

Report summary

Citizenship consolidated?

A survey of citizenship in schools between 2009 and 2012

This report evaluates the quality of citizenship education in primary and secondary schools. It is based on evidence from inspections of citizenship between September 2009 and July 2012 in 126 maintained schools in England, including four special schools. Inspectors observed 146 primary school lessons and 567 secondary school lessons, met with subject leaders and school leaders and interviewed just over 1,700 pupils and students.

Part A focuses on the strengths and weaknesses identified in the 32 primary schools and 94 secondary schools inspected during the survey.

Part B provides specific examples of good practice in teaching and learning in citizenship.

This report follows the Ofsted report of 2010: *Citizenship established? Citizenship in schools 2006/09*.

Key findings

- In most of the primary schools visited, citizenship was a strong feature of the curriculum. Primary headteachers frequently viewed the subject as key to promoting their school's shared values and a sense of community within the school. They identified citizenship as an important vehicle for successfully promoting pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors judged pupils' achievement to be good or better in 28 of the 32 primary schools visited.
- In the secondary schools visited in this survey, achievement in citizenship was better than in those visited in the last citizenship survey. In 64 of the 94 schools visited, pupils' achievement was judged to be good or better.
- Teaching was good or better in three quarters of the secondary schools visited in this survey. At best, teachers were confident experts, successfully employing a range of techniques in challenging pupils to critically explore issues and form their own views on key concepts.

- However, teaching was not good enough in a quarter of the secondary schools; in two schools it was inadequate. Where teaching required improvement, weaknesses in the teachers' subject knowledge and expertise led to only limited and superficial learning.
- Although examples of effective cross-curricular delivery, resulting in high-quality learning, were observed, there were often missed opportunities to explore key aspects of citizenship in sufficient depth or to give parity to learning in citizenship with that achieved in the host subject.
- For some non-specialist teachers, the requirement to teach citizenship has proved an unwelcome burden. Not all of those required to teach the subject understand the principles that underpin citizenship education and how these relate to other subjects, particularly the humanities and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- Leadership of the subject was good or outstanding in two thirds of the secondary schools visited. At best, effective subject leaders enjoyed strong support from senior staff and were empowered through appropriate status and resources to coordinate and drive improvement in the subject, despite, on occasions, managing complex cross-curricular arrangements.
- Most of the schools visited provided a range of suitable opportunities for pupils to achieve well through active citizenship, through volunteering to support or represent others, or assuming leadership roles to influence change within the school. Fewer encouraged pupils to make a difference beyond school.
- Teachers' use of assessment in lessons was stronger than seen in the previous survey but this was the weakest aspect of teaching overall in both primary and secondary schools.

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