizenship should not be – volunteering or community service devoid of any underpinning knowledge and understanding, decision making opportunities, desire to instigate change or reflect upon what was learned through the experience.’ (Nelson and Kerr 2005:14)

‘Active citizenship can be defined as citizens taking opportunities to become actively involved in defining and tackling the problems of their communities and improving their quality of life.’ (Home Office, Civil Renewal Unit in Nelson and Kerr 2005:13)

These two quotes outline the dilemma that citizenship education finds itself in. On the one hand, active citizenship remains ill defined in the school context, but on the other, it has been clearly defined in a social context. One of the major stumbling blocks to the initiation of active citizenship is that there appears to be no agreed definition amongst the statutory and non-statutory bodies engaged with the citizenship curriculum. The two key bodies influencing the definition of the subject, Ofsted and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) each appear to have divergent views on what should actually constitute active citizenship. The core issue centres on the relationship between participation and the citizenship programme of study. Neither of these organisations appears to have defined what constitutes active citizenship. However, both have, at different times, given examples of what they feel this should include.

In addition to these two organisations, a closer consideration of the Crick Report (and the views of other non-statutory bodies) serves to further illustrate the state of confusion.

**The Crick Report**


‘It is vital that pupils are provided with structured opportunities to explore actively issues and events through school and community involvement, case studies and critical discussions that are challenging and relevant to their lives. It is difficult to conceive of pupils as active citizens if their experience of learning in citizenship education has been predominantly passive.’ (QCA 1998:37)

This leaves the strong impression that without active participation citizenship will fail to achieve the revolutionary aims of the Crick Report. Broadly, this point is agreed upon by
all parties. However, the report’s further contentions do not necessarily agree with those of Ofsted and QCA. The quote above talks about ‘school and community involvement, case studies and critical discussions’ suggesting that active participation can be a classroom activity as at least a part of provision. They go on to say that:

‘Pupils may derive further benefit where these opportunities are linked to a class, school or community project which they have helped to identify, plan, carry through and evaluate.’

(QCA 1998:37)

This implies that participation does not necessarily need to be connected to the programme of study for citizenship but that this is desirable where possible. Furthermore, the report states that ‘Often the school and its local community provide a perfect context for pupils to examine issues and events and to become involved in active, participatory activities and experiences where the emphasis is on learning through action’ (ibid:37). Again this suggests that whilst engagement with the community is desirable, it is not essential for the school to fulfil its duties to pupils. This could be interpreted as a caveat fulfilling Crick’s desire to prevent the over burdening of teachers.

Where community involvement does take place the Crick Report talks about pupils ‘becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities including learning through community involvement and service to the community’ (ibid: 40) [my emphases]. This suggests a service rather than political ethos, implying that pupils who help in an old people’s home can be considered to be receiving their entitlement to active citizenship. The examples given, however, do not imply the same approach. The report mentions a successful school council including an anti-bullying campaign and the work of pupils with their local council to renovate a local park. Both examples involve the skills of negotiation, decision making and participation required in the programme of study and both constitute political change actions.

QCA

Following the issuing of the citizenship order by the secretary of state, responsibility for drawing up a programme of study for the subject passed to the QCA. In support of this the QCA published a suggested scheme of work for citizenship lessons at the different key stages, as well as guidance on how to implement the new subject. QCA concurs with the Crick Report and, as we shall see, Ofsted, in emphasising the importance of active participation:

‘Opportunities for pupils to become helpfully involved in the life of the school are essential forms of learning in citizenship.’ (QCA 2000: 10)

This reinforces Crick’s view on the essential role of active citizenship. Elsewhere QCA states that active citizenship activities ‘…can take place in the school or local community (or a mixture of the two)’ (QCA 2001a). With regard to links to the programme of study QCA’s view, like that of the Crick Report, is that active citizenship activities:
‘…may [my emphasis] also address aspects of knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens and developing skills of enquiry and communication.’ (ibid)

But it also states that:

‘as they progress through the key stage, pupils’ involvement in activities should allow them to take increasing responsibility and make progress in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding.’ (ibid)

In another document QCA says:

‘Citizenship…encourages pupils to play a helpful [my emphasis] part in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and the wider world. It also teaches them about our economy and democratic institutions and values.’ (QCA 2000:4)

This further emphasises the ‘helpful’ rather than political nature of participation suggested by the Crick Report whilst the link between participation and the programme of study is made but appears more desirable than essential. The list of suggested activities is again illuminating, including (QCA 2000 / QCA 2001a):

- Maintaining a citizenship portfolio
- Participating in the organisation of the school e.g. reception, running sports events, school councils
- Working with peers e.g. tutoring, mentoring
- School / group events e.g. real game, mini Olympics, mock election
- Environmental projects e.g. cleaning / campaigning
- Wider community activities e.g. with old people
- Contributing to national government priorities at local level e.g. contributing to community safety plan, PCT, peer drug education
- International activities e.g. mock UN, school links
- Planning and building a sensory garden
- School council
- Recycling collection teams
- Woodland redevelopment
- Current political issues e.g. letters to MPs
- Running a school radio
- ‘Voice of Plymouth Schools’ forum
- Refereeing sports events

These activities vary between the service learning approach of helping in the community through activities such as peer mentoring to more political activities such as school councils. Note that few, if any of them are fundamentally classroom based. We will return to the significance of these distinctions in due course.

OFSTED
As the organisation responsible for monitoring the implementation of citizenship in schools Ofsted decides whether or not schools are fulfilling the requirements of the curriculum and therefore theirs is generally the definition of greatest interest in schools.

The key issues of contention between Ofsted and QCA concern the voluntary or political nature of activities and the links to the programme of study. Ofsted is unequivocal about the value of classroom activities as active citizenship. This is contentious in as much as it appears to confuse active citizenship with active learning:

‘The third strand of citizenship, the skills of participation and responsible action, has been developed well in some schools through the use of discussion and other methods, including role play and collaborative working in the context of citizenship knowledge and understanding.’ (Ofsted 2004:3)

This suggests that rather than active citizenship being experience of the ‘real world’ it might simply be a simulation. Such an approach appears to be based on the principle of education through rather than for citizenship, in contradiction to the aims of the Crick Report.

What is also fundamental to Ofsted’s definition is that active citizenship must be connected to the programme of study. The 2002/3 citizenship subject report stated that:

‘It is important that the skills of enquiry and communication and of participation and responsible action are exercised in the context of knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens.’ (Ofsted 2004:6)

This was reiterated by the chief inspector of schools David Bell in a 2005 speech:

‘Enquiry in science and participation in sport, meritorious as they are in their own right, are not about national curriculum citizenship, unless they are dealing with material from the citizenship programme of study.’ (Ofsted 2005)

Similarly charity work is not acceptable in its own right:

‘…giving to charity is in itself not central to the participation strand. Where charity work develops effective citizenship, pupils investigate an issue that has come to their attention and the options available; they make decisions to organise events and how the money can best be spent; and they reflect on why this process is necessary and what the alternative might be.’ (Ofsted 2005)

If we then compare this to the suggestions made by QCA as to what might constitute active citizenship a number of the options are excluded. Refereeing a sports fixture is not acceptable and helping old people is only applicable if the activity has been planned by the pupils and can be shown to be ‘necessary’. A key distinction begins to arise here between what is regarded as ‘doing good’ and what is ‘political good’. David Bell is clear that it is the latter rather than the former which meets the real intention of the national curriculum.
‘Many pupils also take up opportunities to participate in activities such as charitable work or mentoring younger pupils. However this is not done systematically enough and seldom meets the real intention of the national curriculum; they are ‘doing good’, rather than ‘political good’ (that is informed, effective citizens). (Ofsted 2005)

So if we then look at the list of suggested activities from Ofsted we see a very different, ‘political’ list of options:

- Mock parliament
- Survey of local council strategy – sending results to the local council
- Pupils write to the council about recycling following a study of the issue and follow it up through a local forum
- Activity days
- School council

A final issue emphasised by Ofsted is the question of entitlement versus enrichment. The 2002/3 report states:

‘Others are developing participative activity in the school and community. Such events are harder to organise, and are sometimes offered as enrichment rather than being part of all pupils’ entitlement.’ (Ofsted 2004:3)

In this analysis Ofsted have applied the same inspection criteria to citizenship as they would to any other subject. Therefore if all pupils are entitled to algebra and study it in maths, then all pupils entitled to active citizenship must receive an equal entitlement. This appears to discourage schools from planning active participation outside the classroom, an approach which counters the 3Cs approach and much of what appears to have been accepted by teachers as the spirit of the programme of study.

If active classroom learning is applicable as active citizenship, it becomes relatively easy to plan for. While this makes it straightforward to satisfy an inspection team, it would appear to risk leading citizenship back to being an ordinary subject, something which both QCA and Ofsted agree it is not. However elsewhere David Bell states that:

‘In other schools, teachers have sensibly interpreted participation and responsible action as taking work to a logical conclusion and making recommendations in letters to responsible persons and bodies, publishing conclusions on school websites or in booklets retained in school libraries and where relevant, making suggestions to school management on matters related to school policy or practice.’ (Ofsted 2005:5)

Therefore the writing of letters to MPs, for example, is regarded by Ofsted as an acceptable form of active citizenship. This may be seen as a sensible solution to both the issues of entitlement and teacher workload.

Ofsted are also positive about the involvement of school councils in citizenship provision however with some reservations:
‘If an active school council is to be seen by the school as part of its participative citizenship programme then all pupils need to be involved in informing the agenda and making their representatives accountable.’ (Ofsted 2004:6)

It could be added that recent voter turnout shows that most people outside schools do not engage in local democracy. However as long as every student is given the opportunity to stand for election, vote, lobby and comment on the activities of the school council this activity is ‘full-entitlement’ active citizenship under any definition.

CONCLUSION

These observations may serve better to frustrate than to inform the school practitioner. Few working in schools have the time or the inclination to investigate differences in opinion on such issues. However, schools do work to two drivers of policy and standards; the perceived needs of pupils on the one hand and the requirements of the inspection regime on the other.

The majority of teachers would recoil at the thought that they were in the profession simply to fulfil the requirements of the inspecting body. Few, on the other hand, would wish to undermine the performance of either their department or institution when inspection does occur. As a result, teachers are left charting a course between these competing demands in order to produce the best education for their pupils and convince Ofsted that they are fulfilling the requirements of the law.

What seems to be the wisest response to this is not to ask ‘how can we fulfil our legal requirements,’ but, ‘what should we offer our pupils as part of a well balanced school experience?’ This enables us to reflect the differing demands placed upon schools by these definitions. If we summarise the demands of the above definitions we are left with the following requirements:

1. The need to support the knowledge, skills and understanding of the citizenship curriculum
2. The use of active learning in the classroom
3. The opportunity for pupils to take part in political activity within and through their school communities
4. The need to encourage pupils to play a helpful role in service to their community

These are generally objectives schools would regard as desirable elements of what they offer to pupils.

David Bell’s separation of political good and doing good will further frustrate those schools who do not wish to separate the two. Good schools do want to offer pupils the opportunity to be both ‘helpful’ and ‘political’ in their school lives. As Freire says, to offer only one would risk either activism or verbalism, the two must exist alongside one another. That Ofsted would like to see one labelled as citizenship and the other not is academic, except in preparation for inspection. If this is our only concern then schools can emphasise active
learning in the classroom and ensure that any extra-curricular activities are labelled as optional unless they are truly accessible to all pupils, e.g. through school council elections. Thus with the job of satisfying the inspectors dealt with a school can turn to the real issue of how best to educate their pupils.

The acceptance of the citizenship curriculum by the whole school, rather than just the citizenship department, is a key issue here. An individual coordinator at middle management or lower cannot be held responsible for the full range of activities a school would ordinarily wish to provide for its pupils. This requires activity and coordination across the school with the engagement of a senior leader in the day to day running of the programme.

QCA’s definition of citizenship engages the whole school in this way. Indeed those schools who took part in the DfES ACiS pilot (DfES 2005) defined active citizenship in much the same way. This is because schools are focused on the needs of a community and therefore have an understanding, however underdeveloped, that political and social activity cannot be separated from one another. The QCA definition connects ‘helpful’ activities, such as volunteering in an old people’s home to political activities such as playing an active role in school councils. This is the spirit of what many schools aim to achieve and in the process it ensures that schools fulfil their legal requirements.

The growing number of school councils, consultations on school policies and the increasing engagement of pupils in day to day activities such as interviewing job candidates are political activities which could be regarded as elements of a political culture in schools. They are real activities already taking place in schools but which are increasingly incorporating the voice of pupils. Therefore it is ultimately a general culture change in schools, not a correct observance of the national curriculum, which will enable pupils to become engaged in a political curriculum accessible to all. A further benefit of a political culture may be the creation of non-citizenship opportunities such as helping in old peoples’ homes, which enable pupils to learn through service rather than political action.

Ofsted’s definition provides schools with something of a firewall in order to fulfil the letter of the law. It seems to suggest that, at present, it is possible to pass an inspection through active learning techniques which many teachers would regard as good practice in any subject. Meanwhile schools can develop their existing pastoral offering to incorporate pupil voice as a political element in the school community. The Crick Report is right in saying that citizenship without active learning runs a high risk of becoming ineffectual civics. However, an active element which is simply simulation runs the risk of being merely tokenism. Returning to Hart, we can see that this cannot reach beyond level 4 on the ladder of participation and probably does not exceed level 3 in most cases. However, it is clear that reaching levels of true participation raises a range of further challenges, primarily student motivation, staff time and resources.

In my own school, I received a great deal of support from senior staff in establishing a citizenship department. Unusually we were able to employ four members of staff for a school of roughly 1300 pupils and offer citizenship as a timetabled subject. By teaching citizenship lessons each week and reinforcing them with speakers and off-timetable events,
we were able to fulfil the requirements of the national curriculum in terms of knowledge and understanding. I believe that the use of active learning techniques means we also fulfilled the active citizenship requirement to Ofsted’s satisfaction, although this was not inspected. A small number of other activities took place around the school, independent of the citizenship department. However these did not offer a full entitlement. It is only later, as the idea of citizenship has spread across the school, that active citizenship is becoming more available to pupils through extra-curricular activities and projects. These are where the real potential for change comes in enabling pupils to interrogate local issues through activities such as a radio project, interviewing new staff and playing a role in planning school events. These activities all contribute to a growing political and participatory culture within the school but would not be classed as active citizenship by Ofsted. Their value however is not to be doubted and this is where the tension arises between fulfilling requirements and developing a ‘citizenship culture’.

The Crick Report aims at, ‘a change in the political culture….’ Cultures, as we know do not develop overnight and if pupils are to become politically engaged through their school lives then political institutions and habits will need time to develop in schools in the same way that they have in wider society, as part of a gradual process.

Therefore citizenship coordinators in schools should continue to develop classroom-based courses in citizenship with an eye to at least the active learning approaches required by Ofsted. In the meantime, schools need to be considering how they maintain and develop a culture which encourages appropriate levels of social and political participation for the particular institution. As the curriculum and the culture develop, they should reinforce one another. In time, active participation can be both doing good and doing political good but schools must take a long view and develop communities which enable both these outcomes. The 3 C’s approach described earlier offers a model for this connecting the classroom to the community beyond the school, theory to real life.

Whether one accepts the Ofsted or QCA definitions of active citizenship, it is impossible to deny that activities taking place in schools have impacts in the school and wider communities. With the demands placed on schools by the extended schools programme, Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural (SMSC) education and anticipated provisions such as the outcomes of the Russell Commission on volunteering, it is clear that active citizenship cannot and should not seek to exist in isolation. If the ambition of the Crick Report is to be met, political action must connect to social action. If this link is not made we will succeed in raising a generation of adults capable of making decisions but incapable of taking the actions which ultimately bring change.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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