University of Reading, Institute of Education and the Citizenship Foundation –
written evidence (CCE0222)

Summary

Introduction, Experience and Expertise

David Kerr is leading expert on Citizenship education and civic engagement with unique experience in terms of policy, research and practice. He is Consultant Director of Education at the Citizenship Foundation in London and Head of Initial Teacher Training at the University of Reading. David was Professional Officer to the Citizenship Advisory Group chaired by Professor (Sir) Bernard Crick. He was seconded to Department for Education (DfE) and QCA in London in support of the citizenship education initiative in England.

He was Chair of the PISA advisory group developing a framework and test on Global Competence for PISA2018. He has led major research studies in citizenship education at national, European and international level. He was Associate Research Director for the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) with responsibility for the study's European module and for the EU study of Participatory Citizenship in Europe. He directed the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) in England and co-directed the ESRC funded Citizens in Transition (CIT) study.

He has worked closely with the Council of Europe since 1999 on its Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education project (EDC/HRE) and is currently the EDC/HRE National Co-ordinator for the United Kingdom (UK). He is also an ACT Council member.

Recommendations

The meaning and purpose of Citizenship and Civic Engagement in the 21st Century

Q1 What does citizenship and civic engagement mean in the 21st Century? Why does it matter, and how does it relate to questions of identity?
Q5 What should be the role of education in teaching and encouraging good citizenship?

1. The meaning and purpose of Citizenship and civic engagement in the 21st Century must be clearly defined and understood across society. Above all, it must proactively set out to empower all people, and particularly young people, to learn, live and work with confidence in a rapidly changing world.

2. The definition and understanding of Citizenship and civic engagement must recognise the reality of the central challenge facing all societies of how to educate people in democratic contexts which are very different from what has come before. It must take note of and contribute to international efforts to collectively address this challenge.

3. All political parties, including the Government, must collectively agree on the meaning and purpose of Citizenship education and civic engagement. They must recognise the central role of education and curriculum in helping young people understand why civic engagement matters and how they can participate actively, responsibly and confidently.
4. The meaning and purpose of Citizenship education and civic engagement will need to be constantly reviewed and updated if it is to remain relevant to the needs of people in a fast-paced, intercultural, interconnected and interdependent world. It must prepare people with the requisite capabilities for engagement both in the UK and beyond.

Strengthening Citizenship and Civic Engagement

Q2. Are there ways of strengthening people’s identity as citizens, whether they are citizens by birth or naturalisation? Could citizenship ceremonies or events throughout the educational process play a role?

Q4. Do current laws encourage active political engagement? What are your views on changes to the franchise for national or local elections, including lowering the voting age? Should changes be made to the voting process or the voting registration process?

5. The deficit model of citizenship and civic engagement in the UK needs to be urgently addressed by the Government with recognition of the crucial role that education can play in repairing this deficit.

6. The Government should ensure that young people understand their legal rights and responsibilities through the distribution of Young People’s Passport and have opportunities to record and publicly celebrate their civic engagement in relation to learning, living and working in society through a Citizenship Record of Engagement.

7. Consideration should be given to setting up a Commission to revisit lowering voting age from 18 to 16, through a gradual approach that would allow 16 year olds to vote in local and devolved elections in the first instance.

Educating for Citizenship

Q5 What should be the role of education in teaching and encouraging good citizenship? At what stages? How effective is current teaching? Do the curriculum and the qualifications that are currently offered need amending?

Q8 What are the values that all of us who live in Britain should share and support? How can these values be strengthened?

8. The Government and public authorities should recognise that building a lasting culture of Citizenship and civic engagement must be founded on a strong foundation of effective Citizenship education and that this must be a key goal and aim for education and curriculum.

9. DfE must encourage all education institutions to consider what their civic mission is and how they educate young people to understand and actively participate in realising it.

10. DfE must urgently replace the current Citizenship National Curriculum with one that is fit for purpose for the 21st Century. The design of the new curriculum should be overseen by a new Citizenship Advisory Group representing all relevant groups in society.
11. DfE should consider placing the education of young people to address controversial issues at the heart of the new education for citizenship at curriculum and whole-school level.

12. There is an urgent need to rebuild a robust evidence base on the state of Citizenship education and to continue to contribute to and learn from education and Citizenship best practice in other countries in Europe and internationally in order to remain relevant and effective.

A Joined up Approach to Citizenship and Civic Engagement

Q7 How can society support civic engagement? What responsibility should central government, devolved and local governments, third sector organisations and the individual have for encouraging civic engagement? What can the Government and Parliament do to support civil society initiatives and increase civic engagement?

13. Government needs to be seen to be valuing and promoting Citizenship education and civic engagement across Government and society. A Minister and a Senior Civil servant should be given the remit to develop coherent policy and positive communication for Citizenship education and civic engagement and coordinate with other government departments and local and devolved governments working on citizenship policy.

14. Government and political parties must ensure that the promotion of Citizenship and civic engagement is built on cross-party support and consensus to prevent it falling prey to the whims and ideologies of particular Ministers and political parties.

15. The DfE should follow up the Crick Report recommendation for the setting up of a Standing Commission on Citizenship education and civic engagement in order to monitor its progress and make recommendations for continued improvements going forward.

For further information about this submission, please contact David Kerr
1. Introduction, Experience and Expertise

1.1 This submission is from David Kerr in a professional capacity. It is based on my relevant experience in the field of Citizenship and Civic Engagement and unique expertise developed in linking policy, research and practice in the UK, as well at European and international level. I was closely involved in the introduction of Citizenship as a statutory subject in the National Curriculum in England in 2002 and have continued to monitor and assess its progress from that point as well as that of Citizenship education and civic engagement developments across the globe.

1.2 In terms of policy expertise, I was Principal Officer to the Citizenship Advisory Group, chaired by Professor, Sir Bernard Crick. I brought evidence of Citizenship and civic engagement developments in other countries for consideration by the Crick Group. Alongside Bernard, I coordinated the writing of the Group’s Final Report, particularly the sections on how the new Citizenship curriculum should be delivered in schools. I was then seconded to the Department for Education (DfE) from 1999 to 2006 to help to turn the vision for statutory Citizenship in schools into a reality through the creation of a network of support. This included the setting up of the professional subject association (Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)), creation of the new one-year ITT PGCE Citizenship course, development of new Citizenship GCSE and A level qualification and engagement with government agencies such as Ofsted and QCDA. I was also involved in liaising between DfE and other Government Departments that delivered aspects of Citizenship and civic engagement policy such as the Ministry for Justice, Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government and Foreign Office.

1.2 In terms of research expertise, I was Research Director at NFER of the DfE commissioned Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) from 2001 to 2010. This was a ground-breaking study that evaluated the progress and effectiveness of the new statutory Citizenship subject in schools in England. I also co-directed the follow-up ESRC study that followed that cohort as they moved from schools into adulthood. I was also Research Director for England’s participation in the large IEA comparative study on civic and citizenship education – CIVED – from 1996 to 1999 and became Research Director from 2006 to 2009, with responsibility for the European module, of the follow-up 2009 IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study, in which England also participated. I have also directed research studies for the Council of Europe and European Commission on active citizenship and liaised with Eurydice on surveys of citizenship education across European countries.

1.3 In terms of practice expertise, I was the subject lead for the first ITT PGCE Citizenship programmes at University College London and the University of Bristol and am currently Head of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) at the University of Reading. I was a Trustee of ACT and the Citizenship Foundation (CF) and am currently a member of the ACT Teaching Council, Consultant Director of Education at CF and Deputy Chair of the Citizenship Subject Expert Group. I am also the UK coordinator for the Council of Europe large-scale Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Project (EDC/HRE) and have helped to develop Citizenship education practice and policies in a number of countries including Turkey, Chile, Colombia, Norway, Sweden and Hungary.
I was Chair of the Expert Group that has helped to develop the new Global Competency framework for OECD as part of PISA 2018.

1.4 I have contributed to the submissions to the Select Committee from the Citizenship Foundation and ACT. However, I believe that my unique experience and expertise built up in relation to research, policy and practice in Citizenship education and civic engagement, in the UK and more widely, puts me a strong position to offer further insights and recommendations in relation to a number of the Committee’s questions. My evidence addresses parts of questions 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 and all of question 5. I am particularly keen to ensure that policy, research and practice remain connected in relation to Citizenship and civic engagement both in education and across Government, and that the UK continues to contribute to and learn from developments in Europe and internationally. This connectivity is vital if Citizenship education and civic engagement is to remain relevant for the challenges of modern society and fit for purpose, particularly for our young people. I would be happy to give oral evidence to the Committee in support of my insights and recommendations.

2. The meaning and purpose of Citizenship and Civic Engagement in the 21st Century

Q1 What does citizenship and civic engagement mean in the 21st Century? Why does it matter, and how does it relate to questions of identity?

Q5 What should be the role of education in teaching and encouraging good citizenship?

2.1 The Crick Report in 1998 recommended ‘that citizenship and the teaching of democracy is so important both for schools and the life of the nation that there must be a statutory requirement on schools to ensure that is it part of the entitlement of all pupils’. This was based on a concern that approaches at the time were uncoordinated and inadequate for ‘animating the idea of a common citizenship with democratic values’. The Report further cited the words of warning of the then Lord Chancellor concerning democratic society in the UK: ‘We should not, must not, dare not, be complacent about the health and future of British democracy. Unless we become a nation of engaged citizens, our democracy is not secure.’1 Almost 20 years later, sadly, similar warnings and concerns ring true. This is, in part, because the actions taken by the Government in addressing the Crick Report have not proved ‘lasting and effective’ as the Group hoped. It is also because the challenges faced in defining what citizenship and civic engagement means in the 21st Century have become more complex, wide-ranging and fast moving.

2.2 The root cause of the challenge of defining what Citizenship and civic engagement now mean and why it matters is the rapid pace of change in 21st society and the wide-ranging, fast moving, irreversible impacts that is bringing to societies. Governments and cross-national agencies across the world are struggling with the question of how to educate people for Citizenship and civic engagement in democratic contexts that are very different from what have come before, in terms of aims, purposes and approaches. There is no full scale answer to this question as yet. However, what is clear from emerging thinking is that the answer will involve encompassing new capacities and approaches that emerge from a number of common trends and needs. These include

1 See https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/sites/teachingcitizenship.org.uk/files/6123_crick_report_1998_0.pdf
recognising and addressing that the meaning and purpose of Citizenship and civic engagement must:

- Emphasise a strong global dimension alongside national and regional (e.g. European) dimensions;
- Contain changed conceptions of identity that accept the notion of people having multiple identities – often termed ‘cosmopolitan citizenship’ – that range from the local to the global;
- Accept the complexity and cultural diversity of society brought about by the growing movement of peoples within and across countries and continents:
- Recognise the growing power and reach of automation and of information and communication technologies (ICTs):
- Recognise the potential for division, conflict, controversy, violence and non-democratic attitudes and actions to develop and spread;
- Promote the importance of and need for people to interact respectfully with others within and across communities and borders;
- Promote the importance of dissolving tensions and (re)building social capital and community cohesion as a defence against the negative impacts of change;
- Encourage the development among people, particularly young people, of open and flexible attitudes and values that aim to unite and bond a common citizenship across communities, countries and continents;
- Inculcate the need for quick and constant creative, collaborative and ethical decision-making and actions if society is to prosper in the face of the challenges to 21st society and democracy.

What is abundantly clear from this context and emerging thinking is that:

- The meaning of Citizenship and civic engagement in the 21st century is more complex and challenging than at any time in society
- Getting the meaning right – in terms of definition, tone, aims and approaches – will be critical for the future survival of democracy and democratic society in the UK and across the world
- The meaning will need to be constantly reviewed and updated in order to be both reactive and proactive in the face of rapidly changing societal contexts
- There will be a need to develop globally competent citizens who can actively engage for the good of humanity
- Education and curriculum will have a crucial role to play in meeting these challenges for current and future generations of young people
- The contribution of education and curriculum will need to be comprehensive across all sectors, ages and parts of society, interdisciplinary across all subjects and responsive to current and future developments in society.

2.3 The work that I have been leading with OECD and PISA 2018 in drawing up a definition of and framework for Global Competence is a step in the right direction. It is helping to proactively address the question of how education and society can rise to the challenge of educating for citizenship and civic engagement in the 21st Century. The definition of Global Competence proposed by OECD for PISA 2018 is instructive and worthy of consideration in terms of its implications for the meaning of citizenship and civic engagement in the UK in the 21st Century and
the role of education and the curriculum in educating for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in and beyond schools.¹

Global competence is the capacity to analyse global and intercultural issues critically and from multiple perspectives, to understand how differences affect perceptions, judgments, and ideas of self and others, and to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with others from different backgrounds on the basis of a shared respect for human dignity. (OECD, 2016)

2.4 I fully support the ACT and CF submissions that if we want a vibrant and healthy democracy where every citizen feels their voice matters and they can play an active part in democratic decision-making and public life, then every young person must have access to an entitlement to high-quality Citizenship education. Citizenship education cannot be left to chance. The Government and all political parties have a collective duty to prepare people to properly understand and participate actively and responsibly within it. However, I would add that the meaning, conception and approach to such Citizenship education and citizen participation must take account of the realities, emerging thinking and responses that I have outlined above. Without this it is doomed to be ineffectual, short-term and out of step with global developments. In 21st Century society we have to prepare all our young people for the realities and possibilities arising from learning, living and working in a fast-paced, intercultural, interconnected and interdependent world. To do otherwise will be to fail in our duty to educate them properly, leave them unprepared and vulnerable and further threaten the security of democracy in the UK. Addressing citizenship and civic engagement is even more important now than it was in 1998 when the Crick Report was published. There is still time to take action that is ‘lasting and effective’ as Professor, Sir Bernard Crick put it but we must act quickly, purposefully and collectively.

Recommendations:

1. The meaning and purpose of Citizenship and civic engagement in the 21st Century must be clearly defined and understood across society. Above all, it must proactively set out to empower all people, and particularly young people, to learn, live and work with confidence in a rapidly changing world.

2. The definition and understanding of Citizenship and civic engagement must recognise the reality of the central challenge facing all societies of how to educate people in democratic contexts which are very different from what has come before. It must take note of and contribute to international efforts to collectively address this challenge.

3. All political parties, including the Government, must collectively agree on the meaning and purpose of Citizenship education and civic engagement. They must recognise the central role of education and curriculum in helping young people understand why civic engagement matters and how they can participate actively, responsibly and confidently.

4. The meaning and purpose of Citizenship education and civic engagement will need to be constantly reviewed and updated if it is to remain relevant to the needs of people in a

fast-paced, intercultural, interconnected and interdependent world. It must prepare people with the requisite capabilities for engagement both in the UK and also beyond.

3. Strengthening Citizenship and Civic Engagement

Q2. Are there ways of strengthening people’s identity as citizens, whether they are citizens by birth or naturalisation? Could citizenship ceremonies or events throughout the educational process play a role?

Q4. Do current laws encourage active political engagement? What are your views on changes to the franchise for national or local elections, including lowering the voting age? Should changes be made to the voting process or the voting registration process?

3.1 The identity of people in the UK as citizens is currently almost non-existent beyond holding a passport by citizens of birth and possibly taking part in Citizenship ceremonies to celebrate citizenship through naturalisation. Beyond this there is little that formally and proactively makes people feel that they are citizens of the UK united by common membership and bonds of belonging. This deficit model of citizenship and civic engagement needs to be urgently and centrally addressed by Government if people are to understand what citizenship and civic engagement means in the UK and why their participation matters. There is a crucial role for education of citizens for citizenship and for this to be a critical part of the educational process. The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) which I directed found that attitudes to citizenship and civic engagement are formed by young people by the time they are adolescents (age 14 to 16) and that these inform their actions and level of participation as they move into adulthood. This underlines the key role of education and schools in this process. The submissions from the Citizenship Foundation and ACT make strong recommendations in this respect. I would like to add to these by drawing attention to the need, as part of this educational process, for the provision of up-to-date information for citizens, particularly young people, in the UK concerning how the political, legal, social and economic system in the nation works. This should include balanced information on the key issues facing society such as Brexit and devolved government, in order to provide young people with strong foundations on which to base their participation and engagement. Alongside this there needs to be careful consideration given as to how the key milestones and experiences in being a UK citizen can be publicly identified, recorded and celebrated.

3.2 In terms of up-to-date information for citizens on how the UK system two initiatives from the Citizenship Foundation are worthy of consideration as exemplars of what it required in a more consistent and systematic form. The first is the Young Citizens Passport, which is in its 16th edition, and provides a succinct and accessible overall guide to young citizens’ legal rights and responsibilities. The YCP has previously been distributed to generations of young people for free via DfE and the Home Office, though this is no longer the case. Such distribution would be a simple way of ensuring that all young people have instant access about their political, legal, social and economic rights and responsibilities. The second is the Brexit for Young People pack, which is an attempt to help young people decide what is important for them from the Brexit negotiations, so they can articulate these as citizens. This is an example of a balanced, practical resource which

3 See https://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/projects/cels/
sets out simply and clearly the key issues on a common topical issue. Such balanced knowledge and information is often difficult to find by citizens but is critical to underpin their responsible participation.

3.3 Alongside the production of knowledge guides that help people understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens is a need to agree on the key milestones that mark the development of active citizens over time and consider how these can be publicly recorded and celebrated. What I am calling for is the development of a Citizenship Record of Engagement (CRoE). This is an active on-line document which actively records and publicly celebrates at crucial milestones the citizenship experiences of young people and citizens as they learn, live and work in modern society. It could include learning experiences in school, acquiring a (new) passport, participation in voluntary activities such as National Citizen Service, participation in community activities, getting to the age of voting, being available for jury service, voting in elections etc. It would be a personal record that could be publicly celebrated at public ceremonies such as school assemblies, University graduation, and Citizenship ceremonies. Such a process would considerably raise the profile of being a UK citizen and would help to strengthen a sense of common membership, citizen efficacy (the sense that participation has an impact) and belonging.

3.4 Consideration should also be given to regular public education initiatives that encourage and provide opportunities for citizens to work together for the common good of communities and societies. The example of annual Citizen Action Days in Austria run by the Polis organisation provides an interesting model of such an approach.6 In Austria, each year, from May to June the Austrian Government encourages and funds a scheme for schools, civic organisations, public authorities and communities to work together, through Citizen Action Days, on projects at local and regional level that promote citizen engagement and participation and bring different generations together. These projects are then celebrated at regional and national level.

3.5 In terms of laws concerning active political engagement evidence and recent developments suggest that the time is ripe to review the current laws concerning the franchise and in particular revisit the question as to whether the voting age should be lowered from 18 to 16. Recent political engagement through the votes on Brexit, the General Election and the Scottish Referendum have underlined the huge appetite of young people and young voters (age 18 to 24) to understand and have a say on the key political issues of the day. This appetite is further fuelled when they are well-informed and feel that their voice matters and will make a difference. The Brexit vote may have had a different outcome if more 18 to 24 year olds had participated in the numbers that they did in the recent General Election. Furthermore, the granting of the vote to 16 year olds in the Scottish Referendum showed that young people could be trusted to use their vote sensibly and responsibly. It also energised the teaching and learning of Citizenship education in schools in helping young people to use their votes wisely. Developments in other countries should also be considered here in providing answers as to how citizens can feel more connected and engaged and how young people can be successfully inducted into the political process. The Nordic countries continue to lead the way in terms of democratic engagement in society, while Austria has successfully lowered the voting age to 16, firstly through local municipal elections and then to general elections and Serbia, Bosnia and Montenegro have permitted voting between the ages of 16 to 18. This gradual approach is one that should be considered in relation to the UK and UK

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5 See http://blog.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/downloads/who-has-the-power-to-brexit/
6 See http://www.politik-lernen.at/site/aktionstage
countries via local and devolved elections in the first instance. There is also scope to register voters when they are at school and when they enrol at university to increase voter registration numbers.

Recommendations:

5. The deficit model of citizenship and civic engagement in the UK needs to be urgently addressed by the Government with recognition of the crucial role that education can play in repairing this deficit.

6. The Government should ensure that young people understand their legal rights and responsibilities through the distribution of Young People’s Passport and have opportunities to record and publicly celebrate their civic engagement in relation to learning, living and working in society through a Citizenship Record of Engagement.

7. Consideration should be given to setting up a Commission to revisit lowering the voting age from 18 to 16, through a gradual approach that would allow 16 year olds to vote in local and devolved elections in the first instance.

4. Educating for Citizenship

Q5 What should be the role of education in teaching and encouraging good citizenship? At what stages? How effective is current teaching? Do the curriculum and the qualifications that are currently offered need amending?

Q8 What are the values that all of us who live in Britain should share and support? How can these values be strengthened?

4.1 A number of submissions, including those from the Citizenship Foundation and ACT, have presented evidence underpinning recommendations to recognise the critical role of effective education for citizenship in underpinning attempts to raise the profile and status of Citizenship and Civic Engagement in the UK. Effective education for citizenship provides the crucial foundations for building a culture of citizenship and civic engagement in the UK. I strongly support this assertion based on my experience and expertise in promoting Citizenship education in England and in other contexts. Education, particularly effective Citizenship education, is essential if teaching and encouraging good citizenship is to take root across society and reach all people, particularly young people. Building a common sense of Citizenship that encourages civic engagement should to be a key goal of education and an underpinning aim of the curriculum, including the National Curriculum. This goal and aim needs to be shared, understood and acted upon by all those working in education.

4.2 There is strong support for making Citizenship a compulsory statutory subject not just for 11 to 16 years olds (Key Stages 3 and 4) but also extending that statutory status for 7 to 11 year olds (Key Stage 2) and including it in post-16 education and training as young people get access to their adult citizenship roles and responsibilities. There is also a strong argument for including it in higher education. I believe that all education institutions – schools, colleges, universities – should consider what their civic mission is and how they seek to educate young people to understand and actively participate in realising this mission. This involves learning not just through
the curriculum but also contributing to the wider culture of the institution as well as connecting to
the communities associated with the institution, what have been defined as the 3 contexts or Cs
of effective citizenship education – curriculum, culture and community(ies).

4.3 Given the imperative to promote effective education for citizenship as an underpinning
foundation for Citizenship and Civic Engagement, it is clear to those involved with Citizenship
education that the current arrangements for and approaches to teaching and learning Citizenship
in schools are not fit for purpose. This includes the framing and content of the Citizenship National
Curriculum programmes of study, the nature of the Citizenship qualifications, the training
provided to teachers and senior managers in schools and the identification and evaluation of best
practice. Education for Citizenship in England, and much of the UK, is currently severely lacking in
all these aspects. Put simply the current arrangements are a severe impediment to making
progress. They cannot provide the breadth and depth of the education and teaching required to
meet the demands of preparing young people for Citizenship and Civic Engagement in the 21st
Century, as I set out in Section 1 of this submission. Rather there is a need for a fundamental
review of current approaches that takes account of the urgent need to prepare all young people
for the realities and challenges of Citizenship and Civic Engagement in modern society.

4.4 This situation has arisen as a result of a gradual breakdown in the political consensus that lay
behind Crick Report and the introduction of statutory Citizenship into schools in 2002. The Crick
Report had the support of all political parties, thereby ensuring that Citizenship and Civic
Engagement was viewed as a common political issue rather than a divisive party political issue.
Unfortunately this political consensus has been lost as education and the National Curriculum
have fallen prey to the influence and ideologies of particular political parties. The reforms of the
National Curriculum that were introduced in 2014 have proved particularly damaging for
education and Citizenship education in promoting the type of Citizenship and civic engagement
that is required for learning, living and working in the 21st Century.

4.5 The Citizenship National Curriculum, as with the rest of the National Curriculum, has been
reduced to a narrow list of knowledge, with a particular focus on the UK. Citizenship is now seen
as teaching young people a core canon of knowledge about UK political, legal and economic
institutions and policies and the importance of volunteering. Many aspects of the previous
curriculum have been removed or downgraded including: knowledge about the role of media and
ICTs, local democracy, Europe and the wider world and freedom of speech; an emphasis on
balancing knowledge and understanding with the acquisition of skills and attitudes; and
opportunities to engage in practical experiences of active citizenship and democratic participation
both in and beyond schools. The modern broader based Citizenship education that was
introduced, following Crick, in 2002 has been replaced with old-style, narrow civic education from
the 1950s and 1960s. This regressive development puts the UK out of step with developments in
many countries in Europe and beyond.

4.6 To compound matters, though Citizenship remains a National Curriculum subject this is in
name not substance. The Government promotion of the core subjects of Maths, English and
Science alongside History, Geography and languages as part of EBacc provision have made it clear
to school leaders, students and parents as to where priorities lie in the education system. The
result has been: a collapse in the status of Citizenship in schools; the downgrading of curriculum
time in many schools, with some not teaching it at all; the collapse in the numbers taking
Citizenship qualifications and the shrinking of the numbers choosing to train to teach the subject.
Though practice remains strong in many schools Citizenship can be classified as a subject in peril in many others, unless there is urgent action.

4.7 What is needed to reverse this sad decline is a return to the conditions that led to the setting up of the Crick Group in 1998. Then the concerns for Citizenship and civic engagement in society, and particularly among younger generations, were so severe that it sparked a desire among all political parties that action needed to be taken. I believe that we have to scrap the current approach to Citizenship education as it is largely unsalvageable in meeting what is needed from education to promote Citizenship and civic engagement. Rather what is required is a new Citizenship Advisory Group that represents all political parties as well as those in modern society who have a vested interest in educating young people for 21st Century democratic society and participation. This should include representatives from young people. The Group’s remit needs to be updated to address the fundamental question, as posited in Section 1, as to how to educate people for citizenship and civic engagement in democratic contexts that are very different from what have come before, in terms of aims, purposes and approaches. The Group’s deliberations must take account of emergent thinking and international efforts to answer this question. While Citizenship as a subject will be a key driver there will also be a need to make interdisciplinary links with other subjects as well as consider whole-school and wider community contexts and aspects linked to developing Global Competence.

4.8 I have been involved in recent developments which I believe provide some of the answers as to how education, schools and curriculum can proactively support the development of a common culture of citizenship and civic engagement. The first is the developments with OECD around Global Competence outlined in Section 1. The second is a suggestion for a reformulated curriculum for citizenship education for the 21st century that included developing a broader range of knowledge and new citizenship capabilities, which I outlined at a recent European Citizenship conference organised by NECE, the German Federal Civic Agency. The third is a focus on helping teachers and schools to teach and manage approaches to controversial issues, developed with the Council of Europe and European Commission in partnership between the Citizenship Foundation and agencies and ministries of education in a number of European countries.

4.9 The work on teaching controversial issues through education in schools offers hope that this approach can help to address the challenge for Governments of how to educate young people to be confident in a fast-paced, intercultural, interdependent, international world in tackling challenges posed to democratic society and democratic values by terrorism, extremism, violence and xenophobia. The two training packs on addressing controversial issues in schools, the first for teachers and the second for school leaders, were demanded by European countries and have been well received in trainings carried out for the Council of Europe under the auspices of the independent European Wergeland Centre (EWC) based in Norway. Indeed, currently the Nordic Council of Ministers from the Nordic countries has commissioned a pilot training for school teams of headteachers and teachers from each country. The outcomes of the training are going to be used to help their schools and communities educate their young people to tackle the democratic

7 See David Kerr Keynote Presentation http://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/netzwerke/neece227285/neece-conference-2016-zagreb
challenges in the communities, country and region. It is hoped the pilot will be rolled out to all
schools in the Nordic region as their response to addressing current challenges posed by
terrorism, extremism (both IS and far-right), violence and discrimination. They prefer this broader
approach to addressing the threats to common values in society rather than the narrower, more
targeted Prevent type policy in the UK.9

4.10 When Citizenship was introduced in schools in 2002 DfE Ministers were keen to evaluate its
effectiveness and build a robust evidence base to improve policy and practice. They commissioned
NFER to undertake the Longitudinal Study (CELS) from 2001 to 2010, ensured England’s
participation in the two IEA international studies of civic and citizenship education (CIVED in 1999
and ICCS in 2009)10 so as to compare progress with other countries and encouraged Ofsted to
carry out regular subject reviews of Citizenship. The outcome of this research and evaluation is
that there is clear evidence of what constitutes effective education for citizenship. The Citizenship
Longitudinal Study (CELS) which I directed from 2001 to 2010 while at NFER found that high
quality Citizenship education is found in schools that see Citizenship as a priority, where it is
embedded in the curriculum, where there are Citizenship trained teachers that lead and
coordinate teaching, support from the Senior Leadership team and where Citizenship is also part
of a whole school approach.11 CELS also shows that pupil outcomes improve in Citizenship where
there is regular time for Citizenship lessons planned, in the culture and ethos of the school and in
the school's relations with the wider community. However, since 2010 that evidence base for
Citizenship has been allowed to wither on the vine. There has been no follow up to CELS, England
did not participate in the latest IEA study (ICCS16) and Ofsted have ceased subject reviews. There
is an urgent need to build a clear, coherent national picture on the impact on Citizenship
education of recent curriculum and qualification reforms through research and evaluation data.

4.2 The approach to Citizenship education in England was also informed by reviewing best practice
at European and international level. As one of the last countries in Europe to introduce Citizenship
as part of the school curriculum there was much to learn from global networks and practice in
other countries. Prior to and following 2002, DfE Ministers encouraged England’s active
involvement in citizenship networks in Europe involving the Council of Europe, European
Commission and Eurydice as well as globally through the British Council and IEA studies12. From
2002 to 2010, England was viewed internationally as one of the leading exponents of effective
Citizenship education and countries were keen to learn from our experience. However, since 2010
Citizenship practice in other countries has begun to outstrip ours, particularly in the Nordic
countries, Finland and Austria to name a few. This has coincided with DfE disengagement from
European and global Citizenship education networks and evaluations13 leading to a missed
opportunity to continue to measure our practice against other countries and contribute to and
learn from such networks. It is vital that initiatives designed at strengthening Citizenship
education take account of and contribute to developments in other countries and continents
across the world in order to remain relevant and effective.

10 See https://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/projects/the-international-civic-and-citizenship-education-study-iccs/
11 See https://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/projects/cels/
12 See https://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/home
13 See http://iccs.iea.nl/
Recommendations:

8. The Government and public authorities should recognise that building a lasting culture of Citizenship and civic engagement must be founded on a strong foundation of effective Citizenship education and that this must be a key goal and aim for education and curriculum.

9. DfE must encourage all education institutions to consider what their civic mission is and how they educate young people to understand and actively participate in realising it.

10. DfE must urgently replace the current Citizenship National Curriculum with one that is fit for purpose for the 21st Century. The design of the new curriculum should be overseen by a new Citizenship Advisory Group representing all relevant groups in society.

11. DfE should consider placing the education of young people to address controversial issues at the heart of the new education for citizenship at curriculum and whole-school level.

12. There is an urgent need to rebuild a robust evidence base on the state of Citizenship education and to continue to contribute to and learn from education and Citizenship best practice in other countries in Europe and internationally in order to remain relevant and effective.

5. A Joined up Approach to Citizenship and Civic Engagement

Q7 How can society support civic engagement? What responsibility should central government, devolved and local governments, third sector organisations and the individual have for encouraging civic engagement? What can the Government and Parliament do to support civil society initiatives and increase civic engagement?

5.1 There is an urgent need for a more joined up approach to Citizenship and civic engagement across Government and in collaboration with local and devolved government and with third sector organisations. Currently the situation is fragmented, inconsistent and inefficient. There are a number of government departments that are involved in promoting and supporting Citizenship and civic engagement but their efforts are not mapped and connected. They include; the Department for Education which has not provided any significant support for Citizenship education since 2008 beyond some recent funding for an ACT project on British values; the Home Office which has funded ACT to work with schools on Citizenship curriculum projects to develop anti extremism education through its Prevent innovation fund; the Cabinet Office which funds work to educate young people about democracy and voting; the Office for Civil Society at the Department of Culture Media and Sport which funds social action, National Citizen Service and new training for Community Organisers; DFID has funded the Global Learning Programme including global citizenship; and the Ministry of Justice which has funded legal education projects run by the Citizenship Foundation.

5.2 The current messages coming from Government and Departments concerning Citizenship education and civic education are also weak and confusing. I support the call from ACT for the DfE to do more to clearly signal to all schools that Citizenship is an important curriculum subject with a clear contribution to make on wider education agendas and that Ministers should make positive
references to Citizenship in their speeches. For example, Citizenship provides the curriculum location, content and knowledge for exploring British Values, Prevent and anti-extremist education and the space to engage with students on a wide range of topical and controversial issues as well as supporting greater social cohesion and social justice. Trained and experienced Citizenship teachers are adept at handling such topics and issues should be valued as education leaders and experts who can work with other members of staff who lack the confidence or expertise. The current silence on these issues is deafening.

5.3 The Crick Group and its report was successful in establishing a consensus around citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools in 1998 because it was set up with cross-party support and included representation from the major political parties and sectors of society with a vested interest in Citizenship education. This meant that there was strong support for making Citizenship a new statutory National Curriculum subject from 2002. Unfortunately, since 2002 that consensus has ebbed away and Citizenship education and civic engagement have fallen foul of the whims and impacts of the ideologies and decisions of particular political parties and Ministers. This has undermined the progress made in promoting and embedding Citizenship education in schools that took place from 2002 to 2010 and led to a waste of experience and expertise across government departments and third sector organisations.

5.4 Professor, Sir Bernard Crick, when formulating the Crick Report, was acutely aware of the vagaries of political and educational policy and of the challenges faced in introducing a new subject into the National Curriculum. He wanted to ensure that the new Citizenship curriculum was not a flash in the pan but had a good chance of taking root across schools and society. In order to try and protect the future of Citizenship education he made a recommendation in the Crick Report that there should be a Standing Commission on Citizenship education set up to monitor its progress and when necessary recommend amendments to the curriculum, inspection arrangements, teaching and learning approaches and teacher training, as appropriate. It would have been interested to see had this recommendation been put into practice what impact it would have had. Any proposals to promote and strengthen Citizenship and civic engagement will face similar challenges to the Citizenship education initiative instigated by the Crick Group. There will be a need to ensure that such proposals are given a chance to make progress, while remaining both relevant to changing circumstances in education and society and effective in terms of policies, practices and levels of support across Government and society.

Recommendations:

13. Government needs to be seen to be valuing and promoting Citizenship education and civic engagement across Government and society. A Minister and a Senior Civil servant should be given the remit to develop coherent policy and positive communication for Citizenship education and civic engagement and coordinate with other government departments and local and devolved governments working on citizenship policy.

14. Government and political parties must ensure that the promotion of Citizenship and civic engagement is built on cross-party support and consensus to prevent it falling prey to the whims and ideologies of particular Ministers and political parties.

15. The DfE should follow up the Crick Report recommendation for the setting up of a Standing Commission on Citizenship education and civic engagement in order to monitor its progress and as necessary make recommendations for improvement going forward.
For further information about this submission, please contact David Kerr