

# Programme of study: Citizenship (Key stage 3)

## Curriculum aims

Learning and undertaking activities in citizenship contribute to achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

## The importance of citizenship

Education for citizenship equips young people with the knowledge, understanding and skills to play an effective role in public life. Citizenship encourages them to take an interest in topical and controversial issues and to engage in discussion and debate. Pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities, duties and freedoms, laws and justice, and democratic institutions. They learn to take part in decision-making and different forms of action and how to play an active role in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and wider society.

Citizenship encourages respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities. It also equips pupils to be able to engage critically with and explore diverse beliefs, cultures and identities and the values we share as citizens in the UK. Pupils begin to understand how society has changed and is changing in the UK, Europe and the wider world. Citizenship addresses issues relating to social justice, human rights and global community, and encourages pupils to challenge injustice, inequalities and discrimination. It helps young people to develop their critical skills and to consider a wide range of political, social, ethical and moral problems and explore opinions other than their own. They learn to evaluate information, make informed judgements and reflect on the consequences of their

The importance statement reflects the three principles of effective citizenship education as set out by the Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools. These were that citizenship should develop social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy.

actions now and in the future. They can argue a case on behalf of others as well as themselves and speak out on issues of concern.

Citizenship equips pupils with the knowledge and skills for effective and democratic participation. It helps pupils to become informed, critical, active citizens who have the confidence and conviction to work collaboratively, take action and try to make a difference in their communities.

## Key concepts

There are a number of key concepts that underpin the study of citizenship. Pupils need to understand these concepts in order to deepen and broaden their knowledge, skills and understanding.

### Democracy and justice

- Actively participating in different kinds of decision-making and voting in order to influence public life.
- Understanding that justice is fundamental to a democratic society and laws and rules are applied to try to ensure everyone is treated fairly.
- Understanding that justice, diversity, toleration, respect and freedom are valued by people with different beliefs, backgrounds and traditions within a changing democratic society.
- Understanding that government is held to account for its actions by parliament and by citizens.

### Rights and responsibilities

- Exploring political, legal and human rights and how these affect both individuals and communities.
- Understanding that individuals and organisations have responsibilities to ensure rights are supported and protected.
- Understanding that rights can compete, and conflict and hard decisions are made to try to balance these.

### Identities and diversity: Living together in the UK

- Appreciating that people living together in the UK have individual, group and national identities, which can change over time and are informed by a person's understanding of what it means to be a citizen.

### **Democracy and justice**

This focuses on the political system in the UK and the role of citizens within it. It includes freedom as part of democracy; fairness as part of justice; power and authority; and accountability. Accountability happens at many levels. For example, in parliament the role of a responsible opposition is to challenge, test and scrutinise what government is doing.

Pupils will learn about the need to balance competing and conflicting demands, and that in a democracy not everyone gets what they want. Linking the student council with teaching about democracy, elections and voting in citizenship provides a way for pupils to apply learning to real decision-making situations. Active participation provides opportunities to learn about the important role of negotiation and persuasion within a democracy.

### **Rights and responsibilities**

Within a democracy, citizens have rights and responsibilities. There are different kinds of rights and different kinds of responsibilities (political, legal, human, moral). Contested areas surrounding rights, are explored. For example, the checks and balances needed in relation to freedom of speech to address threats from extremism and terrorism.

### **Identities and diversity: Living together in the UK**

This includes the multiple identities that may be held by members of an ethnically and religiously diverse society and the ways in which identities are affected by change in society. For example how migration has shaped communities; how living together in the UK has been shaped and continues to be shaped by political, social, economic and cultural change. The historical context for such changes should be considered where appropriate.

All pupils, regardless of their legal or residential status should explore and develop their understanding of what it means to be a citizen in the UK.

- Understanding connections between the diverse national, regional, ethnic and religious cultures and communities in the UK.
- Understanding connections between the UK and the rest of Europe and the wider world.
- Exploring the different forces that bring about change in communities over time.

### **Critical thinking**

- Engaging with opinions, ideas, beliefs and values, and understanding and responding to the main issues.
- Challenging opinions, actions, assumptions or policies on grounds of ethics, evidence or argument.
- Developing own views, taking account of a range of cultural, ethical and moral contexts and views other than their own.

# Key processes

These are the essential skills and processes in citizenship that pupils need to learn to make progress.

## Critical thinking and enquiry

Pupils should be able to:

- reflect on different opinions, ideas, beliefs and values by exploring topical and controversial [issues and problems](#)
- research, plan and undertake enquiries into topical and controversial issues and problems using a range of information and sources
- [analyse and evaluate](#) sources used, identifying different values, ideas and viewpoints and recognising bias.

## **Taking informed and responsible action**

Pupils should be able to:

- work individually and with others to [identify citizenship issues](#) within the school and wider community, and negotiate, plan and [take action](#) to try to influence others, make change or resist unwanted change, using time and resources appropriately
- analyse the impact of their actions on communities and the wider world, now and in the future
- reflect on the progress they have made, evaluating what they have learnt, what went well, the difficulties encountered and what they would do differently.

## Advocacy and representation

Pupils should be able to:

- express and explain their own opinions to others through discussions, formal debates and [voting](#)
- put together an argument showing consideration of different viewpoints and drawing on what they have learnt through research, action and debate
- justify their point of view and the views of others, giving reasons to try to persuade others to think again, change or support them.

### **Critical thinking and enquiry**

Using real case studies to explore issues and problems can help to develop skills of critical thinking, enquiry, debate and advocacy. This includes developing judgements on the basis of evidence and can involve exploring opinions and values other than the pupils' own.

### **Issues and problems**

These are topical political, social and ethical issues and problems, which can be controversial and sensitive and can lead to disagreement. They should not be avoided but handled so that pupils develop skills to discuss and debate citizenship issues and consider points of view that are not necessarily their own. Ground rules and the use of distancing techniques are some of the ways to manage the discussion of such issues.

### **Analyse and evaluate**

This includes pupils evaluating and assessing different opinions and challenging what they see, hear and read through research and investigation, considering scenarios and case studies.

### **Identify citizenship issues**

The action should be informed by research and investigation into a political, social or ethical issue or problem.

### **Take action**

This includes developing and using skills while applying citizenship knowledge and understanding. Actions could include presenting a case to others about a concern; conducting a consultation, vote or election; organising a meeting, event or forum to raise awareness and debate issues; representing the views of others at a meeting or event; creating, reviewing or revisiting an organisational policy; contributing to local community policies; lobbying and communicating views publicly via a website, campaign or display; setting up an action group or network; training others in democratic skills such as advocacy or campaigning.

### **Advocacy and representation**

Developing skills of advocacy and representation will provide opportunities for pupils to build on the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing from the English programme of study. In the context of citizenship pupils need to practice communicating with different audiences, including those in positions of power, to try to influence and persuade them about ways of making a difference to political and social issues.

### **Voting**

This includes knowing about and participating in different kinds of voting, for example show of hands, secret ballot and simulating division. Voting can be part of activities, for example to decide on a motion within a debate or to agree a new policy for the student council.

# Range and content

This section outlines the breadth of the subject on which teachers should draw when teaching the key concepts and key processes. Citizenship focuses on the political and social dimensions of living together in the UK and recognises the influence of the historical context. Citizenship also helps pupils make sense of the world today and equips them for the challenges and changes facing communities in the future.

The study of citizenship should include:

- [political](#), legal and [human rights](#), and responsibilities of citizens
- the role of the [law and the justice system](#) and how they relate to young people
- [key features of parliamentary democracy and government in the four nations of the UK](#), and at local level, including voting and elections
- freedom of speech and diversity of opinion, and the role of the media in informing and influencing public opinion
- examples of how individual and collective actions can affect communities and the [environment](#)
- strategies for handling local, national and international disagreements and conflicts
- the needs of the local community and how these are met through public services and the voluntary sector
- where public money comes from and who decides how it is spent
- how individuals, groups and organisations can influence decision-making ([locally](#), nationally and globally) through action
- the [shared values](#) and [changing nature of UK society](#), including the diversity of beliefs, cultures, identities and traditions
- reasons for migration to, from and within the UK and the impact of movement and settlement on places and communities
- the UK's role and interconnections with the European Union and the rest of [Europe, the Commonwealth, the United Nations](#) and the world as a global community and the political, economic, environmental and social implications of this.

## Political rights

This includes the development of universal suffrage and equal opportunities. This links with the study of the development of democracy in history.

## Human rights

Human rights are a key theme in citizenship that may be revisited in many different contexts (local to global). The role of the United Nations and the European Union in securing human rights is explored. Linking teaching to topical issues provides a way of engaging pupils in learning about the values underpinning human rights and the extent to which conventions and declarations have been enshrined in national law.

## Law and the justice system

Law and the justice system include the criminal justice system. Some topical areas of law such as antisocial behaviour legislation can provide a focus for exploring the difference between criminal and civil justice.

## Key features of parliamentary democracy and government

This includes an understanding of the role of political parties, the first past the post system of elections, the role of government and opposition, and cabinet decision-making.

## The four nations of the UK

This includes how democracy has changed in recent times. For example, the devolution of power to the Scottish Parliament and the assemblies in Northern Ireland and Wales. This links with the study of the origins of the UK in history.

## Environment

The study of the environment provides links to work in science and geography. This provides opportunities to evaluate individual and collective actions that contribute to sustainable practices and consider the different ethical implications and consequences of actions, policies and behaviours. This could include reviewing the school's policies on sustainability or investigating the impact of decisions such as those made about purchasing a mobile phone or domestic recycling.

## Locally

Locally includes decision-making in the school and local community.

## Shared values

Freedom, understanding and respect in a just and democratic society. Exploring current topical issues provides opportunities for pupils to discuss shared values using real examples where values may relate to one another.

**Changing nature of UK society**

Change is a constant feature of UK society and pupils should understand some reasons why change occurs (eg migration, economic factors, globalisation) and how communities change as a consequence (eg shops, food, schools, languages).

**Europe**

A European dimension can be incorporated when exploring many topical issues. This includes the environment, immigration, trade and economic issues, diversity and identities.

**The Commonwealth**

This includes the development, membership and purpose of the commonwealth. This links with the study of the British Empire in history.

**The United Nations**

This includes exploring the role of the United Nations in the context of topical events affecting the international and/or global community

# Curriculum opportunities

During the key stage pupils should be offered the following opportunities that are integral to their learning and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject.

The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to:

- debate, in groups and whole-class discussions, topical and controversial issues, including those of concern to young people
- develop citizenship knowledge and understanding while using and applying citizenship skills
- work individually and in groups, taking on different roles and responsibilities
- participate in both school-based and [community-based citizenship activities](#)
- participate in different forms of individual and collective action, including decision-making and campaigning
- work with a range of [community partners](#), where possible
- take into account legal, moral, economic, environmental, [historical](#) and social dimensions of different political problems and issues
- take into account a range of contexts, such as school, local, regional, national, European, international and global, as they are relevant to different topics
- use and interpret a range of sources of information from the [media and ICT](#)
- [make links](#) between citizenship and work in other subjects and areas of the curriculum.

## **Community-based citizenship activities**

Community-based activities encourage pupils to work with people beyond the school community to address real issues and decisions.

## **Community partners**

Community partners could include voluntary organisations and public and private bodies. For example, the police, magistrates and the courts (to support work relating to the law and justice system) and local councillors, MPs and MEPs (for example to support work relating to parliament, democracy and justice).

## **Historical**

This includes considering relevant historical contexts in order to inform citizenship issues and problems.

## **Media and ICT**

This includes using and interpreting a wide range of sources of information during the course of enquiries and research, and learning how different media inform and shape opinion. Pupils need to evaluate the extent to which a balanced or partial view of events and issues is presented. There are opportunities to link with other parts of the curriculum, including English and ICT.

## **Make links**

Links include work on the media in English and ICT; work on diversity and inclusion in history and RE; and work on the environment and sustainability in geography and science.