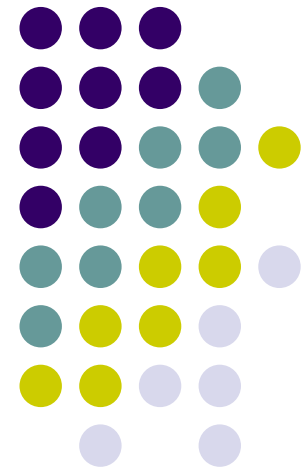


CITIZENSHIP: Next Steps

Keith Ajegbo



Expectations of citizenship education



- Final report of the advisory group led by Bernard Crick: we unanimously advise the secretary of state that citizenship and the teaching of democracy--- is so important both for schools and the life of the nation----
- We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country
- There are worrying levels of apathy, ignorance and cynicism about public life

Citizenship education was designed to bring about lower levels of disengagement and anti social behaviour and increased participation in society.

IMPACT BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



- Citizenship education was conceived as a demanding subject as it moved beyond the classroom.
- It was designed to develop:
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - Skills of enquiry and communication
 - PLUS
- Participation and responsible action in the real world beyond the classroom.

5 years on much still expected



- Expectations of citizenship are still high. Recent reports see it as a school subject that has the power to change how students act in society.
- i) The Education and Skills Committee in its report on Citizenship Education calls for government departments to work together to achieve outcomes.
- ii) ‘Diversity and Citizenship’ enhances the role of citizenship by adding a new strand, ‘Diversity and Identity: Living Together in the UK. This requires citizenship to link closely with history and to support community cohesion.
- iii) ‘Our Shared Futures’ the report from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion states that the citizenship curriculum should be reviewed and strengthened in line with the Ajebo report with a focus on the opportunities it affords for building integration and cohesion.

Vision versus pragmatism



- This is the title of the 5th Annual Report of the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study for the NFER.
- In order to move on it is important to look at the expectations placed on citizenship in relation to what is happening in schools.
- There is excellent practice in citizenship education across the country but that practice is far from universal.



The challenges

- Finding time for citizenship education in a crowded curriculum. Issues are:
 - i) The best model for delivery
 - ii) The relationship with PSHE
 - iii) Balancing knowledge, skills and action
- Ensuring schools have trained citizenship teachers
 - i) 55% of teachers (teaching citizenship) surveyed in the NFER study had not received any training
 - ii) In 2005 citizenship was the worst taught subject according to an OFSTED survey.
 - iii) Issues of content, teaching styles and assessment

Crossroads



- The expectations on citizenship are great in terms of the national agenda. It has, as well, the potential to offer new ways of teaching and learning, to deal with controversial, to inspire learning across the curriculum and to transform the ethos of a school.

BUT

It is at a crossroads and to do this it needs attention. It requires a national strategy that pulls together a number of strands and creates coherence.

Ways Forward



- Clarity is needed about how citizenship feeds into a range of policies and debates.
- What is the relationship of citizenship to: Every Child Matters, Personalised Learning and Community Cohesion?
- Where does citizenship stand in relation to multi culturalism and Britishness?

Ways Forward



- Schools have a great deal of autonomy. The evidence is that citizenship works well when there is a moral commitment by school leadership to its importance.
- To what extent will the revised NPQH take on the relationship of citizenship education and the development of a citizenship rich school as a central tenet of developing school leadership.

Ways Forward



- For citizenship education to become what it could be the key players in education need to come together to redefine its purpose and importance.
- Work by the DFES, QCA, TDA and Ofsted needs to be coordinated in order both to provide schools with support but also to ensure there are levers to make things happen.
- Similarly as it indicates in the Select Committee Report government departments with a citizenship agenda need to coordinate their approach.

A great subject



- The development of this A level is a great step forward.
- For pupils to achieve the highest standards what comes before in their education needs to be carefully considered.