The role of citizenship education in schools

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Abstract
This article argues that citizenship education already plays, and, indeed, should play an important role in schools. Not only does citizenship education deliver specific aims of education, which warrant its inclusion in the curriculum of any school, it also owes its existence to a moral obligation of states to educate citizens for effective participation in civic life. However, the particular type of citizen, which states wish to create will in large part be determined by the approach taken to teaching citizenship education. As a result of this, the role of citizenship education will differ considerably depending on which model is adopted. The article explores three roles for citizenship education in schools in detail. It then seeks to propose a transformative role for citizenship education in schools in order to create citizens who are equipped with the necessary knowledge, understandings and dispositions to make a fundamental difference in their societies.

Introduction
The last twenty-five years have seen an unprecedented interest in the issue of citizenship in general, linked to the range of political, economic and social changes which have occurred over the period and which have touched societies across the world. These include, amongst other things, migration across borders, the collapse of existing political structures and the growth of others, the changing role of women, the impact of the global economy, revolutions in media and ICT, the emergence of new communities and forms of protest (Kerr, 2000, 2003). To this, the concerns of
'international terrorism’ have also concentrated minds on the question of whether certain citizenship rights, as have existed in liberal democratic societies, should be restricted.

Increasingly, interest in citizenship education has not only emerged from international concerns, but in the desire to deal with closer to home issues such as perceived or real rises in crime, the need to build ‘social capital’, low voter turnout in elections, and a growing ‘democratic deficit’ emerging from the lack of interest and involvement of young adults in public and political life. International and domestic issues and considerations have led to a fundamental review of the purposes and nature of citizenship education and have raised questions about the capacity of existing citizenship education programmes to meet these challenges.

The 1990s witnessed a ‘resurgence of interest’ in civics and citizenship education as the number of formal democracies increased (Smith, 2003). In the United Kingdom and, indeed, internationally, it is an exciting time for those involved in the process of educating children for citizenship. This resurgence of interest in citizenship education and civics has helped to focus minds not only the potential role of citizenship education in schools, but also the content and teaching approaches which should be adopted to facilitate education for citizenship. Programmes such as the IEA Citizenship Education Study (Torney-Purta et al., 1999, 2001) have revealed the transitional nature of many countries civics and citizenship education programmes. Increasingly, states are looking to re-define the role of their citizenship education programmes in order to meet contemporary challenges.
This article analyses the role citizenship education performs in delivering specific aims of education, which, in its own right, justify its existence in the curriculum. It will then consider three particular roles which citizenship education can play in schools. Particular reference will be made to the ‘National Curriculum for Citizenship’ in England; a new statutory subject, the nature of which has been shaped by this current reassessment of the role and purposes of citizenship education. In conclusion, a key argument will be made that citizenship education should play a major role in schools, the nature of which should be to transform society through the development of particular learning and participatory experiences which promote higher levels of thinking and rational participation in civic life.

**Citizenship education’s link to the aims of education**

Before considering the role which citizenship education should perform in schools, it is necessary to locate the aims within broader, general aims of education. Whilst there may be a lack of universal agreement as to these aims of education, measuring the aims of citizenship education against these benchmarks provides justification for citizenship education’s existence in any school’s curriculum.

Lawton (1983) argues that a key aim of education is ‘making available to the next generation what we regard as the most important aspects of culture’. Lawton defines culture as divisible into eight sub-systems, which will ‘interact and influence each other’. Citizenship education, being concerned with the nature and form of human interaction in a contemporary context, certainly contributes to the development of pupils’ understanding of at least four of Lawton’s key systems including the ‘social
structure/system’, the ‘economic system’, the ‘rationality system’ and ‘morality system’. Indeed, citizenship education will develop understandings of elements of the ‘communication’ and ‘belief’ system too. Citizenship education provides coherence to pupils’ understanding of these systems, the knowledge having already been developed throughout the rest of the curriculum.

Whilst Lawton sought to define education’s role in developing knowledge and understanding of the societal systems, White claims that the possession of such knowledge is not enough:

> The educated man...care[s] about his own well being in the extended sense which includes him living a morally virtuous life, this latter containing a civic dimension...The educated man [will have the] ability to detach himself from narrow ends and to enter imaginatively into others’ points of view.’

(White, 1982)

Woff (1991) has additionally suggested ‘The morally educated person...has reached her position on moral and political matters...with an awareness of alternative values and ideals’. Effective citizenship education programmes in schools, dealing with a range of moral issues and facilitating understanding of a plurality of ideas will, again, give greater coherence to developing such an aim of education. The ‘National Curriculum for Citizenship’ in England (QCA, 1999a) reveals an attempt to create the types of educated people espoused by White and Woff. It includes the requirement that ‘Pupils should be taught to...use their imagination to consider other people’s experiences and...explain views that are not their own’ alongside participating responsibly in school and community based activities.
As mentioned, worldwide and domestic challenges have created demands for educational reform. Torres (1998) has identified the key issues of citizenship, democracy and multiculturalism at the heart of this debate. A consideration of the aims of English ‘National Curriculum’ (QCA 1999b) reveal the growing importance ascribed to the development of citizens equipped to meet future challenges and a clear link to citizenship education:

The school curriculum should contribute to the development of pupils’ sense of identity through knowledge and understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural heritages of Britain’s diverse society and of the local, national, European, Commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives...The school curriculum should pass on enduring values, develop pupils integrity and autonomy and help them to be responsible and caring citizens capable of contributing to a just society...it should promote equal opportunities and enable pupils to challenge discrimination and stereotyping. (QCA, 1999b)

Also mentioned is the need to foster a ‘commitment to sustainable development’ and for pupils to ‘understand their responsibilities and rights’. The citizenship dimension of these aims is so explicit they could have, in fact, have been adapted as the aims of any national curriculum for citizenship.

Citizenship education rightly deserves a place in the school curriculum as a basis for the curriculum and as a subject which can give coherence to citizenship understandings reached across children’s school experience. Citizenship ramifications will always exist for any subject taken at school, any course studied, any career pursued. However, despite this fact, across the countries surveyed in the IEA study (Torney-Purta et al., 1999, 2001), citizenship education is perceived to have ‘a low status within schools’ despite being regarded as the central purpose of education (Davies, 2003). As Torney-Purta revealed, ‘Civic goals are thought of as important, but
much less critical than goals in subject areas such as science’ (Torney-Purta, 1999). Part of the problem for citizenship education traditionally has been the fact that it does not tend to sit comfortably amongst other subjects which are ‘...located within an overall standards, assessment and qualifications framework intended to raise educational outcomes’ (Gamarnikow and Green, 2000).

**Approaches and roles of citizenship education programmes in schools**

If one accepts that citizenship education must have a role in schools, with its role rooted in the aims of education, its purpose needs to be explicitly shared with pupils and understood as the basis of the whole curriculum by teachers and curriculum planners. Arguably, it also requires the coherence that a discrete lesson or an integrated programme can offer. The IRCAF (1996) and IEA(1999,2001) projects have identified wide ranging approaches to delivering citizenship education across twenty-one countries. Whilst the names, nature and form of these approaches differ, so do the different roles ascribed to such programmes, rooted as they are in the unique political and historical contexts of these countries (Torney-Purta, 1999; Heater 2004).

 Whilst it is clear that differences exist, it is worth focusing on the commonalities of approach across different countries. Print and Coleman (2003) identified three sets of learning which citizenship education delivers. The first relates to knowledge of democratic processes, institutions, the law, national identity and political heritage. The
second relates to the development of skills such as active citizenship, critical reflection and enquiry. The third relates to values education which ‘underpin democratic citizenship and social society’ such as social justice, intercultural education and ecological sustainability.

The depth to which a citizenship education programme emphasises one set over another will depend upon a variety of different factors or ‘frames’ as Kerr (2000, 2003) has made reference to. Firstly, countries with ‘values neutral’ approaches to education may find difficulty in defining the aims of citizenship education than their ‘values explicit’ counterparts. Secondly, Kerr states that countries with ‘minimal’ interpretations of citizenship education will tend to focus on the transmission of knowledge, whilst those with ‘maximal’ approaches also encourage investigation and critical engagement with citizenship themes.

A third frame, linked closely to the second, is whether countries are educating about, through or for citizenship. This is a crucial issue as it raises key questions about the purposes of teaching citizenship in schools. Finally, based upon the IEA Octagon Model (Torney-Purta et al., 1999, 2001), are questions of where children engage with aspects of society and the impact of these on their personal development. It, therefore, looks beyond the role schools play in developing citizenship education.

The approach an individual state takes to teaching citizenship education in schools will be in large part based upon the role which they ascribed to such a programme. Heater (2004) argues that the education model which a state has chosen for its citizens, whether this be assimilation, marginalisation or pluralism, can provide answers to the
role which citizenship education performs in schools. Whilst this is undoubtedly the case, simply looking at these education models are not enough. Consideration needs to be made of the specific roles which citizenship education has performed in schools over time.

Wilkins (2000) argues that there are three broad roles which citizenship education performs in schools. The first is a ‘conforming’ approach. This traditionally taught right from wrong and the importance of duty to preserve ‘established order’, though a contemporary form is, arguably, found in the attempt to build ‘social capital’ through citizenship education programmes in schools. The second approach is ‘reforming’, an aim to ‘reform society’ through developing appropriate knowledge, understandings and skills in pupils, enabling them to play their part in civil society. This approach, as Wilkins suggests, is clearly evident in the ‘National Curriculum for Citizenship’ in England. The final approach is ‘transforming’; an approach which not only aims to provide pupils with the skills to ‘make a difference’, but to ‘empower individuals to change their material circumstances’.

The remainder of this article will consider these three key roles which citizenship education can perform in schools. Obviously, in education systems - either by choice or in reality - more than one of these roles may exist. It will be my contention, however, that citizenship education needs to be transforming in order to educate pupils effectively for citizenship.

A conformist role for citizenship education in schools
The role of citizenship education in schools as a mechanism to ensure conformity is one that has roots in ‘the traditionalist model of teaching right from wrong and respect for institutions in society’ (Wilkins, 2000). Specific values to be inculcated in pupils tend to be those that are accepted by the majority, or at least espoused by a significant minority with political power. As such, this approach has been associated with attempts to ensure the continued domination of power by certain elites alongside the preservation of a particular social order. Its end result creates the ‘passive citizen -[trained] for conformity and obedience’ (Lawton, 2000). The approach can also be associated with ‘paleoconservative’ citizenship education which would ‘at best...encourage dispositions like respect, responsibility and self-discipline; at worst, submission and docility’ (Arthur and Davison, 2000).

Historically speaking, this particular role for citizenship education developed out of teaching approaches which ‘consisted of a set of objectivist values defined by religious, educational or political authority’ (Bottery, 2000). It also has key links to Heater’s ‘assimilation’ model for education. Courses in citizenship were developed in the US in order to ‘foster a sense of national identity, a patriotism and loyalty to the American Constitution amongst immigrants from a wide range of backgrounds’ (Heater, 1990, cited in Bottery, 2000).

It seems that such civic instruction as a key component of citizenship education has largely disappeared in the countries involved in the IEA study (Torney-Purta, 1999). However, the teaching of particular values still forms the basis of some countries’ approaches to citizenship education. Korean pupils, in the primary phase, study ‘A disciplined life and moral education’, where moral education is very much the main
component. In Singapore, compulsory civic and moral education are taught through prescribed approaches and textbooks. Swedish schools have the responsibility for inculcating ‘particular values associated with citizenship education’, whilst German teachers are obliged by law to teach values. (Kerr, 2000).

These approaches emerge from educational systems which are ‘values-explicit’, but as Lawton (2000) has indicated, countries such as the UK have had their fair share of programmes which have aimed to teach particular values and moral instruction. Indeed, as Wilkins (2000) argues ‘The history of state education in the UK clearly indicates the importance of schooling as a means of fostering ‘appropriate’ values and practices amongst citizens’. Independent schools traditionally prepared their pupils for their social role and leadership whilst poor students in state schools would be taught practical skills and ‘a sense of duty and obedience’.

There are few advocates in education for a conforming role for citizenship in schools in this current age. Policy makers and educators are well aware that any attempt to simply ‘instruct’ or simply ‘imbue’ students with particular values will be doomed to failure, particularly with the variety of alternative values which young people are now exposed to through the media. However, arguably a new variant on the conforming approach can be found in education policy designed to engineer ‘social capital’.

The desire to build social capital comes from a perception that social cohesion has been undermined by either the socio-economic changes of the last thirty years or by the permissive and liberal approaches to policy throughout the western world over the same period. The disappearance of extended families, traditional communities and
civic participation have created the conditions where crime and social exclusion have increased, whilst respect for authority and institutions have diminished. Such concerns surrounding the absence of social capital have influenced political thinking and policies across political spectrums. In itself, building social capital has been seen as a role of citizenship education in schools. As Gamarnikow and Green (2000) have shown, there is a crucial link between the desire to build social capital and the introduction of citizenship education into the ‘National Curriculum’ in England:

the chief objective behind this new curriculum subject is to enhance the civic and political development of young people in a social and political context where fears about young people’s alienation from Britain’s democratic institutions and processes are growing...Citizenship education is therefore a key element of the wider policy concerns of New Labour to combat social fragmentation and exclusion

Many may argue that building social capital is a reformist approach to citizenship education. It is true that this approach could lead to a genuine improvement in, at least, the involvement of young people in their communities. Nevertheless, there are two key issues which arguably place this approach in a conformist mould. Firstly, it emerges from a ‘deficit’ model, suggesting that something is wrong in society and must be corrected. Close examination of the Crick report (QCA, 1998) reveals such concerns. It, therefore, leads to attempts to either develop particular forms of values or a new form of benign civic instruction to remedy these failings which may be rooted in past ‘glory days’ when sections of community were, at least, more closely bonded. Secondly, it still requires elements of conformity. For example, social capital concerns
will lead to educating pupils in absolutes such as respecting and obeying law. Yet, such concepts can, themselves be challenged in particular contexts; the case of apartheid South Africa and the role of terrorism in ending minority rule there being a case in point.

Print and Coleman (2003) have argued that the role which citizenship education can actually play in building social capital is much less than has been stated. More importantly, if social capital concerns are the key reason for introducing citizenship education (as is arguably the case in the UK), then any failure of programmes to contribute significantly to building social capital will lead to criticism of schools, ignoring the other skills pupils may have acquired. The lack of social capital in societies itself creates problems for teachers engaged in educating for citizenship when concepts such as community or society seem abstract for many students. In general, whether it exists to instruct citizens, inculcate specific values or build social capital, the assertion that a *conformist* role for citizenship education can lead to effective education for citizenship must be seriously questioned.

**A reforming role for citizenship education in schools**

We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country both nationally and locally: for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence on public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting…and to make them individually confident in finding new forms of involvement and action among themselves. (QCA, 1998)

This statement, from the Crick Report in the UK, can be used as a summary of *reformist* approaches to teaching citizenship education in schools. A *reforming* model ‘is more
analytical; not content with teaching uncritical respect, but recognizes conflict and ambiguity in society’ (Wilkins, 2000). Broadly speaking, a reforming role for citizenship education in schools equips pupils with the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to play an active and participative role in society. It enables pupils to critically assess their own relationships with other members of society and to challenge discrimination and inequality wherever it resides. In this approach, pluralism in society is celebrated, alongside a diversity of ideas, values and concepts. It seeks to incorporate those who may currently feel outside ‘citizenship’ at present.

Reforming approaches to citizenship education emerge from a variety of considerations. These include the need to develop political literacy in pupils, equip pupils to deal with their role as global citizens, a human rights agenda and approaches which promote inclusion and challenge racism and prejudice. Furthermore, as with building social capital, a reformist approach could be part of a broader government project of constitutional reform. Indeed, Crick (2000) and Lockyer (2003) argue this was a key factor in the introduction of citizenship education to the ‘National Curriculum’ in England.

All reformists are concerned with the growth in voter apathy and, in particular, the development of a ‘democratic deficit’ between young people and political participation. An increasing number of citizens aged 18-34 are failing to vote in elections (Kerr 2003). Not surprisingly, education systems and, in particular citizenship education, have come under close scrutiny with respect to their role in educating pupils in political participation in democratic processes. Betty Boothroyd, former Speaker of the House of Commons, spoke of her increasing concern “…that Citizenship
as a subject appeared to be diminishing in importance and impact in schools...with unfortunate consequences for our democratic processes’ (Boothroyd, 1998).

Reformists claim that education for political literacy and participation will help to deal with this growing democratic deficit. As Kerr (2000) states, ‘Research shows that students who take citizenship/civics courses in schools are more knowledgeable about political life...and therefore more likely to participate in the future’. In the UK as early as 1969, Crick wrote that political education should be taught ‘both in its own right and in the public interest’ (cited in Lawton, 2000). The necessity to politically educate pupils is brought into even sharper focus by Gundara (2000)

Politically undereducated or ill-educated members of society are dangerous because they can misrepresent the complexity of humanity and opt for simplistic solutions based on populist politics, often encouraging authoritarian and undemocratic solutions to complex societal issues.

Such political literacy must facilitate education for citizenship. Didactic politics teaching, focussed on systems and institutions, are unlikely to engage pupils. It could even develop greater apathy. Denver (1998) warns that compulsory political education may lead to the same disinterest compulsory religious education has suffered over the years.

Reformists claim that citizenship education which facilitates participation within school, the community or beyond will ensure pupils understand politics and civic responsibility in action. As Harland (2000) states, ‘We need to foster attitude, motivation and a willingness to participate even more than specific knowledge about current political arrangements’. The development of skills and dispositions appropriate
to a life of active citizenship should be complemented by actual involvement in decisions which affect their lives, starting with the school context. Skinner and McCollum (2003) argue for pupils’ involvement in school policy development, ensuring ownership by all affected by such policies. Osler (2000) has also highlighted Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989): ‘The right to participate extends to children’s time at school and the Convention also requires that children have equality of access to participation rights within the school and community’.

Increasingly, students are becoming more actively involved in decision making and citizenship endeavours. The ‘National Curriculum for Citizenship’ in England at Key Stages 3 and 4 has a statutory requirement that students are taught to ‘negotiate, decide and take part responsibly in...school and community based activities’ (QCA, 1999). Swedish schools are required to use ‘democratic working methods with teachers and students deciding the learning goals in each subject’, whilst in Spain many school councils are empowered to share responsibility for curriculum plans, finances and behaviour (Kerr, 2000). Using these examples, reformists argue that the role of citizenship education in schools will include facilitating students’ involvement in decision making, starting with their active participation in schools.

*Reformists* see a role for citizenship education in schools in engaging communities who may feel outside the mass of the citizenry, through prejudice, discrimination or insufficient opportunities to access democratic processes. Citizenship education can provide an opportunity to improve relationships between ‘permanent minorities and majorities’ through approaches which ‘develop integrative mentalities based on concepts of differences and multiple identities’ (Gundara, 2000). Furthermore,
Gundara claims citizenship education, providing it values essential differences between cultural groups, can develop effective interactive relationships between them, and ‘nurture notions of the citizenship rights of both’.

Critical of the absence of anti-racist education in the citizenship curriculum in England, Osler (2000a) argues that an effective programme for democratic citizenship needs to ‘develop a new concept of multiculturalism which is itself founded on human rights and which is inclusive of all citizens’. This could alleviate potential tensions for citizenship education in faith schools, particularly where certain religious and citizenship values may differ (Lockyer 2003).

A fourth reforming consideration of the role of citizenship education in schools is facilitating an appreciation for human rights in local, national and international contexts. This is seen as a vital component for global citizenship education, which itself developed as a reaction to the horrors of the 20th Century and the challenges of poverty and environmental damage (Heater, 2004). The United Nations and the European Union have played an important role in promoting education for human rights and global citizenship. As a result of the ‘UN Decade for Human Rights Education’ (1995-2004), a plan of action has been developed for expanding human rights education through both school and community based programmes. The European Union’s Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) has been influential in formulating a goal which encourages the development of ‘autonomous, critical, participatory and responsible citizens’ who respect the principles of ‘democracy, human rights, peace, freedom and equality’ in a national and international context (Smith and Print, 2003).
A fifth reforming role for citizenship education in schools emerges from the desire to prepare pupils for the challenges of the global economy and the revolution in information and communications technology. Globalisation has many challenges; at best, it brings world communities closer together and promotes interdependence; at worst, it runs the risk of developing monoculture and the control of the world economy by multinational corporations. There is obviously considerable merit in teaching pupils about how economies are interrelated, how economic decisions impact upon the environment and the changing nature of work. However, this could run the risk of developing a ‘libertarian’ approach to citizenship education, in which pupils are simply educated to operate and succeed successfully within the capitalist system. This may encourage virtues not associated with ‘responsible’ citizenship (Arthur and Davison, 2000).

A transforming role for citizenship education in schools

A transforming role of citizenship education in schools will share many similarities with the reforming agenda. The development of valuable skills and dispositions, which will prepare pupils for active participation in civic society through teaching approaches which facilitate education for citizenship, would continue to be present. However, the key aim of this approach will focus on empowering pupils to change society. Teachers will enable and actively encourage pupils to do this, both through learning approaches and the content of citizenship education programmes. ‘It makes’, as Wilkins (2000) explains, ‘explicit the political context of schooling which remains at the implicit level in the reforming model’.
There are important differences between the two approaches. A *reforming* role for citizenship education is based around the idea that pupils need to be taught vital knowledge, skills and dispositions both because it is good for them and good for society. However, simply learning particular aspects of knowledge or acquiring relevant skills for civic participation may be of little interest for young people; this is particularly true when certain young people simply do not accept that certain concepts are ever realisable or, indeed, exist in contemporary society.

Take, for example, ‘the rule of law’. Many pupils, in discussions, are particularly adept at identifying circumstances in which ‘the rule of law’ is not universally applied either at home or internationally (the US led war in Iraq as a case in point). They are rightfully critical when they are being asked to internalise certain values or dispositions which key figures in society do not abide by. As such, despite this conflict between theory and reality, some pupils may decide the concept is still with merit and is worth internalising. Other pupils may simply be passive towards these or even reject such ideas. The same may be said for teaching the skills of participation. Students may become involved actively at school, or in particular citizenship pursuits, but frustration and apathy may develop when their ideas are not realised or their participation not appreciated. Other students may quickly identify that many of these pursuits are tokenistic and have little relevance to the world outside, except for being a particular aspect to mention on a CV.

Pupils need to feel excited about particular subjects, or at least feel that there is some worth in studying subjects. Citizenship education can obviously be engaging, relevant
and worthwhile, but it has to compete with other subjects which are traditionally perceived as having more worth for their immediate futures. A reforming model may well develop important skills and knowledge in pupils, but there is a tangible risk that these will not transfer to the actions and attitudes of young people once they leave school. A transforming model, on the other hand, could develop a disposition in pupils which would allow them to challenge everything. It, therefore, removes the ceilings of the subject by allowing challenges to existing values, political and economic structures and assumptions in society, to one in which the very nature of such a development can be challenged. As Arthur and Davison (2000) state:

It is not sufficient to inform pupils about how parliament works, legal rights and so on. Such an approach to citizenship education is at the passive end of the continuum... the discourse of citizenship education itself needs to be made visible to pupils so that they can critique its underpinning social values and beliefs in order that they may become active transformed citizens.

From a starting point that everything can be challenged, this approach could allow pupils to develop higher levels of thinking which would allow students to challenge their own perceptions and allow them to arrive at new understandings and dispositions. This would require the development of appropriate teaching and learning strategies in order to nurture such thinking and dispositions. As Davies (2003) suggests:

We need to consider a coherent conceptual meaning of citizenship education in a way that breaks down the barriers between knowledge, skills and understanding, and allows students to focus on the process of being a citizen. We need to employ an appropriate and targeted set of pedagogical strategies which encourage young people to enjoy the conceptual engagement that relates to key processes. We should ensure that students may participate in a range of contexts, including those that go beyond the local, regional and national
Such an approach would also foster a sense of empowerment which would have other socially transformative effects, empowering ‘students and educators to challenge social injustice and inequitable and wasteful economic relations which are often harmful to the ecology of the planet’ (Lynch, 1992).

Politically, a transforming role for citizenship education in schools may be far too controversial as an explicit aim of element of the curriculum. There is a big difference between the role of subject being to reform society and a role being to transform society. However, it is my contention that unless citizenship education enables pupils to think of themselves as having the capacity to transform society, and equips them with ways of thinking and approaches which facilitate this, it may fail to develop citizens in the way in which even the reformists may wish to see.

**Conclusion**

Citizenship education provides a vital role in schools, not only in helping to reveal broad aims of education but in the development of pupils into citizens. Citizenship education must exist in schools, not only to prepare pupils for their future lives as members of many communities, but also because states have an obligation to their citizenry to provide individuals with the necessary skills and dispositions to play their part in society.

Citizenship education in schools should exist to ensure that pupils understand the part they play in societies, whether through obligation, respecting others, appreciating diversity or having the capacity to understand, demonstrate or challenge existing
values, concepts and socio-political states of nature. However, effective education for citizenship can only happen when school children are encouraged to think of citizenship education as a device for transforming society. A conforming role for citizenship education requires students to buy into a view of society and a set of values and dispositions which they simply may not understand or wish to acquiesce to. A reforming role, on the other hand, equips them with skills which allow them to participate more effectively in civil life, but may leave open the chance that this will be of little relevance to their own lives; as such creating a new generation of citizens who are more knowledgeable and skilled, but who may continue to remain mostly passive.

A transforming role for citizenship education in schools, taught through particular teaching approaches which develop higher levels of thinking in citizenship, could create engaged citizens who are ready for the challenges of the twenty-first century and equipped to play their part in shaping their own personal and societal destinies. If such an approach is to succeed, however, such transformation must begin in schools, where pupils are given appropriate and tangible opportunities to shape policy and practice, developing a democratic model which pupils could learn from. Effective education for citizenship, whatever the chosen approach for the subject, must begin in the micro-cosmic societies within which young people spend a vast majority of their time.

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